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A "Different" Jazz Ambassador Herbert Ward through the Lenses of FBI Reports

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In recent years, US historiography has invested substantial effort into mapping the phenomenon of "jazz diplomacy" in the 1950s and 1960s. The mission of the well-known *Jazz Ambassadors* project of the US State Department was fairly clear: to present jazz as an example of typical American culture, show it as a messenger of freedom in countries often governed by oppressive regimes, and dispel the embarrassment of the world's public over the US Government's unwillingness to tackle pressing issues of racial inequality and civil rights.[1]

In the early stage of the Cold War, US administration soon realized that jazz and swing music would be better tools of its cultural diplomacy than ballet or classical music, especially since the successful European tour of the opera *Porgy and Bess*[2]

1 See, in particular, the works of VON ESCHEN, Penny M.: *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press 2004; DAVENPORT, Lisa E.: *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era*. Jackson, University Press of Mississippi 2009; FOSLER-LUSSIER, Danielle: *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy*. Berkeley, University of California Press 2015; HATSCHEK, Keith: The Impact of American Jazz Diplomacy in Poland during the Cold War Era. In: *Jazz Perspectives*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (2010), pp. 253–300.

2 UY, Michael: Performing Catfish Row in the Soviet Union: The Everyman Opera Company and Porgy and Bess, 1955–56. In: *Journal of the Society for American Music*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (2017), pp. 470–501.

in 1954 and 1955. The subsequent series of tours of American jazz musicians in Africa, Asia, Middle East, and Eastern Europe was supplemented by other parallel forms of propaganda, such as radio broadcasts (represented, for example, by Willis Conover's *Music USA* programme aired by the Voice of America) or sending books and musical recordings to countries behind the Iron Curtain.[3]

Thanks to cultural exports sponsored by the US Government, thousands of people were able to meet jazz idols of those times, including Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Goodman, Dave Brubeck, Duke Ellington, or Louis Armstrong. As we now know, this diplomatic effort to present the United States as a land of freedom suffered from many controversies, mainly because Afro-American musicians sent to tours under the auspices of the US Government had their own experience with domestic racism, which they sometimes mentioned when abroad.

However, the main character appearing on the following pages is an American who somehow did not fit into the official efforts to use jazz music as a tool of diplomacy. Herbert Ward was a left-wing jazz bassist and singer, who asked for asylum in communist Czechoslovakia at the end of 1954. He, too, helped promote jazz behind the Iron Curtain, and many Czech musicians still remember him. However, his story is counterposed to the official vision of US cultural diplomacy which sent only carefully selected musicians, ones who could serve its purposes mentioned above, to tour the world, while Herbert Ward was, as a US political refugee, a good proof of the hypocrisy of the US system for Czechoslovak authorities.

I call him a "different" jazz ambassador in the title of my study to distinguish Ward's mission from that of the "Real Jazz Ambassador," the nickname given to Louis Armstrong in the context of US jazz diplomacy.[4] My work attempts to prove that the earliest share in the rehabilitation of jazz in communist Czechoslovakia belonged to Herbert Ward, a relatively unknown white jazzman whom the FBI suspected of cooperation with the Communist Party of the United States, rather than to Louis Armstrong. While Armstrong was intentionally used by US diplomacy, Ward was an unintended consequence of the persecution of left-wing citizens in the United States in the early 1950s.

The story of the American musician who applied for political asylum in Czechoslovakia in 1954 (together with his wife and two little sons) became part of the mythology of the older jazz generation and also made its way into popular culture.[5]

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3 RITTER, Rüdiger: Broadcasting Jazz into the Eastern Bloc – Cold War Weapon or Cultural Exchange? The Example of Willis Conover. In: *Jazz Perspectives*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2013), pp. 111–131; REISCH, Alfred A.: *Hot Books in the Cold War: The CIA-Funded Secret Western Book Distribution Program Behind the Iron Curtain.* Budapest–New York, Central European University Press 2013.

4 Compare VON ESCHEN, Penny M.: *Satchmo Blows Up the World,* pp. 58–91.

5 Especially into Josef Škvorecký's short story "Malá pražská matahára" [Little Prague Matahara] and his essay "Red Music," or the movie *Rytmus v patách* [Rhythm at the heels] based on another short story of Škvorecký, which was filmed for the Czech TV by Andrea Sedláčková in 2010. The roles of the Wards were played by James Harries and Tonya Graves. See ŠKVORECKÝ, Josef: Red Music. In: IDEM: *Mezi dvěma světy a jiné eseje* [Be-

However, these sources do not answer the main questions asked in this text: Who, actually, was Herbert Ward, and how did he find himself in Czechoslovakia? Was he indeed hunted by the FBI? Was it because of his political (communist) belief, or because of much more mundane reasons (as some contemporary witnesses suggest)?

In my opinion, Ward's case will not only help supplement the well-known story of US jazz diplomacy, but also contribute to a recently opened discussion on the Anglo-American left-wing community in communist Czechoslovakia.[6] It should also be noted that I made use of sources which Czech historians have not yet been using routinely, in particular archives of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), to examine it.

Czech historiography has hitherto paid its attention mainly to Greek and Yugoslav (anti-Tito) immigrants.[7] Until recently, the English-speaking and mostly left-wing oriented political immigration to Czechoslovakia has stayed away from the limelight – it has so far been dealt with only in partial studies and/or biographies of contemporary witnesses.[8] It is quite understandable, as the English-speaking immigrants were, especially when compared to the mass immigrations mentioned above, seemingly negligible groups of individuals whom, however, the Czechoslovak regime did not hesitate to use for propaganda purposes, particularly in the case of asylum seekers from the United States.[9]

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tween two worlds, and other essays] (*Collected Works of Josef Škvorecký*, Vol. 21). Praha, Ivo Železný 2004, pp. 45–62, here p. 59; IDEM: Malá pražská matahára. In: IDEM: *Příběhy o Líze a mladém Wertherovi a jiné povídky* [Stories about Lisa and young Werther, and other stories] (*Collected Works of Josef Škvorecký*, Vol. 2). Praha, Ivo Železný 1994, pp. 237–248, here p. 246.

6 Compare, in particular, GEANEY, Kathleen: Špatná strana hranice? Anglicky mluvící levicová komunita v Československu na počátku studené války [On the wrong side of the border? The English-speaking leftist community in Czechoslovakia at the beginning of the Cold War]. In: *Střed: Časopis pro mezioborová studia střední Evropy 19. a 20. století*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2013), pp. 40–62; OLŠÁKOVÁ, Doubravka: V krajině za zrcadlem: Političtí emigranti v poúnorovém Československu a případ Aymonin [In the land behind the mirror: Political immigrants in post-February Czechoslovakia and the Aymonin case]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (2007), pp. 719–743.

7 See, for example, HRADEČNÝ, Pavel: *Řecká komunita v Československu: Její vznik a počáteční vývoj (1948–1954)* [*The Greek community in Czechoslovakia: Its emergence and initial development (1948–1954)*]. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2000; VOJTĚCHOVSKÝ, Ondřej: *Z Prahy proti Titovi! Jugoslávská prosovětská emigrace v Československu* [From Prague against Tito! Yugoslav pro-Soviet emigration in Czechoslovakia]. Praha, Faculty of Arts of Charles University 2012.

8 See, for example, KIMMAGE, Ann: *An Un-American Childhood.* Athens, Georgia, University of Georgia Press 1996.

9 Compare BAŠTA, Jiří: Propagandistické využití kausy amerického emigranta G. S. Wheelera [Propagandistic use of the case of the American émigré G. S. Wheeler]. In: *Securitas Imperii*, No. 7: *Sborník k problematice bezpečnostních služeb* [Collection on issues related to the Security Services]. Praha, Office for the Documentation and the Investigation of the Crimes of Communism 2001, Police of the Czech Republic, pp. 224–251.

As to US political asylum seekers in Czechoslovakia, there were at least 14 of them at the time of Herbert Ward's arrival.[10] Although the cited list of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia obviously does not contain complete data on the number of asylum seekers, it does provide indicative guidance permitting an evaluation of the significance and structure of US immigration of those times. It is remarkable that many of the US asylum seekers were people with a university degree, for example scientists who subsequently worked at the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, or left-wing intellectuals who found jobs in the media. Representatives of the former "group" include George Standart and his wife Phoebe, Morton Nadler, and Joseph and Ruth Cort; the latter group is represented by Herbert Lass and his wife Hilda, George Wheeler, Abe Chapman, a.k.a Abe Čapek, and others. Save for elementary data, we do not know much about other US asylum seekers (absent on the cited list).[11]

There were just a few US asylum seekers in Czechoslovakia with an artistic background: the best known of them was probably Aubrey Pankey, an Afro-American singer who asked for asylum during his second tour in Czechoslovakia in March 1955. The Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia granted it on 23 May 1955; however, Pankey obtained asylum in the German Democratic Republic in 1956 and he stayed there for the rest of his life.[12]

The Wards were also artists. Before he arrived to Prague, Herbert had been a bassist playing with both classic and jazz orchestras (but he could also play the tuba and sing); his wife Jacqueline had been a dancer and choreographer, but also a journalist. Unlike most other US asylum seekers, the couple came to ask for asylum with their two children (Norman and Laurence), and they were soon joined by their close relative (Nicholas Rippen Abberly, Jacqueline's father and until 1948 a member of the US Communist Party), who also asked for asylum. It is also interesting to note that Herbert Ward had roots in Slovakia, where he visited his relatives.[13]

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10 *National Archives*, Prague (hereinafter *NA*), Fond (f.) 1261/2/4 (International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia 1945–1962; the fonds was initially designated AÚV KSČ 100/3), Volume (Vol.) 2, Archival Unit (AU) 6, Foreigners living in Czechoslovakia on the basis of asylum: ex-US citizens (undated, probably 1954).

11 Among them were, for example, Walter and Marta Hübscher, Rose Savaat, Joy Moss Kohoutová, Jimmy Robinson (Smith) (see DURNOVÁ, Helena – OLŠÁKOVÁ, Doubravka: Academic Asylum Seekers in the Communist Czechoslovakia. In: STELLA, Marco – ŠTRBÁŇOVÁ, Soňa – KOSTLÁN, Antonín (ed.): *Scholars in Exile and Dictatorship of the 20th Century.* Praha, Centre for the History of Sciences and Humanities of the Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2011, pp. 90–103, here p. 94).

12 *NA*, f. 1261/0/11 (Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia 1945–1962), Vol. 43, AU 59, Item 15, Granting of asylum in Czechoslovakia to US citizen Aubrey Pankey and his wife.

13 *Archive of the Security Services*, Prague (hereinafter *SSA*), f. A2/1 (Secretariat of the Minister of Interior, Part 1: 1948–1959), Inventory Number (IN 737), Cardboard Box (CB) 38, Report on negotiations concerning the granting of political asylum to the Ward family and preparations of a press conference with them, 2 November 1954.

Archival Sources

When working on this text, I made use of both Czech and foreign archival fonds. As to the former, I soon encountered certain limits, as they did not provide much information about the motivation or detailed circumstances of the Wards' arrival to Czechoslovakia. I am referring particularly to fonds of the Politburo and the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, and the Archive of Security Services (SSA); it is true they contain basic data on granting the asylum to the Wards, but they do not disclose almost anything about their further fate in Czechoslovakia; I was unable to find any file covering their activities in Prague after they were granted asylum even in the SSA.[14] I got a much deeper insight into the story of the couple by studying foreign sources: archival documents of the US Department of State and, in particular, the Federal Bureau of Investigation which maintained fairly sizable files on both Wards. The documents of both institutions are stored in the US National Archives and Record Administration (NARA).[15] I was granted access to the FBI files on the basis of a request submitted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).[16] Staff members of the National Archives had edited or blackened the files before their release; this concerned particularly information from foreign intelligence assets (see below). However, many of the names of informers and investigators had not been anonymized, and I can therefore quote them here under their real names. Interviews with ex-collaborators of the Wards in the field of art and an interview with their son Laurence were used as supplementary sources.

14 There were probably some files of the First Directorate of the SNB (National Security Corps) covering activities of the couple in Vienna, but they are either still classified and unavailable (the Office for Foreign Relations and Information has not handed them over to the SSA), or have been shredded. More specifically, the numbers of the file that have not been handed over are 40377 and 81212 (Sub-file 104); the former concerns agent Alfréd Petrovič and allegedly mentions Jacqueline Ward, while the latter is titled "Operative correspondence with friendly intelligence services" and allegedly mentions Herbert Ward (his file has been obviously discarded).

15 *National Archives and Record Administration*, Washington D.C. (hereinafter *NARA*), f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward); *Ibid.*, f. Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Box 995, Loc 250/61/11/2, 263.1122 Ward. I also asked the CIA for Herbert Ward's file, but the agency refused to confirm or deny the existence of his file (however, some copied documents in the FBI's file indicate that the Wards were under CIA's surveillance as well).

16 For example, useful guidelines how to use the FBI's archives are provided by the following texts: PRATT, William C.: Using FBI Records in Writing Regional Labor History. In: *Labor History*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (1992), pp. 470–482; ROSSWURM, Steven – GILPIN, Toni: The FBI and the Farm Equipment Workers: FBI Surveillance Records as a Source for CIO Union History. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (1986), pp. 485–505; SCHMIDT, Regin: *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States, 1919–1943.* Copenhagen, Museum Tusculanum Press 2000, pp. 20–23.

The declassification of the Wards' files under FOIA was partly complicated by the fact that they had been staying in Europe, i.e. away from the direct jurisdiction of the FBI, for a substantial period of time (1950–1965). The files therefore contain many documents prepared by intelligence agencies (mainly CIC), which focused on the couple's activities abroad; NARA's staff members performed more editing in them, but the documents provide a broad and deep insight into the activities of the Wards in Europe (especially in Austria) and the communcation of these agencies with the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The Wards in the Context of the US "Witch Hunt"

The case of the Wards should be perceived in the context of American anti-communist hysteria at the turn of the 1940s and 1950s. With hindsight and based on information obtained later in Soviet archives, it is true that concerns about communist infiltration cannot be regarded as entirely groundless, but the threat represented by and importance of the Communist Party of the USA were unquestionably overrated. While the legal framework for the persecution of communists in the United States had already been there for some time (the so-called Smith Act adopted in 1940 set criminal penalties for the support of and membership in organizations advocating the overthrow of the US Government), but it received significant support in the form of the 1950 Internal Security Act which strengthened anti-espionage acts, permitted emergency detention of unreliable individuals, and set an obligatory registration by the Department of Justice for communist and similar organizations. In addition, there was a number of Executive Orders of the President (especially Executive Orders No. 9835 of 1947 and No. 10450 of 1953), which laid down security clearance procedures for federal employees and in particular permitted checking their loyalty (including membership in communist organizations).[17]

Aside from the historically best-known trials with US Communist Party members or supporters and hearings before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), the persecution of left-wing individuals need not have necessarily resulted in a charge or a trial. McCarthyism had many forms and levels, and while criminal prosecution was one of them, informal checks, stigmatization or economic sanctions were much more frequent. Labelling an individual a "security risk" by placing him or her on one of "blacklists" prepared by various agencies and authorities was crucial not just for staff members of federal offices; loyalty testing principles were gradually transferred to the private sector and other areas of social life as well. The crusade against "the Reds" spread into the education system, community of lawyers, and various industries where it enabled corporations to effectively suppress the influence of trade unions.

17 See WIECEK, William M.: The Legal Foundations of Domestic Anticommunism: The Background of Dennis v. United States. In: *The Supreme Court Review*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2001), pp. 375–434, here pp. 420–428.

The "blacklisting" also affected the entertainment industry, and not just renowned Hollywood directors at that, but also at much lower levels.[18]

The Federal Bureau of Investigation played a fundamental role in the anti-communist crusade. It gathered information on members and sympathizers of the Communist Party of the USA and supplied a lot of data to various investigation commissions (apart from the House Un-American Activities Committee also the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee), government agencies, and also private enterprises. It checked the loyalty and political reliability of staff members of government agencies and offices. It had been maintaining lists of potentially dangerous individuals (often Communist Party members) since 1939, although it initially did not possess any mandate to do so; by 1950, about 12,000 people were on the so-called Security Index (including Nicholas Abberly, Jacqueline Ward's father). These lists were often used to prepare "blacklists" of other organizations and agencies.[19]

Proving the membership of an individual in the Communist Party convincingly enough was not always easy for the FBI, one of the reasons being the sectarian character and clandestine operations of the party. As a matter of fact, a convincing proof was sometimes unnecessary for government institutions, as they were applying a "guilt by association" principle.[20] An accusation of harbouring communist opinions thus did not have to be based on proven membership in the Communist Party; it could also be derived from the membership in or support of parallel organizations, so-called front groups.[21] The notorious lists of "subversive organizations," which were put together by the Department of Justice, were the most succint expression or manifestation of the above principle. According to the files which the FBI maintained on the Wards, investigators only had indirect evidence on their membership in the Communist Party; but they were all the more interested in their membership in so-called parallel organizations, attendance of left-wing events, or subscription of communist press.

By the time the Wards arrived to Prague, McCarthyism was already on its way out, but the FBI's obsession with communist threat had a substantial amount of inertia, as indicated by the files on the couple; they were asked about their membership in the party and other political activities as late as at the end of the 1960s.

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18 See, for example, SCHRECKER, Ellen: *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America*. Boston, Little & Brown 1998, pp. 271–278.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 208–218; compare also SCHMIDT, R.: Red Scare, pp. 365–367.

20 SCHRECKER, E.: *Many Are the Crimes*, p. 276.

21 The legal base was provided by President Truman's Executive Order No. 9835, which ruled out not only Communist Party members, but also members and sympathizers of other organizations which the Department of Justice labelled as communist or subversive, from federal agencies and institutions.

Jazz and the Popular Front

Herbert Ward was not by far the only leftist-oriented jazz musician in New York of the 1940s. His case should therefore be judged with a view to the role of jazz in the environment of the US radical left of the period.

While the attitude of US Marxist critics toward jazz had been at best reserved in the early 1930s, the campaign reacting to the trial with the "Scottsboro Boys" (after 1931), and especially the formation of the anti-Fascist *Popular Front* in 1934, changed that.[22] The Communist Party of the United States played an essential role both in the defence of African American teenagers falsely accused of rape and in the broad anti-Fascist campaign. Jazz musicians also took part in many benefit concerts against racism and Fascism which the party was organizing at that time. Journalists from the *Daily Worker,* the Communist Party daily, somewhat moderated their criticism of jazz music, and came to appreciate its democratization and anti-segregation aspect (exemplified by mixed jazz bands and their mixed audience). A more moderate attitude toward jazz was, quite understandably, a good tool to win sympathizers, especially among black youths.[23]

The New York branch of the Communist Party of the United States, especially its members in Harlem, played a crucial role in the process of convergence of party and jazz music. In the mid-1930s, the number of black members of the Harlem party cell was dramatically growing, and even jazz musicians, who often appreciated the equalitarian rhetoric of the American Communist Party (as they encountered discrimination of their black colleagues in mixed bands, when looking for accommodation on tours etc., every day) were not unaware of the development.[24]

Their involvement in left-wing structures might vary as to its intensity. Under the aegis of the Popular Front, they could play at benefit events in support of refugees from Europe or the Republican side of the Spanish civil war, perform at intentionally racially mixed dancing parties, or actively participate in various organizations (most frequently not directly in the Communist Party of the United States, but in other member organizations of the Popular Front, where Communist Party members had only an indirect influence). In this respect, Artie Shaw, Teddy Wilson, or Frankie Newton, to name but a few, could be included among politically more active jazz musicians.[25]

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22 On the Popular Front in the USA see, for example, SMITH, R. Eric: Popular Front. In: ARNESEN, Eric (ed.): *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History.* New York, Routledge 2007, pp. 1108–1111; on the "Scottsboro Boys" case, see MILLER, A. James: Scottsboro Case. In: *Ibid.*, pp. 1222–1224.

23 See BAKAN, Jonathon: Jazz and the "Popular Front": "Swing" Musicians and the Left-Wing Movement of the 1930s–1940s. In: *Jazz Perspectives*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2009), pp. 35–56, here pp. 40–43; STOWE, David W.: *Swing Changes: Big-band Jazz in New Deal America.* Cambridge, Massachusetts – London, Harvard University Press 1995, p. 65.

24 See NAISON, Mark: *Communists in Harlem during the Depression*. Urbana, University of Illinois Press 1983, p. 279.

25 See BAKAN, Jonathon: Jazz and the "Popular Front," pp. 43–48; DENNING, Michael: *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century*. London, Verso 1996, p. 334.

Due to the broad variety of the member organizations of the Popular Front, it is clear that musicians who were anti-Fascists, but also critical toward communism, such as Duke Ellington or Count Basie, could also appear at the benefit gigs.

However, at the turn of the 1940s and 1950s, as anti-communist hysteria was peaking, these nuances became blurred, and some jazz musicians, just like their colleagues in the movie industry, found themselves in trouble because of their pre-war activities. Many of the member organizations of the former Popular Front were included on the list of subversive organizations maintained by the Department of Justice. The well-documented cases of Duke Ellington or Frank Sinatra clearly show that all it took for the FBI to start an investigation was a pre-war anti-Fascist statement or "suspicious" overstepping of the racial *status quo* at mixed concerts.[26] It was very seldom that cases like this advanced as far as a hearing before the House Un-American Activities Committee (one of them was Artie Shaw's); however, psychic, administrative, and economic consequences due to stigmatizing statements in the media of interest of the FBI were no less important (even Frank Sinatra, for example, experienced them).

The Wards were struggling with similar economic restrictions. Although there is not much supporting information, it seems that one of the impulses prompting Herbert Ward to leave for Europe was lack of job opportunities after his name had appeared, due to his political orientation, on the "blacklist" of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) led by James Petrillo.[27]

Early Artistic Careers of the Wards

Herbert (Field) Ward was born on 20 January 1921 in Bellaire, Ohio, to mother of Slovak descent Anděla Frančeková (born in 1898 in Trnava, adopted the name Angela Beta Carre after her second marriage) and American father David Stephen Ward (born in 1896 in Bellaire).[28] His parents allegedly got acquainted in Europe after the Great War, when Herbert's father had been discharged from the US Army in which he had served. Herbert dedicated himself to music since early age, completing his formal

26 MEYER, Gerald: Frank Sinatra: The Popular Front and an American Icon. In: *Science & Society*, Vol. 66, No. 3 (2002), pp. 311–335; PEAKE, Bryce: Duke Ellington, Irving Mills, and the Broadcast Boundaries of Racialized Heteronationalism, according to the FBI. In: *Cultural Politics*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (2016), pp. 203–216.

27 Ward's dismissal from the American Federation of Musicians because of his alleged communist orientation was mentioned by his father-in-law Nicholas Abberly during an interrogation by the FBI. The reason of the dismissal could also be Ward's criticism of the segregation of black members of the AFM; AFM's President James Petrillo was resisting the integration of black musicians for quite some time. (See WONDERLICH, Chris: American Federation of Musicians. In: ARNESEN, E. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History*, here p. 82.)

28 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 7.

education in music at the Sacramento College in California. After the United States entered the war in 1941, he returned to Ohio and worked for the tyre manufacturer of the name BF Goodrich in Akron. He was inducted into military service in 1942 and was seconded to ground aviation service in Alaska where he remained until his injury after which he was transferred to the army jazz orchestra.[29]

After the war, Ward continued to pursue his musical career in a variety of jazz bands in New York; newspaper articles and ads indicate that the musicians he played with included, for example, Artie Shaw, Art Hodes, Muggsy Spanier, Mezz Mezzrow, Pete Seeger, Bill Davison,[30] or Sidney Bechet.[31] His one-year stint in Brazil with the band of saxophonist Bud Freeman (1947), which even Czech press wrote about, was also a success.[32]

Ward's wife was art-oriented as well. She was born Jacqueline Hope Rippenbein on 6 March 1919 in New York in a family with Russo-German Jewish roots. Her father was Nicholas Rippenbein, one of the US aviation pioneers (around 1916–1920) and also an inventor, later known as Nicholas Rippen Abberly (born in 1891 in Elisabeth, New Jersey). We do not have any detailed information on her mother Jewel Loebenger Rippenbein.[33]

Jacqueline spent most of her pre-war life in Los Angeles, where she also started studying at the university after graduating from high school, but she quitted after four semesters of law studies. According to her personal questionnaire completed later for the Czechoslovak Radio, since 1938, she worked, for example, as a sales assistant in a music shop, a secretary in the patent office of her father, etc. Between 1942 and 1944, she was employed as a head of a boarding house for young people, but she was also already active as a dancer and choreographer – for example in Hollywood's Universal Film studios.[34]

Journalistic activities of Jacqueline Ward were probably due to her left-wing orientation; since 1938, she was contributing as a contract journalist to the *People's World*

29 See HANEY, Thomas S.: Ward, Suspected of Defecting to Reds, Grew Up in Akron. In: *Akron Beacon Journal* (23 October 1954), p. 1; *SSA*, f. A2/1, IN 737, CB 38, Report on the negotiation concerning the granting of political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and on preparations of a press conference with them.

30 See the recording (CD): DAVISON, Bill: *Rare Wild Bill.* Middlesex, Submarine Records 2014.

31 See the recording (CD): BECHET, Sidney: *Live In New York 1950–1951.* Copenhagen, Storyville Records 1995.

32 ŠVÁB, Ludvík: Ze světa jazzu [From the world of jazz]. In: *Mladá fronta* (21 December 1947), p. 5.

33 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 7.

34 *Archival and Programme Fonds of the Czech Radio,* Prague (hereinafter *APF CR*), f. Personal files of employees, CB 455, Jacqueline Ward – personal file.

daily, one of leading communist papers on the West Coast of the United States.[35] She continued to do so until 1946, i.e. until her move to New York.[36]

"Progressive Artists" in the Service of the Party

Political activities and Communist Party affiliations of the Wards ranked among the central moments of the investigation conducted by US authorities, and references to their membership in various left-wing organizations, whether alleged or not, appear throughout their FBI files. The reliability of informants of the FBI was obviously fluctuating, resulting in contradictory or incomplete information. I will therefore focus only on those political activities and organizations which appear most frequently in the FBI files on the Wards.

Insofar as the Federal Bureau of Investigation was concerned, the key issue was whether the Wards had been members of the Communist Party of the United States and whether they identified themselves with its policy. During the investigation, which was taking place between 1950 and 1967, albeit intermittently, the agency however failed to produce convincing enough evidence on their membership. In October 1954, one of the informants recruited in the ranks of American Communist Party members (known as James Dodge, or Ellin Marshall, codename T-4) testified that in 1949 Herbert had told her about his membership in the CPUSA and lent her the *Communist Manifesto* and other printed materials bearing the logo of the Young Communist League (YCL).[37] Furthermore, the FBI had an earlier (1944) deposition of an anonymized informant codenamed T-7, which stated that then yet unmarried Jacqueline had been a member of one of the Communist Party cells – namely the fairly moderate Communist Political Association – in Los Angeles.[38] There are no more direct proofs of their membership in communist organizations in the file. Upon his return to the United States (in a testimony made in Dallas in 1960), Jacqueline's father Nicholas Abberly (according to his own words, himself a member of the Communist Party in Los Angeles from 1937 to 1948) "categorically denied" that Herbert or Jacqueline had ever been members of the Communist Party, although he did not deny their affinity to the left-wing artistic community.[39] In a written (probably forced) statement made in December 1953 before the Vice Consul at the US Embassy

35 Compare RICHARDS, Paul: People′ s World. In: BUHLE, Mario Jo – BUHLE, Paul – GEORGAKAS, Dan (ed.): *Encyclopedia of the American Left.* New York – London, Garland Publishing 1990, p. 573.

36 *APF CR*, f. Personal files of employees, CB 455, Jacqueline Ward – personal file.

37 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Joseph M. Zimmerman, New York, 17 November 1954, p. 3.

38 *Ibid.*, Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 5.

39 *Ibid.*, Department of State: Office of Security, Report of Special Agent Frank G. Terry, Dallas, 14 October 1960, p. 4.

in Vienna, the Wards denied their membership in the Communist Party, both presently or in the past.[40]

There is no mention whatsoever about membership in the Communist Party of the United States in relatively long public statements for the press which the couple made after they had been granted asylum in Czechoslovakia.[41] However, some non-public Czech documents provide different information. Both the draft and the final version of the Ministry of Interior's proposal to grant asylum to the Wards prepared for the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia mentions that "both Mr. Ward and Mrs. Ward are progressive artists and members of the Communist Party of the United States" and that they got acquainted while working for the American Communist Party.[42] Jacqueline Ward provided a fairly detailed account of her political activities in the personal questionnaire she filled in December 1961, when she started working for the International Broadcasting Section of the Czechoslovak Radio; apart from her membership in the Young Communist League in the 1930s, she also mentioned her membership in the CPUSA since 1938 and her work in the CPUSA's Broadway street cell in New York.[43] I have also found a brief piece of information about the alleged membership of the couple in the Communist Party of the United States in an internal memo of the Communist Party of Denmark from April 1951, which concerned left-wing Americans in Denmark (where the Wards had arrived in the summer of 1950).[44]

In addition to the membership of the Wards in the Communist Party, FBI investigators were also interested in other political activities of the couple, namely their membership in so-called front organizations of the Communist Party, proclaiming sympathies to communist ideology, and establishing related contacts.

According to two secret informants, since January 1949, the Wards were on the membership list of one of the Branches of the International Workers Order (IWO).[45]

40 *Ibid.*, Affidavit No. 4302 (Herbert Ward), Embassy of the USA, Vienna, 11 December 1953; Affidavit No. 4300 (Jacqueline Rippen Ward), Embassy of the USA, Vienna, 15 December 1953.

41 ČTK [Czechoslovak Press Agency]: Statement of US citizens Mr. and Mrs. Ward during a press conference in Prague. In: *Rudé právo* (10 November 1954), p. 3.

42 *SSA*, f. A2/1, IN 737, CB. 38, Report on negotiations concerning the granting of political asylum to the Ward family and preparations of a press conference with them; *NA*, f. 1261/0/11, Vol. 21, AU 29, Item 3 *per rollam*, Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia dated 2 November 1954, on item "Proposal to grant political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and to arrange a press conference with them."

43 *APF CR*, f. Personal files of employees, CB 455, Jacqueline Ward – personal file.

44 *The Labour Movement's Library and Archives*, Copenhagen (hereinafter *LMLA*), f. Danish Communist Party's Archive, k. 209, Ib Nørlund: Notat om amerikanere i partiets nærhed [Report on Americans close to the party], 16 April 1951. It is a brief list of five Americans, alleged communists, who arrived to Denmark at that time. The author of the handwritten report is Ib Nørlund, a functionary of the Communist Party of Denmark, the editor of the *Tiden* magazine and the Danish editor of the *World Marxist Review*.

45 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

It was a cooperative organization which mainly provided cheap life and health insurance to its members. It distinguished itself from other similar organizations by offering its insurance policies to everyone, regardless of skin colour or job, including workers in highly hazardous working positions. In addition, it widely supported cultural and sporting activities of its members and their children. Strictly speaking, the International Workers Order was not a party or trade union organization, but it unquestionably supported radical left-wing social policies and its leaders were organized in the Communist Party of the United States. On the other hand, its organizational structure provided a fairly high level of autonomy to its sections (language, etc.) and most of its rank-and-file members were not organized Communist Party members.[46]

What mattered most to US investigators, however, was the fact that the International Workers Order had been on the Department of Justice's list of subversive organizations since 1947 and regarded as part of a broader communist movement (the IWO was ultimately disbanded in 1954 after a number of trials). The Wards could certainly participate in its political activities, such as peace petitions or rallies,[47] but they could just as well be rank-and-file members whose primary interest was cheap insurance. This was also what the couple claimed in their abovementioned statement made at the US Embassy in Vienna in 1953: "It was a cheap kind of insurance and at the time I was pregnant and broke and it seemed like a good thing. It turned out to be a waste of money. We cashed in our policies some months later when we left for Denmark," said Jacqueline.[48]

Using voters' registrations, the Federal Bureau of Investigation also found out that Herbert had registered as a voter of the American Labor Party in 1949.[49] This left-wing party was, especially in New York, a realistic alternative for voters who wished to support "New Deal" policy, but not by voting for candidates of the Democratic Party directly. However, the party later suffered from strife, and by the late 1940s it was largely controlled by the CPUSA.[50]

The FBI file repeatedly mentions the Wards' membership in the Young Communist League mentioned above. This organization operated as a youth offspring of the Communist Party of the United States and in its heyday was attracting mainly the second generation of more radical ethnic immigrants and descendants of socialists with Jewish roots. Through cultural events and clubs, it was able to attract youths,

46 See KEERAN, Roger: International Workers Order. In: BUHLE, M. J. – BUHLE, P. – GEORGAKAS, D. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of the American Left*, p. 379; REITER, Ester: International Workers Order. In: ARNESEN, E. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History*, p. 694.

47 See LEGER, Silas: Interview with Jacqueline Ward, 18 May 2010, Hawaii, USA (video, with a copy in the author's archive).

48 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Affidavit No. 4300 (Jacqueline Rippen Ward), Embassy of the USA, Vienna, 15 December 1953.

49 *Ibid.*, Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

50 HOWARD, Adam: American Labor Party. In: ARNESEN, E. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History*, p. 90.

including those outside traditional left-wing circles. At the end of the 1930s, the New York branch alone had about 12,000 members. The league taught its members mainly organizational skills; they helped, for example, organize strikes, with logistics, or distribute the *Daily Worker* Communist Party daily.[51]

More specifically, the T-4 informant mentioned above stated that she had received a printed document with the Young Communist League logo from Herbert in 1949, and her colleague codenamed T-5 (John Leo Cefkin, an ex Communist Party member) stated that he had known Jacqueline as an YCL member in the 1930s.[52] Jacqueline's membership in the Young Communist League is also mentioned in the Czech asylum granting proposal, as well as in the personal questionnaire she herself completed for the Czechoslovak Radio, where she mentioned that she had been a rank-and-file member since 1934, and subsequently the YCL's secretary in San Diego and cultural officer at the UCLA.[53]

The political orientation of the Wards is mentioned in some other testimonies as well. Witness James Kocour testified that he had accommodated the couple for five days in his house in Cleveland in the spring of 1947 or 1948, upon request of Herbert's sister. Based on his conversation with them, he allegedly reached the conclusion that they were "fanatic communists": "I have arrived at this conclusion in view of the fact that Herbert Ward was denouncing capitalism and Christianity while he praised everything connected with Communism and Russia. I firmly believe that Jackie Rippen Ward is also a Communist," he stated to an FBI investigator in October 1954.[54]

In April 1950, witness Kathleen Truesdale stated that she knew Herbert as a musician playing in New York's Riviera Club. He attracted her attention because he was reading the *Daily Worker* and discussing its content vividly with the club's patrons. At the same time, he made it plain that he attended communist events and distributed petitions in support of trade unions.[55]

In November 1954, another (anonymized) witness testified that he had met Jacqueline sometime around 1944; she was then a member of the Westlake Communist Club in Los Angeles and offered him a subscription of the Communist Party paper

51 BUHLE, Paul: Young Communist League (and Successors). In: BUHLE, M. J. – BUHLE, P. – GEORGAKAS, D. (ed.): *Encyclopedia of the American Left*, pp. 872–875.

52 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Joseph M. Zimmerman, New York, 17 November 1954, p. 3.

53 *SSA*, f. A2/1, IN 737, CB 38, Report on the negotiation concerning the granting of political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and on preparations of a press conference with them; *APF CR*, f. Personal files of employees, CB 455, Jacqueline Ward – personal file.

54 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Lawrence A. Westcott, Cleveland, 8 November 1954, p. 2.

55 *Ibid.*, Office Memorandum, Report of FBI Special Agent in Charge in New York for FBI Director, New York, 25 August 1950, p. 1.

People's World.[56] John Leo Cefkin and the Wards also visited the Communist Party supported Midvale Summer Camp in Ringwood, New Jersey.[57]

Trip to Europe

It is quite remarkable how the whole investigation of the Wards by the FBI began. It seems that they had not been in the focus of attention of the agency until 1950, and the case actually began by a statement of James Kocour from Cleveland made to the local FBI office. Kocour claimed that relatives of his student Desmonde Ward planned to leave the country in July 1950 and travel to Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union, where they would like to settle. The relatives were naturally the Wards (Desmonde was Herbert's sister); Kocour provided their brief description (albeit with minor errors), not forgetting to add that Ward was an "ardent communist." The case landed on the desk of the FBI Headquarters in Washington, D.C., which was coordinating subsequent investigation with relevant local offices.[58]

At that time, the young couple had known each other for about two years, had a one-year old son Laurence, and, by July 1950, been also just married. Herbert wanted to make use of an attractive offer of support to Second World War veterans under the Servicemen' s Readjustment Act[59] for continued musical education. In his passport application dated 11 July 1950, he stated that he planned to study at the Paris Musical School and also visit Denmark and Sweden. The Wards set off from New York for Europe aboard the MS Batory at the end of August 1950.[60]

There is no further mention of Paris in any other documents; however, a handwritten note in the archives of the Communist Party of Denmark, whose author was a prominent party official Ib Nørlund, indicates that the Wards were in Copenhagen probably as early as in August 1950. The slightly sceptical note says that Ward claimed to be a member of the Communist Party of the United States and asked for asylum in Poland or Czechoslovakia. His request was allegedly denied, which is why he plans to continue his studies in Denmark. It seems that the Wards were looking for a place to stay at people of a similar political orientation; the report mentions that they lived as subtenants with the Christensen family (the husband was allegedly

56 *Ibid.*, Office Memorandum, Report of FBI Special Agent in Charge in Los Angeles for FBI Director, Los Angeles, 17 November 1954, p. 1.

57 *Ibid.,* Report of Special Agent Joseph M. Zimmerman, New York, 17 November 1954, p. 4.

58 *Ibid.*, Office Memorandum, Report of FBI Special Agent in Charge in Cleveland for FBI Director, Cleveland, 14 July 1950, p. 1

59 The 1944 federal act, known as *G. I. Bill*, allowed US war veterans to apply for and receive scholarships, low-interest mortgages, entrepreneurial loans, requalification, and unemployment support. By 1956, around 10 million veterans had made use of these benefits.

60 *Ibid.,* Report of Special Agent John V. Jackolski, Washington, 7 August 1950, p. 1.

a party member) and that they got their previous accommodation thanks to an ad published in the Danish Communist daily *Land og Folk*.[61]

Herbert continued to study at the Royal Danish Conservatory, his mentor being the well-known double bass player Louis Hegner,[62] while Jacqueline occupied herself with, *inter alia,* "design of art objects," and also gave birth to their second son Norman.[63] We do not know anything about their political activities in Denmark. The later proposal to grant asylum in Czechoslovakia only mentions that "Herbert appeared at mass meetings and contributed articles to the Danish Communist Party daily paper *Land og Folk*."[64] According to information of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which the report in the FBI file indirectly refers to, Ward is "a well-known figure to the Danish Police who noted his passport as a communist sympathizer."[65]

Nevertheless, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the US Embassy in Denmark interpreted Herbert's visit of the World Festival of Youth and Students in East Berlin in 1951 as a more or less political act. The third postwar event of this type (the venues of the first two were Prague and Budapest) was attended by 24,000 participants from over a hundred countries (the total number of visitors was, however, around 1.5 million). The event, whose covert organizers were communist organizations (World Federation of Democratic Youth, International Union of Students) was of crucial importance for presenting the superiority of the socialist ideology and way of life. To the outside world, however, it posed as a non-political peace event; young people attending it could join many cultural, sporting, and other activities.[66]

The motivations (and possibilities) of participants in the festival from the East and those from the West were, however, different. While the former consisted solely of carefully vetted and politically reliable delegates, attending the festival was a matter of free choice for the latter. Although political orientation did play a role (many of them were members of communist-influenced youth organizations), it should not be overrated; they were also attracted by the event's social programme, a certain

61 *LMLA*, f. Danish Communist Party's Archive, CB 209, Ib Nørlund: Notat om amerikanere i partiets nærhed, 16 April 1951.

62 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 6.

63 *APF CR*, f. Personal files of employees, CB 455, Jacqueline Ward – personal file.

64 *NA*, f. 1261/0/11, Vol. 21, AU 29, Item 3 *per rollam*, Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia dated 2 November 1954, on Item "Proposal to grant political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and to arrange a press conference with them."

65 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 3.

66 See KOTEK, Joël: Youth Organizations as a Battlefield in the Cold War. In: *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (2003), pp. 168–191, here p. 171.

piquancy of paying a visit to the reality of the Eastern Bloc, and also subsidized transport and accommodation.[67]

The event was closely watched by the CIA, and Western authorities tried to prevent their citizens from travelling to East Berlin by denying passports, visas, or even by stopping trains already on the way. Some Western visitors were later persecuted by state authorities or their employers.[68]

Some of the above can also be exemplified on Ward's trip to Berlin. In June 1952 (i.e. one year after the festival), he was questioned about his visit to Berlin at the US Embassy in Copenhagen (allegedly because of stamps in his passport). It is obvious that his strategy was rather defensive: he said that he had not realized the importance of the event for the communists and that he had not travelled to Berlin because of the event's programme, but because of the offer of cheap transport and because he wanted to purchase a favourably priced upright bass in Berlin.[69] In his later affidavit made at the US Embassy in Vienna in 1953, he declared that he had got a tip for a cheap musical instrument in Berlin from a Copenhagen musical shop owner and also had made use of a favourably priced offer of some students and teachers from the conservatory to travel together to East Berlin. He thus travelled to Berlin as a member of the Danish delegation rather than the American one, and allegedly spent his time in Berlin by walking around and shopping.[70] The above explanation was unfit for Ward's purposes later, when he was in Prague: in his 1954 statement for the Czechoslovak media, Ward claimed that he had visited the festival because of artistic interest and that the trip had marked the beginning of his subsequent difficulties.[71]

Having provided explanation at the US Embassy in Copenhagen, Ward had his passport confiscated, and he was to prove his loyalty by two affidavits made by US citizens (his passport was returned roughly two months later, on 25 July 1952).[72] His passport was confiscated for a second time by the Danish police and was to be given back only for the purpose of Ward's return to the United States.[73]

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67 *Ibid.*, p. 175; KOIVUNEN, Pia: Overcoming Cold War Boundaries at the World Youth Festivals. In: AUTIO, Sari – MIKLÓSSY, Katalin (ed.): *Reassessing Cold War Europe*. New York, Routledge 2011, pp. 175–192, here p. 178.

68 See KOTEK, J.: Youth Organizations as a Battlefield in the Cold War, p. 175; KOIVUNEN, P.: Overcoming Cold War Boundaries at the World Youth Festivals, p. 180.

69 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 6.

70 *Ibid.*, Affidavit No. 4302 (Herbert Ward), Embassy of the USA, Vienna, 11 December 1953.

71 ČTK: Statement of US citizens Mr. and Mrs. Ward during a press conference in Prague.

72 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent Frank Bydlon, New York, 7 October 1953, p. 6.

73 *Ibid.*, p. 3; ČTK: Statement of US citizens Mr. and Mrs. Ward during a press conference in Prague.

Vienna: Under the Supervision of the CIC

Because of its territorial jurisdiction (only the territory of the United States) and the couple's staying abroad, the Federal Bureau of Investigation was forced to temporarily suspend Herbert Ward's file (granting it a so-called "closed" status in 1953). Documents of subsequent European activities of the Wards thus mostly come from diplomatic sources (US Embassies in Prague and Vienna), informants, intelligence services operating abroad (i.e. mainly the CIA and CIC[74]), or later interrogations conducted by the FBI (relatives, etc.) in the United States.

According to the above information, the Wards arrived to Vienna on 27 December 1952, and settled in a leased apartment situated in what was then the US sector of the city (Dornbacherstrasse 60). Herbert continued to study at the University of Vienna and together with his wife earned some extra income through the United States Information Service (USIS), a cultural branch of the United States Information Agency (USIA) subordinated to the US Department of State – he as a musician (e.g., in the American Cosmos theatre), she as a choreographer.[75]

The US Counterintelligence Corps was naturally interested mainly in the couple's political activities, which the agency asked about their friends and members of the Austrian Communist Party (*Kommunistische Partei Österreischs* – KPÖ), and also the Wards' landlady, Austrian Edith Riedl. She stated that the Wards started receiving communist friends (mainly Austrians) fairly regularly in the leased apartment soon after their arrival. She allegedly guessed the political orientation of the visitors from badges on their attire. She summoned courage to evict the Wards only when they had been two months behind with rent; she contacted the police who forced the Wards to move out in the summer of 1954.[76]

In Riedl's opinion, the Wards were not too well off financially, a fact confirmed to the CIC informant also by their friend, Austrian Communist Party member Eleonore Koebel. The (anonymized) informant attended several parties which were also attended by the Wards and KPÖ members (in addition to Koebel, the visitors also included

74 In declassified files of the FBI, these agencies are sometimes designated by a code (e.g. T-1, T-5), or referred to obliquely (e.g., "a government agency conducting security-type investigations with a foreign jurisdiction"), or their identification has been blackened. In some cases, it is therefore not quite clear whether the information in question was obtained by the CIC, or the CIA. The US Counterintelligence Corps (CIC) was interested in the Wards because of their friendship with personnel of the US Occupation Administration Radio Station in Austria and also because Herbert's sister Desmonde was a civilian employee of the US Army in Salzburg. Some stamps in the file indicate that certain reports/messages were also shared with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

75 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report by C. A. Moynihan, FBI, Salzburg, Austria, 20 October 1954, pp. 1–9; *NA*, f. 1261/0/11, Vol. 21, AU 29, Item 3 *per rollam*, Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia dated 2 November 1954, on item "Proposal to grant political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and to arrange a press conference with them."

76 *Ibid.*, Report of C. A. Moynihan, FBI, Salzburg, Austria, 20 October 1954, p. 4.

Erich and Sofie Dlabaja). According to the source, the Wards seemed to be (based on how they talked or joked) also members of the Communist Party and their son Larry a member of the communist-supported youth organization *Sturmvogel*.[77]

The informant met the Wards and Koebel even after the couple had been evicted (1 August 1954). The Wards were then living in unsatisfactory conditions, sharing an apartment with their acquaintances in the US sector. When the informant suggested the Wards could stay in his flat, Koebel answered that "the Party did not wish such close contact with Americans." When he objected that the Austrian Communist Party should have helped the Wards in their difficult situation, Koebel said that the party had been providing financial help to the couple and was trying to find a place for living for them. She added that the Wards were writing articles for the Communist Party daily *Volksstimme* and that they had also provided other important information to the party. Nevertheless, the family moved to the Nord Hotel in the Soviet sector in early August, and stayed there until October.[78]

The US Counterintelligence Corps was collecting additional information on the couple from their Vienna friends working for the Blue Danube Network (BDN), the radio station of the US occupation administration in Austria, or their fellow workers in the US Information Service (the well-known singer Olive Moorefield) as late as in the summer of 1954. However, most of them stated that they had discussed mainly music with the Wards and had not noticed any political activism on their part. The agency was also interested in Ward's sister Desmonde; not just because she was in contact with the Wards during their stay in Denmark and Austria, but also because she was a civilian employee at a US military base in Salzburg until autumn 1954.[79]

The FBI file and later statements of the Wards indicate that the family found itself bogged in financial problems in 1954. Herbert was fired from the US Information Service, allegedly because of his communist contacts,[80] and friends started avoiding them. When interrogated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1966, Herbert attributed the above to misinformation intentionally spread by an alleged CIA agent.[81] However, the lack of job opportunities was not a strong enough reason for the couple to return to the United States.[82]

Certain pressure from American authorities can be seen in their refusal to extend the validity of Herbert's passport, which he asked for one day before its expiry (13 July 1954). Vice Consul Jack Spinx denied his request, offering Ward two

77 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
78 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
79 *Ibid.*, pp. 4–7.
80 He was fired in November 1953 upon a recommendation of US Vice Consul Jack C. Spinx (see *Ibid.*, p. 3).
81 The person could be Leo Sendel, whose name Ward mentioned later in his statement for the Czech press (ČTK: Statement of US citizens Mr. and Mrs. Ward during a press conference in Prague).
82 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent John E. Kelly, New Haven, 6 July 1966, p. 3.

options – either documents permitting Ward to stay only in Vienna, or a passport to be used solely for the return to the United States. Ward initially agreed with the latter option, filled the appropriate repatriation documents, and also applied for an official repatriation loan of USD 750 to cover his costs. However, subsequent internal diplomatic communication indicates that the Wards no longer had valid passports after their move to the Soviet sector (Hotel Nord), and it was thus difficult to establish and maintain further communication with them.[83]

Vice Consul Spinx continued to communicate with Ward staying at Hotel Nord by phone. Early in September, he notified him of the endorsement of the loan, later (23 September) on a potential cancellation of it in the event Ward did decide to return to the United States soon. The last time Spinx communicated with Ward was in the morning of 18 October, but when asked about his final decision, Ward answered that he would stay in Vienna at least until next spring.[84] However, the US Embassy had had vague information from US intelligence services (its source was Eleonore Koebel) indicating that the Wards planned to ask for asylum in one of the people's democratic countries.[85]

We do not know all details of the Wards' negotiations concerning the asylum granting. According to their son Larry, the family no longer felt safe in Vienna and was under pressure of US intelligence services and US Embassy staff. However, the Wards also did not want to return to the United States, as they allegedly knew stories about people whose loyalty had been questioned after their return, or who had been downright persecuted. Helped by friends, the Wards made telephone calls to several Eastern embassies to ask for asylum, of which at least three (Hungarian, Czechoslovak, Soviet) granted their request. Following a "family council," they decided to accept the offer of the Czechoslovak Embassy, the main reason being that Herbert's mother came from Slovakia.[86]

During a later interview at the US Embassy in Prague (in 1960), Ward mentioned several reasons why he had asked for asylum in Czechoslovakia: (1) he had been dismissed from a theatrical performance in Vienna sponsored by the US Department of State; (2) the passports of his family had been confiscated in Vienna; (3) the US Embassy had been forcing him to return to the United States although he had no job or family environment there; (4) he had suffered violations of privacy, including

83 *Ibid.*, f. Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Box 995, Loc 250/61/11/2, 263.1122 Ward, Foreign Service Dispatch No. 297 from the US Embassy in Vienna to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 3 September 1954.

84 *Ibid.*, Foreign Service Dispatch No. 476 from the US Embassy in Vienna to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 18 October 1954.

85 *Ibid.*, Foreign Service Dispatch No. 410 from the US Embassy in Vienna to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 4 October 1954.

86 Minutes of the author's interview with Laurence Ward (born in 1949), which took place on 20 January 2014 (in personal archives of the author).

interrogation of his children; (5) media had spread information that he had been abducted to the Soviet sector in Vienna and that he had been involved in espionage.[87]

The last of the reasons listed above probably had a real base: in the afternoon of 18 October 1954, the whole Ward family checked out from Hotel Nord and left the place in cars with Soviet license plates.[88] According to son Larry, these were three ZIL limousines with Russian-speaking military crews who loaded all their belongings.[89] The "disappearance" of the family was widely medialized, in particular after Herbert's subsequent visit to the hotel two days later to pick up remaining toys and delivered mail.[90]

Asylum Negotiations

The events that followed are described in a preserved (but unfortunately incomplete) document from the archive of the Czech Ministry of Interior. Although the negotiations concerning asylum to be granted to the Ward family were assisted by the Czechoslovak Embassy in Vienna, the execution of related steps took place in cooperation between Czechoslovak and Soviet security elements.

The document mentions that the Wards had been living in "a conspirative apartment of Soviet comrades" from 18 October. The family stayed in this unspecified place in the Soviet sector until their departure for Czechoslovakia. The safe house was used to discuss matters related to the asylum granting and to prepare the scenario of a statement for the media, which was initially planned to be released in Vienna. A report by unidentified staffers of the Ministry of Interior states: "Before we departed, the Wards had been in touch with a Soviet official who discussed asylum in Czechoslovakia with them in general terms and had them write some reports, e.g., on activities of the CIC in Vienna, civil rights in the United States, US imperialist policy, women's issue in the United States, etc. Most of the reports were written by Jacqueline Ward."[91]

In the safe house, the Wards were waiting for the arrival of Jacqueline's father Nicholas Rippen Abberly, for whom they also planned to ask for political asylum. For this reason, they sent him money to buy a ticket for the boat trip to Europe,

87 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Report of Special Agent John E. Kelly, New Haven, 9 November 1966, p. 23.

88 *Ibid.*, f. Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Box 995, Loc 250/61/11/2, 263.1122 Ward, Foreign Service Dispatch No. 496 from the US Embassy in Vienna to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 22 October 1954.

89 Minutes of the author's interview with Laurence Ward, which took place on 20 January 2014 (in personal archives of the author).

90 BDN: American, Dropped Out of Sight in Vienna, Seen Driving Soviet Car. In: *Embassy Daily Bulletin*, Vienna (22 October 1954), p. 4.

91 *SSA*, f. A2/1, IN 737, CB 38, Report on the negotiation concerning the granting of political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and on preparations of a press conference with them, p. 4.

and when news about their "disappearance" had been published in the newspapers, they also sent him a message that they were still in Vienna. Soviet comrades, whom the document does not identify in detail, initially strove for Vienna as the venue of the press conference to clearly point at the methods employed by the CIC office in Vienna to compromise and abduct people and to bring confusion among Americans in Vienna, as the statement could never be claimed forced.[92]

While waiting for Abberly's arrival, there were several meetings between the Wards and Czechoslovak negotiators (probably Ministry of Interior staffers) and their Soviet colleagues. The agenda included, *inter alia,* the organization and content of the press statement of the couple. The document seems to indicate that the Czechoslovaks did not want the Wards to proclaim themselves Communist Party members, although the latter might have wished to do so; an example of the above is provided by brief minutes of the meeting which took place on 18 October: "Jacquelina [*sic*] Ward stated that they did not want to silently sneak out of Austria after the arrival of her father; they would like to make use of the occasion to clearly declare, as communists, why they asked for political asylum in Czechoslovakia. We accepted her statement and told her that we would think it over, but that they should not pose as communists, but rather as American artists who were involved only in their work, but simply could not live under the present US regime."[93] Judging from the final form of the statement (which does not contain a single word about the political orientation of the couple), it seems that the presentation of "ordinary American citizens" was more valuable for the Czechoslovak regime.

In the meantime, preparations for the asylum granting were going on in Prague. The proposal was submitted by Minister of Interior Rudolf Barák to the Secretariat of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on 2 November 1954; because of the urgency of the matter, the Communist Politburo discussed it as early as on the following day. Its decision was positive, and it tasked Minister of Culture Václav Kopecký and Minister of Interior Rudolf Barák to organize, in coordination with the Czechoslovak Press Agency, the press conference (its date was initially 5 November, but it took place on 9 November).[94]

The Wards pressed for Abberly's arrival who, however, did not let them know about himself (according to a later interrogation, he came to Vienna from Antwerp by train on 10 November, by which time the couple had already been in Prague).[95] Czechoslovak negotiators did not think it was likely that the Americans would let Abberly leave for Europe, which was one of the reasons why it was decided to hold

92 *Ibid.*

93 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

94 *NA*, f. 1261/0/11, Vol. 21, AU 29, Item 3 *per rollam*, Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia dated 2 November 1954, on item "Proposal to grant political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and to arrange a press conference with them."

95 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Department of State: Office of Security, Report of Special Agent Frank G. Terry, Dallas, 14 October 1960, p. 2.

the press conference in Prague rather than in Vienna. "However, the idea [of having the conference in Vienna – author's note] was abandoned on 26 October 1954, after a meeting of Soviet comrades, as it could produce a politically very tense atmosphere, perhaps also in connection with other simultaneous actions."[96]

Other circumstances of the Wards' departure from Vienna are not known (the relevant document of the Ministry of Interior stored in the Security Services Archive is not complete). According to their son, the Soviets escorted the family to the airport (probably the Voeslau Airfield, where the Soviets had an air base until 1955); after a while, the Wards boarded the aeroplane heading for Prague and landed there, probably on 7 November 1954.[97] They were temporarily accommodated in Hotel Gráf, where they were for several months until they got a regular place to live.[98]

The Press Conference in Prague

It is likely that not all functionaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia agreed with the medialization of the asylum for the Wards, although they probably did not have any objections against its granting. Anna Baramová, head of the International Department of the Central Committee, was asked for an opinion. Her handwritten note on the asylum granting proposal says: "Ward is of Slovak descent, which is why there is only one solution – to grant him asylum. Holding a press conference could have adverse repercussions in Austria. I recommend to deal with the matter without any publicity."[99] The recommendation, however, was not heeded; on the contrary, the matter was properly exploited for propaganda purposes.

News about the arrival of the Wards to Prague received extraordinary publicity. A half-hour recording of the press conference was aired by Czechoslovak Radio, parts of its filmed footage were included in the Czechoslovak Film Weekly, the statement of

96 *SSA*, f. A2/1, IN 737, CB 38, Report on the negotiation concerning the granting of political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and on preparations of a press conference with them, p. 1.

97 Minutes of the author's interview with Laurence Ward, which took place on 20 January 2014 (in personal archives of the author); *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Memorandum of FBI Special Agent in Charge of FBI's Regional Office in Washington for FBI Director, Washington, D.C., 21 December 1965, p. 1; An article in the *New York Times*, which refers to unspecified intelligence sources, states that the Wards flew from Voeslau to Warsaw, but this would not have made much sense, judging from other available documents (Special to the New York Times: US Family is Traced. In: *New York Times* (27 October 1954), p. 11).

98 See DORŮŽKA, Lubomír: *Panoráma paměti* [Panorama of memory]. Praha, Torst 1997, p. 302; ŠKVORECKÝ, J.: Red Music, p. 59.

99 *NA*, f. 1261/0/11, Vol. 21, AU 29, Item 3 *per rollam*, Resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia dated 2 November 1954, on item "Proposal to grant political asylum to Mr. and Mrs. Ward and to arrange a press conference with them."

the Wards was published in all major Czechoslovak dailies on 10 November 1954,[100] and many dailies abroad using information provided by the US press agency Associated Press.

Details about the preparations of the statement are unknown, but we know that an outline of its contents and structure was produced as early as during the negotiations in Vienna. The press conference was held on 9 November 1954 in the building of the Czechoslovak Press Agency (ČTK) in Prague, and it was attended by several dozen journalists – film footage shows that Ward was reading a written statement which was also handed out to all participants.[101] Although the journalists could ask questions at the end of the press conference, there was no room for deviations in Czech dailies, all of which published the statement in a completely identical wording (as a Czechoslovak Press Agency newspiece, including answers to questions of the journalists).

The Wards presented themselves as artists, and "good and fair Americans" at the conference; not a single word was spoken about their political activities. They stated the main reason for their persecution was their participation in the World Festival of Youth and Students in East Berlin in 1951, by which they allegedly committed a "serious offence." They described the harassment of the FBI and other US authorities, which they had allegedly experienced in Denmark and Austria. And they went on to generalize that a similar system of intimidation was "now the main feature of social life in America." Herbert Ward stated: "I did not want to and could not have anything in common with a society which does not hesitate to tread on the US Constitution or the Bill of Rights, spends US taxpayers' money to fund its orgies, and specializes in threatening peace using any fraudulent and unlawful means available. I have therefore refused any contact with these people. I wanted to live as an honest musician and not to be dragged into the quagmire of espionage."[102]

The children of the two asylum seekers, sons Norman and Laurence, had a significant role in the statement. It was their protection against the ignoble American culture and indoctrination, which the Wards used to justify their act. "We want to educate [them] in the spirit of true progressive American traditions, in the spirit of true freedom and genuine American democracy which no longer exists in the United States. We want to save them from the rottenness of the profiteering culture, from the system of mind control that would have turned [them] into puppets, into unthinking policemen to be used against peace-loving countries."[103]

Many commentators subsequently emphasized the aspect of progressive education in Czechoslovakia: "What a sad picture: if an American wants to educate his children in the spirit of progressive American traditions – he must immigrate to

100 Probably in *Rudé právo*, *Svobodné slovo*, *Práce*, *Obrana lidu*, *Zemědělské noviny*, *Lidová demokracie*, *Mladá fronta*.

101 *Czechoslovak Film Weekly*, No. 47 (1954), Press conference with the Ward family.

102 ČTK: Statement of US citizens Mr. and Mrs. Ward during a press conference in Prague.

103 *Ibid.*

Czechoslovakia!"[104] It was particularly Jacqueline Ward who stressed many other pitfalls of children's education in the statement, including censorship of textbooks, decadent culture (comics, movies), dangers lurking in parks, etc.

Perhaps out of deference to the Wards' professions, the journalists greatly emphasized the decline of American culture and its consequences, in particular the unavailability of higher-level culture to broader audiences, low standard of living, and persistent discrimination of black musicians, in their questions: "When Mr. Ward was on tour with a mixed band, its black members often had to look for a different hotel. As to the employment of Negroes, they are the first to be fired when there is unemployment threat, and the last to be taken back to work. Most blacks have to live in special quarters."[105] The aspect of racial segregation was also accentuated in a reference to the persecution of the American left-wing singer and activist Paul Robeson.

The statement for the Czechoslovak Press Agency emphasized cultural advancement of Czechoslovakia as opposed to the situation in the United States, and declared it was one of the reasons why the Wards had sought asylum in the country. Herbert was allegedly excited by the performance of Czechoslovak artists at the World Festival of Youth and Students in Berlin: "They told him about the cultural life in Czechoslovakia. He therefore believed that Czechoslovakia would be a good place to live, not just because of job opportunities, but also because they could learn from their colleagues and also develop artistically, which would not have been possible if they had stayed in Austria or the United States."[106]

Subsequent newspaper comments stressed mainly the typical character of the life story of the Ward family. They compared practices of US authorities and the FBI to Fascism and the Gestapo. "Fear tails an ordinary American like a persistent and importunate shadow wherever he goes. Fear of what the FBI has on him in its files, fear of the moment it may accuse him of un-American activities," read an article published in the leading Czechoslovak Communist Party daily *Rudé právo*.[107]

Prague Blues

Some letters, which the couple sent to their friends (through intermediaries) and which are included in their FBI file, provide an insight into early months of the Wards' life in Prague. In an early one (from December 1954), Herbert was reflecting (still somewhat expressively) the events in Vienna, complaining that the US Department of State had dragged him into its spying games. He adds that many Western articles

104 ŠUBRT, L.: Vláda strachu vyhání Američany z domovů [The rule of fear drives Americans from their homes]. In: *Práce* (11 November 1954), p. 4; compare also KÁBRT, Jaromír: Cesta manželů Wardových za demokracií [The Ward family road to democracy]. In: *Obrana lidu* (11 November 1954), p. 4.

105 ČTK: Statement of US citizens Mr. and Mrs. Ward during a press conference in Prague.

106 *Ibid.*

107 SUCHÝ, Čestmír: "Svoboda" po americku ["Freedom," American style]. In: *Rudé právo* (11 November 1954), p. 2.

on them were lies, that the Czechs had received them obligingly, and that he and his wife would be able to work in their professions.[108]

A year after their arrival, Jacqueline also wrote a letter to her acquaintance (singer Olive Moorefield living in Vienna):

"We recovered quickly from the nerve-wracking, fearful state we were in, on leaving Vienna after all the 'hue and cry' about the 'sinister Russian spies.' We're very glad indeed that we decided to come here instead of proclaiming our innocence to the CIC there. Those jerks are so 'spy-happy' that we wouldn't have stood a chance."[109] At that time, the Wards had already been living in an allotted flat in an apartment block, which Jacqueline relished: "We have a brand new apt., complete with central heating, hot water, bathroom, etc. – new furniture, washing machine, refrigerator, new radio, vacuum cleaner, new clothes, in short, we're living like human beings again. And we earned the money to pay for it all by doing the work we're trained for – that's the best part of all."[110]

Although the Wards were not among important "cadres" of the Communist Party of the United States, they did have some advantages as US asylees. For example, their son Larry recalls that the family did not have to pay rent for the apartment, which meant substantial saving for them.[111] At first, their possibilities to travel abroad were probably limited (they reached Czechoslovakia without valid US documents and obtained valid Czechoslovak identity cards only in April 1955); however, the situation improved in the early 1960s, when they received unrestricted US passports.[112]

The Wards undoubtedly appreciated security which Prague offered to them (unlike Vienna, where their financial situation was a long way from good). In June 1955, Herbert got a residency with the prestigious FOK Symphonic Orchestra, where he joined the double bass section. Although some of his contemporaries had a tendency to question his abilities in the field of classical music,[113] he remained there until his

108 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Foreign Service Dispatch No. 800 from the US Embassy in Vienna to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 17 January 1955.

109 *Ibid.*, f. Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Box 995, Loc 250/61/11/2, 263.1122 Ward, Foreign Service Dispatch No. 602 from the US Embassy in Vienna to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 10 January 1956.

110 *Ibid.*

111 Minutes of the author's interview with Laurence Ward, which took place on 20 January 2014 (in personal archives of the author).

112 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Memorandum of FBI Special Agent in Charge in New York for FBI Director, Washington, D.C., 21 September 1961, p. 4. However, the Wards did not have problems with trips to socialist countries even in the early stage. In the summer of 1957, Herbert performed at the well-known jazz festival in Sopoty, Poland. (See DRAPIŃSKI, Lech: Przed Festiwalem Jazzowym: Ambicje, szmira i dolary. In: *Dziennik Bałtycki* (14–15 July 1957), p. 5.)

113 HAVLÍK, Ferdinand: *Můj život s klarinetem: Vzpomínky legendárního kapelníka divadla Semafor* [My life with the clarinet: Memories of the legendary band leader of Semafor theatre]. Praha, Maxdorf 2011, p. 207. However, this information was denied by violoncellist

departure from Czechoslovakia in 1964. However, it is likely that he did not undergo a standard audition process. His personal file from the time he played with the FOK Orchestra contains the following note: "Member of the FOK from 1 June 1955. Assigned by the Ministry of Education, Musical Department. No application."[114] Available documents show that his salary was comparable to those of other players falling into the same category.[115]

The Wards were provided with some security of their existence, especially at the beginning of their stay in Czechoslovakia by the musical and dancing series titled *Really the Blues*, for which they were engaged by its authors, Lubomír Dorůžka, Josef Škvorecký, and Ludvík Šváb. The programme was shown for the first time on 18 May 1955 in the Slavonic House in Prague, and depicted the early history of jazz using a combination of spoken lectures and musical and dancing numbers. Herbert was the accentuated star of the programme (bass, singer, tuba), while Jacqueline was responsible for the choreography of four dancers from the National Theatre ensemble.

Although the name of the programme refers to the well-known book by Mezz Mezzrow,[116] there is no material or other connection. Jazz performances were at that time still regarded as something suspicious in Czechoslovakia, which is why the programme's authors stressed their inspiration by the work of "progressive" American publicists, in particular Sidney Finkelstein.[117]

A significant socio-critical aspect was clearly visible not only in the interpretation of each phase of the evolution of jazz (slavery-related past, commercial abuse of the style's authenticity, racial segregation, unemployment), but also in the anti-American impression that the programme, especially its final part, made. It contained, for example, the American trade union song "Banks of Marble."[118] The impression did not go unnoticed by US *chargé d'affaires* Albert W. Sherer, who sent a relatively extensive report describing the programme to Washington. He wrote the following

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Zdeněk Koníček (born 1918), Ward's colleague in the FOK Orchestra, and clarinetist Pavel Smetáček (born in 1940), son of the FOK Orchestra's conductor Václav Smetáček (see minutes of the author's interviews with Zdeněk Koníček and Pavel Smetáček, which took place on 14 March 2014, and 24 February 2014, in the author's personal archive).

114 *Archive of the FOK Orchestra*, Praha (hereinafter *AFOK*), f. Personal files, Herbert Ward – personal file.

115 *Archive of the Capital City of Prague* (hereinafter *ACCP*), f. Department of Culture of the National Committee of the Capital City of Prague, CB 270, Inv. No. 2766, Personal matters – FOK Symphonic Orchestra 1952–1976, Calculation of the average salary of orchestra members, 14 January 1957.

116 MEZZROW, Mezz – WOLFE, Bernard: *Really the Blues*. New York, DELL 1946.

117 Sidney W. Finkelstein (1909–1974) was an American left-wing musical and literary critic; he published his works in, for example, the New Masses magazine. He was the leading musical theoretician of the Communist Party of the USA and also the author of the book *Jazz: A People's Music* (1948), which the authors of the *Really the Blues* programme were also drawing from.

118 *Really the Blues* (script by Lubomír Dorůžka, Josef Škvorecký, Ludvík Šváb, directed by Tadeáš Šeřínský), printed programme leaflet (in the personal archive of trombonist František Kunc).

about the song "Went to Atlanta": "The last was sung by Ward himself, who instead of singing the original words, rendered a parody in which he stated that he had been driven from his home, had been hounded by the 'secret service' who had opened his mail and spied on him, and that he had finally found refuge in a free country. No translation or indication of what he was singing about was given to the audience, since the latter would have found too close a parallel between Ward's experiences as he related them, and their own."[119]

As mentioned by the authors of the *Really the Blues* programme in their later recollections, the anti-American tone of the programme and the participation of the Wards (political asylees) were welcomed arguments in the permission-seeking administrative process at the time which was still not too much in favour of jazz. The programme was very successful at the time (it had dozens of reprises in Prague and elsewhere), and was also televised. The Wards, however, later withdrew from it, allegedly because of financial demands.[120]

At the time, they were working on the *Really the Blues* programme, another event occurred which the Wards could not have had a clue about: in May 1955, a US attorney wrote to the Federal Bureau of Investigation a letter notifying the agency that the existing evidence concerning the Wards' membership in the Communist Party and their participation in the World Festival of Youth and Students in East Berlin was not sufficient for criminal prosecution. More specifically, the Wards were facing charges under Section 1001 of Title 18 and Section 1203 of Title 22 of the United States Code; in the former case for making false statements to federal authorities, in the latter case for lack of or inadequate integrity and independence required of a federal employee.[121] No detailed explanation is given, but other documents in the file indicate that both potential charges might have been related to the Wards' membership in the Communist Party. They denied their membership in affidavits made at the US Embassy in Vienna, whereby they might have perpetrated the first of the criminal acts mentioned above. In addition, Herbert Ward was employed as a musician by the US Information Service, basically a government organization, and his membership in the Communist Party could have made his integrity questionable. Because of the attorney's refusal to prosecute, the FBI suspended the investigation for a few years (although they did file the occasional report from the US Embassy in Prague, etc.), and resumed it later, especially after Nicholas Abberly and the Ward family had returned to the United States.

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119 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Foreign Service Dispatch No. 456 from the US Embassy in Prague to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 27 May 1955, p. 2.

120 DORŮŽKA, L.: *Panoráma paměti*, p. 302; ŠKVORECKÝ, J.: Red Music, p. 59.

121 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Official memorandum of William F. Tompkins, Assistant Attorney General, Internal Security Division, for FBI Director, 9 May 1955.

Nevertheless, the Wards had at least some fragmentary information about interrogations of their relatives and friends, which had been taking place until then. In her letter already quoted above, Jacqueline writes about problems that Herbert's sister Desmonde struggled with: "After all the newspapers branded us as dangerous spies, she began to have trouble, too. The FBI visited her mother-in-law, and that good dame had hysterics and frantically recalled her son to her motherly bosom. So Desy is now without a husband. She says most of her friends left her, too, and she really had tough going. Herb's stepfather was fired from his army post after 15 years devoted service, as a security risk. So, a lot of other people have had it in the neck, too. When will it all stop?" [122]

As soon as Herbert had finished his stint with the *Really the Blues* programme (where he played in the Prague Dixieland Band), he established his own band, Herbert Ward's Dixieland, which many future celebrities of Czech jazz and pop music passed through (including, for example, Karel Růžička, František Ringo Čech, Ivan Mládek, Ferdinand Havlík). The band was performing at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, appearing at concerts and in particular at balls or variety shows both in Prague and during tours to various regions of the country. Ward's fellow players recall that performing with him was an initiation of sorts for them – while he regarded them as equal partners, he was a mentor and an example for many of them. With his many years of performing on New York's jazz stage, he shared his experience "on the fly" with Czech musicians who were relatively isolated at that time (lack of recordings, tutorial materials, etc.).[123]

In addition to schooling his fellow musicians, Ward was providing yet another benefit for them – his goodwill. At that time, there were not too many American musicians touring Czechoslovakia, and his name in the programme attracted attention, particularly of younger people in the audience. Ward was allegedly able to make skillful use of this fact when negotiating with promoters and arranging gigs. Herbert was making more money than his fellow players (according to František Ringo Čech, twice the amount earned by his band's musicians, i.e. the bandleader's bonus), but the latter were apparently aware that he was an asset which other bands did not have. The situation sometimes produced envy of other similar ensembles.[124]

Ward's band appeared in a then favoured format of musical series which interpreted the history of jazz from various angles (for example, *My Bread Was Full of Blues*, *Music of New Orleans*, *Cross the River*, *Jazz Images*). Not everyone was probably enthusiastic about Ward's demands. For example, jazz critic Emanuel Uggé warned his friend and

122 *Ibid.*, f. Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Box 995, Loc 250/61/11/2, 263.1122 Ward, Foreign Service Dispatch No. 602 from the US Embassy in Vienna to the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 10 January 1956.

123 See minutes of interviews of the author with trombonist František Kunc (born in 1935) on 28 April 2014, trumpeter Josef Krajník (born in 1939) on 10 October 2014, drummer and singer František Ringo Čech (born in 1943) on 5 February 2014, and trombonist Václav Fiala (born in 1930) on 27 January 2014 (in the author's personal archive)

124 Minutes of interviews of the author with František Ringo Čech and Václav Fiala, which took place on 10 October 2014, and 27 January 2014 (in the author's personal archive).

musical enthusiast Ladislav Pospíšil in a letter against inviting Herbert to perform in Olomouc. "His approach is very slapdash. He is as pompous as a maharajah from Borneo […] Ward has now clearly shown that he is a freeloader of a mediocre talent, or – to put it more accurately – an artist who is not respectable enough. If Ward is – given the present situation – available at all, he will demand at least CZK 400 for five blues songs. That is very expensive."[125]

In addition to performing, Herbert was occasionally composing pop songs for other bands (such as "Two Sombreros," "They Say 'What to do with the Young,'" "Maybe") or for films (e.g. *The Breakup*). According to one of Jacqueline's letters, he was composing at the time when the FOK Orchestra, of which he was an employee, was touring abroad, while he – perhaps because of passport problems – had to stay in Prague. It was a welcome contribution to the family budget.[126]

Jacqueline, too, was trying to establish herself in the cultural sphere. Between 1955 and 1960, she was mostly employed as a contract worker by various promoters (Musical and Circus Performers' Centre, Prague Variety Shows, Community Education Association, etc.) as a dancer and choreographer. Also interesting is her stint with the Artistic Ensemble of the Ministry of Interior.[127] There she did not perform on stage; she only led courses of modern jazz dance. According to her colleague Jana Hošková, she was a very versatile dancer, in command of multiple modern dancing techniques (Matt Matox, Marta Graham, or José Limón), which she had learnt back in New York, but which found their place in Czechoslovakia much later. She was thus ahead of the local modern dancing practice in many respects and her talent was not made full use of (for example, she was not coopted to the staff of the Conservatory of Dance of the Capital City of Prague). Hošková recalls that Jacqueline's engagement in the Artistic Ensemble of the Ministry of Interior had to be explained to the authorities by a proposition that jazz (and thereby also *jazz dance*) was an expression of resistance of oppressed American Negroes (i.e. very much in the same way as Herbert's concert performances).[128]

125 A letter of Emanuel Uggé (Prague) to Ladislav Pospíšil (Olomouc) dated 22 September 1955, p. 1 (in the personal archive of Ladislav Pospíšil).

126 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Department of State: Office of Security, Report of Special Agent Frank G. Terry, Dallas, 14 October 1960, p. 6 (copy of Jacqueline's letter addressed to her father and dated 3 October 1960).

127 As to the ensemble, see ŠMIDRKAL, Václav: "Fízlrevue": Jak hrál, tančil a zpíval Umělecký soubor ministerstva vnitra ["Cop revue": How the artistic ensemble of the Ministry of Interior used to play, dance, and sing]. In: *Paměť a dějiny*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2010), pp. 44–58.

128 Minutes of the author's interview with dancer and publicist Jana Hošková (born in 1929), which took place on 10 March 2014 (in the author's personal archive); HOŠKOVÁ, Jana: Průkopníci jazzového tance [Pioneers of jazz dance]. In: HOŠKOVÁ, Jana – SKÁLA, Gustav – GENZEROVÁ, Gabriela – SLAVICKÝ, Jaroslav (ed.): *Cesty k tanečnímu a baletnímu mistrovství: Taneční konzervatoř hlavního města Prahy 1945–2005* [Roads to dance and ballet mastery: The Conservatory of Dance of the Capital City of Prague 1945–2005]. Liberec, Knihy 555, 2005, p. 24.

For a short time, Jacqueline was also leading pantomimic performances in the "Máj" theatre (the *Fanfares of Silence* production in May 1959), in which, for example, Jaroslav Šerých, later to become a renowned graphic artist, was taking part during his studies.[129] However, by 1960, the pantomimic ensemble was disbanded. According to Jacqueline's letter to her father, the family's financial situation was not too good at that time, and Jacqueline was therefore trying to find a new job (she, for example, tried to write an illustrated book for children).[130] She got a more permanent job in the English Section of the Czechoslovak Radio (broadcasting to listeners abroad, i.e. Radio Prague), a safe haven for many English-speaking asylees living in Prague, in December 1961. According to her son Larry, she was producing news reports on various spheres of life and culture in Czechoslovakia and promoting socialist rule abroad (in this case allegedly in broadcasts addressing East African nations and countries). Just like other employees of the media, she was struggling with censorship restrictions. She continued to work for the Czechoslovak Radio until her departure from Czechoslovakia in July 1964.[131]

Growing Disillusionment

According to documents in the FBI file, the dissatisfaction of the Ward family, and particularly Jacqueline's, was gradually building up. In late 1959, she phoned the US Embassy in Prague to announce her intention to divorce her husband and return to the United States, namely to Herbert's sister who was living in New Mexico at the time. The nature of the Wards' disputes is not quite clear, but the author of the report nevertheless concluded that Jacqueline's primary motive was her longing for home and dissatisfaction with the life in Czechoslovakia. Herbert, however, did not want to come back – both because of worries of potential sanctions in the United States and because it was uncertain that he would get a job there.[132] Upon her request, Jacqueline Ward was issued a temporary passport which she, however, could use only to return to the United States.

The divorce ultimately did not happen, but Jacqueline did not stop thinking about the return. In her already cited letter to her father from October 1960, she mentioned

129 See PROCHÁZKOVÁ, Květa: Jaroslav Šerých: Co nemá řemeslný základ, neobstojí [Things without a craftsmanship base do not stand the test]. In: *Týdeník Rozhlas*, Vol. 19, No. 6 (2009), p. 12.

130 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Department of State: Office of Security, Report of Special Agent Frank G. Terry, Dallas, 14 October 1960, p. 6 (copy of Jacqueline's letter addressed to her father and dated 3 October 1960).

131 *APF CR*, f. Personal files of employees, CB 455, Jacqueline Ward – personal file; Minutes of the author's interview with Laurence Ward (born in 1949), which took place on 20 January 2014 (in personal archives of the author).

132 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Operations Memorandum of the US Embassy in Prague for the Department of State in Washington, D.C., 20 November 1959.

difficulties with obtaining the (territorially unrestricted) passport, but she also admits mixed feelings when thinking about the return to the United States. She was mainly worried about employment uncertainty and the environment unsuitable for educating her children:

"We've heard so much about demoralization crime, delinquency in schools, street gangs – degenerate television programs (everybody has sets, I believe) sexy movies, magazines, etc. that it frightens us. One can't isolate kids either. They have to run with the pack, and the nature of the pack seems to be low [...]. We could hold out here a while longer, time for the kids to form a better protection against the sort of thing they'd be up against when we return."[133]

It seems that Jacqueline was longing for home somewhat more than her husband, and she also communicated more frequently with the US Embassy in Prague. The file thus contains a report on an interview an embassy staffer had with her in connection with her passport prolongation application in January 1963. During the interview, Jacqueline expressed considerable disappointment with the stay in Czechoslovakia, and particularly with their situation. She was troubled by the fact that she had been unable to make a significant breakthrough as a dancer, getting only occasional stints in small clubs, "between the dog act and the juggler." She believed her attempts to establish her own dancing troupe had failed because of the Wards' political message being too weak to satisfy local functionaries.[134]

We do not have any statement by Herbert; nevertheless, Jacqueline said that although he was employed by the FOK Symphonic Orchestra, he had not yet succeeded in asserting himself in jazz, the area he was most interested in. According to the interviewing embassy official, "she stated that both she and her husband have lost respect in the CSSR because the serious musicians believe their residence here to be because of failure in their own country, while the less serious musicians do not trust them and are afraid of the competition."[135]

In the minutes of the interview, the embassy official also noted that the Wards were treated much in the same way as other defectors to the Soviet Union or other Eastern Bloc countries:

"They arrived as honor guests, were given every opportunity to carry on their work, were used for propaganda purposes, and when they appeared to settle in and attempt to carry on a normal existence, were of no more use or consequence to the Czech officials. Mrs. Ward stated exactly this in the interview which indicates clearly her disillusionment with life in the CSSR."[136]

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133 *Ibid.*, Department of State: Office of Security, Report of Special Agent Frank G. Terry, Dallas, 14 October 1960, p. 6 (a copy of Jacqueline's letter addressed to her father and dated 3 October 1960).

134 *Ibid.,* Memorandum of FBI Special Agent in Charge of FBI's Regional Office in Washington for FBI Director, 29 December 1965, p. 4 (an excerpt from a memorandum of the US Embassy in Prague dated 1 February 1963).

135 *Ibid.*

136 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Available documents and interviews show that the Wards were aware of discrepancies between official propaganda and everyday stereotypes or realistic career opportunities. Nevertheless, Larry, the elder son, claims that they wanted to give their children the broadest possible education and career opportunities, a motive which became particularly urgent around 1964, when Larry was finishing the ninth (and last) year of elementary school in Prague. The loosened political atmosphere in the United States (which the Wards were aware of) and the acquisition of unrestricted American passports (which the family did not have until 1961 or so) also played a role.[137]

The FBI file indicates that the family did not want and could not return to the United States directly, as they did not have any employment background there and did not possess enough money in Western currencies. They intended to earn the money first in Western Europe. Contacts which Herbert established with German guest musicians occasionally playing in Prague also contributed to the decision to move to Munich.

Herbert's employer (FOK) and Herbert thus first agreed on a two-month unpaid leave (from 19 March 1964); on his request, he stated that he wanted to earn enough money to be able to return to the United States in the Federal Republic of Germany (he never returned to play with the orchestra again).[138] His arrival to Munich was noticed by the Associated Press agency which stated that Ward had arrived early in April 1964, with a standard US passport, and was looking for a musical job.[139]

Return to the United States

The Ward family stayed in Munich for the next six months (from July 1964 at the latest) during which both sons attended school (and struggled with German, but paradoxically also with written English, which they had not learnt in Prague), while Herbert with his new trio was fairly intensively performing all over Germany. It was the separation and unfamiliar environment which finally made Jacqueline leave the Federal Republic of Germany earlier than Herbert; following an agreement, she settled, sometime in January or February 1965, with Herbert's sister Desmonde in North Windham, Connecticut.[140] Herbert was tied in Germany, having to finish the remaining month of his contract, and therefore arrived to the United States later (namely to New York on 6 March 1965).[141] Shortly after Herbert's arrival, the reunited family moved from Desmonde to the nearby municipality of Willimantic.

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137 Minutes of the author's interview with Laurence Ward, which took place on 20 January 2014 (in personal archives of the author).

138 *AFOK*, f. Personal files, Herbert Ward – personal file.

139 AP: U.S. Violinist Back in West; Defected to Prague in 1954. In: *New York Times* (1 May 1964), p. 5.

140 Minutes of the author's interview with Laurence Ward, which took place on 20 January 2014 (in personal archives of the author).

141 *NARA*, f. Record Group 65, General Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI Headquarters Case Files, File 100-HQ-370406 (Herbert Field Ward), Memorandum of FBI

The Federal Bureau of Investigation renewed its interest in the Ward family practically from the moment they arrived to the United States – their stay in Czechoslovakia and alleged membership in the Communist Party were a strong enough reason for the agency to keep an eye on their activities. As they were moving house quite often between 1965 and 1966 (North Windham; Willimantic; Hartford, Connecticut, Honolulu, Hawaii, from September 1966), the FBI needed quite a lot of time to localize them and to collect information from their acquaintances, neighbours, or fellow workers. Local FBI offices thus questioned, for example, staff members of the school where Herbert's sister Desmonde was employed (in North Windham), officials of the American Federation of Musicians where Herbert had re-registered, next door neighbours, or postmen (about letters and parcels delivered to the Ward family).

At that time, the Federal Bureau of Investigation did not collect much new information; according to various testimonies, the Wards were maintaining a low profile and did not discuss politics or their stay in Europe very much. Jacqueline was a housewife, although she wrote a contribution to newspapers every now and then, and she also started devoting her time to choreography again. Herbert accepted a part-time job with the Hartford Philharmonic Orchestra and made some extra money as an insurance agent of Aetna Life Insurance. Their financial situation probably was not too good (according to one of their neighbours, their car was 10 years old), but they were satisfied with their new home. According to one of the testimonies, Jacqueline, however, was missing the high level of European culture in the United States.[142]

All the preparations listed above were aimed toward the first interrogation of the Wards after their return, which occurred relatively late, on 23 June 1966, in Hartford. However, even the documents prepared to support the questioning state it was unlikely that the couple had been informants of Eastern intelligence services and that they probably had not participated in any communist activities after their return.[143] The interrogation was supposed to establish the current attitude of the Wards to the United States, and its outcome was also to be used as the basis of the decision whether their names would be entered into the Security Index, i.e. a list of people considered a threat to US national interests.

When questioned, Herbert stated that, looking back, he regretted his decision to seek asylum in Czechoslovakia; nevertheless, he explained it by circumstances, namely false information about them spread by an alleged CIA agent in Vienna. As a result, he had lost his job and his passport, and his friends had been turning away from him. Under the circumstances, he had seen emigration as the only and inevitable option. According to his words, he had realized that they were being used in anti-American propaganda soon after their arrival to Prague, and he also admitted that their statements had contributed to it, as the memory of the events in Vienna was still rankling. They had initially lived well in Prague, but as soon as their usefulness

Special Agent in Charge in New York for FBI Director, 11 March 1965, p. 3.

142 *Ibid.*, Memorandum of FBI Special Agent in Charge in New Haven for FBI Director, 13 April 1966, pp. 1–10.

143 *Ibid.,* p. 10.

for propaganda purposes was over, it had been increasingly difficult for them to find adequate jobs in their fields of expertise. They claimed they had not been interested in politics. Jacqueline added that they had not had any problems with leaving Prague, but they had been postponing the departure, as they had not had any perspective of existence in the United States.[144] Based on the outcome of the interview, Agent John E. Kelly concluded that the Wards did not have to be entered into the Security Index, as they had been cooperative during the interview and most probably had not participated in any subversive activities after their return. He also added they were no longer usable as intelligence sources.[145]

The FBI Headquarters in Washington, D.C., was not fully satisfied with the above conclusion, and ordered the New Haven Office to conduct a supplementary interrogation focused on political activities of the Ward family in the past in greater detail. In the meantime, Herbert's statement about the intentionally distributed false information was to be checked at the CIA (however, the outcome is either missing or blackened in the file).[146] Due to circumstances (the Wards moved to Hawaii in September 1966, when Herbert got a new job with the local philharmonic orchestra there), the investigation was assigned to the FBI office in Honolulu.

During a subsequent interview (26 January 1967), Herbert denied that he had ever been a member of the Communist Party of the United States or any other party; he only admitted that he had once signed a petition in support of the American Labor Party in New York. He stated he had also received the Communist Party *Daily Worker* newspaper for about three months in his mailbox, but he claimed he had not subscribed it. He had never taken a stand against the capitalist system, although he had criticized the discrimination of black musicians when in New York. He added that he believed that some of the problems with the FBI had been caused by their relative Albert Rippenbein (Jacqueline's uncle), who had allegedly denounced them as communists because of family disputes.[147]

The whole case of the Ward family, spanning for 17 years, ended three months later. The FBI Office in Hawaii concluded that there was no additional security-related information on them and that the Wards probably were no longer politically active. For this reason, Agent John E. Kelly proposed to close the case, stating that, in his opinion, the Wards did not meet the criteria justifying their inclusion in the Security Index; nevertheless, due to their past contacts and long-term stay in Czechoslovakia,

144 *Ibid.*, Report of FBI Special Agents FBI John E. Kelly and Jack U. Richardson, Hartford, Connecticut, 23 June 1966, pp. 2–5.

145 *Ibid.*, Report of FBI Special Agent FBI John E. Kelly, New Haven, 6 July 1966, p. 2.

146 *Ibid.,* Letter of FBI Director to FBI Special Agent in Charge in New Haven, 3 August 1966, p. 1.

147 *Ibid.*, Report by FBI Special Agent G. Stuart Thatford, Honolulu, 26 January 1967, p. 2. The FBI indeed contacted Albert Rippenbein in 1953; however, the file seems to indicate that he only provided information about the Wards' stay in Denmark and their intention to travel on to Eastern Europe. More substantial information about the Wards' membership in communist organizations was provided by other FBI informants.

they were included in the so-called Reserve Index B, i.e. a list of individuals of left-wing orientation, but considered less of a threat.[148]

Conclusion

In the introduction of this study, I mentioned a well-known chapter of the American cultural diplomacy, namely the *Jazz Ambassadors* project, by means of which the US government was improving its image from 1956 until the late 1970s. The ambiguous position of US jazzmen who were to promote the United States as a country of freedom behind the Iron Curtain, in Asia, or in Africa at the time of prevailing racial inequality was later described in *The Real Ambassadors* (1961), a jazz musical composed by Dave and Iola Brubeck on the basis of their own experience, in which Louis Armstrong was appearing as well.

I tried to explain that some American artists had travelled behind the Iron Curtain even before US jazz diplomacy was born. They did not always travel as members of organized troupes, as was the case, for example, of the *Porgy and Bess* (Everyman Opera) tour, but sometimes also as individuals seeking political asylum. Perhaps the best-known case is that of Afro-American singer Aubrey Pankey, who was granted asylum in the German Democratic Republic in 1956. In the presented study, I mapped in detail the case of American jazz musician Herbert Ward and his wife Jacqueline, who asked for asylum in Czechoslovakia in 1954.

I call Herbert a "different jazz ambassador" because he was not sent behind the Iron Curtain under an official programme; his case was an unintended consequence of persecution of a left-wing citizen during the late phase of McCarthyism. It is a paradox that a man whom the FBI suspected of cooperation with the Communist Party of the United States participated in the rehabilitation of jazz in communist Czechoslovakia.

Although the FBI lacked direct evidence (e.g. a list of members), it had indirect reports from several informants indicating that the Wards presented themselves as leftists among their friends, particularly after the war, and directly admitted to some of them that they were members of the Communist Party of the United States or the Young Communist League – or at least made that impression. As to more direct indications, it is possible to refer to the abovementioned document of the Ministry of Interior on negotiations concerning the terms and conditions of the asylum, which states that Jacqueline wished to present herself as a communist at the press conference, or the questionnaire she completed upon signing an employment contract with the Czechoslovak Radio (1961), in which she mentioned she had been a member of the Young Communist League since 1934 and of the Communist Party of the United States since 1938. The statements made by the Wards for the FBI or US embassies, in which they denied their communist activities, must be taken with a pinch of salt, as admitting them would have made their position in the United States very difficult at that time.

148 *Ibid.*, Report of FBI Special Agent FBI John E. Kelly, New Haven, 22 March 1967, p. 1.

Basic contours of the Wards' case are comparable to fates of many English-speaking asylum seekers in Czechoslovakia during the 1950s. Their extensive exploitation for propaganda purposes by communist authorities and initial gratification over a newfound home were gradually replaced by disenchantment produced by day-to-day concerns of the life under socialist rule – omnipresent bureaucracy, which was often difficult to comprehend, mistrust and stereotypes on the part of the Czech population, censorship, and problems with finding and getting an adequate job.

Although unquestionably left-oriented (Jacqueline perhaps more than Herbert), they did not come to Czechoslovakia to build socialism, but because they felt victimized (just like many people of a similar mindset during the McCarthy era); under the circumstances, they were looking for a calmer place for educating their children and better employment opportunities.

Their decision must be perceived in an appropriate context. The Wards were members of a generation which possessed fresh memories of the war (Herbert was even wounded), saw significant social differences, unemployment, and racial discrimination in New York in the late 1940s. Their left-wing leaning was by no means an exception, even in comparison with the situation in Europe. When they found themselves without passports and without jobs after living for two years in Vienna, emigration to Czechoslovakia was, from their perspective, a rational choice, as they would very likely have faced political persecution in the United States. And the fact that they sobered up from their youthful political idealism fairly soon behind the Iron Curtain cannot change that.

The Wards have never returned to Czechoslovakia. Their distant relatives in Slovakia, however, are probably still alive.

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Translated by Jiří Mareš

"It Was the Poles" or How Emanuel Ringelblum Was Instrumentalized by Expellees in West Germany

On the History of the Book Ghetto Warschau: Tagebücher aus dem Chaos

Stephan Stach

In the 1960s, Germany's mass murder of European Jews during the Second World War was increasingly the focus of public attention. This was precipitated, to a great degree, by the shock of Adolf Eichmann's capture and trial in Jerusalem in 1961. A great number of reports and books appeared at the time on that and other trials of Nazis and their crimes.[1] A growing number of memoirs and diaries written by Holocaust victims and survivors, along with other books on the topic, were being published as well.[2] The Holocaust soon also became an issue entrenched in the

1 ARENDT, Hannah: *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. New York, Viking Press 1963; COHEN, Nathan: *Rechtliche Gesichtspunkte zum Eichmann-Prozess*. Frankfurt am Main, Europäische Verlangsanstalt 1963; KAUL, Friedrich Karl: *Der Fall Eichmann*. Berlin [Ost], Das Neue Berlin 1963; MŇAČKO, Ladislav: *Já, Adolf Eichmann…* [I, Adolf Eichmann…]. Bratislava, Slovenské vydavatelstvo politickej literatúry 1961. On the reception of Eichmann's trial in Hungary and its impact on the Holocaust discourse, see BOHUS, Kata: Not a Jewish question? The Holocaust in Hungary in the Press and Propaganda of the Kádár Regime during the Trial of Adolf Eichmann. In: *Hungarian Historical Review*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (2015), pp. 737–772.

2 HILBERG, Raul: *The Destruction of European Jews*. New Haven, Yale University Press 1961; EISENBACH, Artur: *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów* [Hitler's policy of the extermination of Jews]. Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza 1961; *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord:*

confrontation between the two Cold War blocs. This was reflected, for example, in the show trials of Theodor Oberländer and Hans Globke in East Berlin, who held high positions in the West German government despite their involvement in Nazi crimes.[3]

The GDR made particular use of these trials *in absentia* to depict West Germany as a bastion of Nazi criminals. In return, many West German politicians and journalists compared the Berlin Wall with the one that surrounded the Warsaw Ghetto, thus bringing the GDR in connection with Nazi Germany.[4]

Such appropriations of the Holocaust were by no means limited to the German-German confrontation. Poland and its inhabitants were, in particular, depicted as "eternal anti-semites" in American and West European media. This stereotype was often even expanded to include the thesis that the deeply rooted Polish anti-semitism had been the true reason for German extermination camps set up in occupied Poland – a claim that has long been refuted by research.[5] Western Bloc interest groups nevertheless instrumentalized this stereotype for their political aims. One particularly drastic example of this, and the subject of this article, was the instrumentalization of the work of Jewish historian Emanuel Ringelblum, the organizer of the underground archive of the Warsaw Ghetto,[6] by expellees in West Germany. Numerous articles and commentaries appeared in various newspapers of the expellee press, beginning in the early 1960s, that referenced Ringelblum in an effort to frame Poland as being complicit in the Holocaust. Ringelblum's last work, his 1944 essay with the title *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w czasie drugiej wojny światowej* [Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War] was printed in 1967 by the Stuttgart-based Seewald Publishing House with the misleading German title *Ghetto Warschau: Tagebücher aus dem Chaos* [Warsaw Ghetto: Diaries from chaos].[7] The Göttinger Arbeitskreis Ostdeutscher Wissenschaftler (Göttingen

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Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des 2. Weltkrieges. Berlin, Jüdischen Historischen Institut in Warschau 1960; ADLER, H. G. – LANGBEIN, Hermann – LIGENS-REINER, Ella: *Auschwitz: Zeugnisse u. Berichte*. Frankfurt am Main, Europäische Verlagsanstalt 1962.

3 Several works were published in the GDR as part of the campaigns against Oberländer, including: *Die Wahrheit über Oberländer: Braunbuch über die verbrecherische faschistische Vergangenheit des Bonner Ministers*. Berlin, Ausschuss deutsche Einheit 1960, and *Globke, der Bürokrat des Todes, bureaucrat of death, bureaucrate de la mort: Eine Dokumentation über die Blutschuld des höchsten Bonner Staatsbeamten bei der Ausrottung der Juden*. Berlin, Ausschuss für Deutsche Einheit 1963.

4 Die Mauer: Rote Nazis. In: *Die Zeit* (31 August 1962); SCHNURRE, Wolfdietrich: *Berlin: Eine Stadt wird geteilt*. Olten, Walther 1962, p. 10. Also: MECKL, Markus: *Helden und Märtyrer: Der Warschauer Ghettoaufstand in der Erinnerung*. Berlin, Universität Berlin 2000, pp. 42 and 124.

5 STEINLAUF, Michael C.: *Bondage to the Dead: Poland and the Memory of the Holocaust*. Syracuse, NY, Syracuse University Press 1997, p. 80.

6 On Ringelblum: KASSOW, Samuel D.: *Who Will Write Our History? Rediscovering a Hidden Archive from the Warsaw Ghetto*, London, Vintage 2009.

7 RINGELBLUM, Emanuel: *Ghetto Warschau: Tagebücher aus dem Chaos. Eingeleitet von Professor Arieh Tartakower*. Stuttgart, Seewald 1967, p. 22. The book will be referred to henceforth as *Ghetto Warschau*.

Working Group of Eastern German Scholars, henceforth the "Göttingen Group") took responsibility for the publication, as will be discussed in the presented article. This association of researchers who were either from the former German East or were active in researching the region, paved the way intellectually for the advocacy of a revision of the postwar Polish-German border along the Oder and Neisse rivers. They sought to instrumentalize Ringelblum's work to this end.

In the following text, I discuss the book, its publisher, and the manner in which an essay on Polish-Jewish relations in German-occupied Poland was transformed into an argument for a revision of the Oder-Neisse border, as well as the later influence of the book in Germany and Poland. To this end, I draw on various publications and the *Pressedienst der Heimatvertriebenen* (Expellee Press Service – *hvp*) published by the Göttingen Group, in addition to the book itself.

Ringelblum as an Unauthorized Publication

In early 1967, the Stuttgart-based Seewald Publishing House published the book *Emanuel Ringelblum: Ghetto Warschau, Tagebücher aus dem Chaos, Eingeleitet von Professor Arieh Tartakower, Institut Yad Washem Jerusalem*.[8] Despite what the title may suggest, this was not in fact a diary that Ringelblum might perhaps have written in the Warsaw Ghetto, but was his last essay, which the author himself titled *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w czasie drugiej wojny światowej* [Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War]. He wrote it from a hidden location after he was able to flee the Warsaw Ghetto.[9] Unlike Ringelblum's other observations from the Ghetto, this was not part of the Ghetto's underground archives, which he himself initiated and ran, even if it was undoubtedly based on the materials that it contained. At the point in time that he wrote the piece, the archive had, however, already been buried beneath the Ghetto in metal boxes and milk cans at three different points.

In his essay on Polish-Jewish relations, Ringelblum attempts to take on the neutral perspective of an historian, even if he himself was personally affected by the events. Even though he knew that the majority of the Polish people were indifferent to the fate of the Jews and that some Polish people betrayed Jews – whether for reasons of avarice or deep-seated enmity – he himself owed his life to helpful Poles, who had freed him from the camp and hidden him in Warsaw. Ringelblum described this ambivalence in his preliminary remarks,[10] which, in his biography published in 2007, Samuel Kassow referred to as "a final synthesis and reappraisal of Ringelblum's prewar scholarship."[11] Kassow alludes here to how Ringelblum's

8 *Warsaw Ghetto: Diaries from Chaos*. (With a Preface by Professor Arieh Tartakower, Yad Vashem Institute, Jerusalem.)

9 RINGELBLUM, Emanuel: Z ostatnich notatek [Recent notes; Editors' preface]. In: *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, No. 25 (1958), pp. 3–30, here p. 3.

10 *Ghetto Warschau*, p. 22.

11 KASSOW, S. D.: *Who Will Write Our History? Rediscovering a Hidden Archive from the Warsaw Ghetto*. The quote can be found on p. 373. Kassow discusses Ringelblum's work on the

studies on the history of Jews in Poland did not view them in isolation, but always in relation to their Polish neighbours and with the awareness of the manifold social and economic interweavement of the two groups.[12]

In his essay, Ringelblum discussed various aspects of Polish-Jewish relations in several chapters. Ringelblum adopted a critical point of view as well, coming to the conclusion that the Polish underground and the Home Army (or *Armia Krajowa* in Polish) could have done much more for the Jews than it did. Ringelblum's bitter disappointment, which becomes repeatedly apparent, reflected to a large degree that Ringelblum, as a Jewish citizen of pre-war Poland, viewed himself as part of a common society. And it was to this society – or what was left of it after the war – that he in fact addressed his essay. This is borne out by the fact that he wrote it in Polish and not in Yiddish, as had been his habit.[13]

Along with his wife and his son Uri, Emanuel Ringelblum was discovered by the Germans and shot in March 1944. The fact that we can read the essay today is thanks to Adolf and Barbara Berman, friends of Ringelblum, who also lived in hiding in Warsaw, and whom Ringelblum had entrusted with his manuscript in three notebooks. Adolf Berman, who emigrated from Poland to Israel in 1950, sent the text from there to the Jewish Historical Institute (or *Żydowski Instytut Historyczny* in Polish, ŻIH) in 1957, whose staff would soon publish it in four installments under its original title in the *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*.[14]

The book published by Seewald was in fact an unauthorized translation of the series published in the *Biuletyn*. This was not a particularly unusual way of doing things among publishers in the West at the time. In 1958, the New York-based publishing house McGraw Hill published an unauthorized English translation of Ringelblum's *Notes from the Ghetto*, which had been published by the ŻIH in Yiddish in 1952.[15] The risk was apparently quite low to be held accountable for such a legal infringement by institutions of the Eastern Bloc. *Ghetto Warschau* adopted the text along with the *Biuletyn* editors' preface. The translator was not, by contrast, mentioned at all. A glossary of abbreviations and an index of people and places was, however, appended as well as an introduction by Arieh Tartakower, which actually constituted a short biographical sketch of Ringelblum. An unnamed editor, moreover, added a few additional remarks to the final text.[16] The first footnote of the published book does mention the fact that the Seewald edition went beyond

book on pp. 372–383.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 374.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 383.

14 RINGELBLUM, Emanuel: *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w czasie drugiej wojny światowej* [Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War]. Published in four parts in *BŻIH*, No. 28 (1958), pp. 3–37, No. 29 (1959), pp. 3–39, No. 30 (1959), pp. 50–86, and No. 31 (1959), pp. 26–37.

15 RINGELBLUM, Emanuel: *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto*. (Edited and translated by Jacob Sloan.) New York, Schovekn Books 1958.

16 In the book, the remarks made by the *Biuletyn* editors are marked with a (B) at the end of the footnotes and those of the publisher with an (H).

a mere unauthorized printing, with the anonymous editor alluding both to the *Biuletyn* editions and the original title with the explanation: "The work appeared in editions 28–30. Each bore the title 'Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War,' which could be omitted in the book edition." [17]

It was Ringelblum himself, however, who chose this title, and it was one which could not simply be cast aside. Since the text had a clear focus on the Polish-Jewish relationship, changing the title to "Warsaw Ghetto: Diaries from chaos" was a greatly significant shift when it came to the readers' understanding the book. Making it seem like Ringelblum's diary leads one toward a completely different view of things – as Ringelblum had become somewhat well-known in 1960s Germany for his work as the founder of the underground archive, and not least through the publication of his diaries in English.[18] From that perspective, the German occupiers were only of marginal importance to the Jews of the Ghetto, with the Poles being the actual culprits in the persecution and murder of the Jews.

Other footnotes added by the editors supported such an interpretation as well. One elaboration on the *Sanacja*, the political camp around Józef Piłsudski that came to power after the 1926 putsch, provides the overgeneralized and indeed false statement that "anti-semitism was part of its underlying standpoint."[19] Elsewhere, the editors claimed that the anti-semitic weekly magazine *Der Stürmer*, which was mentioned by Ringelblum, was held in "very low esteem even by the National Socialists."[20] The editors' comments also reveal an attempt to form a clear distinction between the German *Wehrmacht* on the one hand and the SS and other Nazi units on the other, seemingly to avoid leaving the impression that the regular army could be involved in such crimes.[21] The jacket text is also quite clear in maintaining that the book was being published with one particular intention in mind, with Ringelblum's supposed diary serving as evidence of Polish culpability in the murder on the Jews. The text states:

"The author himself put together the diaries, published here for the first time in the Western world from part of the material [from the underground Ghetto archive]. Ringelblum noted that the Germans would not even have been able to track down their Jewish victims without the help of Polish anti-semites. It was Poles who were

17 *Ghetto Warschau*, p. 17.

18 The press, furthermore, frequently alluded to Ringelblum's work within the context of the trials of the Nazis as well as the debate over the statute of limitations on Nazi crimes, as in Warschauer Getto: Die Augenzeugen (*Der Spiegel* (21 September 1960), pp. 75–82) and Geschichtsakten als Kriminalkartei (*Die Zeit,* (5 March 1965), p. 3). Ringelblum and his archive were also featured in Josef Wulf's book *Vom Leben, Kampf und Tod im Ghetto Warschau* published by the Bundeszentrale für Heimatdienst (Bonn, 1958). Wulf also published in the *Deutsche Rundschau* on the topic: WULF, Josef: Dr Emanuel Ringelblum und sein Untergrundarchiv im Warschauer Ghetto. In: *Deutsche Rundschau*, No. 87 (1961), pp. 241–249.

19 *Ghetto Warschau*, p. 27.

20 *Ibid.,* p. 60.

21 *Ibid.,* pp. 113 and 168.

willing and able to denounce Jewish people, businesses, and properties and – once the extensive deportations began – sought to uncover the hiding places of their Jewish fellow citizens." [22]

The text emphasized collective guilt of the Poles, while only peripherally mentioning the German role as the instigators of this activity, especially as planners, organizers, and perpetrators of the mass murder of Jews, portraying this as the deeds of but a few "German criminals." Even those Poles who helped Jews were discredited in the text: "Only a small number of Poles hid their Jewish fellow citizens; and even they mostly demanded a high price for their help. Blackmail was the order of the day; even the Polish underground organization only seldom supported the persecuted Jews. The historian recorded how fleeing Jews were murdered by Polish partisan groups."[23]

In summary, the book jacket, the false title, and the editors' comments all combined to create the impression that it were actually the Poles who bore a significant portion of blame for murdering the Jews. This all occurred, besides the change of the title, without altering the text, but through deliberately false contextualization. Readers were deceived by the sense that this was in fact Ringelblum's diary, while the jacket text and comments steered them toward focusing on Polish participation in the persecution of Jews. The alleged reliability of the book as underscored by the name of Emanuel Ringelblum was further strengthened by the fact that a professor and staff member at Yad Vashem contributed a preface as well. At first glance, one could even have the impression that Tartakower or Yad Vashem itself published the book.[24]

This strategy was quite a success. The book was in fact listed as published by Yad Vashem in the *Quellen zur Zeitgeschichte* bibliography published by the Munich-based Institut für Zeitgeschichte.[25] Even the publisher Heinrich Seewald wrote a short article on the work of his publishing house that Arieh Tartakower edited the volume.[26] The actual editors, not mentioned in the book itself, were in fact staff members of the Göttingen Group, who were wise to remain in the shadows when it came to this volume. We can, however, reconstruct their role through the expansive reporting done on the publication of the book and the previous appearance of excerpts from Ringelblum's essay in the *Pressedienst* published by the Göttingen Group.

22 *Ibid.,* book jacket text.

23 *Ibid.*

24 The names Tartakower and Yad Vashem were, for example, printed just as large as Ringelblum's name on the title page, whereas no information was provided on the actual editors.

25 BENZ, Wolfgang: Deutsche Geschichte seit dem Ersten Weltkrieg. In: *Quellen zur Zeitgeschichte*, Vol. 3 1973, p. 251.

26 SEEWALD, Henrich: *Ein Forum freier Diskussion: Seewald Verlag in Stuttgart – Degerloch*. In: *Im Dienst des Buches, Beiträge zur Partnerschaft, Wissenschaft, Forschung, Praxis, Verleger berichten aus ihrer Werkstatt*. Hamburg, C. Boysen 1967, pp. 168–173, here p. 172.

The Göttingen Group

A group of scholars from the former German East and other researchers of the region gathered in Göttingen in 1946 to form the *Göttinger Arbeitskreises Ostdeutsche Wissenschaftler*.[27] One of the main tasks of the group, which would rapidly develop into a sort of think tank for expellee associations, was working toward the revision of the Oder-Neisse border. They presented, for example, a document to the foreign ministers of the Western allies in April 1947, stipulating that the Eastern territories were indispensable for Germany.[28]

The Göttingen Group began to publish its own "press information service" in 1947 and was then tasked by the *Vereinigte Deutsche Landsmannschaften* (or the United German Homeland Associations in English) in 1949 with the publication of the *Pressedienst der Heimatvertriebenen*. The Göttingen Group put together the information it disseminated there mostly by combing through Polish, Soviet, and international press. Each of the weekly editions also included two commentaries, written by named authors, which were reprinted in the expellee press, mostly directly and without mentioning the *hvp*. The *hvp* was well received within the expellee press and was considered to be its "main source and leading political voice."[29] According to Hans-Jürgen Gaida, it was the source of "aggressive terminology used in expellee journalism."[30]

Public funding was soon added to the financial support of expellee associations as well. Within the context of the Cold War, there was a high demand for linguistic and regional knowledge of those working with the Göttingen Group, soon making it possible to carry out political research on the East within an institutionally sustained framework. [31]

The Göttingen Group's one-sided practices in putting together its press service and other publications, which included distorted translations and other misrepresentations, not only drew the ire of the People's Republic of Poland. West German press, such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) and *Der Spiegel*, also published critical reports on the Göttingen Group's working methods in 1958, following the

27 On the Göttinger Arbeitskreis see: LINNEMANN, Kai Arne: *Das Erbe der Ostforschung: Zur Rolle Göttingens in der Geschichtswissenschaft der Nachkriegszeit*. Marburg, Tectum Verlag 2002; SALZBORN, Samuel: Göttinger Arbeitskreis. In: HAAR, Ingo – FAHLBUSCH Michael – BERG Matthias (ed.): *Handbuch der Völkischen Wissenschaften*. München, Tectum 2008, pp. 198–203.

28 LINNEMANN, K. A.: *Das Erbe der Ostforschung: Zur Rolle Göttingens in der Geschichtswissenschaft der Nachkriegszeit*, p. 125.

29 GAIDA, Hans-Jürgen: *Die offiziellen Organe der ostdeutschen Landmannschaften: Ein Beitrag zur Publizistik der Heimatvertriebenen in Deutschland*. Berlin, Publizistik der Heimatvertriebenen in Deutschland 1967, p. 53.

30 *Ibid.,* p. 206.

31 LINNEMANN, K. A.: *Das Erbe der Ostforschung: Zur Rolle Göttingens in der Geschichtswissenschaft der Nachkriegszeit*, pp. 123 and 126.

publication of the brochure *Die deutschen Ostgebiete jenseits von Oder und Neiße im Spiegel der polnischen Presse*.[32]

The quotes used there were so distorted through translation and abridgement that, in some cases, they even came to take on the opposite of their original meanings. While the FAZ Polish correspondent, Hansjakob Stehle, discussed the brochure and publicized the falsifications in an article with a title translating as "Quotes in a fun house mirror,"[33] *Der Spiegel* went a step further and accused the Göttingen Group of "swindling for Germany."[34] The following year, an analysis of the brochure by the Editorial Committee of the *Zachodnia Agencja Prasowa* [Western press agency] appeared in a book published in Poznań that had twice as many pages as its subject.[35] The extensive response provided in the Göttingen Group's activity report suggests that the group did in fact run into difficulties with its public-sector funding due to press reports on the brochure, although this did not lead to any serious consequences for the institution's work.[36] Until the social democratic-liberal coalition took power in Bonn in 1969, the Göttingen Group remained a well-financed advisor to the Federal Chancellery in policies involving the East.[37] It stands to reason, however, that the incident played a role in the Göttingen Group making its propaganda somewhat more subtle later on. The adaptation of Emanuel Ringelblum's *Polish-Jewish Relations during the Second World War* can thus be seen as unsurpassed in parlaying a minimal falsification of source texts into anti-Polish propaganda.

"Polish Anti-Semitism" in the West German Expellee Press

Years ago, Klaus-Peter Friedrich already wrote of the 1960s German expellee press' conspicuous interest in Polish anti-semitism and connected strategies and goals, as well as the important role played by the group's *hvp* Press Service.[38] While Friedrich

32 KURTH Karl O. (ed.): *Die deutschen Ostgebiete jenseits von Oder und Neiße im Spiegel der polnischen Presse*. Würzburg, Veröffentlichungen Göttinger Arbeitskreis 1958.

33 STEHLE, Hans-Jacob: Zitate im Zerrspiegel: Eine Göttinger Broschüre unter der Lupe. In: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (1 December 1958).

34 Schwindelt für Deutschland. In: *Der Spiegel* (17 December 1958), pp. 35–37.

35 The book appeared in Polish and German: *Uwaga Fałszerstwo!* Poznań-Warszawa, Wydawnictvo Zachodnie 1959; *Achtung Fälschung!* Poznań-Warszawa, Wydawnictvo Zachodnie 1959. Its title was borrowed from an article in *Die Welt*: HAGEN, Volker V[on]: *So kommen wir nicht zu einem neuen Mitteleuropa: Das Kesseltreiben unter den Vertriebenen*. In: *Die Welt* (2 September 1958).

36 BRAUN, Joachim Freherr Von: Göttinger Arbeitskreis – Tätigkeitsbericht 1958/59. In: *Jahrbuch der Albertus-Universität zu Königsberg/Pr.,* Vol. 10 (1960), pp. 241–264, here 259–263.

37 Verflechtung von Politik und Wissenschaft. Osteuropaforschung des Göttinger Arbeitskreises im Wandel. In: *Neue Züricher Zeitung* (12 November 1996).

38 FRIEDRICH, Klaus-Peter: Antisemitismus in Polen im Spiegel der deutschen Vertriebenenpresse, einige Beobachtungen während der antisemitischen Kampagne von 1967/68. In: KOSMALA, Beate: *Die Vertreibung der Juden aus Polen 1968: Antisemitismus und politisches Kalkül.* Berlin, Metropol 2000, pp. 141–173.

based his work on the Marburg Herder Institute's thematic collection of newspaper excerpts on "Jews in Poland," an evaluation of the *hvp* Press Service reveals that it was nearly the exclusive source of reports on the topic in the expellee press. When newspapers discussed the topic, it was almost always ultimately based on a report from the *hvp* Press Service.[39]

The *hvp* Press Service began focusing on Polish anti-semitism and Polish collaboration in the Holocaust in 1960. This initially involved statements made by Jewish researchers and journalists as well as treatments of the topic in literature and film, such as in Leon Uris' books *Mila 18* and *Exodus*.[40] The Göttingen Group's *hvp* editors became aware of Ringelblum's essay on Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War in early 1961. In its evaluation of the Western press, the Göttingen Group came across an article in the London-based *Wiener Library Bulletin*, which reported on the relations between Poles and Jews during the German occupation of Poland. Two articles placed next to one another summarized a report taken from the ŻIH's *Biuletyn*: a documentation of Polish help to Jews[41] and the Ringelblum essay on Polish-Jewish relations in its several installments. The latter was presented comprehensively in the *hvp* of 15 March 1961 within the context of Adolf Eichmann's trial that was taking place at the time. With the introductory words "With regard to Eichmann's trial," the publication stated: "As has recently been reported, the Warsaw Ministry of Justice prepared a dossier on Eichmann's crimes and Nazi persecution of Jews. It is, however, unclear whether the accusations made by Dr Ringelblum and Leon Uris were taken into consideration that broad circles of Poles approved the persecution and even, in part, participated in them as well."[42]

In 1963, well over two years after the Göttingen Group became aware of Ringelblum, the first selected excerpts were published in German translation in the *hvp*. A second collection of excerpts followed 10 months later.[43]

In both cases, *hvp* editors prefaced the excerpts with a short explanatory text. But only in the first of those texts, which appeared in April 1963, was the correct

39 The *hvp* was analyzed from 1961 to 1969 for this article. For nearly all of the articles cited by Friedrich from the expellee press there was also a report or a commentary by a named writer in the *hvp Pressedienst*.

40 See FRIEDRICH, K.-P.: Antisemitismus in Polen im Spiegel der deutschen Vertriebenenpresse, einige Beobachtungen während der antisemitischen Kampagne von 1967/68, pp. 145–147.

41 This refers to the articles: In the Face of a Common Foe: Poles and Jews during the Occupation and Dr Ringelblum's Indictment. Both are to be found in: *Wiener Library Bulletin* 15 (1961), No. 1, p. 10. The first article references BERENSTEIN, Tatiana – RUTKOWSKI, Adam: O ratownictwie Żydów przez Polaków w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej [On the rescue of Jews by Poles during the Nazi occupation]. In: *BŻIH*, No. 35 (1960), pp. 3–46; the second RINGELBLUM, Emanuel: Stosunki polsko-żydowskie podczas drugiej wojny światowej [Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War], which appeared in 1958–59 in numbers 28–31 of the *Biuletyn*.

42 *Hvp,* No. 11/61 (15 March 1961).

43 *Hvp,* No. 16/63 (17 April 1963) and No. 1/64 (2 January 1964).

title of the essay provided along with a short account of its actual background. The second part, however, was already announced as taken "from the diary of Dr Emanuel Ringelblum."[44] The Göttingen Group had apparently recognized by then that the propagandistic value of Ringelblum's statements increased when they were presented as excerpts from his previously well-known diary and not just as a piece on Polish-Jewish relations.

Beginning in 1964, Emanuel Ringelblum had clearly become a sort of "star witness" for *hvp* editors when it came to Polish anti-semitism. While at first infrequently mentioned in the reports compiled by the *hvp*, the Göttingen Group would refer to Ringelblum in nearly every segment on Polish anti-semitism and the participation of Poles in the German murder of Jews. This was the case, for example, in early January 1964, when the Göttingen Group used the title "Jewish accusations against Poles: 'The Ghettos were a Polish invention'" to present the views of an unnamed French jurist of a Polish-Jewish background. According to the Polish exile magazine *Orzeł biały* [White eagle], this person had stated that the ghettos, constructed by German occupiers in Polish cities, had in fact been constructed according to Polish plans, something that the magazine refuted vehemently. The Göttingen Group commented on the matter in return with the words: "The Jewish jurist expressed nothing else […] but what can be seen in the report of the Warsaw Ghetto historian Dr Emanuel Ringelblum on the expansive Polish participation in the persecution of Jews and in anti-semitic riots between 1941 and 1945."[45]

In reality, Ringelblum wrote nothing to indicate that the German occupiers had made use of Polish plans in constructing the Ghetto.

Just a few weeks later, Erwin Rogalla, alluded again to Ringelblum in the *hvp* commentary on "the Polish glass house."[46] There, he portrayed the accusations of the Polish press that the Federal Republic of Germany had only been half-heartedly prosecuting Nazi crimes as "hypocritical." He retorted that there had been no trials at all in Poland against those who "participated in the persecution of the Jewish population during the Second World War or even before 1939," as the "historian of the Warsaw Ghetto, Dr Emanuel Ringelblum, reported on in particular detail." Just a few lines further down, he wrote that "the same disingenuousness and hypocrisy" could be observed when the Polish side reported on German crimes against the Poles but left out expulsions and that "Polish extermination camps [sic] such

44 *Hvp,* No. 1/64 (2 January 1964).
45 *Hvp,* No. 1/64 (2 January 1964).
46 *Hvp,* No. 5/64 (29 January 1964).

as Lambsdorf and Potulice"[47] had been constructed, in which "many thousands of East Germans had lost their lives."[48]

Rogalla's article is exemplary in depicting what was of interest to the Göttingen Group with regard to the topic of anti-semitism in Poland: For one thing, mentioning the complicity of the Polish people in the persecution and murder of Jews during the Second World War was meant to relativize the culpability of the Germans. While Polish participation was frequently cited, German culprits were not in fact referred to as "Germans" but mostly as "Nazis," or the culpability was connected in the text to a faceless "National Socialist criminal regime." Moreover, the expelled Germans were depicted in this context as victims of "the Poles," both Jews and Poles mentioned in the text appeared as victims in parallel – and both in fact as victims of the Poles. Rogalla further underscored this equation of German and Jewish victims by using the term "extermination camp," which rhetorically equated the two aforementioned work camps for German expellees with German death camps Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Majdanek.[49] With this line of argument, the Göttingen Group sought to refute Polish justification for acquiring former German areas east of the Oder-Neisse line as reparations for the crimes committed by German occupiers in Poland. This was meant to pave the way forward for a revision of the border.

Red Nationalism, Politics of History and Polish Jews

The soil was indeed fertile for this type of argument as there was actual anti-semitism within the Polish United Workers' Party (or *Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robonicza* – PVAP – in Polish) alongside the historical view of Poles were the main victims of the Second World War and of German occupation. These views were supported by the "Partisans," a PVAP fraction led by Mieczysław Moczar. This group was dominated by nationalism veiled as communist rhetoric, including anti-semitism – in the guise of anti-Zionism – as well as anti-liberal and other nationalistic views.[50]

47 This referred to the work camps Lambsdorf/Łambinowice (June 1945 through autumn 1946), and Polutlice (1945–1950). Other camps of the sort were run as well, with around 120,000 German prisoners, of which some 20,000 died due to breakouts of disease and poor conditions, but also as a result of violence on the part of camp personnel. See: *Transodra Online,* No. 18 (Oct. 1998), pp. 175–191; see also: http://www.dpg-brandenburg.de/nr_18/lager.htm [cit. 2012-10-19].

48 All citations from the mentioned articles in: *Hvp,* No. 5/64 (29 January 1964).

49 Despite the relatively high number of German victims in the two aforementioned camps and others, this sort of equation is of course completely unreasonable, not only due to the enormous difference in the numbers of victims but also because the camps set up for German prisoners were by no means intended for the physical annihilation of their inmates.

50 These Partisans consisted primarily of members of the security forces and lower and middle administrative levels, whose members were part of the Armia Ludowa [People's army], the armed socialist resistance group during the German occupation. They therefore – hence the term "Partisan" – distinguished themselves from party officials who had been in the Soviet Union during the war. ZAREMBA, Marcin: *Im nationalen Gewande:*

These Partisans presented a version of the Second World War in which there had been no Polish collaborators or participation in the crimes of the Germans. Instead they claimed that Poles suffered the most under German occupation as a result of their heroic resistance. This view was devised and propagated by the Main Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes (or *Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich* in Polish) and the Council for the Protection of Struggle and Martyrdom Sites (or *Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa* in Polish), and its dissemination was supported to a large degree by the ZBoWiD veterans' association (or *Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację* in Polish). This association was led by Moczar and was open to members of the former Home Army (*Armia Krajowa* in Polish), through which he won over large portions of the former nationalist resistance.[51]

While Poles were depicted as being among the main sufferers of the Second World War through the "martyrdom narrative of the Polish nation as a whole,"[52] as Joanna Wawrzyniak put it, Jews were almost fully left out as a victim group. This was particularly reflected in the propagation of the figure of six million Poles murdered by Germans, which referred to the number of citizens of pre-war Poland who were killed, a figure that included three million Polish Jews. Practically the only context in which Jews were particularly mentioned in this version of the historical narrative was when they were rescued by Poles.[53] This was exemplified by the celebrations to mark the 20th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which depicted it as an act of Polish resistance, even if the Polish keynote speaker still underscored the self-sacrificial help that Poles extended to their Jewish fellow citizens.[54] This form of appropriation was met with opposition from Jewish survivors and Jewish organizations – especially outside Poland. The "Partisans" in return saw it as Jewish ingratitude that Jews continued to speak of Polish participation in the wartime crimes committed against them. On top of that, they accused them of preferring to work together with the Polish archenemy, the Federal Republic of Germany.[55]

These developments did not elude the attention of the Göttingen Group. As one 2 June 1965 *hvp Pressedienst* article with the title "Increasing anti-semitism in Poland" put it: "In the 'Polish United Workers' Party,' the so-called 'Partisans' – the Polish national-communists – indulge in a pronounced form of anti-semitism.

Strategien kommunistischer Herrschaftslegitimation in Polen 1944–1980. Osnabrück, Fibre 2011, p. 295.

51 WAWRZYNIAK, Joanna: *Veterans, Victims and Memory: The Politics of the Second World War in Communist Poland*. Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang 2015, pp. 183–193 and 196–200.

52 *Ibid.,* p. 199.

53 *Ibid.,* pp. 196–200.

54 ZAREMBA, M.: *Im nationalen Gewande: Strategien kommunistischer Herrschaftslegitimation in Polen 1944–1980*, pp. 333–336. See also STACH, Stephan: Holocaust und Kalter Krieg im deutsch-polnisch-jüdischen Kontext: Das Jüdische Historische Institut in Warschau und die beiden deutschen Staaten. In: *HISTORIE*, Vol. 2 (2009), pp. 57–81, here pp. 69–72.

55 WAWRZYNIAK, J.: *Veterans, Victims and Memory: The Politics of the Second World War in Communist Poland*, p. 206.

These 'Partisans' endeavoured to have all Jews pushed out of public positions and functions."[56]

In the period that followed, reports were also repeatedly made about the Partisans and their anti-semitic views.[57] The Göttingen Group's ongoing reference to Polish anti-semitism during the war and the publication of Ringelblum's "Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War" using the misleading title in spring 1967 aimed to attack the one-dimensional historical view propagated by the Polish side where it was the most vulnerable: The treatment of Jews and the behavior of Poles towards their Jewish fellow citizens during the war.

Dr Ringelblum's Accusations: On the Reception of the Book in West Germany

In Emanuel Ringelblum, the Göttingen Group had found a particularly credible witness to Polish anti-semitism and participation in the Holocaust. The *hvp Pressedienst* and the Göttingen Group publications could only reach as far as the expellee milieu itself. If the Göttingen Group sought to reach a broader public, it would have to find a neutral publishing house, one which was not easily connected to the group or the expellee community. While the head of Seewald Publishing House was, with his right-wing conservative views, ideologically close to the Göttingen Group, he did not come from the expellee community himself and enjoyed a reputation as a publisher of books on contemporary history.[58]

The greatest success that the Göttingen Group had with the book was winning over Arieh Tartakower to write the preface to the book in question. As an Israeli historian and a member of the Yad Vashem staff, he provided the book with an inestimable level of credibility. I was not able to reconstruct the conditions under which he was recruited for the project. It seems unlikely that the Göttingen Group officially contacted him and that Tartakower was aware of the people he was dealing with.[59]

Seewald's publication of the book was marked in the *hvp* with a commentary by Erich Janke entitled "Warsaw Ghetto – the truth on the complicity of Polish

56 *Hvp,* No. 22/65 (2 June 1965).

57 *Hvp,* No. 24/65 (16 June 1965), *hvp,* No. 42/1965 (20 October 1965), and *hvp* No. 49/66 (7 December 1966).

58 In: *Der Spiegel*, No. 45 (8 November 1999), p. 314.

59 Arieh Tartakower, who was also the chairman of the Israeli section of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), participated in the (unsuccessful) negotiations with the Sociocultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ) on their joining the WJC in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It was within this context that he visited the Jewish Historical Institute (ŻIH) on several occasions so that he must have been aware that such a publication could entail serious problems for the institute. See: BERENDT, Grzegorz: Starania organizacji działających w Polsce o przystąpienie do Światowego Kongresu Żydowskiego (1945–1961) [Efforts of organizations operating in Poland to join the World Jewish Congress]. In: BERENDT, Grzegorz (ed.): *Studia z historii Żydów w Polsce po 1945 roku* [Studies on the history of Jews in Poland after 1945]. Warszawa, Żydowski Instytut Historyczny 2000, pp. 9–66.

anti-semites."[60] This made all too clear how the Göttingen Group hoped to have the book seen. Beginning with how Polish Premier Józef Cyrankiewicz, at the inauguration of the Auschwitz memorial, completely omitted the fact that the majority of the people murdered there had been Jews, Janke looked into the question of why Poles sought to suppress any mention of the fate of Jews in the Second World War. He suggested that this was not in fact exclusively driven by the wish to depict the "Polish people with six million dead"[61] as the main victims of the war, while hushing up the fact that most of the victims were in fact Jewish – using "the so-called 'final solution to the Jewish question' to further their political goals in opposition to West Germany – just as it was used to frame mass expulsion of the East German population as an 'act of reparation to Poland.'"

Instead, the true reason for Polish silence on the Jewish victims, according to Janke, was the fact that the murder of Jews would not have been possible in the first place without Polish complicity and assistance. As he put it: "Hitler and his henchmen would have never been able […] to murder so many people of Jewish faith and Jewish background had it not been for the numerous cases of Polish people betraying […] their Jewish fellow citizens. The person who was the first to put this serious accusation into writing […] was the historian of the Warsaw Ghetto, Dr Emanuel Ringelblum. […] In an attempt to ensure the historical veracity of one of the darkest chapters in human history, the Stuttgart-based Seewald Publishing House published Ringelblum's writings for the first time in the Western world in a book entitled *Ghetto Warschau*, for which Professor Dr Erich [sic] Tartakower of the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem wrote the preface."

Janke not only denied suffering of Poles under German occupation but also, with reference to Ringelblum, depicted the Poles as accomplices in the persecution and murder of Jews as well as the expulsion of Germans. This depiction was ultimately based on the same arguments that Erwin Rogalla used in his 1964 commentary. Janke ratcheted it up even further by juxtaposing the seemingly distorted official Polish version of history with its mirror image in the form of an equally distorted account.

Ringelblum's essay, which was now bent to this purpose in the book *Ghetto Warschau*, would now serve as an outline for anti-Polish attacks. The rhetoric of the Göttingen Group, which instrumentalized Jewish victims of the Holocaust while specifically focusing on the complicity of Poles in the murder of Jews, followed the same pattern as official Polish history, which remained silent on the Holocaust and practically made the Poles the sole victims of the German occupiers. The murdered Jews were thus mere objects to serve the respective interests of each of the two sides.

Despite the best efforts of the Göttingen Group, the book *Ghetto Warschau* would not find much resonance in Germany outside of the expellee press, even though an anti-semitic campaign began in Poland only a few weeks after its publication, following the Six-Day War between Israel and its Arab neighbours, a campaign that

60 *Hvp*, No. 19/67 (10 May 1967).
61 *Ibid.*

would result in the emigration of vast portions of Poland's Jewish population.[62] While Polish anti-semitism would certainly become a topic of focus in the German press of the time, this did not, much to the surprise of the Göttingen Group, lead to *Ghetto Warschau* being discussed in the mainstream press, even as it reflected "numerous parallels to the current situation of Jews in Poland," as one member of the group found in summer 1968.[63]

This was not likely due to a lack of interest in the topic, with Chaim Kaplan's *Scroll of Agony* being a frequent object of discussion in numerous major newspapers and magazines of the time.[64] Nor was Seewald, as the publisher of the book, the reason for it being ignored in mass media, as a total of 12 of the publishing house's books had been reviewed in *Die Zeit* alone between 1967 and 1969. Academic journals on East European and contemporary history also ignored the book until a single report was published on it in the journal *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* in 1972.[65]

The only exception to this was the *Österreichische Osthefte*, which did in fact review the book in 1967. The reviewer did, however, take notice of the book's inconsistencies, pointing out with astonishment that readers would expect Tartakower's preface to be followed by materials from the Ringelblum archives rather than "a popularized historical depiction of relations between Poles and Jews." He later added: "It nearly sounds like a justification: The Germans were not so bad after all – and the Poles were not much better."[66] While the author did not see the inconsistencies as being connected to an intentional attempt at distortion, the *Osthefte* review does take note of the book's questionable treatment of Ringelblum's essay. This was surely the reason for the book being ignored in the broader press, as an attentive West German journalist would have taken note of the conspicuously intensive focus of the expellee press on the book. This was perhaps the reason why the press preferred to avoid the book altogether.

The book was met with particular resonance in the expellee press, whose focus on Polish anti-semitism gained further impetus with the beginning of the anti-semitic campaign taking place in Poland at the time. The *hvp* reported dozens of times between mid-1967 and early 1969 on the anti-semitic incidences in Warsaw and frequently drew parallels to the depictions presented in Ringelblum's work. These

62 On the campaign see: DAHLMANN, Hans-Christian: Antisemitismus in Polen 1968: Interaktionen zwischen Partei und Gesellschaft. Osnabrück, Fibre 2013; STOLA, Dariusz: *Kampania antysyjonistyczna w Polsce 1967–1968* [Anti-zionist campaign in Poland 1967–1968]. Warszawa, Instytut studiów politycznych PAN 2000.

63 MEINHARDT [Günther]: Der Polnische Antisemitismus im Spiegel der ausländischen Presse. In: *hvp,* No. 25/68 (19 June 1968).

64 As in *Der Spiegel* (30 June 1967, p. 111) as well as the *Neue Züricher Zeitung*, *Nürnberger Zeitung*, and *Berner Tageblatt*.

65 SCHRECKENBERG, Wilhelm: Das Judentum in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Teil II. In: *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, Vol. 2, No. 23 (1972), pp. 99–115, here pp. 104–106.

66 GESSNER, Christian: Ringelblum Memoiren. In: *Österreichische Osthefte*, Vol. 5, No. 9 (1967), p. 431.

reports were then carried by various magazines of the expellee press. Editors there also published reviews of *Ghetto Warschau*, which interpreted it from the point of view supported by the Göttingen Group.

One example of such a review was that written by Gerhard Webersinn in *Der Schlesier*,[67] which referenced Polish anti-semitism in order to minimize German culpability in the mass murder of Jews. Webersinn discussed two other Seewald books as well, fully taking on the Göttingen Group's interpretation, as was made particularly obvious by his paraphrasing of the book's jacket blurb.[68] This then provided the basis for his severe anti-Polish attacks, positing a continuity between how Polish people betrayed their Jewish fellow citizens, as described by Ringelblum, and the Polish policy toward Israel at the time and the anti-semitism within the PVAP.

In the same text, he discussed a volume of Hans Laternser's pleas during the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt.[69] Webersinn said of the defense lawyer Laternser that he "sought to shed detailed light on difficult actions of nearly a quarter century ago." In fact, Laternser, whose clients were accused of carrying out selections in Auschwitz, did his best to prevent such information from seeing the light of day. He generally insinuated that Jewish witnesses harboured feelings of vengeance and lacked in objectivity, even to the point of stating that the selectors had saved the lives of many Auschwitz prisoners.[70] The cynical nature of the Göttingen Group's view of history emerges with particular clarity when we read how Webersinn, in the very same text, utilized the testimony of a Jewish victim to pin the blame for the Holocaust on the Poles, while at the same time portraying the attorney defending the perpetrators as a figure working hard to uncover those very crimes.

"Zionists" and "West German Revisionists": The Reception of the Book in Poland

Hardly a week after Webersinn's review was published in *Der Schlesier*, the Katowice-based *Trybuna Robotnicza*[71] directly addressed this anti-Polish provocation in an article with the title "What *Der Schlesier* enjoys." The author not only found Laternser's book to be an atrocity (*ohyda*) but that this description applied to Ringelblum's work as well. The *Trybuna* writer found the latter to be a falsification, in particular when

67 WEBERSINN, Gerhard: Polen – Juden – Deutsche. In: *Der Schlesier* (3 August 1967).

68 The two quoted bits of the jacket text were repeated nearly verbatim in Webersinn's review.

69 LATERNSER, Hans: *Die andere Seite im Auschwitz-Prozess 1963/1965*. Stuttgart–Degerloch, Seewald 1966.

70 DIRKS, Christian: Selekteure als Lebensretter: Die Verteidigungsstrategie des Rechtsanwalts Dr Hans Laternser. In: WOJAK, Irmtrud (ed.): *"Gerichtstag halten über uns selbst…": Geschichte und Wirkung des ersten Frankfurter Auschwitzprozesses*. Frankfurt am Main, Instituts zur Geschichte und Wirkung des Holocaust 2001, pp. 163–192, especially 172 and 175.

71 Notatki i utarczki: Z czego cieszy się "Der Schlesier" [Notes and skirmishes: What enjoys "Der Schlesier"]. In: *Trybuna Robotnicza* (12–13 August 1967).

compared with *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej*,[72] a book on Poles who saved Jews during the war, a comparison meant to illustrate the "incomprehensible hatred" that went into Ringelblum's writing. The author of the article, however, could only back up this claim of "hatred" with a quote from Webersinn's review, which itself only paraphrased the blurb on the Seewald edition – none of which was in fact written by Ringelblum himself. The Polish commentator found it to be even more questionable, however, that Tartakower provided a preface to the book for the Germans, who were so unfavourably disposed toward the Poles. In both of his charges, he followed the Partisans' line of interpretation, which insinuated cooperation between ungrateful Jews and West German revisionists at the expense of the Poles.[73] The Partisans' historical narrative was ultimately of a similar cynical nature to that of the Göttingen Group.

While the criticism in *Trybuna Robotnicza* was limited to Ringelblum and Tartakower, people from the community surrounding the Partisans would soon use the book to attack the Jewish Historical Institute (ŻIH).[74] This institute was a thorn in their side since, as a Jewish institution, it could not be brought under their control, while with the Ringelblum Archive and other holdings it possessed a large body of documents that contradicted the view of history propagated by the Partisans. The publication offered them an opportunity to attack the ŻIH openly.

In early September 1967, an article appeared in the newspaper *Prawo i Życie* by Jan Kieliński with the title "Ignominy," which again focused on the book *Ghetto Warschau* and its review in *Der Schlesier*. Kieliński's article not only took on the *Schlesier* piece but also accused the ŻIH of keeping Ringelblum's notes from the Ghetto hidden from the Polish public: While only fragments of the text had appeared in Polish, full book editions had been published in Yiddish, English, French, and Italian.[75] Continuing in his polemic article, Kieliński wrote that while no Polish edition was about to appear any time soon, a German version had in fact been published: "Polish archive materials […] were made available via Yad Vashem to the West German Seewald Publishing House, which published them in German."[76] The ŻIH, he indirectly insinuated, was also responsible for the West German Neo-Nazis (*neohitlerowcy*) receiving access to Polish documents so that they could then, with Israeli support, place the blame for the Holocaust on the Poles.

72 BARTOSZEWSKI, Władysław – LEWINÓWNA, Zofia: *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej: Polacy z pomocą Żydom, 1939–1945* [This one is from my homeland: Polish help to Jews, 1939–1945]. Kraków, Znak 1967.

73 STEINLAUF, M. C.: *Bondage to the Dead: Poland and the Memory of the Holocaust, pp.* 84–86.

74 On the history of the ŻIH, see: STACH, Stephan: Das Jüdische Historische Institut in Warschau 1947–1968. In: *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts – Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, Vol. 7 (2008), pp. 401–431.

75 A thoroughly revised Yiddish edition did in fact appear in 1952, which was then translated in the US into English and later from English into French and Italian. RUTKOWSKI, Adam: O amerykańskiej, francuskiej i włoskiej edycjach kronik Getta Warszawskiego Emanuela Ringelbluma [About the American, French and Italian editions of the chronicles of Emanual Ringelblum's Warsaw Ghetto]. In: *BŻIH*, Vol. 45–46 (1963), pp. 267–280.

76 KIELIŃSKI, Jan: Nikczemność. In: *Prawo i Życie* (10 September 1967).

Kieliński raised these false accusations against the ŻIH intentionally and despite knowing better. It was indeed absolutely clear from *Ghetto Warschau* that it was based on a text published in the ŻIH *Biuletyn*.[77] A transfer of the documents from Polish archives abroad was therefore by no means necessary in the process. According to Adam Rutowski, the ŻIH deputy director and the translator of Ringelblum's notes from Yiddish into Polish, Kieliński also knew of the contract, signed in 1960, between the Czytelnik Publishing House and the ŻIH for the publication of a Polish edition of all of Ringelblum's writings. The publication had been repeatedly delayed due to concerns on the part of the publisher,[78] apparently involving the question of whether the essay on Polish-Jewish relations should be included in the edition.[79]

The goal that the Partisans pursued in this attack, which would in fact lead to an intensive investigation of the ŻIH by the Supreme Audit Office (or *Najwyższa Izba Kontroli* in Polish),[80] was to gain control over the ŻIH archival materials. This effort was driven forward by Czesław Pilichowski, the director of the Main Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes since 1965, who sought to integrate the materials into his own archive.[81]

The ŻIH did all it could to publish the Polish Ringelblum edition, likely as a reaction to these accusations. The ŻIH library indeed holds a completed galley proof of the book, with 1968 as the publication year. A handwritten note, however, indicates that the issue was withdrawn by the publisher in March 1968.[82] Pressure on the ŻIH increased steadily following the appearance of Kieliński's article, along with further accusations in the press that would soon follow and continue on in the course of the investigation. The withdrawal of the publication project by the publishing house had deprived the ŻIH staff of a final chance to counter the accusations.

In spring 1968, Pilichowski began his own attack on the ŻIH. On 26 May of that year, an article of his with the title "Documents and forgeries" was published in *Trybuna*

77 The version of Ringelblum's "Polish-Jewish Relations" in the *Biuletyn* was indeed softened somewhat by the editors through omissions and stylistic changes. Compare: KERMISH, Joseph: Introduction. In: RINGELBLUM, Emanuel: *Polish-Jewish Relations during the Second World War*. Evanston, Northwestern University Press 1992, pp. i–xlvi, here p. xxxii. A complete version of the Polish text can be found in the edition edited by Arthur Eisenbach in 1988: RINGELBLUM, Emanuel: *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w czasie drugiej wojny światowej* [Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War]. Warszawa, Czytelnik 1988.

78 RUTKOWSKI, Tadeusz Paweł: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny i jego pracownicy w okresie wydarzeń marcowych 1968r [Jewish Historical Institute and its employees during the March events of 1968]. In: *Dzieje Najnowsze*, Vol. 4 (2011), pp. 31–44, here p. 34.

79 Compare NALEWAJKO-KULIKOV, Joanna: Dzieje publikacji "Kroniki getta warszawskiego" w Polsce: Rekonesans badawczy [History of the publication of the "Warsaw Ghetto chronicles" in Poland: Research reconnaissance]. In: LEISEROWITZ, R. – LEHNSTAEDT, S. – NALEWAJKO-KULIKOV, J. – KRZYWIEC, G. (ed.): *Lesestunde: Lekcja Czytania*, pp. 385–403.

80 RUTKOWSKI, T. P.: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny i jego pracownicy w okresie wydarzeń marcowych 1968r, pp. 34–36.

81 STACH, S.: Holocaust und Kalter Krieg im deutsch-polnisch-jüdischen Kontext: Das Jüdische Historische Institut in Warschau und die beiden deutschen Staaten, pp. 76–79.

82 RUTKOWSKI, T. P.: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny i jego pracownicy w okresie wydarzeń marcowych 1968r, p. 37.

Ludu, the official voice of the PVAP. In it, he insinuated that the ŻIH had passed on materials from the Ringelblum archive to Yad Vashem, from which Arieh Tartakower put together a selection for Seewald to make it seem that the Poles were the true perpetrators of the Holocaust. He wrote that Ringelblum's notes had, "in the hands of the Zionists, gone from an indictment to a defence speech for the Hitler-fascist perpetrators of genocide."[83] He continued that, thanks to the ŻIH's work in support of the Israeli "Zionists," they were able to rehabilitate West German revisionists and shift the blame for the crimes against the Jews from the Germans to the Poles.[84]

A response by ŻIH Director Artur Eisenbach first appeared as a letter to the editor on 5 July 1968, alongside a commentary by Pilichowski, in which Pilichowski admitted that the accusation that the ŻIH sent archive material abroad had been a misunderstanding, even as he raised new accusations against the institute in return. He answered Eisenbach's explanation that the ŻIH had neither been involved in or informed about the Seewald *Ghetto Warschau* edition, with the question as to why the institute did nothing about it after it was published. Pilichowski underscored his full support for the decision made by the Czytelnik Publishing House against the publication of Ringelblum's writings, since they had not been prepared by the ŻIH in accordance with academic standards or been provided with an adequate commentary. In the end, he explained, the essay on "Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War" was, word for word, identical to that in the Seewald book *Ghetto Warschau*.[85]

The dispute between Pilichowski and the ŻIH ended in a sort of stalemate. Most ŻIH staff members left Poland in the aftermath of the anti-semitic campaign, and Artur Eisenbach resigned as director. The Ringelblum archives did, however, remain at the institute, which was then run by the historian Szymon Datner. The Göttingen Group interpreted this change at the institute's helm in its own manner and published an *hvp* report on the matter with the title "History of the Warsaw Ghetto to be 'rewritten.'"[86]

Conclusion

The attempt of the Göttingen Group to defame the Poles with the help of Emanuel Ringelblum's essay on Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War, and to use the text as propaganda toward a revision of the German-Polish postwar

83 PILICHOWSKI, Czesław: Dokumenty i Fałszerstwa [Documents and forgery]. In: *Trybuna Ludu* (26 May 1968).

84 With his claim of this type of cooperation between Israel and West Germany, Pilichowski built on the claim made in 1967 by Tadeusz Walichnowski that Zionists exchanged considerable financial support from West Germany in return for cleansing the revisionists there of their blame for the Holocaust. WALICHNOWSKI, Tadeusz: *Izrael a NRF* [Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany]. Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza 1967.

85 Letter to the editor of Dokumenty i fałszerstwa [Documents and forgery]. In: *Trybuna Ludu* (5 July1968).

86 *Hvp,* No. 18/69 (30 April 1969).

border, illustrates the degree to which the perception and interpretation of the Holocaust was determined by Cold War constellations. The process of coming to terms with the German crimes against the Jews, a process that was set in motion by both Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem and the West German trials of various concentration and death camp personnel, was viewed by researchers of the Göttingen Group – more than a few of whom had been responsible for contributing to the National Socialist racial ideology themselves – as a particular opportunity to further pursue their political goals.[87] The Göttingen Group did this by focusing on anti-semitism and participation of Poles in the persecution and murder of Jews and depicting the Poles as being collectively responsible for the Holocaust together with a few Nazi criminals. The Göttingen Group believed that it found a document that could support this view of history in Ringelblum's essay on Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War – at least when a modicum of adaptation had it appear to be Ringelblum's diaries from the Warsaw Ghetto. This shifting of blame for the Holocaust to the Poles primarily served the Göttingen Group to present the Germans expelled from the former German East as a group victimized more or less to the same degree as the Jews.

The Göttingen Group thus developed an interpretation of the Holocaust in German-occupied Poland that was the exact mirror image of the Polish narrative on the occupation established by the "Partisan" faction. The nationalist group depicted the Poles as the main victims of the war, who saved Jews despite their own suffering. The Partisans moreover tacitly turned the murdered Jews into Polish victims as well. Ultimately, Jewish victims of the Holocaust served only as objects in both historical narratives, whose suffering was to be instrumentalized for political goals in one way or another.

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Translated by David Dichelle

87 Such as Erhard Riemann, who led the Section for Racial and Ethnic Research at the Krakow-based Institute for German Work in the East during the occupation (LINNEMANN, K. A.: *Das Erbe der Ostforschung: Zur Rolle Göttingens in der Geschichtswissenschaft der Nachkriegszeit*, p. 131) and Theodor Schieder, who contributed to Nazi "racial policy" with his essays and analyses (HAAR, Ingo: *Historiker im Nationalsozialismus: Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft und der "Volkstumskampf" im Osten*. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht 2000, pp. 340–345).

With Chinese Communists against the Czechoslovak "Normalization" Regime

Exile Listy Group and Its Search for Political Allies against Soviet Power Domination in Central Europe

Petr Orság

In 1974, when Pavel Tigrid, a prominent Czechoslovak exile journalist, recapitulated the activities of the generation of the post-August political exiles in the West during the six years after the invasion to Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact armies, he criticized it for a somewhat surprising political and organizational "shyness," resulting, for example, in the fact that no stable central exile organization had been established. According to one of his critical remarks, which were mainly directed at the reform-communist political exiles, little use had been made of the opportunities to find political partners in the world in order to increase the effectiveness of foreign activities against the Czechoslovak "normalization" regime. Apart from insufficient efforts to find allies among the members of the influential West European left, Tigrid also criticized them because "no agreement and cooperation had been established – at least publicly – with so promising an ally as China."[1]

Tigrid's reflections about the People's Republic of China (PRC) being a potential ally of the exiles against Soviet imperialism reflected the state of Soviet-Chinese

1 TIGRID, Pavel: *Politická emigrace v atomovém věku* [Political emigration in the atomic age]. Praha, Prostor 1990, p. 99. This edition is based on the book revised by Tigrid and published by the exile Index publishing house in Cologne in 1974, and not on the book published in the *Svědectví* edition in 1968.

relations, which had already been tense for many years,[2] as well as changes on the world political scene. In both of these, the "Czechoslovak issue" played an important role. China criticized the military invasion to Czechoslovakia in August 1968 as an example of the aggressive policy of the Soviet Union, and its highest representatives called on Moscow to withdraw the occupation armies from Czechoslovakia. China was more vocal in its criticism of the invasion than many other countries. But in fact Chinese communists had little sympathy for the Czechoslovak reform experiment with democratic socialism.[3] However, also in their own interest, they insisted on the principle of national and state sovereignty. They perceived the military invasion, as a practical demonstration of Brezhnev's doctrine of limited sovereignty, as a threat to China, and this led them to revise their foreign policy.[4]

As a result of the invasion to Czechoslovakia, although not exclusively for that reason, US administration headed by Richard Nixon also began inquiries through its secret diplomatic channels into the possibility of rapprochement with China. The future partnership between the United States and China started to take a definite shape against the background of growing tension in Soviet-Chinese relations – at the end of the 1960s, the decade-long split between the two countries deteriorated further with new incidents. In 1969, the long-term territorial dispute escalated into a series of military clashes on the Soviet-Chinese border. Although further escalation of the conflict was avoided, the situation remained tense. Political leaders in Beijing were therefore eager to seek effective protection against Soviet threat. The discreet rapprochement with the United States – once the arch-enemy of China – (*inter alia,* through diplomatic missions in the United Nations Organization, France and other countries) culminated with the visit of US President Nixon to China in 1972, marking the beginning of the era of US-Chinese strategic partnership.[5]

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2 For information on a number of cross-currents in the Sino-Soviet relations and disputes dragging on since Khrushchev's era see, for example, DURMAN, Karel: *Popely ještě žhavé* [Ashes still hot], Vol. 1: *Světová válka a nukleární mír 1938–1964* [War and nuclear peace 1938–1964]. Praha, Karolinum 2004; RADCHENKO, Sergey: The Sino-Soviet Split. In: LEFFLER, Melvyn P. – WESTAD, Odd Arne (ed.): *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. 2: *Crises and Détente.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2012, pp. 349–372.

3 Zdeněk Mlynář aptly commented that until the August invasion, Chinese politicians viewed Alexander Dubček only as "second-rate version of Khrushchev" (see MLYNÁŘ, Zdeněk: Čína – hrozba nebo naděje? [China – menace or hope?]. In: *Čína našima očima* [China through our eyes]. Köln/R., Index 1982, pp. 109–126).

4 For more information see, for example, JIAN, Chen: China and the Cold War after Mao. In: LEFFLER, Melvyn P. – WESTAD, Odd Arne (ed.): *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. 3: *Endings*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2012, pp. 181–200; MEISNER, Maurice: *Mao's China and After: A History of People's Republic.* New York, Free Press 1999.

5 See DURMAN, Karel: *Popely ještě žhavé*, Vol. 2: *Konce dobrodružství 1964–1991* [Endings of adventures 1964–1991]. Praha, Karolinum 2009, pp. 92–95; and MEISNER, M.: *Mao's China and After*, p. 378.

Czechoslovak Left-Wing Exile in the West and China

The pro-China orientation with the intention of undermining Soviet domination in Central Europe can also be traced, albeit more subtly, in the activities of part of the Czechoslovak post-August exile.[6] Whether Tigrid's critical remarks mentioned above reflected his genuine conviction or whether they were rather meant as a public intellectual nudge of Jiří Pelikán, the leading figure among the exiled reform communists,[7] the fact is that the reality did not correspond to Tigrid's words at the time.[8]

First, let us take a moment to look at the first part of Tigrid's criticism. It is true that Pelikán and his friends opposed the proposals that called for the establishment of a new exile political organization or an institutionalized party that would unite the excommunicated communist reformers. Nevertheless, the reason for this was not passivity nor resignation to political activity, but rather, in the beginning, the need to clarify the positions of the members of the reform-communist exile community (for example, economist Ota Šik left the activities of Pelikán's group and shifted to a social-democratic position). Moreover, Pelikán and his friends feared fruitless politicking. They were all too well acquainted with the development of the post-February exile movement, whose leaders had become entangled

6 In passing, let us mention that as early as in the late 1950s, Ferdinand Peroutka, one of the prominent Czechoslovak émigrés of the post-February generation, also paid systematic attention to China. See, for example, a three-volume selection of his commentaries for Radio Free Europe (FIALOVÁ, Zuzana (ed.): *Mluví k vám Ferdinand Peroutka* [This is Ferdinand Peroutka speaking]. Praha, Argo 2003, 2005 and 2006) or Peroutka's biography by Pavel Kosatík (KOSATÍK, Pavel: *Ferdinand Peroutka: Pozdější život (1938–1978)* [Ferdinand Peroutka: Later life (1938–1978)]. Praha, Mladá fronta 2000, pp. 251–254). Most recently on official relations between communist Czechoslovakia and China until the beginning of the 1960s see, for example, KOLENOVSKÁ, Daniela: Mezi dvěma slunci: Československo ve střetu o mezinárodní komunistické hnutí (1953–1962) [Between two suns: Czechoslovakia and the Sino-Soviet dispute over the international communist movement (1953–1962)]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (2014), pp. 531–559.

7 Pavel Tigrid was one of the first of prominent post-February émigrés to recognize the value of Jiří Pelikán for the Czechoslovak exile community. He saw that Pelikán was a personality with an extraordinary political and organizational talent, who had ample contacts throughout the world, which he had established as the head of the International Union of Students, director of Czechoslovak Television or chairman of the Foreign Committee of the National Assembly. Entries in Pelikán's diaries, which are stored in the personal fund kept in the archive of the Italian Parliament, show that both men met regularly since at least the beginning of the 1970s, continuously planning and coordinating activities against the "normalization" regime. See *Historical Archives of the Chamber of Deputies* (hereinafter *ASCD*), Rome, fund (f.) Jiří Pelikán, cardboard box (k.) 34.

8 This passage of Tigrid's book was criticized, for example, by Karel Kovanda in his letter to Jiří Pelikán of 27 September 1976. In the letter, Kovanda reminded that he had begun to build contacts with Chinese diplomats as early as in November 1971. (*Ibid.*, k. 16.)

in unproductive disputes over past faults and failures instead of organizing effective actions against the communist regime.[9]

Perhaps in order to avoid a similar fate, the reform communists, headed by Jiří Pelikán, initially implemented a more modest plan. Instead of establishing an exile political organization, they opted for a bimonthly exile magazine entitled *Listy* [Sheets] as the main platform for their foreign activities. It was Pelikán who, having settled in Rome, became its demiurge and the principal force behind it. From the very beginning, he saw the publication of *Listy* as a highly engaged political act and considered giving publicity to the Czechoslovak issue his primary task.[10]

The *Listy* group gradually formed around the publishing of the Rome-based magazine. Pelikán and his associates called it a "loose association" of those who had participated in the reform movement in Czechoslovakia and had moved to the West after the military intervention.[11] By calling it a group, they declared publicly that it was not a political party. However, it was the *Listy* group that eventually crystallized into the most influential left-wing political group of the post-August exile. Its members, headed by Pelikán, gradually established close and often long-term cooperation with the political leaders of the West European left, such as Bettino Craxi, Willy Brandt, Olof Palme, Bruno Kreisky, François Mitterrand and many others, who complemented the extensive international network of contacts and collaborators in Europe and elsewhere.[12]

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9 For more information on the crystallization of ideas of the post-August exiles in the West see ORSÁG, Petr: *Mezi realitou, propagandou a mýty: Československá exilová média v západní Evropě v letech 1968–1989* [Between reality, propaganda and myths: Publishing activities of members of the Czechoslovak exile community in the West between the years 1968–1989]. Praha, Nakladatelství Lidové noviny 2016, pp. 65–75. On the situation in the ex-communist exile community see also CACCAMO, Francesco: *Jiří Pelikán a jeho cesta socialismem 20. století* [Jiří Pelikán and his journey through socialism of the 20th century]. Brno – Praha, Doplněk – Masarykova dělnická akademie 2008.

10 *Listy* magazine was primarily targeting at readers in Czechoslovakia; hundreds of copies were shipped illegally to Czechoslovakia from the very first issue. Together with the Czech edition of the magazine, Pelikán also produced versions in other languages. Their aim was to win support for the Czechoslovak cause among the left-wing readers in different Western countries. The Italian mutation of *Listy* was published in several thousand copies thanks to the financial and organizational support of the Italian Socialist Party. In addition to that, French, German, Scandinavian, and shortly also English mutations were published several times a year. Pelikán and his colleagues also directly publicized Czechoslovak issues in Western media in different countries. (For more see ORSÁG, P.: *Mezi realitou, propagandou a mýty*, pp. 100–110.)

11 See HEJZLAR, Zdeněk: O skupině LISTY [On the Listy group]. In: *Listy*, Vol. 7, Nos. 3–4 (1977), p. 15. In this article, Hejzlar also summarized programme priorities and aims of the *Listy* group. Some of the members objected to his characterization of the group, perhaps most emphatically Adolf Müller (see *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 10, Müller's letter to Hejzlar, 17 August 1977).

12 This text does not aim to describe the activities of the *Listy* group toward the West European left or activities to increase publicity of the "Czechoslovak issue." For more information on the *Listy* group and the leading role of Jiří Pelikán see CACCAMO, F.: *Jiří Pelikán a jeho cesta socialismem 20. století*, pp. 32–51; for more information on the media activities of the

And now let us proceed to Tigrid's critical remarks on the exiled left's alleged lack of interest in China. When seeking political allies against Soviet imperialism and Husák's "normalization," the *Listy* group did not confine its activities to cultivating ties with political parties, movements and sympathizers in Western Europe. If the Czechoslovak action was to succeed, however, these alliances would be crucial – as well as publicly highly visible. In contrast, the most discreetly developed contacts included those that the members of the *Listy* group maintained with Beijing and Chinese communists. And it is on this cooperation, kept secret in the first years of exile but later made public, that I will focus on in this study.

Pelikán interpreted the possibilities of cooperating with China the same way as Tigrid did. Even though publicly he did not share more information on the *Listy* group's activities with China than was strictly necessary, he was aware that Chinese protests against Soviet policy could be used in support of the exile and the Czechoslovak anti-regime opposition. From the first volume, the Chinese question was also regularly covered in *Listy* magazine.[13] Whenever Pelikán publicly defended the reasons for publishing articles on China, he used general arguments on the need to reflect the Chinese model of the path toward socialism and often contextualized them with reference to the hostile stance of the Czechoslovak regime toward China. For example, in his opening to a series of texts called "Do we understand China?," he wrote: "[…] not everything defamed by Soviet propaganda and its serving Czechoslovak propaganda can be automatically considered good. But precisely for this reason we want to examine Chinese reality critically and seek responses to questions raised by it. We already know that Chinese foreign policy is clearly favourable to us: The Chinese delegation in the UN is the only one that repeatedly raises the issue of withdrawing Soviet armies from Czechoslovakia. China also strongly opposes the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia, as well as Soviet power policy toward other East European and Third World countries […]."[14]

These public arguments justifying the exiled reform communists' reasons for establishing and developing contacts with Chinese political circles from the very beginning of their foreign activities differed little from what they said about China internally – in correspondence and debates. China's increasing power on the international scene, its criticism of imperial and conquering Soviet foreign policy, as well as the internal development of China after the excesses of the Cultural Revolution had disappeared – all these developments led the exiles to consider the possibility of using them for the benefit of Czechoslovak foreign action. In many ways, the opportunity to develop friendly relations with Chinese communists was an attractive prospect for Pelikán and his associates. On the one hand, these contacts could

post-August exiles in the West see ORSÁG, P.: *Mezi realitou, propagandou a mýty*, mainly pp. 80–110.

13 See, for example, DALIMIL [LIEHM, Antonín Jaroslav]: Čína – třetí světová velmoc [China – the third superpower]. In: *Listy*, Vol. 1, Nos. 4–5 (1971), p. 17. This text was the first deeper reflection on China published in the first edition of the *Listy* magazine. More texts on China were also published in the next editions of the magazine.

14 Rozumíme Číně? [Do we understand China?]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (1976), p. 29.

help them in terms of their power position, that is to acquire a stronger position as political exiles in the West in their action against the Czechoslovak "normalization" regime. Over time, this objective was successfully achieved, as is shown by the reaction of the official Czechoslovak and Soviet media, which closely followed the contacts between the post-August exiles and the Chinese and attacked them in their propaganda activities. The activities of Pelikán's circle were also facilitated by regular financial contributions from Chinese comrades.

At the same time, China provided the former communist reformers with another, more general opportunity. The gradual easing of political and economic conditions in the "Middle Kingdom" and the increasing need for systematic change in the country increased the interest of Chinese political circles in the 1960s Czechoslovak attempt to reform state socialism. Their primary interests were economic. The need to study and reconsider different economic models increased in Beijing after the pro-reform wing of the Communist Party of China (CPC), under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping (rehabilitated for the second time), managed to enforce economic reforms in December 1978, also known as the "Four Modernizations." Apart from economic aspects, the Chinese political elite were also interested in the broader sociopolitical context of developments in Central Europe, including the activities of the opposition against local communist regimes. Czechoslovak exiles gladly became the intermediaries of these experiences. Undoubtedly, some of them also perceived it as a sort of satisfaction after the defeat of the Prague Spring.[15]

However, Pelikán, whose connections in China were unrivalled among the exiles, as well as others, realistically evaluated the opportunities that were opening up. This is not to suggest that he did not take his intermediary role and the role of others who went to China seriously. Yet he did not overestimate this role, because he was well aware of the different sociocultural context and substantial limits of the Chinese reality. He had respect for China, but no illusions that the engagement of the *Listy* group in this direction could lead to a major breakthrough in his exile activities, or even in Sino-Czechoslovak relations. He saw the Chinese part of his exile mission rather in synergy with other initiatives.

Pelikán's close associate and former director of the Czechoslovak Radio, Zdeněk Hejzlar, was very cautious about expressing any generalized opinions on China, as journalist Antonín J. Liehm or political scientist and founder of the exile publishing house Index, Adolf Müller, had done. For example, Hejzlar, who visited China in the spring of 1981 with other members of the *Listy* group, regarded the trip as useful "for our purposes." But upon his return, he also realized that this was a diametrically different world, a world that was difficult for a European to understand and therefore also difficult to grasp. He claimed that in China "despite external similarities, everything was different from Europe: The phenomenon of

15 Probably the most inclined to more active engagement with China of the members of the *Listy* group was Zdeněk Mlynář – in the spirit of the words "it might be worth trying to start there again with our experiences." (See *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 10, Zdeněk Hejzlar's letter to Jiří Pelikán, dated 14 April 1981. In this quotation Hejzlar rephrases Mlynář's opinion.)

individualism has never developed, the phenomenon of liberalism was virtually non-existent, everything in relation to human and civil rights is also different, the scales of values are based on different traditions."[16] He also commented briefly on the gradual progress toward market economic reforms and its reflection in the official ideological doctrine of the Chinese communists: "They keep their distance from Marxist-Leninist phraseology and are against 'revisionism.' However, they also consider 'practice as decisive,' and so they undertake one revision after another. This has to lead to some new ideological concept, but it is still vague; they are not afraid of debating and questioning, but rather of conclusions […]."[17] Zdeněk Hejzlar, himself a communist "revisionist," was very curious about whether sociopolitical development in China would bring "anything qualitatively new." Keeping abreast of the search for a "reform-communist path" in China was also inspirational for other reform communists in exile, who participated in developing ties with China.

How and When It All Began, or Early Attempts to Establish Contact with the Chinese Communists

It was mainly Jiří Pelikán, but also several of his colleagues in exile, who had useful contacts in China after 1968 that could be developed. Pelikán had a number of friends in China from the time when he was head of the International Union of Students – for example, as early as in the 1950s, he had personal contact with Hu Yaobang,[18] the then Secretary General of the Communist Youth League of China, who was to become a very important figure in Chinese politics in the 1980s. Hu was a long-term collaborator of Deng Xiaoping. Together with him, he fell into disgrace during the Cultural Revolution, but following his political rehabilitation he rose to the top of the party hierarchy in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1980, he became Secretary General of the CPC Central Committee, and a year later head of the CPC. He was one of the politicians who initiated the rehabilitation of repressed intellectuals and introduced liberalization reforms in Chinese society.[19]

16 *Ibid*.

17 *Ibid*.

18 In their correspondence, the exiles mostly used "hybrid" Czech and English (*Wade-Giles*) transcriptions, but with some inaccuracies. In direct quotations, original transcriptions were preserved and the current English transcriptions (Pinyin) indicated in footnotes or brackets.

19 The conservative part of the Communist Party followed the reform efforts of Hu Yaobang and the party liberal wing with displeasure. Eventually, Hu Yaobang was obliged to resign and was replaced by Zhou Ziyang. Hu Yaobang's popularity especially among the young generation and Chinese intellectuals became particularly evident after his death in April 1989. His sudden death triggered student-led mass demonstrations at Beijing's Tiananmen Square, during which protesters demanded more substantial reforms. Bloody suppression of the protests with the use of heavy weaponry in June 1989, during which several hundred people were killed by the army, and the subsequent repressions against representatives of the democratization movement clearly marked the limits of the political liberalization in

Pelikán's friends from the student movement included Wu Xueqian, also a victim of the Cultural Revolution, who was later rehabilitated and in the 1980s became the PRC minister of foreign affairs. A similar fate was experienced by Hu Qili, former president of the All-China Student Federation, who acted as an influential member of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee after the rehabilitation. Another of Pelikán's friends, Qian Liren, was the first permanent Chinese delegate to UNESCO in 1978–1981. Later he became head of the International Liaison Department of the CPC and chief editor of the Communist Party's official newspaper, The People's Daily (*Renmin Ribao*).[20]

Similarly, nuclear physicist František Janouch, Pelikán's collaborator in exile and founder of the Charta 77 Foundation, visited China for the first time as early as in 1957. At that time, he travelled to China as a young researcher studying in the Soviet Union and – in his own words – as an ardent communist.[21] Janouch's friends primarily came from the world of science at Chinese universities. During the 1960s, he maintained these contacts, and after he arrived in the West in December 1973, he was able to build them up further.

A reference to the Chinese delegation to UN in the Pelikán's quotation from *Listy* magazine leads us to the first of the discreet initiatives of the exiled former reform communists, through which they sought contact with Chinese representatives. In November 1971, that is shortly after the PRC became a member state of the UN General Assembly as well as a member of the UN Security Council,[22] Pelikán asked his collaborator in exile, Antonín J. Liehm, to contact the PRC delegation at the UN headquarters in New York. At that time, Liehm was a visiting professor at the City University of New York. Pelikán provided Liehm with a letter of recommendation, addressed to "the delegation of the PRC to the UN, New York."[23] Pelikán drafted

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the country. (For more information see, for example, MEISNER, M.: *Mao's China and After*, pp. 483–513; FENBY, Jonathan: *The Penguin History of Modern China: The Fall and Rise of a Great Power, 1850–2009*. London, Allen Lane 2009, pp. 618–637.)

20 Pelikán's long-time contacts in China are also evidenced by his correspondence with Hu Yaobang and Hu Qili of August 1958 (in Russian and English), with whom Pelikán negotiated a Chinese visa for the representatives of the Yugoslavian Union of Students so that they could attend the 5th Congress of the International Union of Students in Beijing (see *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 1).

21 See JANOUCH, František: Ze země předsedy Maa [From chairman Mao's country]. In: JANOUCH, František – GROMAN, Martin – ŠTĚPÁNEK, Daniel (ed.): *Na smutek není čas: Korespondence mezi Františkem a Rivou Krieglovými a Františkem Janouchem a Adou Kolmanovou (1974–1979)* [No time for grief: Correspondence between František Kriegel and Riva Kriegelová, and František Janouch and Ada Kolmanová]. Praha, Nadace Charty 77 2009, p. 114, František Kriegel's letter to Janouch, 2 March 1976.

22 The acknowledgement of the People's Republic of China in international fora came as one of the results of the US-China rapprochement. The Republic of China – ROC (with the seat in Taiwan, where political elites of the Nationalist Party, Kuomintang, moved after the lost civil war and the victory of the communists in 1949), which had been the representative of China in the UN and other international organizations until then, was thus replaced by PRC in the UN organs.

23 The letter in English is dated 12 November 1971 in Rome (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16).

the letter as an official document and acted in it as a politician duly elected to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. He approached Chinese diplomats on behalf of the group of delegates of the 14th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, elected in 1968,[24] and on behalf of "the Socialist Movement of Czechoslovak Citizens, the main underground organization on Czechoslovak territory fighting against the Soviet occupation of our republic and for revolutionary socialism." He also signed the letter as a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. In several points, he summarized the objectives that led him to establish contact. He was primarily interested in informing Chinese representatives on the situation in Czechoslovakia and the local socialist opposition as well as in obtaining information for the opposition movement about the PRC position, and more specifically about its attitude toward Czechoslovakia. He also proposed exchanging publications and articles, and discussing practical steps that could lead to establishing closer relations between Beijing and the socialist opposition of Czechoslovakia "in fighting imperialism, for national independence, peace and socialism." Pelikán also thanked the PRC government for the protests against the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet army and for the displays of solidarity, emphasizing that "the clique of Husák and Biľak, which attacks the Communist Party of China and the PRC, does not express the opinion of the Czechoslovak people."[25]

This letter outlines in a surprisingly accurate way the plan of future cooperation with Chinese political circles, which the left-wing exiles around Pelikán followed in the years to come.[26]

This was not the only activity. Contact with Chinese diplomats was also established earlier by another exile, Jan Kavan, who had settled in Great Britain. From 1970, from his base in London, he had organized illegal contacts with the domestic opposition through couriers that he sent to Czechoslovakia. He was in contact with Jiří Pelikán practically from the very beginning of his exile.[27] However, these initial contacts with China had not yet been coordinated.

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24 In the letter, Pelikán refrains from mentioning that this was an extraordinary congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ), also known as the Vysočany Congress, which the "normalization" KSČ later proclaimed invalid. Among the delegates of the congress, he named the following exiles: Eduard Goldstücker, Zdeněk Hejzlar, Ota Šik, himself and Josef Pokštefl. Except Pokštefl, all of them were elected members of the KSČ Central Committee; Goldstücker, Hejzlar and Šik also the members of Presidium of the KSČ Central Committee. For more information on the Vysočany Congress see, for example, CVRČEK, Lukáš: Vysočany 1968: Mimořádný XIV. sjezd KSČ [Vysočany 1968: The Extraordinary XIV. Congress of the KSČ]. In: *Securitas Imperii*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2009), pp. 138–183.

25 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Jiří Pelikán's letter to the PRC delegation to the UN, 12 November 1971.

26 It is not clear from the preserved and available archival documents and memories of contemporaries whether the Chinese responded to this attempt of contacting them through the UN.

27 Correspondence between Kavan and Pelikán shows that from the beginning of the 1970s Pelikán used illegal communication channel created by Kavan to smuggle information and various documents. From 1971, this was also the way *Listy* magazine was shipped to

Kavan's initial contact with diplomats of the "Middle Kingdom" took place in London. He was invited to visit China.[28] Kavan accepted the invitation and went on a promotional tour, paid for by the Chinese. Later they communicated mostly through the Chinese embassy in Paris, to which Kavan travelled from London. He provided the Chinese diplomats in France with situation reports on the Czechoslovak opposition, as well as with various samizdat materials and documents, which were distributed in the West through Kavan's agency, Palach Press. His expenses for travelling between London and Paris were paid for by the Chinese.

At the beginning of the 1970s, another former university student radical, Karel Kovanda, who was studying political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the United States at that time, also began to look into "the Chinese possibilities." He also followed the changes in US foreign policy and the friendly relations between the United States and China with interest. Based on this, he decided to establish contact with Chinese diplomats through the PRC embassy in Ottawa, Canada, to which he addressed a letter in November 1971.[29] The Chinese replied and invited him to visit the embassy. Kovanda reported his activity to Pelikán and his collaborators, such as Liehm. At the time, he also discovered that similar contacts were being sought through the UN by Antonín J. Liehm, and in

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Czechoslovakia, during the first year in more than 100 copies (for example, in the letter of 27 October 1971 Kavan mentions to Pelikán the possibility of shipping approximately 200 copies of *Listy* magazine – *Ibid.*, k. 15).

28 According to Kavan, the beginnings of his contacts with Chinese diplomats are indirectly linked to his trip to the United States. In the summer of 1968, as the representative of the foreign section of the Union of University Students of Bohemia and Moravia, he embarked on a tour of American universities, giving lectures about the Czechoslovak student movement. The invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact armies came while he was still in the United States. In reaction to it, Kavan wrote a text on the student movement, Czechoslovak Prague Spring and invasion to the *Ramparts Magazine* (see KAVAN, Jan: Testament of a Prague Radical. In: *Ramparts Magazine*, Vol. 7, No. 5 (28 September 1968), pp. 53–60). In the following year, when already in exile, he was invited as a former representative of Prague radical students to the United States to the conference "Perspectives of Europe," organized at the Wellesley College of Cambridge University in Massachusetts. Kavan did not obtain a visa to travel to the United States, but could send his contribution to the Conference volume. (KAVAN, Jan: A postscript. In: STETTNER, Edward A. (ed.): *Perspectives on Europe*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Cambridge University Press 1970, pp. 130–149). In the opening of the text, he wondered why US authorities did not allow him to participate personally in the conference, raising a rhetorical question whether one Czechoslovak student could really pose any threat to social stability. Subsequently, the information on the visa refusal was also published in the *New York Review of Books* magazine. According to Kavan, this was probably where the Chinese drew information about him, as shortly afterwards, he was contacted by a representative of the Chinese embassy in his flat in London and invited to visit China, since he could not travel to the United States nor to the USSR. (See record of the author's conversation with Jan Kavan, Prague, 5 February 2015.)

29 He refers to this letter in his correspondence with Jiří Pelikán of 27 September 1976, saying that he wrote to the Chinese diplomats in November 1971 (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16). It was therefore at the same time when Liehm sought to establish contacts with Chinese diplomats in the UN.

Europe through diplomatic missions in Italy by Jiří Pelikán and in Sweden by Zdeněk Hejzlar. His first visit to the Chinese embassy in Ottawa took place on 29 October 1972, and in the following months he visited it on two further occasions. Since there was a programme of Soviet studies at MIT, Kovanda had access to a variety of material on the Soviet Union, such as documents of Amnesty International or the Russian samizdat magazine *Chronicle of Current Events*,[30] which was obtained through different channels from the Soviet opposition. Chinese diplomats expressed their interest in these materials, and so Kovanda sent copies of them to Ottawa. Like Kavan, he was invited to a tour of China, which he undertook in November 1972. He emphasised to the Chinese diplomats that he was interested in "the political aspects of the tour and expressed his wish to report on the situation in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to all who are willing to listen."[31]

Before embarking on the tour, he received a letter from Jiří Pelikán with instructions on how to make the best use of the visit and negotiate concrete forms of cooperation. When he was in China, Kovanda was to pursue the following: Convince one of the Chinese leaders to give an interview to *Listy* magazine, persuade the Chinese to invite another representative of *Listy* for a study tour to China with the aim of writing reports and other materials on contemporary China, and, if possible, to invite a three- to five-member delegation of representatives of the Czechoslovak socialist opposition to China. Apart from that, Kovanda was to appeal to China to issue a declaration on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the occupation of Czechoslovakia, in which they should analyze Soviet policy in Eastern Europe and express their support for the nations fighting "against Soviet hegemony, for independence and socialism." Pelikán also suggested inquiring into the possibility of sending a representative of the Czechoslovak left-wing opposition for a more permanent stay in Beijing as an information and political agent, "under some kind of cover – *Listy* magazine, or a translator for Hsinhua, or student or radio worker – or whatever role the Chinese would consider acceptable."[32]

None of these far-reaching plans, which were obviously ahead of their time, could be implemented in practice during Kovanda's first visit to China – apart from the

30 *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii* magazine [Chronicle of current events] was published by Soviet dissidents in 1968–1983 as a samizdat type-written periodical, in which they reported violations of human rights by the communist regime. Altogether, 63 issues were published. This periodical was the longest-running samizdat title in the former Soviet Union. The digitalized version is available at: *http://www.memo.ru/history/diss/chr/*.

31 According to Kovanda, his main discussion partner at the embassy was a diplomat whose name was Kuo Ching-an (written probably in English transcription). See record of author's conversation with Karel Kovanda, Prague, 11 August 2014 and the following correspondence of 15 August 2014.

32 Hsinhua – New China press agency (Xinhua); Kovanda used Wade-Giles romanization in his quotation. By "Radio" Pelikán meant Radio Peking (*Beijing Guangbo Diantai*), which also had a Czech section preparing broadcasts for Czechoslovakia. Apparently, Pelikán's letter, which had been delivered to Kovanda on 25 October 1972, has not been preserved. Kovanda quoted the letter according to his diary from 1972, in which he had copied parts of the letter (see author's correspondence with Karel Kovanda, 15 August 2014.)

fact that he informed the Chinese leaders about the situation in Czechoslovakia and the persecution of local opponents of the regime. However, the first steps had been taken, and over time, the activities outlined by Pelikán were gradually implemented. Kovanda stayed in contact with the Chinese embassy in Ottawa,[33] Kavan with the embassy in Paris and Pelikán with the embassy in Rome, where from at least 1973 he regularly met Chinese diplomats.[34] According to Pelikán's diaries, the Chinese subscribed to *Listy* magazine from as early as 1974 (they were interested in both the Czech and Italian editions) and contributed financially to the expenses of printing and gradually also to other activities of the *Listy* group.[35] The PRC diplomatic mission in Rome played a key role in the negotiation and coordination of the activities between the Chinese and Jiří Pelikán and the *Listy* group. However, the exiles also gradually started to use the diplomatic missions in Stockholm, Bonn and Vienna as contact embassies for maintaining relations and exchanging information and various materials.[36] Jan Kavan remained in contact with the embassy in Paris.

Gradually, other members of the *Listy* group also began to travel to China and expand the range of previous contacts and also the opportunities to use them. Economist Jiří Kosta, who worked at the university in Frankfurt at that time and also had a professional interest in China (his research focused on the economic systems of Soviet-type "real socialism"), had been looking for an opportunity to travel to China since mid-1973; this negotiating took place at the Chinese embassy

33 Sometime in 1975, this connection was interrupted, because (as he wrote in a letter to Pelikán) "a year ago (approximately) my contact was expelled from Canada on the suspicion of industrial espionage against the United States (or something similar)." (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 27 April 1976.)

34 In a letter to Adolf Müller of 15 January 1974, Pelikán mentioned a small detail illustrating the increasing interest of Chinese communists in the émigrés' opinions – before Christmas Day, he had been brought a box with Chinese wines and cognacs from the Chinese embassy and invited by the Chinese ambassador to private dinner (see *Archive of the Institute of Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic*, (hereinafter *AUSD*), Brno, f. Index, k. 18).

35 See *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 34, Jiří Pelikán's personal diaries of 1974. See ORSÁG, Petr: Mezi realitou, propagandou a mýty: Vydavatelské aktivity československých exulantů na Západě v letech 1969–1989 [Between reality, propaganda and myths: Publishing activities of Czechoslovak exiles in the West in the years 1969–1989]. In: *Český časopis historický*, Vol. 113, No. 1 (2015), p. 130.

36 See *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 10, Zdeněk Hejzlar's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 14 April 1981. In the letter, Hejzlar informed Pelikán about the visit of members of the *Listy* group in China (Zdeněk Hejzlar, Zdeněk Mlynář, Adolf Müller and Michal Reiman) and also urged him that the main embassy for contacting and negotiating with the Chinese was the one in Rome: "You must insist on that, because otherwise there is a great danger of various 'personal initiatives' […]." By this he primarily referred to overly active Zdeněk Mlynář. The Chinese embassy in Stockholm, through which the *Listy* group distributed information and materials, is mentioned, for example, in František Janouch's letter to Jiří Pelikán of 27 August 1979. This letter shows that Janouch was in contact with the embassy secretary (compare ORSÁG, Petr (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence* [František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Correspondence]. Praha, Novela bohemica 2015, p. 154).

in Bonn.[37] He was not allowed to go on an individual study trip aimed at becoming acquainted with the Chinese economic and social model, but could join a group of West German tourists in the spring of 1974 and participate in their tourist and sight-seeing tour to China. Apart from cultural and historic sights, he also visited selected industrial enterprises, agricultural communes, hospitals and local service works.[38] Jiří Pelikán provided him with relevant information and contacts. However, when he arrived in China it became evident that without personal contacts his chances of earning the trust of his Chinese hosts and negotiating anything in favour of the Czechoslovak socialist exile opposition were minimal.[39] Even so, he met several communist functionaries and had an opportunity to talk to academics from the Faculty of Economy of Shanghai University and show his interest in the economic transformation of the country. In a letter to Pelikán, he highlighted the notable differences in economic governance compared with the Soviet model: "Planning is very detailed, technically and formally it resembles the planning of the 1950s; however, the hierarchy of the institutions is not as rigid and bureaucratized as during Stalinism. […] Greater initiative in the development of production, its distribution, in the organization of work and in regular production management is possible. This is because the organizational and institutional norms are not so rigid and unified. In many areas, there are no written rules, and therefore local conditions and possibilities can be taken into consideration. Many things which are decided by the centre in Moscow in the Soviet system, are managed by the provincial authorities in China. Many competencies are decentralized to the level of the city, district, urban district, rural municipality or even to the level of what is called the street council of a city district."[40]

The position of nuclear physicist František Janouch, who left for the West as late as in December 1973, was somewhat different. He could develop contacts with Chinese colleagues whom he had met through his scientific activities. During his stay in Copenhagen in 1974, he was contacted by a physicist friend from the Faculty of Physics at the technical university in Beijing (*Tsinghua University*).[41] He knew Janouch from his stay in China in the 1950s and offered him a study tour of China.

37 An entry in Pelikán's diaries shows that Jiří Kosta's journey to China was discussed at the *Listy* group's meeting in Milan on 12 November 1973 (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 34, Jiří Pelikán's personal diaries for 1973, 12 November 1973).

38 For more information see KOSTA, Jiří: Čína očima českého ekonoma [China through the eyes of a Czech economist]. In: *Čína našima očima*. Cologne, Index 1982, pp. 39–57.

39 After his return from China to Germany, in his letter to Jiří Pelikán of 9 March 1974 Kosta said: "I was aware that any negotiation or intermediation in the issue of Czechoslovak socialistic opposition was not on the table as far as I was concerned. Should I look for reasons, then it would be, firstly, as you have already implied, the current situation in domestic and foreign policies, and secondly, also a certain distrust in me, of whom very little is known." (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16.)

40 *Ibid.*

41 In Janouch's articles, cited below, the name of the university was transcribed as *Tsin-Hua* (probably according to the English transcription, but with a mistake – correctly, it should be *Tsinghua University* in English).

Janouch embarked on this trip in autumn 1975 and, among other things, resumed old friendships at the universities in Beijing and Shanghai. Apart from academic debates, he also discussed the Chinese model of socialism, the Prague Spring and the Czechoslovak attempt at reform. After his return, he published the information about the journey in articles for *Listy* and *Svědectví* [Testimony] magazines.[42]

The fact that the reactions to these trips were closely followed in Chinese political circles is shown in the correspondence that Janouch and Pelikán maintained at that time.[43] These letters also reveal that Pelikán's contacts with Chinese diplomats had become very close by 1976 (in the second half of the year he met them practically every month) and that he wanted to act as a sort of European intermediary for China (at least in Italy), organizing, for example, a meeting of the Cultural Counsellor from the PRC embassy in Rome with Italian journalists.

The Problem of Czech Exiles within Mao's Theory of Three Worlds

Over time, contacts between Jiří Pelikán and the *Listy* group, and Chinese diplomats developed further. Nevertheless, the negotiations were difficult and lengthy, and they did not yield the results that the exiles initially imagined and planned for.[44] The possibility of having more open relations with Chinese communists was also complicated by, among other things, the theory of Three Worlds, as articulated by Deng Xiaoping in his speech to the UN General Assembly in New York in spring 1974.[45] According to his theory, the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, belonged to the first world, the developed countries of Western

42 JANOUCH, František: Čína našima očima [China through our eyes]. In: *Listy*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (1976), pp. 29–35; IDEM: Ze země předsedy Maa [From chairman Mao's country]. In: *Svědectví*, Vol. 13, No. 51 (1976), pp. 449–472. František Janouch said that Pavel Tigrid, with whom he maintained contacts at that time, was excited about Janouch's invitation to China. The Chinese paid for the air ticket, but he also received financial assistance from Tigrid for the journey. The text for *Svědectví* was written jointly by Janouch and Tigrid in Tigrid's house in Hericy, where Janouch travelled after his return from China. (See record of author's conversation with František Janouch, Prague, 20 March 2014.)

43 See ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, pp. 63 and 65, Jiří Pelikán's letters to František Janouch, 28 August 1976 and 3 September 1976.

44 František Janouch aptly commented on this in one of his letters to Pelikán: "[…] I have received a letter from Beijing, in which they say that they are still discussing my proposals. We must be patient – they will certainly come to a decision in 10,000 years – if some politicians, governments or groups do no fall before that […]." (*Ibid.*, p. 54, Fratišek Janouch's undated letter to Jiří Pelikán, according to the context probably July or August 1976.)

45 This theory is accredited to Mao Zedong in China (see, for example, book publication of the text, which was originally published in the *Renmin Ribao* daily: *Chairman Mao's Theory of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds Is a Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism.* Beijing, Foreign Languages Press 1977). However, it was first publicly presented in international fora by Deng Xiaoping in his speech to the UN (see, for example, YEE, Herbert S.: The Three World Theory and Post-Mao China's Global Strategy. In: *International Affairs*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (Spring 1983), pp. 239–249).

and Eastern Europe to the second world, and the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, including China, to the third world.[46] Chinese politicians included Czechoslovakia among the countries of the second world, that is among countries with which they had to cooperate against the first world, mainly Soviet "social imperialism," during the rapprochement with the United States. That was also one of the reasons why Chinese representatives did not want to disclose their cooperation with the left-wing exile opposition officially and openly criticize the Czechoslovak regime; the main geopolitical enemy and rival in the international communist movement was the Soviet Union. In practice, this meant that in the debates with Pelikán and his collaborators Chinese partners were willing to support the émigrés' objections to Soviet power expansionism in Europe and to criticize the military intervention in Czechoslovakia, but not much more than that. This situation is well illustrated by Pelikán's complaint that as exiles they were "inconvenient allies" of the Chinese politicians.[47]

At the same time, it is evident that the negotiations were extremely complicated for him and his colleagues, in particular during the turmoil on the Chinese political scene in the 1970s. To keep up with the rapidly changing loyalties of Chinese diplomats, who scrupulously observed the latest course of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, was often frustrating. "Just yesterday I was at the Chinese embassy and the very same counsellor who one month ago had explained to me that Teng [Deng Xiaoping] was a traitor and a reactionary, told me now the very opposite with a straight face, without even trying to explain. I understand that he cannot say anything else, but still, we thought that the meeting would be held on a different level. We will see what can be done about this," Pelikán wrote to Janouch in October 1976.[48]

Despite the problems in communication, the negotiations with China progressed well and gradually led to more concrete offers of cooperation. In this respect, the year 1976 was a significant one for the Czechoslovak exiles, thanks in no small part to the important changes on the internal political scene in China. In January, Prime Minister Zhou Enlai died; however, it was not vice-president Deng Xiaoping who became his successor as expected, but the little-known Hua Guofeng, who was

46 See, for example, MEISNER, M.: *Mao's China and After*, pp. 395 and 409; YEE, H. S.: The Three World Theory and Post-Mao China's Global Strategy.

47 ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondenc*e, p. 63, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 28 August 1976.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 72, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 26 October 1976. The correspondence between Pelikán and Janouch shows that Pavel Tigrid also sought establishing contacts with the Chinese through the Chinese embassy in Paris. In a letter addressed to Pelikán, Janouch said: "Regarding *Listy* – I am curious how the Chinese will react. Tigrid told me that one of his acquaintances had really disliked my article about China published in *Svědectví,* which Pavel had translated and sent to the embassy […]." (*Ibid.*, p. 54, František Janouch's undated letter to Jiří Pelikán, according to the context probably July or August 1976. Janouch refers to his article "From chairman Mao's country.") Pelikán also wrote to Janouch that Tigrid complicated everything by being impatient and expecting "immediate results" (*Ibid.*, p. 63, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 28 August 1976).

recommended by Mao Zedong. The April manifestation which was to pay tribute to the deceased Zhou Enlai, but which at the same time turned into a protest against the policy of the Cultural Revolution, was severely repressed. Deng Xiaoping was removed from the political spotlight as the alleged instigator of the protests. However, Mao Zedong died in September, and a month later Hua Guofeng formally called the Cultural Revolution to a close and arrested the radical group known as the Gang of Four. All these power games also had an impact on the negotiations with the Czechoslovak exiles.

Radio Peking as a Possible Source of Alternative Information for Czechoslovakia?

In 1976, the Chinese offered the émigrés around Pelikán a two-year work contract for a post of a language expert and consultant in the Czech service of Radio Peking. The first candidate from the *Listy* group to be sent to Beijing was Jan Kavan.[49] At the beginning, Kavan seriously considered going to China. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, he was the main organizer of illegal shipments of books, magazines and similar commodities to Czechoslovakia from the West, and in his own words, he was tired of doing this.[50] Kavan also discussed the offer by China with representatives of the socialist opposition in Czechoslovakia, because the Chinese had also considered inviting someone from this group. This, however, was not realistic.[51] Subsequently, Kavan had discussions about the journey with Chinese diplomats in Paris. He proposed that he would go to Beijing for one year and that in the second year he would be replaced by Karel Kovanda, who was very interested in the offer.[52] Eventually, it was Karel Kovanda who left for China on behalf of the *Listy* group in the summer of 1977. One of the reasons for this was that Kavan could not give up his work of organizing communication channels with home at that time, because after Charter 77 had been established the need to maintain effective and operating illegal contacts became even more important.

49 See *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 18 October 1976.

50 *Ibid.*, k. 15, Jan Kavan's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 30 October 1976.

51 In the quoted letter, he says: "[…] I am determined to go there, at home they think that I could be of help and this recommendation came from various circles […]." (*Ibid.*) The fact that an offer was received in Czechoslovakia through Kavan was also confirmed by Jiřina Šiklová, an important contact-person in Prague for illegal communication with Kavan (see author's correspondence with Jiřina Šiklová of 8 March and 10 March 2015 and records of author's conversations with Kavan, Prague, 5 February and 27 February 2015).

52 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 15, Jan Kavan's undated letter to Jiří Pelikán, according to the context January 1977. Kovanda sometimes translated press materials obtained from dissidents at home into English for Kavan and the Palach Press. Kavan then distributed them – also to the Chinese diplomats from the Paris embassy. Kovanda repeatedly expressed his interest to be sent to China on behalf of the *Listy* group in letters to Jiří Pelikán (see *Ibid.*, k. 16, for example Karel Kovanda's letters to Jiří Pelikán of 18 October 1976, 26 October 1976 and 13 November 1976).

By sending Karel Kovanda to Radio Peking, another part of Pelikán's original vision of 1972 was fulfilled – having a more permanent and immediate contact in China in order to develop other activities. In his letters to friends in exile, Pelikán said several times that he regarded Kovanda as a representative of the *Listy* group. For example, in a letter to František Janouch in August 1977 he stressed that Kovanda went to Beijing "on our behalf," and that he promised to send not only contributions to the Rome-based *Listy* magazine, but also internal information on local affairs, "as soon as he manages to find some reliable connection."[53] Just before leaving for China, Kovanda met Pelikán and a recent émigré, Zdeněk Mlynář, a political scientist and former member of the Czechoslovak communist leadership. Together they discussed the issues he should strive for in China.

Kovanda contacted Pelikán from Beijing on the 10th day of his stay, sending him a letter with general information on the situation in the Czech section of Radio Peking: "There are approximately 13 people; some of them speak good Czech, others do not. Some had studied in Prague, at least for several months, even during the 1960s when relations were bad, but there was a cultural agreement. Now, there is no agreement at all. All of them (I think) had learnt Czech at the Institute of Foreign Languages here, some only with Chinese teachers […]."[54] Later, in a book interview, Kovanda mentioned that in terms of age and opinions, the editors were a curious mixture: "Some of the editors were younger, others older, some were old communists, others old covert dissenters, some were young people who came to the radio as a consequence of the Cultural Revolution, having been simply dragged from their villages and told: 'You will learn Czech.' And so they learnt Czech and then went to work for the radio station."[55]

Jana Stárková, who replaced Kovanda in the post of language expert at Radio Peking, later recalled that some of her colleagues were "children of the Cultural Revolution affected by total brainwashing," who were keen to leave the rural areas after the end of the revolution and study in the cities, preferably Beijing. Her colleagues in the editorial office included former cooks, village shepherds and the like, who had chosen Czech, a language completely unknown to them, from a number of languages that they could select, and had studied it at the Institute of Foreign Languages in Beijing. Stárková also described how she had heard about the horrible experiences of her editorial office colleagues during the Cultural Revolution, when workers of the radio station who had become "politically unreliable" committed suicide by jumping out of the window. "And so you would learn that XY is sitting next to Z, whose daughter committed suicide […] and others just kept working

53 ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, p. 109, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 18 August 1977.

54 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's hand-written letter to Jiří Pelikán, 10 August 1977.

55 PAVLAČÍK, Zbyněk – KOVANDA, Karel: *Zápasy o svědomí* [Struggle for conscience]. Ostrava, Jagello 2011, p. 31.

there as if nothing had happened, no protests at all, they tried to forget it or simply endure it and kept working together side by side."[56]

In the mid-1970s, Radio Peking broadcast a 30-minute programme in Czech at 8:00 pm Central European time, repeated at 8:30 pm, on the frequencies of 26.3, 38.3 and 42.7 metres.[57] The programme was prepared almost exclusively using official material from the New China (*Xinhua*)[58] press agency, and according to Kovanda it reflected "life here rather than life in Eastern Europe."[59] Under the impression of political easing in China, Kovanda still cherished hopes of gradually influencing the content of broadcasts to Czechoslovakia. The editors of Radio Peking received *Rudé právo* daily, and Kovanda asked Pelikán to send *Listy* magazine. His work as a consultant consisted of proofreading Czech translations of texts prepared by his Chinese colleagues for broadcasting and in pointing out to mistakes. He did not participate in the broadcasts personally (for example as a presenter). The Czech section formed part of Radio Peking's department for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The radio station broadcast in all East European languages, but the only experts sent by governments were from Romania and Albania. During Kovanda's stay, there was also a Hungarian woman from the German Democratic Republic and a Yugoslav, who had an Albanian wife and lived alternately in Albania and China. Kovanda reported that there was no Pole, Russian or Bulgarian, and suggested to Pelikán that if "finding a Polish, or alternatively a Russian expert could be mediated, it would be, I think, welcomed."[60] Kovanda was not the first Czech expert to work for Radio Peking. Before him, director Vladimír Vlček, a former prominent member of the communist regime, who had left for the West after 1968, had worked for the radio station in 1974–1975.[61]

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56 Records of the author's conversations with Jana Stárková, Brno, 10 July 2014; Wien, 19 November 2014.

57 Later Kovanda said that this 30-minute programme was always repeated twice (see KOVANDA, Karel: Čínské střípky [Fragments from China]. In: *Čína našima očima*, p. 60. In the correspondence of 1978, Kovanda mentioned the frequencies of 27.2, 38.3 and 42.7 metres (see ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, p. 258, Circular of the *Listy* group of 20 October 1978). In the overview of foreign radio broadcasts to Czechoslovakia for 1982, the exile *Západ* magazine [The West magazine] mentioned a one-hour programme and the following frequencies: 25, 31, 35, 39, 58 and 65 metres for Radio Peking (*Západ*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1982), p. 31).

58 In his letters, Kovanda uses Wade-Giles romanization of the press agency "Hsinhua."

59 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 10 August 1977.

60 *Ibid.*

61 After the war, Vladimír Vlček (1919–1977) studied at the Moscow All-Union State Institute of Cinematography (*Vserossiyskiy gosudarstvennyy institut kinematografii* – VGIK) and directed primarily "socially constructive" documentaries and films, such as *Rudá záře nad Kladnem* [Red glow over Kladno], which was based on the book of the same name written by Antonín Zápotocký. He became a laureate of the Stalin Prize. His links to China were also professional – in 1953, he was a member of a delegation of film-makers to China. As a result of the journey, he directed a creative document entitled *Čínské jaro* [Chinese spring] (1953), for which he wrote the screenplay as well. After going to exile, he also

Foreign experts were accommodated in Hotel Friendship, which was, according to Kovanda, a complex of houses built by the Russians in the 1950s.[62] The Chinese had turned this complex into a sort of a "foreigners' ghetto, in which foreigners all live together, in plain sight."[63] Local people could enter the hotel complex only on rare occasions, and the entrance was patrolled by the army. Although foreigners could move around Beijing freely, meeting local people informally was virtually impossible. Any contact between local people and foreigners had to be officially reported and approved by the authorities.[64] This barrier to Chinese everyday life was difficult to penetrate and meant that foreigners were under control practically all the time and basically kept in isolation. This was also the case for Kovanda, and he could not establish contact with any organization, "definitely not with the Foreign Office" (i.e. the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs).[65] Although he tried to be active and sought opportunities to use his stay in Beijing for the benefit of the Czechoslovak socialist opposition, the preserved correspondence illustrates that, despite the tentative and very slow political easing in post-Maoist China, it was an immensely difficult task under the local conditions.

It took him several months before he could establish a satisfactory postal link with Europe to send information and contributions to Pelikán for *Listy* magazine. In his letter of 26 October 1977, he wrote to Pelikán that after initial problems the "postal situation normalized," by which he meant coping with bureaucracy and censorship. The letter addressed to Pelikán, in which he sent a sequel to his article for *Listy* magazine on China after the 11th Congress of the Communist Party, was not delivered directly from Beijing. It was taken by someone who had travelled to Paris and was then sent from there to Rome, because this was one of the ways to circumvent Chinese censorship.[66] However, according to information provided by Karel Kovanda, this channel was not used regularly, but rather at random. Mostly, he had to rely on the official postal service.[67] The people in the editorial office knew that Kovanda was writing about the situation in China for *Listy* magazine, but it was tolerated.[68] Apart from *Listy* magazine, Kovanda also had contacts in the editorial office of the *Los Angeles Times* and wrote articles for them. Some of these

worked in Japan. Kovanda wrote to Pelikán that Vlček did not stay in Beijing for two years, because his wife had left him (*Ibid.*, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 10 August 1977).

62 *Ibid.,* Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 10 August 1977.

63 KOVANDA, K.: Čínské střípky, p. 61.

64 *Ibid.*

65 *ASCD*, Karel Kovanda's hand-written letter to Jiří Pelikán, 10 August 1977.

66 *Ibid.*, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 26 October 1977.

67 See Karel Kovanda's e-mail correspondence with the author of this text of 10 July 2015.

68 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 21 November 1977. Kovanda's article about China after the 11th Party Congress was published in *Listy* magazine in two parts: Po 11. sjezdu KS Číny [After the 11th Congress of the CPC]. In: *Listy*, Vol. 7, No. 5 (1977), p. 33; Čína po 11. sjezdu strany [China after the 11th Party Congress]. In: *Ibid.*, No. 6, pp. 46–48. Both texts were printed without the name of the author (at Kovanda's request as his mother and brother lived in Prague and he did not wish to attract attention to his person), but with a note under the title saying "From our Beijing correspondent."

texts were delivered without any problem, others never arrived – apparently not passing China's censors, presumably because they contained something considered controversial from the perspective of China.[69] Kovanda also mentioned permanent problems with the postal service in his contribution to the exile collection of texts entitled *Čína našima očima* [China through our eyes]. Censorship affected both the correspondence sent to and from China, as well as foreign magazines sent to China from abroad. For example, Kovanda received an issue of *Newsweek* magazine with a page torn out and with a note attached saying that "the withheld material harmed [...] the interests of the Chinese people."[70] Despite all these problems, Pelikán kept providing him with issues of *Listy* magazine, which Kovanda tried to distribute whenever possible – to Chinese colleagues who showed an interest in the magazine, or, through his contacts among Western diplomats in Beijing and to other countries.[71] Contact with Kovanda was also maintained by other members of the *Listy* group, for example by Zdeněk Hejzlar, who sent him information on the group's activities.[72]

However, after several months of observing how Radio Peking operated, Kovanda came to the conclusion that material which had not been issued by the official New China press agency had no chance of being included in the broadcasts. This also applied to information on the Czechoslovak opposition – except if it was received by some European correspondent of the agency, "who would leave it up to the superiors in Beijing to decide whether to include it or not."[73] Kovanda explained the Chinese approach to Pelikán in the context of Mao's policy of Three Worlds: "[...] the countries of the second world (including official Czechoslovakia) are not to be attacked. On the contrary, possibilities are sought to enter into an alliance with them. Therefore, we cannot expect that China would write about our domestic political processes. The only things about our opposition's activities they would publish

69 See record of the author's conversation with Karel Kovanda, Prague, 11 August 2014. Subsequently, Chinese censors also withheld Kovanda's letters, which he sent from California to Beijing to Jana Stárková, his successor as language expert at Radio Peking (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 23 March 1980).

70 KOVANDA, K.: Čínské střípky. In: *Čína našima očima*, p. 72.

71 In the letter of 21 November 1977, Kovanda instructed Pelikán to send him 6 to 12 copies of *Listy* magazine and offered that apart from his Chinese colleagues, he could also try to distribute the magazine through his "Czech-Canadian friend, whose husband works at the Canadian embassy." He also mentioned that on board of a plane he had met an employee of the East European department of the Japanese foreign ministry and that he could send him a sample issue of *Listy* with an accompanying letter, "and should the Japanese be interested, they might subscribe to the magazine." (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 21 November 1977.)

72 In the letter to Pelikán of 26 October 1977, Kovanda mentions that Hejzlar "sent him a letter with a package of things from Cologne" (*Ibid.*, letter of 21 November 1977). Cologne in West Germany was the seat of the exile Index publishing house and a meeting place of members of the *Listy* group.

73 *Ibid.*, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 30 December 1977.

are those aimed directly against the Soviet Union […]."[74] Kovanda questioned the possibilities of his Beijing mission from the point of view of the Czechoslovak exile opposition in a similar way in a report for the *Listy* group a year later. He stated that, with the exception of information and texts for *Listy* magazine, his efforts in the interest of the exile movement had no effect: "I tried to do many things unofficially: I wrote a long letter to Geng Biao, the head of the International Liaison Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, with suggestions about what could be done on the occasion of the anniversary of the invasion or Františ̌ek Kriegel's birthday. Nothing happened; I did not even receive a reply. The husband of our superior works at the Foreign Office, so I once wrote a page about my view on the changes in the Charta leadership to my superior, hoping that she would find it interesting and that perhaps she could unofficially show it to her husband. However, she merely asked why I had written it to her."[75] On the other hand, Kovanda also stressed several times that there was a big difference between the officially declared position and unofficial approaches. Unofficially, Chinese politicians monitored activities of the Czechoslovak anti-regime opposition, in particular after Charter 77 had been established. For their internal use, information on the opposition was included either in the internal party periodical *News*, a four-page daily "in the format of *Večerní Praha* daily […] or in what we would call a cadre report, which is a daily (!), in the format of *Time* magazine, with 60–90 pages, intended for cadres, including all workers of the Czech section of Radio Peking."[76] The internal cadre press also reprinted, for example, abridged versions of Gustáv Husák's speeches, yet, as Kovanda wrote, "his attacks against the opposition are always translated *in extenso*."[77]

According to Chinese foreign policy, Czechoslovakia therefore belonged to the second world. However, Kovanda also noticed that the Chinese approach toward individual countries of Eastern Europe was differentiated and that many things were not stated explicitly: "On 1 October, it was a state holiday here. For several days, congratulatory telegrams from all over the world were being published. Telegrams from Poland and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (from Lubomír Štrougal) were published a day earlier than those from the USSR, GDR and Mongolia. In this country, nothing is a coincidence: the order of the telegrams

74 *Ibid.*

75 See ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, p. 258, information by Karel Kovanda for the *Listy* group, 20 October 1978. The reference to František Kriegel's birthday reminds of the fact that the traces of the Czech left in China were of very old date – Kriegel worked there during the Second World War as an army doctor at the Chinese-Japanese battlefront (see JANOUCH, František – GROMAN, Martin – ŠTĚPÁNEK, Daniel (ed.): *Na smutek není čas*, p. 16).

76 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 30 December 1977.

77 ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, p. 259, information by Karel Kovanda for the *Listy* group, 20 October 1978.

suggests, in the subtlest way, that despite the developments of the past few years, Czechoslovakia is perceived by China differently than let us say Bulgaria."[78]

Despite Kovanda's scepticism, Pelikán and his friends considered his work useful. On the one hand, they were aware that inserting "subversive content" into the broadcasts of Radio Peking for listeners in Czechoslovakia was not possible – for example, by quoting the exile *Listy* magazine – and also that the broadcasts were of poor quality. On the other hand, thanks to Kovanda, the *Listy* group had access to information on the steps taken by the Chinese leadership. This information was used not only for *Listy* magazine, but also in developing their activities in the West. For this reason, Pelikán called on his collaborators in the *Listy* group in early 1979 and asked them to look for a possible successor to Kovanda in Beijing when his contract at the radio station expired: "[…] in the current situation, it would be a pity not to use the opportunity of having somebody in Beijing, who could inform us about developments and write for *Listy* magazine; it would be good to find a successor for two more years. The requisites are a good command of Czech and English, and political reliability. If you have any recommendations and suggestions, let me know as soon as possible […]."[79]

An important change in the attitude of the Chinese political elite and greater openness toward Czechoslovak left-wing exiles came about with the journey of František Janouch to China in May 1979, and notably with the visit of Jiří Pelikán, who travelled to China this time as a member of the European Parliament – a position to which he had been elected as the nominee of the Italian Socialist Party. Both of them could build on relatively extensive contacts they had in China – Janouch in the world of science,[80] Pelikán in the highest spheres of Chinese politics, to which some of his former friends in the International Union of Students had progressed in the meantime.

Despite all his contacts and connections, Pelikán remained realistic and urged Janouch, before his trip to China in spring 1979, not to expect any major change in negotiations from Chinese partners regarding their attitude toward the Czechoslovak exile opposition and possibilities of closer cooperation: "[…] there are still many obstacles. One of them […] is our political orientation and the pressure of

78 Čína po 11. sjezdu strany. In: *Listy*, Vol. 8, No. 6 (1977), p. 48. The article was published without the name of the author.

79 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 3, undated circular of the *Listy* group for Pelikán's collaborators – Zdeněk Hejzlar, Zdeněk Mlynář and Adolf Müller – according to the context January or February 1979. In this circular, Pelikán wrote the name of the PRC capital as "Pekin."

80 In 1979, Janouch left for China at the invitation of Beijing Technical University and the Chinese Academy of Sciences. This was already his third journey to this country. (See *Ibid.*, k. 12, Confidential information written by František Janouch after his return from China for the inner circle of *Listy* group leadership, which was called coordination committee, about political contacts and negotiations in PRC between 20 April and 18 May 1979. The heading of the report states "Only for information of J. Pelikán, Zd. Hejzlar, Zd. Mlynář and J. Müller" – the last name refers to Adolf Müller, the initial "J" was written by Janouch by mistake.)

the Prague Spring on democratization in China […]."[81] He also pointed out how difficult it had been for Karel Kovanda to establish any useful contacts, despite the fact that it had been repeatedly stressed in talks with Chinese diplomats in Rome that Kovanda was acting as a representative of the *Listy* group in Beijing. Economist Jiří Kosta had had a similar experience in China as well.

Regarding the content of Janouch's talks with Chinese representatives, Pelikán still drew on the original aims, as outlined at the beginning of the 1970s in the letter for the negotiations with the Chinese delegation to the UN. The only difference was that he gradually developed and refined these aims. In general terms, the main interest was still that in international fora Chinese diplomats and politicians should demand the withdrawal of the Soviet army from Czechoslovakia. Other points to be negotiated were more specific: support for Czechoslovak socialist opposition "through mutual contacts, exchanges of information and also through material support (for publishing magazines, *Listy* magazine, books, leaflets, or for persecuted dissidents at home and the Charter 77 movement)";[82] better targeting of propaganda to Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe, especially by changing the content of Radio Peking, which should provide more information not only about China, but also about international developments, that is including the countries of Eastern Europe; and finally support by China in sending materials to Czechoslovakia and exporting manuscripts or information from home through the embassy in Prague.[83] In the spring of 1979, Janouch had negotiations in China along these lines, and his Chinese partners promised to provide this support.[84]

According to the report that Janouch prepared for the close circle of the Listy group leadership, he met representatives of the scientific world (he was received by the rector of Beijing Technical University and the vice-president of the Academy of Sciences of China, Zhou Peiyuan) and several top representatives of the CPC, mainly Pelikán's old friends from the International Union of Students, who had progressed to the top of party hierarchy after the Cultural Revolution and subsequent political rehabilitation. These included Xie Banding, vice-president of the *Chinese People's*

81 ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, p. 140, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 3 April 1979. In the letter, Pelikán said that the Chinese had already subscribed to 10 issues of *Listy* magazine.

82 *Ibid.*

83 *Ibid.* According to Jan Hanzlík, who analyzed materials of the Czechoslovak communist intelligence service related to the activity of the Czechoslovak exile community, Pelikán was allowed to "use the Chinese diplomatic channel from the Federal Republic of Germany to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic" after his visit to China in 1979. (HANZLÍK, Jan: Československá emigrace očima tajných materiálů [Czechoslovak emigration in the light of secret materials]. In: *Securitas Imperii*, No. 9: *Sborník k problematice zahraničních vztahů k čs. komunistického režimu* [On the issue of foreign relations toward the Czechoslovak communist regime]. Praha, Úřad dokumentace a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu 2002, p. 293.)

84 See ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, pp. 142–144, František Janouch's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 2 May 1979.

Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries,[85] and primarily the deputy head of the International Liaison Department of the CPC Central Committee, Wu Xueqian, who was later to become the PRC minister of foreign affairs.[86] Janouch said that their main interest was the political and economic situation in Czechoslovakia, Charter 77 and other opposition groups, as well as, for example, parallel culture, samizdat publications, contacts of opposition movements with representatives of the opposition in Poland, the GDR, USSR and Hungary. "Chinese friends were very interested in the issue of differentiation between individual East European countries, the possibilities for China to find allies in government circles, options for armed opposition or fighting against Soviet oppression, forms of economic, political, military and similar oppression by the Soviets and our information on developments in the USSR. A number of questions were also aimed at the *Listy* group, enquiring, for example, about its political position, status and connections with home," Janouch said in his report to the *Listy* group.[87]

During Janouch's stay in China, it also became clear why all Karel Kovanda's attempts to establish political contacts during his term of appointment at Radio Peking had failed: Despite Jiří Pelikán's repeated messages to Beijing through Chinese diplomats in Rome that Kovanda represented the *Listy* group in China, Chinese partners regarded him strictly as a language expert and therefore did not allow him to participate in any political debates. This changed in part with the arrival of Janouch, who convinced his Chinese partners to allow him to participate in political negotiations.[88] Subsequently, Janouch interpreted their joint official reception by Wu Xueqian at the CPC Central Committee as extremely important. According to him, Chinese political circles thereby acknowledged, at least on a symbolic level, the *Listy* group as a representative of the Czechoslovak exile opposition: "Meeting

85 Pelikán wrote about Xie Banding in a letter to Kovanda of 18 May 1979: "Xie Banding is really an old friend, who had worked with me for four years at the secretariat of the International Union of Students in Prague as the Chinese vice-president. He therefore knows Prague very well, speaks English (if he has not forgotten it during re-education) and is a good guy […]." (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Jiří Pelikán's letter to Karel Kovanda, 18 May 1979.)

86 In a letter to Pelikán of 30 April 1970, Kovanda wrote about dinner with Wu Xueqian as with "an old colleague of yours" (*Ibid.*, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 30 April 1979).

87 *Ibid.*, k. 12, František Janouch's confidential report about political contacts and negotiations in PRC between 20 April and 18 May 1979, written for the inner circle of *Listy* group leadership.

88 Subsequently, this was also confirmed by Kovanda in his letter to Pelikán of 30 April 1979, in which he informed on Janouch's visit to China. However, he commented on the reasons the Chinese had impeded his participation in discussions differently: "It was interesting that the comrades were very hesitant to let me participate in these discussions; Janouch, however, insisted and so I could be there in the end. They were not concerned with the fact that I would hear something I should not hear, but rather with the fact that I would see more than I should: his students. And I saw them and recognized a number of them: there were people who interpreted for me here in 1972 and which I have not seen since then, despite asking about them. They were simply hiding them from me. They were people from the international department of the Central Committee […]." (*Ibid.*, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 30 April 1979.)

on this level is usually granted only to representatives of fraternal parties (during my stay in China in 1975, I was repeatedly told that if we established a party in exile, China's relation toward us would change immediately)."[89] Apart from other meetings, Janouch also gave a lecture on Czechoslovakia to the Czech section of Radio Peking, trying to explain to the editors how to change the content of the broadcasts in order to make them more interesting for Czech listeners: "When asked how to improve the broadcasts, I responded that firstly, in terms of technical quality, better audibility was necessary, and secondly, in terms of content, I suggested dividing the news into three parts – China and its international relations, the world, and Eastern Europe and the USSR, and more commentary about the opposition as well as events and problems in Eastern Europe."[90]

It should be added that after the Sino-Albanian split in 1978, Albania cancelled a Radio Peking relay station in Tirana, which considerably weakened the quality of its reception in Czechoslovakia.[91] However, it could still be heard.[92] Radio Peking's broadcasts were monitored for the Ministry of the Interior by the Monitoring Service of the Foreign Radio and Television Broadcasting section of the Czechoslovak Radio, but did not attract as much attention as, for example, the broadcasts of Radio Free Europe or other Western stations broadcasting information to Czechoslovakia in Czech.[93]

"Where Did Pelikán Have Lunch?" or "Everybody Listens to the Voice of America"

However, even during Janouch's stay in Beijing, it became clear that the main negotiating partner for Chinese communists was Jiří Pelikán. He was the one they referred to whenever the debate was about to shift from general to more specific parameters of cooperation. Janouch therefore urged Pelikán to travel to China as soon as possible, "so that the iron that I started to strike has no time to cool down."[94]

89 *Ibid.*, k. 12, František Janouch's confidential report about political contacts and negotiations in PRC between 20 April and 18 May 1979, written for the inner circle of *Listy* group's leadership.

90 *Ibid.*

91 See PAVLAČÍK, Z. – KOVANDA, K.: *Zápasy o svědomí*, p. 31.

92 See, for example, the following testimony: STEJSKAL, Lubomír: Letní seriál: Vzpomínky rozhlasového posluchače, 3. část. Fyzicky v totalitě, duchem na Západě [Summer series: Radio listener's memories, part 3. Physically in totality, mentally in the West]. In: Stejskal. bigblog.lidovky.cz [online]. 3 August 2008 [cit. 2015-04-09]. Available at: *http://stejskal.bigbloger.lidovky.cz/c/44659/Letni-serial-Vzpominky-rozhlasoveho-posluchace-III.html*.

93 See, for example, TOMEK, Prokop: Rušení zahraničního rozhlasového vysílání pro Československo [*Jamming* foreign radio broadcasts to Czechoslovakia]. In: *Securitas Imperii*, No. 9, pp. 334–367.

94 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 12, František Janouch's confidential report about political contacts and negotiations in PRC between 20 April and 18 May 1979, written for the inner circle of *Listy* group's leadership.

Nevertheless, at that time Pelikán was fully occupied with another task important for his political future in the West – the pre-election campaign for the European Parliament, to which he was eventually elected as a nominee of the Italian socialists. Consequently, his journey to China was postponed to November 1979, but when he travelled there he was already a member of the European Parliament and had been invited by the CPC Central Committee. This ensured his reception at the highest party level.[95] He was received by the vice-chairman of the government and head of the International Liaison Department of the Party Central Committee, Ji Pengfei, and by Hu Yaobang, the future chairman of the CPC. He also met other high-ranking members of the party and state apparatus, old acquaintances, such as Wu Xueqian, who was the deputy head of the International Liaison Department at the time and would become the PRC minister of foreign affairs later. Pelikán was in China for 11 days (19 to 29 November), and he visited Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou (Canton).[96]

During the talks, Chinese politicians were extremely interested in the functioning of the European Parliament, the situation in Czechoslovakia and other countries of Eastern Europe, as well as the current state of Eurocommunism in Europe. This reflected the efforts of Beijing to play a more active role in international politics and become a counterweight to Moscow in the international communist movement. China's great desire for information at the time is aptly illustrated by a note in Pelikán's diary written during his stay in China: "Everybody listens to the Voice of America."[97]

With regard to Czechoslovakia, Pelikán's "Preliminary report on the visit to China" indicates that his partners were particularly interested in information on Charter 77, the dissident organization *Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných (VONS)* [Committee for the defence of the unjustly persecuted] and other opposition activities. The Chinese also started to interpret the Czechoslovak attempt to reform state socialism differently, seeing it now as a potential inspiration for economic and political reform in China: "The attitude to the 'Prague Spring' has changed: They now evaluate it positively and wish to understand its experience more deeply. They are mainly interested in the work of our economists (reform, the relation between the plan and the market, the introduction of the private sector), workers' councils, problems with nationalism and changes in the regulations and structure of the party. 'The project on the experiences of the Prague Spring 68' is very much welcomed, and they have expressed a wish to receive all the studies and all our publications in general […]."[98]

95 See *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 12, undated Jiří Pelikán's "Preliminary report on the visit to China," written for the inner circle of *Listy* group leadership.

96 Pelikán had already visited China in 1956, 1958 and 1959 (*Ibid.*, k. 12).

97 *Ibid.*, Jiří Pelikán's personal diaries from his stay in China in 1979, entry on the first page of the diary "China (1)," dated as "Pekin 19.-24. XI."

98 *Ibid.*, Jiří Pelikán's "Preliminary report on the visit to China" written for the inner circle of the *Listy* group leadership, undated. In the report, Pelikán referred to the research project "Experiences of the Prague Spring 1968," in which Czechoslovak researchers and publicists

This interest of the Chinese to find out more about the broader – as well as the cultural – context of the Prague Spring reform movement was also noted by Antonín J. Liehm, who arrived in China in the summer of 1981, together with František Janouch, as a representative of the *Listy* group, at the invitation of the Chinese communists. His meetings included one of several hours with Chinese film-makers. Relatively well-informed on the development of film in Czechoslovakia, Chinese film-makers were very interested in how to do things "differently," so that they would still be acceptable for the Communist Party, but also more progressive and liberal.[99]

Government and party officials had all the important articles from Listy magazine translated into Chinese. Partly as a result of this, the employees of the International Liaison Department of the CPC Central Committee were well informed on the situation in Czechoslovakia. There were two "political workers" whose area of specialization was Czechoslovakia and who were assisted by several language and technical experts – the latter monitored Czechoslovak media for them. The *Listy* group also sent them their own Rome bimonthly, as well as selected publications of the exile publishing house *Index* and materials of the Palach Press agency.

It is symptomatic that despite the grandiose reception of Jiří Pelikán, Chinese politicians wished that "the visit be comradely and not official, and therefore be kept secret from the media and the public."[100] This corresponded fully with their position toward the countries of Eastern Europe, which remained prospective partners for China against Soviet hegemony. Moreover, they did not want to give grounds for protests against interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Relations toward its own opposition certainly also played an important role, as it could feel legitimized by official recognition of opponents of other socialist countries' regimes.

Yet, the wish to be discreet was one that Pelikán could not and did not want to fulfil – he argued that as an Italian deputy of the European Parliament he had to be in contact with the Italian embassy in Beijing, as well as with Italian and foreign journalists. "I also said clearly that the Listy group was not an illegal organization and that we wanted people at home to know about our activity as much as possible. […] I think that this 'risk of publicity' had to be taken even at the cost of damaging our future relations. From the outset, we wanted to act as equal partners, with an autonomous position and opinion."[101] The concern about harming relations, however, did not materialize, and contact between the *Listy* group and the Chinese communists not only continued, but also became closer. Pelikán's position

in exile had participated under the leadership of Zdeněk Mlynář (for more on the project see CATALANO, Alessandro: Zdeněk Mlynář a hledání socialistické opozice [Zdeněk Mlynář and the search for socialist opposition]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (2013), pp. 277–344).

99 Record of the author's conversation with A. J. Liehm on 22 May 2014 in Olomouc (stored in the author's personal archive).

100 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 12, undated Jiří Pelikán's "Preliminary report on the visit to China," written for the inner circle of *Listy* group leadership.

101 *Ibid.*

in negotiations was strengthened by his being an elected deputy of the European Parliament, and this legitimized his international-political position as a representative of an important European institution. By not being only an émigré, he became a more significant negotiating partner for Chinese politicians.

However, there was also a good reason for the Chinese wanting to treat Pelikán's visit in November 1979 as discreet: The journey was monitored by both the Czechoslovak and Soviet intelligence services, and the official media in both countries used it for their own propagandistic purposes. While Pelikán was still in China, a short report under the heading "Birds of a feather flock together" was published in the *Rudé právo* daily. It stated that Chinese communists were starting to re-evaluate some of the dogmas of the Cultural Revolution, "but not the hostile attitude and aggressive policy against those communist and workers' parties which refused to embark on the venturesome Maoist path and succumb to the needs of superpower chauvinism and hegemony of Beijing." This policy also allegedly included "anti-Czechoslovak gestures and provocations," such as the invitation "of the traitor and renegade Jiří Pelikán." The report referred to the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, which "characterizes the provocative invitation as 'the interest of Beijing to flirt' through direct contact with similar traitors and renegades, which allegedly 'fits the framework of the new Chinese strategy.'"[102] Three days later, the Moscow daily Pravda published an article "Where did Pelikán have lunch,"[103] a literal translation of which was reprinted the following day in the *Rudé právo* daily.[104] The text basically repeated the propagandistic rhetoric of the previous article about Pelikán being "a renegade and provocateur" who is "related to imperialistic subversive centres." In addition, it reminded Soviet readers of Pelikán's role during the Prague Spring: "[…] more than 10 years ago, he was one of the main ideological leaders of powers that sought to mislead Czechoslovakia from the path of socialist development which it had chosen."[105]

The fact that Pelikán's journey to Beijing was commented on by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) demonstrates the specific and extraordinary position of Pelikán within the Czechoslovak exile community. The opening of the article merely mentioned that a member of the "european parliament" (the name was in quotation marks and in lower case) had arrived in Beijing, however, precisely this fact undeniably contributed to the attention paid by Soviet propagandists to a journey of an émigré from a small Central European

102 VOLF, Alois: Vrána k vráně sedá [Birds of a feather flock together]. In: *Rudé právo* (27 November 1979), p. 7.

103 BOGOMOLOV, P.: Gde obedal Pelikan… In: *Pravda* (30 November 1979).

104 Kde Pelikán oběd̆val [Where did Pelikán have lunch]. In: *Rudé právo* (1 December 1979), p. 7. The text begins with the words: "On Tuesday we wrote about the invitation of the traitor and renegade J. Pelikán to Beijing, and the objectives pursued by the Chinese leadership with this invitation. We reprint here the report entitled "Where did Pelikán have lunch" published on Friday by the Soviet periodical *Pravda,* which also commented on Pelikán's visit.

105 *Ibid.*

country and "an unexpected alliance of a theorist of 'socialism with a human face' and practitioners of 'barracks communism.'" Several days later, Tvorba weekly also reported on Pelikán and his trip to China in the article "Poverty of emigrant kings … and slaves." The writer of this report, apart from repeating what had already been said in *Rudé právo* daily, spoke about "the farce of electing Jiří Pelikán to the so-called european parliament, where he has the part of an extra with the fossil Otto von Habsburg," and about "how he and Chinese Maoists in Beijing fell into each other's arms."[106]

Pelikán's journey to China also attracted the attention of West European press. Apart from the *Corriere della Sera*, a report was published by the Beijing correspondent in *Le Monde*. The writer of this text erroneously described Pelikán as the former director of the Czechoslovak Radio during the Prague Spring, but stated that he left for Beijing as an Italian citizen and a deputy of the European Parliament. He also mentioned that this was already the second visit of Italian socialists to Beijing in two weeks; before Pelikán, chairman of the Italian socialists Betino Craxi had visited China.[107] At the beginning of 1980, Pelikán gave an interview to the Italian magazine *Panorama*. In the interview, he expressly mentioned the article published in *Pravda*,[108] as well as another article published in the magazine *Leviatano*, which opened by stating explicitly that Pelikán had visited China as an émigré from Eastern Europe.[109] These examples show that Pelikán closely followed the reports of his exile activities in the major West European media.

Reports of Pelikán's visit to China in the official media of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia as well as in the West did not affect relations between Pelikán and Chinese communists. The visit resulted in concrete offers of cooperation, which Pelikán reported to the inner circle of the *Listy* group leadership. The offers included the possibility of sending a four- or five-member delegation to China for a month-long stay, sending one or two Czechoslovak experts on Soviet policy to China, the formation of a permanent group to monitor developments in China and subsequently publish a book with this information, and plans to improve cooperation with Radio Peking.[110] As part of the internal agreement between Pelikán and the Chinese communists, the Chinese partners also undertook to provide financial support for the *Listy* group's activities. This information was not, however, included in Pelikán's internal report for the Listy group's "coordination committee." It only appears in his diary, in which he "stenographically" recorded the progress

106 SLÁDEK, Čestmír: Nouze emigrantských pánů… a kmánů [Poverty of emigrant kings… and slaves]. In: *Tvorba*, Vol. 38, No. 50 (12 December 1979), p. 8.

107 See JACOB, Alain: M. Jiri Pelikan a été l′ hôte du comité central du parti communiste. In: *Le Monde* (27 November 1979).

108 C'è nostalgia di Kruscev. In: *Panorama*, No. 720 (4 February 1980), p. 67.

109 Un esule dell'Est visita la Cina. In: *Il Leviatano*, No. 3 (29 January 1980), p. 7.

110 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 12, Jiří Pelikán's "Preliminary report on the visit to China," written for the inner circle of *Listy* group leadership, undated.

of negotiations, which were conducted in "a close circle" in China,[111] on concrete forms of cooperation. In one instance, Pelikán quoted this his Chinese partners: "We know that you work in difficult conditions. In a show of support […] we want to give you a modest contribution of USD 30,000."[112] It is not clear from the documents whether the money promised by the Chinese was actually provided or not; but it would not be the first discreet financial assistance to Pelikán and the *Listy* group. Pelikán's diary indicates that since at least 1974, the Chinese contributed different amounts to his activities.[113] After Pelikán's visit to China, it seems that the range of activities receiving financial support broadened to include not only the Listy group, but also the publications of the Index publishing house concerned with China.[114] The Chinese financially supported, for example, the publication of Janouch's book *Neretušované pohlednice z Číny* [Unretouched postcards from China], published by Index in 1980, as well as the publication of the book *Čína našima očima*, a collection of texts by Zdeněk Hejzlar, František Janouch, Jiří Kosta, Karel Kovanda, Antonín J. Liehm, Zdeněk Mlynář, Adolf Müller, Jiří Pelikán and Michal Reiman. This book was published by Index in 1982 as a result of the visits of the *Listy* group members to China. From the beginning of the 1980s, members of the *Listy* group also gradually began to participate in study visits and tours to China, for which all the travel costs and expenses related to their stay were paid by the Chinese.

The increased activity of the left-wing exiles in relation to China was not only monitored by official communist and Western press, it was also the subject of internal debates of other Czechoslovak exiles. For example, an exiled social democrat, Jiří Loewy, wrote to his colleague Přemysl Janýr in December 1982: "I heard the other day in Scandinavia that financial problems of the *Listy* group, before chronic ones, suddenly disappeared: after the return of four exponents of the *Listy* group from China. […] I want to emphasize that I am only telling what I have been told."[115]

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111 According to the entries in Pelikán's diaries, this was probably a meeting with Wu Xueqian, Pelikán's old friend from the International Union of Students. Janouch also met Wu Xueqian, together with Kovanda, during his visit to Beijing in April and May 1979 (*Ibid.*, Jiří Pelikán's personal diaries from his stay in China in 1979, diary "China (3)," entry of 23 November 1979).

112 *Ibid.* The amount was in US dollars. This can be evidenced by notes in the margins of Pelikán's diary, in which he recorded the then valid conversion of US dollars to Italian liras: "800 x 30.000 = 240.000.000." The exchange rate of Italian Liras to US dollars in December 1979 was approximately 1:811 (see, for example, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis [online]. FRED Economic Data [cit. 2015-04-10]. Available at: *https://research.stlouisfed.org/fred2/data/EXITUS.txt*).

113 See ORSÁG, P.: Mezi realitou, propagandou a mýty: Vydavatelské aktivity československých exulantů na Západě v letech 1969–1989, mainly p. 130.

114 In his letter to František Janouch of 26 October 1980, Pelikán writes that the Chinese agreed to "provide assistance to some projects that I would propose." (ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, p. 181.)

115 *AUSD*, Praha, f. Jiří Loewy, Korespondence [Jiří Loewy, correspondence], Jiří Loewy's letter to Přemysl Janýr, 2 December 1982.

Loewy talks about the visit of Zdeněk Hejzlar, Zdeněk Mlynář, Adolf Müller and Michal Reiman to China in the spring of 1981. The documents from this period, however, demonstrate that the key figure in negotiating financial support and other issues was Jiří Pelikán, not any of these four *Listy* group members. Pelikán was also able to obtain funds for publishing Listy magazine and for other activities of the *Listy* group from many other sources.[116]

How to Proceed with Radio Peking or "Do Some Harm Directly to Ivan"

The cooperation also included Radio Peking. As already mentioned, Pelikán had called on his colleagues to look for a new representative of the Listy group for the post in Beijing as much as half a year before Kovanda's two-year contract in the Czech section of the radio station expired. One of the candidates that Pelikán started to negotiate with was journalist Jiří Hochman, who had worked for a number of periodicals in Czechoslovakia before 1969, such as the *Rudé právo* daily or the *Reportér* weekly. He was an experienced journalist, and during his trips abroad he had also visited China in 1956, where he served as a reporter for the *Rudé právo* daily at the 8th Congress of the CPC and had his own contacts there.[117] After going into exile, he settled in the United States. His letter to František Janouch, in which he responded to the work offer in Beijing, shows that in the long-term he was keeping abreast of the situation in China: "By the way, I also know Hu Yaobang from Prague personally; I interviewed Deng Xiaoping twice, in October 1956 and January 1957. After Liu Shaoqi, he seemed to be the most interesting of them. I also have a number of acquaintances there, journalists (from Paris, Geneva, Algiers, Havana) and students. Some of them used to visit me at RP [*Rudé právo* daily]. Naturally, I have a very good idea of how to do short-wave news broadcasts, and I am trying to get the picture of how this could be done from China to Eastern Europe. […] I attach great importance to building up the propagandistic component, but from what you have sent me, it rather appears to be a matter of routine and quantity […]."[118] From the point of journalistic competence, he was therefore a suitable person; he even took Chinese lessons in the United States. Moreover, at the end of the 1970s, he had considerable financial problems.[119] Pelikán's choice was thus logical, and

116 For more information see most recently: ORSÁG, P.: *Mezi realitou, propagandou a mýty*, pp. 127–132.

117 See *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Jiří Hochman's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 23 April 1979.

118 *Ibid.*, Jiří Hochman's undated letter to František Janouch, according to the context probably June 1979. This was Hochman's response to Janouch's letter of 25 May 1979, in which Janouch commented, in the light of his recent visit of China, on the work opportunity in Radio Peking. (In the letter, the name of the Cuban capital is written in its original version "Habana.")

119 In the letter to Pelikán of 7 March 1980, Hochman confessed that for almost three years he had problems finding a decent job. He also unsuccessfully applied for the job in the Voice of America. (*Ibid.*, Jiří Hochman's letter to Jiří Pelikán of 7 March 1980.) Along the

in the beginning Hochman considered the offer seriously: "I am really interested in this issue, if only because it would be an opportunity to do some harm directly to Ivan after a few years," he wrote to Janouch. However, in the end he rejected the offer and did not go to China.[120]

The *Listy* group also considered the possibility of making the contact person in Beijing Jana Neumannová, a historian, translator and signatory of Charter 77, who was being harassed by the "normalization authorities" in Czechoslovakia and had problems getting a job. The possibility of sending Neumannová to Beijing, where she could teach Czech and Russian at the Institute of Foreign Languages, was discussed by Pelikán in his letters to Janouch.[121] In December 1979, he said sceptically: "Case *Jana* – unfortunately, we have reached a deadlock. My Chinese partners (from the party) politely, but firmly declined the proposal, or, to be more precise, postponed it (which is in fact the same thing) with the justification that they have only a few pupils studying Czech and Russian. They might be afraid of more people 'from the West' and their views on the harder line that the Chinese leaders apply to their own 'dissidents.' Apart from that and having seen the current situation, I am concerned that Jana might feel the same oppressive atmosphere in China as in Prague (though it would not be quite as bad)."[122] In the end, Jana Neumannová did not go to China either; in 1980, she left Czechoslovakia and went into exile in Austria.

In November 1979, Jana Stárková, daughter of the exile Jiří Stárek, took up the post of language expert at Radio Peking after Karel Kovanda. Jana Stárková studied history and Slavonic studies as well as Sinology in Vienna at that time and already had Austrian citizenship.[123] Just as in the case of her predecessor, Pelikán also tried to instruct her on how she should or could work for the benefit of the Czechoslovak exiles. The reality was, however, completely different. As mentioned

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same lines, he also wrote to František Janouch in an undated letter (about June 1979) that he was getting his Ph.D. at a university, receiving scholarship of 400 US dollars from the university, and at the same time doing a badly paid job of an assistant for another 400 US dollars. (*Ibid.,* Jiří Hochman's undated letter to František Janouch, according to the context probably June 1979.)

120 The plan failed, because Hochman wanted to transfer part of the salary to his family in the United States in US dollars, as well as due to other formalities (see, for example, ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 1 August 1979). His financial situation did not improve for at least another year. (See *Ibid.*, p. 174, František Janouch's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 12 October 1980; *Ibid.*, p. 178, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 21 October 1980.)

121 See, for example, ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, pp. 147 and 162, Jiří Pelikán's letters to František Janouch, 31 June 1979 and 13 December 1979.

122 *Ibid.*, p. 162, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 13 December 1979.

123 Jana Stárková's contract in the Czechoslovak section of Radio Peking lasted from 8 December 1979 to 20 December 1980. The English translation of the official Chinese certificate issued on 10 December 1980 by Radio Peking, which was provided to the author by Jana Stárková, says: "This is to certify that Miss Jana Starek of Austrian nationality was employed as an expert of Radio Peking's Czechoslovak section from 8 November 1979 to 20 December 1980 during which time she did both translating and polishing work."

before, not even Karel Kovanda could avoid feelings of frustration during his work for Radio Peking because of not being able to implement Pelikán's original plans for his political activity in China. Yet, despite numerous complications and the omnipresent control of the state and party apparatus, he was at least able to send contributions on the situation in China for *Listy* magazine, inform Pelikán on the news and shifts on the Chinese political scene and, albeit in a very limited way, help to present Czechoslovak issues. Jana Stárková also arrived in China with the idea of sending information and contributions to Europe. However, within a few weeks of her arrival she discovered that none of this would be possible. During her work, the regime for foreigners at the radio station became possibly even stricter (perhaps in consequence of Kovanda, who had tried to take the initiative whenever possible)[124] and any attempts to take political action were now impossible. Contact with the outer world was also strictly controlled, correspondence was censored and suspicious shipments were withheld by the authorities.[125] Like Kovanda, Stárková was not allowed to participate in live broadcasts. She worked strictly as a language advisor and proof-reader of Czechoslovak broadcasts – from a linguistic point of view, she controlled virtually all programmes that were to be broadcast. When her colleagues in the editorial office discovered she was bilingual, she also helped with this work in the German section.

Lectures for Chinese colleagues in the Czech and German sections of the radio station were the only opportunity for limited interaction with the public that the Chinese communist apparatus tolerated. Stárková could inform her colleagues about the situation in Czechoslovakia, including, for example, persecution of the local opposition. According to Stárková, her colleagues were interested in knowing how the post-August exiles perceived the situation in Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe; however, trying to have this information broadcast was impossible. For example, she suggested a programme for the anniversary of the August invasion of Czechoslovakia, but it was rejected. If the invasion was mentioned at all in the Czechoslovak broadcasts, it was only as a short, factual statement. The first texts on China by Jana Stárková were therefore only published in some of the local media (for example the *Wiener Tagebuch*) after her return to Austria.

Even later, the *Listy* group sought ways of making better use of Radio Peking broadcasts as part of its foreign activities against the "normalization" regime.

124 This is how Jana Stárková's experiences were interpreted by Karel Kovanda in his conversation with the author of this text. Kovanda maintained correspondence with Jana Stárková since at least the beginning of 1979. In a letter to Jiří Pelikán, sent from Beijing on 2 February 1979, Kovanda said that "Jana Stárková from Wien" had written to him "that she would be interested in working here." Kovanda recommended her to contact the Institute of Foreign Languages in Beijing where she could teach Czech. (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 16, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 2 February 1979.)

125 This was confirmed by both Jana Stárková and Karel Kovanda in conversations with the author of this text. Kovanda also wrote to Pelikán that the letters, he sent from the United States to Jana Stárková, were being withheld by the Chinese censorship. (*Ibid.*, Karel Kovanda's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 23 March 1980.)

Besides the language assistants, such as Kovanda and Stárková, other exiles repeatedly tried to convince the Chinese of the need to improve the content of the broadcasts to Czechoslovakia. This included, for example, an offer to send an experienced journalist to Beijing for two to three months to assist with changing the programmes. This intention was already implied in the plan to send journalist Jiří Hochman to Beijing, a plan that was not carried out in the end. When Zdeněk Hejzlar, Zdeněk Mlynář, Adolf Müller and Michal Reiman visited China in the spring of 1981 on behalf of the *Listy* group, Mlynář appealed to the Chinese partners to improve broadcasts to Czechoslovakia. They were considering sending Vladimír and Ruth Tosek, a married couple who worked for the BBC Czechoslovak broadcasting service and also edited *Listy* magazine. For the Chinese, "this was an interesting proposal," but one that eventually also came to nothing.[126] The Czechoslovak broadcasts of Radio Peking therefore never joined the ranks of other foreign radio stations, such as Radio Free Europe, the Voice of America, the BBC or Deutsche Welle, which, with the active participation of émigrés, broadcast "subversive" content to Czechoslovakia and served as an alternative source of information for people in Czechoslovakia.

Intermediary for China on the European Political Scene

In the foreword to the book *Čína našima očima*, published in 1982 as a concrete result of the trips of the *Listy* group members to China, the representatives of the exile publishing house Index wrote that it was Pelikán's visit to China in November 1979 as a member of the European Parliament that marked a new phase of Czechoslovak-Chinese cooperation, "in which, as long as the Husák regime follows an unrealistic and hostile policy toward China, Czechoslovakia is represented by its exiles."[127] While this is certainly an overstatement, the fact remains that Pelikán's visit took place at the best possible time – in China, Pelikán's old friends from the International Union of Students, under the leadership of Hu Yaobang, had risen to positions at the top of the power pyramid, and shortly before the trip, Pelikán himself was elected as deputy of the European Parliament.

Following this visit, other members of the Listy group also began to travel to China. Local experts consulted them on a number of issues regarding the modernization of the country. For example, Zdeněk Hejzlar wrote to Pelikán upon his return from China that the Chinese "are seeking reformist solutions to their own problems" and that "they will gladly accept the intermediation of visits by experts – mainly economists and social scientists."[128]

126 *Ibid.*, k. 10, Zdeněk Hejzlar's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 14 April 1981.

127 Introduction. In: *Čína našima očima*, p. 5. The opening text of the publication was probably written by Adolf Müller.

128 *ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 10, Zdeněk Hejzlar's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 14 April 1981. The same was suggested in a letter entitled "For information," which Hejzlar had sent to several humanity and social science scholars and economists in exile on 22 November 1981 (such as Radoslav Selucký, Jiří Sláma, Zdeněk Strmiska, Karel Kaplan). In the letter, Hejzlar informs

These visits also led to the publication of the above-mentioned *Čína našima očima*. It was Pelikán who came up with this idea.[129] The preparation of the publication was coordinated by Adolf Müller of the Index publishing house in Cologne. In August 1981, Müller outlined the general structure of the book in a letter to the members of the *Listy* group who had visited China, naming the following as possible contributors: Zdeněk Hejzlar, František Janouch, Jiří Kosta, Karel Kovanda, Antonín J. Liehm, Zdeněk Mlynář, Adolf Müller, Jiří Pelikán, Michal Reiman and Ota Šik.[130] Out of these, all except Ota Šik eventually contributed to the book. Although Müller showed great interest in Šik's perspective as an economist and approached him several times, Šik refused the offer, claiming that he lacked sufficient material to write on Chinese economy and that he had never written on China, not even for magazines.[131]

Photographer Ivan Kyncl was approached regarding photographic material for the book. Kyncl submitted about 20 photographs. From these, only one group photograph, depicting Chinese representatives with the exiles Jan Kavan and Cyrill John, was selected for the book. A letter from Kyncl to Müller in November 1981 shows that Müller was primarily interested in group photographs, but Kyncl did not have any others.[132] Another reason that no more of Kyncl's photographs were selected could have been that they were reportage style photos depicting Chinese everyday life (with titles such as "Morning gymnastics," "Clay figures factory," "Guard by the hotel," "Reformatory in Shanghai"). Müller and the *Listy* group probably did not want to risk offending the Chinese communists by publishing photographs that might depict something unacceptable to the Chinese. The book therefore included only non-conflict and static group photographs of the members of the *Listy* group with Chinese representatives. Pelikán and his friends probably wanted to accommodate the Chinese, who had contributed financially to the publication of the book. The opening photograph, which shows Jiří Pelikán with Hu Yaobang, was sent to Müller by Pelikán, who commented on it in a letter of July 1982: "Let them see in Prague that we have good connections! And hopefully, the Chinese will not become angry, as a lot has already been revealed about our journeys, and the whole book deals with it, after all […]."[133]

When publishing information on China, for example in *Listy* magazine, Pelikán generally employed various measures to prevent any misunderstanding that could

about Chinese interest in the opinions of Czechoslovak scholars in exile. (*Ibid.*, František Hejzlar's letter "For information," 22 November 1981.)

129 Pelikán already wrote about this plan to Janouch in his letters of 21 October or 26 October 1980 (see ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, p. 181).

130 *AÚSD*, Brno, f. Index, k. 30, Adolf Müller's letter to the members of the *Listy* group, 21 August 1981.

131 *Ibid.*, Ota Šik's letter to Adolf Müller, 30 January 1982.

132 *Ibid.*, Ivan Kyncl's letter to Adolf Müller, 14 November 1981.

133 *Ibid.*, Jiří Pelikán's letter to Adolf Müller, 7 July 1982.

threaten their cooperation.[134] The Chinese in fact objected several times about the way Czechoslovak exiles wrote about what was really going on in their country. In the summer of 1976, František Janouch commented in a letter to Pelikán on Chinese objections to his article "From chairman Mao's country," which had been published in *Svědectví*.[135] Not long after that, Pelikán replied that he had been contacted by the Chinese from the Rome embassy, "so, I assume they were not so much offended, although I do not know yet whether they are already familiar with the content of your and Karel's article […]."[136]

In this context, it should be mentioned that in China in the 1980s, books of some members of the *Listy* group were also published in Chinese. Jiří Kosta published a book in Chinese entitled *Teorie a praxe socialisticky plánované ekonomiky* [Theory and practice of socialist planned economy], and as early as in April 1980, Zdeněk Mlynář's most famous book, *Mráz přichází z Kremlu* [published in English as *Night Frost in Prague*] was translated into Chinese and published.[137]

But Jiří Pelikán became an important intermediary in issues related to China not only for the *Listy* group and the Czechoslovak exile community. Thanks to his long-term contacts in China and ties with Chinese political and party leaders, he began to play a similar role as a member of the European Parliament. In this respect, his above-mentioned visit to China at the end of 1979, which he carried out as a representative of this institution, was a test for both sides. In his following trips to China as MEP, he prepared situation reports on the gradual changes taking place in Chinese politics and economy for his colleagues in the European Parliament. At the same time, he encouraged the development of economic cooperation between the countries of the European Community and China, which soon appeared to be a prospective partner for the future. In 1983, Pelikán became a rapporteur of

134 See, for example, ORSÁG, P. (ed.): *František Janouch – Jiří Pelikán: Korespondence*, p. 172, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 20 May 1980.

135 See *Ibid.*, p. 54, František Janouch's undated letter to Jiří Pelikán, according to the context July or August 1976.

136 *Ibid.*, p. 63, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 28 August 1976; also p. 65, Jiří Pelikán's letter to František Janouch, 3 September 1976. They were referring to the following articles: JANOUCH, F.: Čína našima očima; KOVANDA, Karel: Ke změnám v Číně [On the changes in China]. In: *Listy*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (1976), pp. 35–37.

137 The book of Jiří Kosta entitled 社会主义的计划经济理论与实践 (*She hui zhu yi di ji hua jing ji li lun yu shi jian*) was published in 1985 by the China Social Sciences Press (*Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe*) in Beijing. This book is included in Ludmila Šeflová's list, but in Wade-Giles transcription (see ŠEFLOVÁ, Ludmila: *České a slovenské knihy v exilu: Bibliografie 1948–1989* [Czech and Slovak books in exile: Bibliography 1948–1989]. Praha, Československé dokumentační středisko 2008, p. 154). Šeflová does not inform on any Mlynář's book in Chinese. The mentioned title 严寒来自克里姆林宫 (*Yan han lai zi ke li mu lin gong*) was published in 1980 in the World Knowledge Press (*Shijie zhishi chubanshe*) in Beijing. Zdeněk Hejzlar refers to the translation of one of Mlynář's book to Chinese in his letter to Jiří Pelikán of 14 April 1981, but without naming any specific title: "They will consider the publication of the offered books and other materials of Czechoslovak opposition in China – a book of ZM has already been published there – case by case." (*ASCD*, f. Jiří Pelikán, k. 10, Zdeněk Hejzlar's letter to Jiří Pelikán, 14 April 1981.)

the Committee on External Economic Relations and in this position participated, for example, in the preparation of "the Report on the Economic and Commercial Relations between the European Community and People's Republic of China." The report states, among other things, that the role of China in international trade and finances was increasing, and it declared an interest in enhancing mutual cooperation, referring to the prospective Chinese market, with a population of one billion.[138]

Conclusion: From the Exiles to Gustáv Husák

The presented text aimed at describing one of the lesser-known initiatives of the left-wing part of the post-August exile community in the West. It provides evidence that in their search for political allies for their foreign action, Pelikán and his colleagues from the *Listy* group did not only seek the support of the leaders of the influential West European left, although these contacts were in many respects decisive. The subtle and discreet cooperation of the *Listy* group with the Chinese communists, which was first kept secret, long remained unnoticed by both communist propaganda as well as other exiles headed by Pavel Tigrid. By making use mainly of documents from the period and personal testimonies of the participants, this text aimed not only at outlining the cooperation and showing the difficulties in developing it further, but also at showing concrete results it brought to the exiles.

The author of the foreword to the book *Čína našima očima* pointed at Czechoslovak exiles as an alternative platform for negotiating with the Chinese political elite during the time when Husák's regime was hostile toward China. Certainly, he was not the only one to be surprised when, less than five years later, in the spring of 1987, his partner in the negotiations, Wu Xueqian, now already in the position of PRC minister of foreign affairs, was received at Prague Castle by the very same Gustáv Husák. "I found the situation absurd: In 1979, I was told in secret that I would be received at the CPC Central Committee by the deputy head of the International Liaison Department. The debate was long […] then I was invited by Wu Xueqian to a banquet right in the seat of the Central Committee […] we were drinking to the liberation of Czechoslovakia, to the withdrawal of the Soviet army and who knows what else. Which toasts were made at the Castle and in the Czernin Palace, I do not know," wrote František Janouch in 1987, when recalling the cooperation of the exiles with Chinese communists.[139] The old friend of the Chinese foreign minister Wu Xueqian, Jiří Pelikán, must have felt the same way. It is not known whether these two men ever had an opportunity later to discuss the twists and turns of Chinese diplomacy and foreign policy. The fact that communist Chinese

138 *ASCD*, k. 12. The report was issued as "Working document" of the European Parliament on 8 February 1984.

139 JANOUCH, František – VACULÍK, Ludvík: *Korespondence.* Praha, Mladá fronta 2012, p. 163, František Janouch's undated letter to Ludvík Vaculík. (The closing part of the letter says: "Started writing on 20 December 1986. […] Finished it […] on 17 March 1987.")

representatives established official relations with Husák's political establishment in the 1980s, after maintaining close ties with Czechoslovak political exiles for several years, can be seen as one example of Chinese political pragmatism. This is, however, a digression from the main theme. On the subject of this study, it only remains to be said that without an account of this part of the activities of the left-wing exiles the mosaic of relations of the Czechoslovak political exiles during the so-called "normalization" period and on the geopolitical chessboard of that time would not be complete.

The Czech version of this article, entitled S čínskými komunisty proti Husákově normalizaci. Exilová skupina Listy a její hledání politických partner proti sovětské mocenské dominanci ve střední Evropě*, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 23, No. 4 (2016), pp. 563–601.*

Translated by Blanka Medková

The Crisis of Modern Urbanism under the Socialist Rule

Case Study of the Prague Urban Planning between the 1960s and 1980s

Petr Roubal

When a group of 22 British architects visited Prague in May 1961, they were surprised by the self-confidence of their Czechoslovak counterparts and the conviction with which they had undertaken the construction of large prefabricated housing estates: "[We] found the architects and planners of Czechoslovakia very sure of what they were doing. They were convinced that their vast [apartment-]building programme was the best and the most urgent thing for them."[1] The surprise of the British architects is quite understandable if we take into account the severe criticism this practice came to face by the end of the 1950s, in reaction to the negative experience with the postwar construction of large social housing estates. It was just at that time that the first critical works aimed at the wider public were published, with their dramatic impact on public debate on modernism in architecture. In 1960, a book by Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City*, appeared. It was followed a year later by an even more influential study, *The Death and Life of American Cities*, by Jane

1 BENSON, Preston: Czechoslovakia in 1961. In: *Town and Country Planning*, Vol. 30, No. 7 (1961), p. 351, cited according to: ZARECOR, Kimberly Elman: Manufacturing a Socialist Modernity: Housing in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1960. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011, p. 295.

Jacobs.[2] In just a few years – as the important historian of postwar architecture, Samuel Zipp, commented – modernistic urbanism "as an instrument of politics as well as a vision was practically dead."[3]

The following text explores the roots of professional confidence of Czechoslovak urbanists mentioned above as well as the reasons for their deep disappointment following the failed experiment of architectural and urban modernism. In the text, I am not concerned only with the difference in time, that is the delay compared with the West, even though this is an interesting example of the functioning of a mechanism that allowed the transfer of ideas with a far-reaching effect on the landscape of socialist cities. My aim is to examine the specific state-socialist sources of intellectual development of the Czechoslovak urbanists' professional culture, taking as an example the Prague urban planning between the late 1950s and late 1980s.[4] Prague urbanism provides a good example for the purposes of this study for two main reasons. First, in contrast to some other industrial centres (mainly the North Moravian town of Ostrava), Prague urbanists were not bound by the legacy of socialist realism of the early 1950s and could therefore introduce completely new concepts of socialist urbanism. Second, Prague, with its cultural heritage, serves as a good example of the clash between modern urbanism and an organically grown city. The account of Prague's urbanism reflects a broader theme of the role experts played in state-socialist governance, a role which dramatically increased during the "thaw" in reaction to the "voluntarism" of the early 1950s. Since the end of the 1950s, architects and urbanists assumed considerable decision-making power over urbanism, whereas the Communist Party authorities limited their interventions in decision-making only to key issues regarding investment and personnel. The autonomy of urbanists as state-socialist experts was all the greater, since in

2 LYNCH, Kevin: *The Image of the City*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press 1960 (in Czech translation: *Obraz města.* Praha, Polygon 2004); JACOBS, Jane: *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York, Random House 1961 (in Czech translation: JACOBSOVÁ, Jane: *Smrt a život amerických velkoměst*. Praha, Odeon 1975).

3 ZIPP, Samuel: *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York.* New York – Oxford, Oxford University Press 2010, p. 17; compare also SAMMARTINO, Annemarie: Mass Housing, Late Modernism, and the Forging of Community in New York City and East Berlin, 1965–1989. In: *American Historical Review*, Vol. 121, No. 2 (2016), pp. 492–521. Sammartino, however, argues against burying urban modernism prematurely and proposes an alternative chronology up to the 1980s.

4 For urban planning under socialism in Czechoslovakia in general compare in particular: MUSIL, Jiří: Vývoj a plánování měst ve střední Evropě v období komunistických režimů [Urban development and planning in Central Europe under communist regimes]. In: *Sociologický časopis*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (2001), pp. 275–296; FERENČUHOVÁ, Slavomíra: *Meno, mesto, vec: Urbánne plánovanie v sociológii mesta a prípad (post)socialistického Brna* [Name, city, object: Urban planning in urban sociology, and the case of (post)socialist Brno]. Brno, Masarykova univerzita 2011; ANDRÁŠIOVÁ, Katarína – DULLA, Matúš – HABERLANDOVÁ, Katarína – MORAVČÍKOVÁ, Henrieta – PASTOREKOVÁ, Laura – SZALAY, Peter: Planning the Unplanned City: Modern Urban Conceptions in a Traditional Urban Structure / Plánované neplánované mestá: Moderné urbanistické koncepcie v tradičnej mestskej štruktúre. In: *Architektúra & urbanizmus*, Vol. 49, Nos. 3–4 (2015), pp. 216–239.

socialist economy they operated regardless of market forces. In a famous debate on the character of the socialist city, Iván Szelényi argues that it was precisely the independence of urbanists from private property and market prices of land that makes a socialist city socialist.[5]

"Deviations in Architecture" and Industrialization of the Building Industry

A leading role in Prague's postwar urbanism was played by a group of left-oriented architectural avant-garde experts. The group, known as the *Pokroková architektonická skupina – PAS* [Progressive architects' group], was formed in the 1930s. Under the spiritual direction of Karel Teige, this group of young architects, mainly Jiří Voženílek (1909–1986), Karel Janů (1910–1995) and Jiří Štursa (1910–1995), focused on experiments with collective housing and championed Soviet urbanism. In particular, they were interested in Nikolai Miliutin's concept of a linear city, which replaced the traditional radial city-planning schemes with uninterrupted linear belts of zones assigned to industry, housing, transport and green parks.[6] They also drew from the Soviet debate on the central thesis of "the industrialization of the construction industry," which shifted the work of architects from creative work to exact scientific procedures.[7] An architect-artist, fulfilling the wishes of rich clients, was to be replaced by an architect-scientist, serving the needs of broad popular strata. Historian of architecture Kimberly Zarecor points out that Jiří Voženílek's

5 *SZELÉNYI, Iván: Cities under Socialism – and After. In: ANDRUSZ, Gregory – HARLOE, Michael – SZELÉNYI, Iván (ed.): Cities after Socialism: Urban and Regional Change and Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies. Oxford, Blackwell 1996, pp. 286–317, here p.* 301. The social geographer György Enyedi holds quite an opposite view in this debate, arguing that what he calls socialist cities are merely a sub-group of underdeveloped cities that seek to catch up with the western model (see ENYEDI, György: Urbanization under Socialism. In: *Ibid., pp. 100–118)*. For a recent view on this debate see BOHN, Thomas M.: *Von der "europäischen Stadt" zur "sozialistischen Stadt" und zurück? Urbane Transformationen im östlichen Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts*. München, Oldenbourg 2009; compare also ZARECOR, Kimberly Elman: What Was So Socialist about the Socialist City? Second World Urbanity in Europe from Postwar Stalinism to Post-Socialist Neoliberalism. In: *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2018), pp. 95–117.

6 MILJUTIN, Nikolaj Alexandrovič: *Socgorod: Otázky stavby socialistických měst. Základy racionelního plánování nových sídlišť v SSSR* [Sotsgorod: The problem of building socialist cities: Basis of rational planning of the new housing estates in the USSR]. Praha, 1931; JANŮ, Karel – ŠTURSA, Jiří – VOŽENÍLEK, Jiří: *Architektura a společnost: Vývoj architektury za kapitalismu a úkoly socialistického architekta. Zásady a program socialistických architektů* [Architecture and society: Development of architecture under capitalism and tasks of socialist architect. Principles and programme of the socialist architects]. Praha, Levá fronta 1933.

7 See JANŮ, Karel – ŠTURSA, Jiří – VOŽENÍLEK, Jiří: Je možná vědecká syntéza v architektuře? [Is a *scientific synthesis* possible in *architecture?*]. In: ŠVÁCHA, Rostislav – RYNDOVÁ, Soňa – POKORNÁ, Pavla (ed.): *Forma sleduje vědu / Form Follows Science: Teige, Gillar a evropský vědecký funkcionalismus 1922–1948 / Teige, Gillar and European Scientific Functionalism 1922–1948*. Praha, Galerie Jaroslava Fragnera 2000, p. 253.

initial theoretical interest developed into extensive applied research when he started working for the design department of the Baťa Works in the Moravian city of Zlín.[8] Baťa, the world's largest producer of shoes between the two wars, sought typification and standardization of housing as one of the key elements of his long-term business strategy, which was to allow him to control all inputs of production. Apart from this autarkic strategy, Baťa also saw industrialization of the building industry as a central instrument for global expansion of the Zlín model of factory towns.[9] Employment at Baťa Works also provided young avant-garde architects with an opportunity for professional growth during the Protectorate, when research at universities was suspended.[10]

After the war, careers of PAS members flourished. Karel Janů was appointed director general of the Czechoslovak Construction Works, which was founded in 1948 by nationalizing all construction works. That same year, Jiří Voženílek became the first director of *Stavoprojekt*, a state-directed system of design and architecture offices, which associated all former private studios into one mammoth organization with 11,000 employees.[11] Both of these architects used their positions to develop their interwar programme of "scientization" of design and architecture practice on a large scale. The aim was to produce well-researched and experimentally verified standardized projects and to pursue industrialization and mechanization of the building industry through the construction of prefabricated panel buildings. The arrival of socialist realism, which only affected architectural works in 1951, did not result in the complete abandoning of this trend. Despite losing their privileged posts, Janů and Voženílek were able to continue with the preparation of prefabricated panel-housing construction as heads of architecture research institutes.[12] A number of designers and architects sought ways of adapting prefabricated panel technology to the needs of socialist realism, for example by modifying panel types so that prefabricated surface decorations of "sorela" (a pejorative term for socialist-realism architecture) could be attached to them. Others pretended that the interwar tradition of functionalism was a specific Czechoslovak "national form" that could fit the "socialist content."

8 ZARECOR, K. E.: *Manufacturing a Socialist Modernity*, p. 91.

9 Cf. JEMELKA, Martin – ŠEVČEK, Ondřej: Company Towns of the Baťa Concern: History – Cases – Architecture. Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag 2013.

10 For the development of Prague urbanism during the war, see HOŘEJŠ, Miloš: *Praha jako německé město: Nacistický urbanismus a Plánovací komise pro hlavní město Prahu* [Prague as a German City: Nazi urbanism and planning commission for the capital city of Prague]. Praha, Mladá fronta 2013.

11 See NOVÝ, Otakar: Čtvrtstoleté jubileum založení Stavoprojektu [Quarter-century anniversary of the foundation of Stavoprojekt]. In: *Architektura ČSR*, Vol. 32, No. 10 (1973), pp. 483–490, here p. 488.

12 The career of Jiří Štursa, a nephew of the sculptor Jan Štursa, developed in quite an opposite direction. This architect was the author of the winning site plan and architectural foundations for the Otakar Švec's design of Stalin Monument at Prague's Letná park. After 1952, he became the dean of the Faculty of Architecture at the Czech Technical University.

However, by the end of 1954, there was already an important shift in Soviet architecture and urbanism, which led to the revival of the PAS members' ideas. The change in the Soviet course was clearly illustrated by a long speech given by Nikita Khrushchev at the National Conference of Builders, Architects and Workers in the Construction Industry in Moscow.[13] In his speech, the highest Soviet representative spoke out against "the deviations in architecture." By this he meant socialist realism, which, in his opinion, favoured aesthetic criteria over economic criteria.[14] According to Khrushchev, the existing practice of pompous and decorative architecture under the false pretence of fighting constructivism was just a waste of time and material. Khrushchev, who often resorted to personal attacks in his speeches, stressed that the main criterion should be the price per square metre of floor space: "Behold, these problems […] are mainly of interest to comrade Zacharov. He may need beautiful silhouettes, but people need flats. People do not care about silhouettes, what they need is houses to live in (applause)!"[15] The task of architects was, according to him, to build cheap apartment buildings as quickly as possible. This was to be achieved through a radical change in architectural production. Instead of "building their own memorials" – such as designing high-rise buildings, in which more than one third of the floor space is filled by a skeleton structure – architects were to focus on designing standardized projects and their systematic use.[16] Categorical acceptance of the prefabricated panel method as the only correct method in the building industry was to be another path toward more effective housing construction. Only the use of prefabricated panels would lead us to "an extensive industrialization of the building industry."[17] In this context, Khrushchev several times stressed the role of Czechoslovak expertise when reprimanding one of the ministers: "The Minister of the Construction-Materials Industry Yudin and others who work in this industry

13 Proslov s. N. S. Chruščova na Všesvazové poradě stavitelů, architektů a pracovníků průmyslu stavebních hmot, průmyslu stavebních a silničních strojů, projektových a vědeckovýzkumných organisací dne 7. prosince 1954 [Speech of comrade N. S. Khrushchev at the National conference of builders, architects and workers in construction materials and manufacture of construction and roads machinery industries, and employees of design and research and development organizations on 7 December 1954]. In: *Diskuse o otázkách soudobé výstavby a architektury v SSSR* [Discussion on issues of contemporary construction and architecture in the USSR], Vol. 2. Praha, Výzkumný ústav výstavby a architektury 1955, pp. 225–285. Compare also Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On eliminating excesses in design and architecture," dated 4 November 1955 (Postanovlenije Centralnogo komitěta KPSS i Soveta ministrov SSSR ot 4 nojabrja 1955 goda No. 1871 "Ob ustraněnii izlišestv v projektirovanii i stroitělstve." In: Sovarch: Projekt Sovetskaja architěktura [online]. [Cit. 2017-03-15.] Available at: *http://sovarch.ru/postanovlenie55*.

14 Proslov s. N. S. Chruščova..., p. 250.

15 *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.,* p. 243.

17 *Ibid.,* p. 230.

should not give themselves airs, but should learn from our friends in Czechoslovakia, who make fine construction materials and parts (applause)."[18]

Formally Khrushchev's speech still echoed Stalinist governance. The political leader presented himself as an arbiter of professional disputes, which he "resolved" with personal attacks against the representatives of "reactionary" institutions, while drowning in micromanagement of the building industry and urbanism (for example, the quality of tiling in hotel bathrooms, the advantages of different surfaces of newly built roads). However, his proposals of applying typification and standardization to construction and design meant a fundamental shift in the relation of the politician with architecture and urbanism, because it complicated, or directly impeded political (as well as artistic) interference. Khrushchev himself summarized the appeal of typification for socialist governance: "What are the benefits of typified construction? Immense. We want to construct: We already have a project, we know the necessary dimensions of the building plot, structures and materials, as well as the number of workers. Everything is clear."[19] Yet, if everything was so clear, the question arises: Where in this technical solution was there room for architects and politicians?

In 1954, Khrushchev's words fell on fertile ground in Czechoslovakia. Jiří Voženílek, director of Stavoprojekt's Research Institute for Construction and Architecture, published Khrushchev's speech in early 1955. This was soon followed by the dramatic fall of Jiří Kroha, the main representative of socialist realism in architecture (his departure would have been even faster had he not been the principal architect of the first All-State Spartakiad held in mid-1955).[20] In 1956, Jiří Voženílek became deputy minister of the building industry, and in 1961 he was appointed Chief Architect of Prague. Karel Janů was awarded a degree of professor at the Faculty of Civil Engineering of the Czech Technical University in 1959, became the dean of the faculty in 1963, and occupied the post of deputy minister of education in 1965–1969. Standardized projects and prefabricated panel technology very soon became accepted as progressive methods and were rapidly applied in practice.[21]

18 *Ibid.,* p. 262.

19 *Ibid.,* p. 245.

20 See ZARECOR, Kimberly Elman: Stavoprojekt a Ateliér národního umělce Jiřího Krohy v 50. letech 20. století [Stavoprojekt and the atelier of national artist Jiří Kroha in the 1950s]. In: MACHARÁČKOVÁ, Marcela (ed.): *Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architekt, malíř, designér, teoretik v proměnách umění 20. století* [Jiří Kroha (1893–1974): Architect, painter, designer, theorist in the metamorphosis of 20th century art]. Brno, Muzeum města Brna – ERA 2007, pp. 328–365.

21 For the information on the issue of panel housing construction, compare in particular SKŘIVÁNKOVÁ, Lucie – ŠVÁCHA, Rostislav – NOVOTNÁ, Eva – JIRKALOVÁ, Karolina (ed.): *Paneláci*, sv. 1: *Padesát sídlišť v českých zemích. Kritický katalog k cyklu výstav Příběh paneláku* [The "Paneláks," Vol. 1: Fifty housing estates in the Czech Republic. Critical catalogue for the exhibition "A Story of a Panelák"]. Praha, Uměleckoprůmyslové museum 2016; and in particular IDEM (ed.): *Paneláci*, sv. 2: *Historie sídlišť v českých zemích 1945–1989. Kritický katalog k výstavě Bydliště – panelové sídliště: Plány, realizace, bydlení 1945–1989* [The "Paneláks," Vol. 2: The history of housing estates in the Czech Republic 1945–1989. Critical

Political preference for standardized panel construction, confirmed by a number of party and governmental resolutions,[22] had its direct effect on urbanism, in particular of compactly built cities, such as Prague. The construction technology directly shaped the urban character, because it was cost-effective only when used in the construction of large apartment blocks. In comparison with construction using traditional materials, panel construction was much more challenging in that it required building the necessary site infrastructure, establishing the construction site and laying down crane tracks. However, in large residential buildings, these increased costs were compensated for by the speed of the construction and average price of a flat. The use of panel technology also strongly implied construction of new housing estates in the flat parts of the city. Moreover, large housing estates located on the outskirts of Prague had to be connected to the city centre by high-capacity public transport. This gradually led to the construction of housing estates alongside the metro backbone. The selected technology ironically resulted in the construction of housing estates with a low density of population, because the use of cranes only allowed the construction of relatively low-rise panel buildings to a maximum height of eight storeys. The preferred panel technology had further consequences for urbanism. Following an intensive debate on two possible alternatives – skeleton structure filled with non-load bearing panels or load-bearing panels without a skeleton structure – the latter was definitely selected at the end of the 1950s.[23] The decisive factors were that load-bearing panels required less use of steel and a smaller workforce. This technology, under which the height of the floors and the dimensions of the rooms were strictly defined by the dimensions of the panels, strongly limited the use of the ground floor of the buildings for shops and other "public amenities." The panel-housing construction thus moved further away from the previous method of creating an urban environment in which shops and services on the ground floors of the buildings lined the living streets and squares. The example of housing construction shows how a selected technology determined future political decisions on the cityscape and formed the social space of its inhabitants – and all of this without any political, let alone public debate on the long-term impact of the technology.

Not all Prague architects shared Voženílek's enthusiasm for panel construction without reservation. Jiří Novotný, who had been responsible for the preparation of the *Master Plan of Prague* before Voženílek became the director of the Office of Chief

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catalogue for the exhibition "Residence – housing estate: Plans, implementation, residence 1945–1989]. Praha, Uměleckoprůmyslové museum 2017.

22 Compare for example, *Národní archiv*, Praha (hereinafter *NA*) [The National Archive of the Czech Republic], fond (fund – f.) Úřad vlády ČSR/ČR, Praha – Usnesení vlády [The Office of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic/Czech Republic Government, Prague – Government Resolutions], inventární číslo (inventory number) 254/1958, Resolution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Government No. 254 regarding the principles of further direction of construction and redevelopment of the capital city of Prague, dated 14 March 1958.

23 See STORCH, Karel: *Nová technika a architektura v Československu* [New method and architecture in Czechoslovakia]. Praha, Unie československých architektů 1961.

Architect of Prague, warned as early as in 1957 about the effects panel technology could have on urban planning: "All of us spontaneously recognize the need of fast industrialized housing construction, yet we are rather lost over how to achieve harmony between the rapidly emerging large housing estates and the conditions of Prague's environment, its picturesqueness. […] We have not yet learnt how to direct industrialization so that it does not predetermine the idea of planning as the mere means of construction."[24] Nevertheless in centrally planned economy, once the decision to build housing capacities with the use of panel technology had been made, it was irreversible. This was due to the fact that it was closely tied to other parts of the economy, mainly the production capacities of panel-production plants.

Urban Optimism of the Prague Master Plan

Urban optimism of the late avant-garde generation was expressed most comprehensively in the *Master Plan of Prague*, which was completed in 1961.[25] It contained all the main principles of urban modernism as formulated in the 1920s and 1930s. The plan was drafted by the Office of the Chief Architect of the City of Prague, an institution newly established according to the Soviet model and reflecting the political decision to assign the task of urban planning to the Central National Committee in Prague.[26] The staff of the new office consisted almost exclusively of representatives of the younger generation of the interwar architecture avant-garde and their pupils who had studied at the Czech Technical University shortly after the Second World War (they were often students who already had some experience in architecture, but were forced to interrupt or postpone their studies after the closure of Czech universities by the Nazis). The office was led by Jiří Voženílek, who appointed architect Jiří Hrůza, who was only 35 years old at the time, as his deputy. Hrůza, a pupil of another important interwar urbanist, František Fiala, later became perhaps the best-known Czechoslovak urbanist thanks to his publishing

24 NOVOTNÝ, Jiří: Směrný plán Prahy 1955 [Master plan of Prague 1955]. In: *Architektura ČSR*, Vol. 16, No. 1–2 (1957), p. 27. In the same issue of the journal, Stanislav Semrád wrote: "Architects agree, and this was also reflected in the results of recent competitions, that industrialized construction cannot contribute to the splendour of Prague, rather on the contrary. In my opinion, not enough has been done to demonstrate that mass construction can be carried out in Prague without having to renounce the need to preserve and add to the beauty of the city." (SEMRÁD, Stanislav: S nadšením, ale realisticky [With ardour, but realistically]. In: *Ibid.*, p. 63.)

25 The draft plan was submitted to the government as early as in 1958 and adapted during the following three years according to comments provided by different ministries. It was finally approved in 1964. (Compare *NA*, f. Úřad vlády ČSR/ČR, Praha – Usnesení vlády, inv. No. 223/1964, Resolution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Government No. 223 regarding the Master plan of the capital city of Prague, dated 22 April 1964.)

26 *Ibid.*, inv. No. 254/1958, Resolution of the Czechoslovak Republic Government No. 254 regarding the principles of further direction of construction and redevelopment of the capital city of Prague, dated 14 March 1958.

activity. His career was launched by a surprising victory in a competition for the renovation of the Terezín monument. After that he prepared the city plan for the rapidly growing city of Košice in Slovakia, followed by a plan for the Most coalfield in Northern Bohemia. The key figures of the Office of Chief Architect also included its main designer, Jiří Novotný, who has already been mentioned. He was the son of Otakar Novotný, architect of the famous modernist building of the Prague Mánes Gallery.[27] In 1961, Novotný's team was joined by Ivo Oberstein, a recent graduate, who was to win an anonymous architecture competition on the Prague Jihozápadní město [South-West City] housing estate later in 1968.

The major influence that can be traced in the *Master Plan of Prague*, which was to determine the city's development until at least the 1980s, was that of Le Corbusier and the basic principles outlined in the Athens Charter. The urbanists from the Office of Chief Architect also applied other inspirations eclectically, such as the theory of a linear city or the principles of garden cities and other disurbanization theories. The nexus between these inspirations and the tradition of interwar avant-garde urbanism was mainly the belief that reconsidering the city's functions and formulating a new "rational" concept was not only possible, but also necessary, and that the implementation of this concept would be just a matter of time and political will. Another link was the principle of top-down emancipation, in the sense of a complete transformation of people's lives without their own participation (the plan did not even simulate any interest in the participative planning). Many of the avant-garde ideas were not specifically developed in the *Master Plan*. According to its authors, they were the natural goals of all "modern," "progressive" or simply "contemporary" planning, and therefore no need was felt to defend them further within the established discourse.

Zoning, "the most progressive principle of urbanism", was accepted as a guiding principle of city planning by the Prague urbanists. Both the city structure and its individual elements were to be "purified" from the existing "inorganic chaos of functions."[28] The separation of individual functional elements in space became the basis for developing virtually all aspects of the city plan. The zoning of the city was not meant to be only an intent to organize the city space "rationally" and logically, but also an aesthetic principle explicitly developed in the document. The urbanists believed that the trend of "aesthetic expression" of the city aimed for "the delimitation of individual elements and their concentration."[29] The composition of the city and the architecture of the buildings were meant to emphasize the specific

27 See NOVOTNÝ, Jiří: *Prahou posedlý* [Obsessed with Prague]. Praha, Karolinum 2002.

28 *Archive of the Prague Institute of Planning and Development* (hereinafter *AIPR*), *Návrh směrného územního plánu hl. m. Prahy: Průvodní zpráva* [Draft proposal of the master plan of the capital city of Prague: Accompanying report]. Praha, December 1961, p. 8. Maps from this plan are available on the website of the Prague Institute of Planning and Development through a recently launched application.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

functions of individual city-forming elements and lead to "perfect functionality, truthfulness of life and strength of the ideals."[30]

However, the general principles of zoning, as we know them from the Athens Charter, underwent an interesting change in the plan in order to build on the previous development of the city. The historical development of Prague, and principally the character of its landscape, determined the "natural basic zoning" of the city[31] that had not been erased even by the speculative capitalist development of the late 19th century. Historically, Prague expanded quite evenly in all directions from its centre alongside radial communications. In contrast to other cities, due to its difficult topography, no circular or tangential communication system developed here. The existing city structure made it possible to create three basic zones: the centre of the city with its socio-cultural function, the middle zone with a dwelling function and the peripheral zone with an industrial function. As to the historic centre, Prague urbanists did not follow the brutal instructions of Le Corbusier, quite the contrary. In the spirit of zoning, they proposed its preservation as a whole, in which all buildings, including the less significant from heritage perspective, have their function in forming part of the preserved conservation area. Conceived in this way, however, many of the functions of the historic centre had to be taken over by a wider centre or other city quarters of the middle zone (for example, the television and radio buildings were situated in Pankrác).

While the historic centre and the peripheral industrial zone were not supposed to undergo any fundamental changes within the plan's time horizon of 1980 (Prague was still planned as the main base of the engineering industry in Czechoslovakia), the same was not true for the middle residential zone. The basic principles of modernist planning were strictly applied to this zone, and the existing structure of its residential areas became completely disintegrated. The plan reproduced the opposition of modernist planning to traditional corridor streets with their "capital sins": mixed city functions, high density of the population and lack of air, sunlight and green areas. Instead of "confined, poorly ventilated blocks of houses, a compact mass of city quarters, undifferentiated functions in which dwellings, work and transport mix and interfere with each other, and a lack of space for leisure activities,"[32] the plan anticipated the construction of industrially built (i.e. panel) housing estates with low population densities, clear composition and protected green areas.

According to the plan, the transformation of Prague's housing was to be carried out in three phases. In the initial phase, during the first five-year cycle, the housing crisis was to be solved by constructing large panel-housing estates on the free city land. New housing estates were also meant to create a sufficient reserve of flats for the second phase of the plan, namely the radical redevelopment of Prague's residential quarters built in the 19th century. According to the plan's authors, these

30 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
31 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
32 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

quarters were correctly located as centres of housing between two main workplace zones – the city centre and the industrial periphery – but their character was determined by the interests of speculative capital to maximize profits. The plan gave a particularly striking example of the "overaged" quarter of lower Žižkov, with its density of up to 2,000 inhabitants per hectare (the planned construction envisaged 350 inhabitants per hectare) and claimed that its redevelopment "would mean removing one of the ulcers of this city."[33] Thus, for the authors of the plan, these residential quarters were located in the correct zone, but their construction was completely wrong. By 1980, the plan anticipated the removal of all buildings built between 1850 and 1900 (to be more precise, only 0.4 percent of these buildings were to be preserved). This was to be done through "concentrated redevelopment," meaning large-scale demolitions of entire blocks. The third phase, which fell outside the plan's time framework, also involved the demolition of all newer quarters built in the first third of the 20th century. It included the redevelopment of the Josefov quarter, which had been built on the site of the former Jewish ghetto only some 60 years ago.

This outlook was also reflected in the plan's approach to modernization of historic quarters. The modernization of buildings – as opposed to redevelopment – meant providing existing buildings with modern facilities, in particular private bathrooms and toilets (according to the census of March 1961, as many as 31 percent of households in Prague did not have their own toilets, and 46 percent did not have private bathrooms),[34] as well as central heating. It also involved the transformation of ground-floor flats into non-residential premises and the removal of temporary buildings from courtyards. This process was understood as the economically least effective instrument of housing policy. According to urbanists, modernization "cannot eliminate all the hygienic defects of the existing dwellings nor the defects resulting from poor urbanism, for example the dwellings will still be oriented to corridor streets and will still suffer from a lack of sunlight, green areas and playgrounds, as well as be exposed to exhaust and dust pollution."[35] Urbanists feared that modernization, which meant investing in buildings doomed to demolition, would only prolong the existence of these "defects."

According to the plan, the redeveloped quarters were to be gradually replaced by new housing blocks, in line with the principles of progressive urbanism, with sufficient green areas, light and public amenities. This was also supposed to erase the existing inequalities in the level of housing standards. As a consequence of applying one of the principal goals of modernist planning – reducing the density of housing development – the number of people living in the historic quarters was to be reduced dramatically, despite the fact that the new buildings would

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 9 and 20.

34 See *Praha v číslech: Ekonomický rozvoj, výsledky sčítání lidu, domů a bytů, perspektiva vývoje do roku 1980* [Prague in figures: Economic development, results of the population and houses censuses, perspective of development until 1980]. Praha, SEVT 1963, p. 108.

35 *AIPR*, *Návrh směrného územního plánu hl. m. Prahy*, p. 57.

be considerably higher (on average seven storeys high). The plan also aimed at using rugged topography to develop green wedges that would penetrate the city from the outskirts to its very centre, and thus further contribute to reducing the population density. After the redevelopment phase, some of the steeper slopes and narrow valleys would no longer be allotted for development. Apart from the hygienic function, green areas were also meant as natural divisions separating the city into clearly arranged and, to a certain extent, independent parts.

Creating autonomous districts by using topographic and historical specifics is just one of the many examples of how modernist disurbanization theories were displayed in the *Master Plan*. The concept of the plan itself was based on the assumption that it was not desirable to expand the city further, but rather to alleviate congestion by developing satellite towns or building a completely new town in the Polabí region.[36] In the government resolution of 1958 mentioned above, the minister-president of the Office of State Planning was instructed to "direct the distribution of working forces in such a way as to prevent the increase of Prague's population."[37] The *Master Plan* also, somewhat unconvincingly, defended the conservation of Prague's villa quarters by arguing that they were well-built and had fully grown trees in the gardens (apart from disurbanization visions, another important factor might have been that urbanists, being members of the metropolitan elite, lived in these quarters).[38] It was assumed that in the long-term, the old compact cities would gradually split into separate specialized units, with assigned functions of housing, production, services and recreation in the "best locations," and connected by "an ideal transport" system.[39]

A sizeable part of the historic quarters was also to be sliced off by generous plans of road construction. In line with the proposed low-density character of the

36 Compare UHRINOVÁ, Marta: Etarea – studie moderního bydlení [Etarea – a study of modern living]. In: *Československý architekt*, Vol. 13, No. 7 (1967), pp. 1–3.

37 *NA*, f. Úřad vlády ČSR/ČR, Praha – Usnesení vlády, inv. No. 254/1958, Resolution of the Czechoslovak Republic Government No. 254 on the principles of further direction of construction and redevelopment of the capital city of Prague, dated 14 March 1958]; compare also *Archive of the Capital City of Prague,* f. Stavební odbor Národního výboru hlavního města Prahy [Construction department of the National Committee of the capital city of Prague], karton [box] 159, inv. č. [inventory No.] 1053, *Proposal of an overall plan of development of the capital city of Prague until 1980*. Praha, Národní výbor hlavního města Prahy 1961. Concerns regarding excessive expansion of Prague were also present in the city planning later (compare, for example, *NA*, f. Úřad vlády ČSR/ČR, Praha – Usnesení vlády, inv. No. 374/1967, Resolution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Government No. 374 regarding the conception of works in the long-term development and construction of the capital city of Prague, dated 29 September 1967).

38 These upper-class quarters were also explicitly defended in the subsequent land-use plans: *AIPR*: *Pražská-středočeská aglomerace: Průvodní zpráva k územnímu plánu* [Prague-Central Bohemia agglomeration: Accompanying report to the land-use plan]. Praha, Útvar hlavního architekta – Terplan 1971, p. 210; *Ibid.*, *Směrný územní plán Hlavního města Prahy* [Master plan of the capital city of Prague]. Praha, Útvar hlavního architekta 1976, p. 5.

39 *Ibid.*, *Návrh směrného územního plánu hl. m. Prahy* [Draft proposal of the master plan of the capital city of Prague], p. 34.

city, individual car transport was presented in the plan as "a progressive" form, which would in time take over an even greater share of the traffic load from the overstrained tram transport system. According to the plan, individual transport was to increase by 570 percent (in the case of suburban transport by as much as 620 percent) by 1980.[40] The aim was to "satisfy the needs of the city inhabitants as to individual transport […] by providing an adequate and sufficient number of individual automobiles and facilitating their circulation."[41] In Prague, a communication system of five main highways was to be built by 1980 – three in a north-south and two in an east-west direction. The highways, planned in the immediate proximity of city center, were planned on a large scale with numerous interchanges, up to six lanes and a daily capacity of 75,000 cars.

Crisis of Urban Modernism under Socialist Rule

Avant-garde modernism constantly met with strong opposition, which in the absence of public debate in socialism, took various forms – from Kroha's nostalgia for socialist realism to criticism disguised as different literary forms drawing on aesthetic criteria and values very far removed from modernism. The plan of blanket redevelopment mainly evoked the cultural clash of the turn of the century regarding the redevelopment of the Josefov quarter, which led to the establishment of a systematic heritage conservation.[42] In the following part of the text I focus on the internal crisis of modernist urbanism, that is, on the loss of illusions among the theorists and practitioners of the modernist vision of the city, and on the process of modernists becoming "reform modernists".

Experts started to criticize modernist planning in the mid-1960s, and over time this spread to an even broader range of themes, eventually challenging the very principle of urban planning. One of the authors of the *Master Plan*, Jiří Hrůza (1925–2012), became the most vocal critic of modernist urbanism in Czechoslovakia. Hrůza started publishing his critical views in the second half of the 1960s, but his criticism only took on a solid form in the early 1970s.

The first major critical work of Jiří Hrůza was an article entitled *Krize sídlišť?* [Crises of the housing estates?], which was published in the journal *Československý*

40 According to the plan, "progressive" forms of transport included air transport as well. The plan anticipated its increase by 850 percent, as well as the expansion of the Ruzyně airport and construction of a helicopter terminal located in Maniny.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 99.

42 For more details on the clash between technocratic modernism and efforts to protect cultural and natural values, see SPURNÝ, Matěj: *Most do budoucnosti: Laboratoř socialistické modernity na severu Čech* [The bridge into the future: The laboratory of socialist modernity in North Bohemia]. Praha, Karolinum 2016; compare also DOSTALÍK, Jan: *Organická modernita: Ekologicky šetrné tendence v československém urbanismu a územním plánování (1918–1968)* [Organic modernity: Environment-friendly tendencies in Czechoslovak urbanism and land planning (1918–1968)]. Brno, Masarykova univerzita 2015.

architekt [Czechoslovak architect] in 1967.[43] In this article, he drew attention to the bad condition of the housing estates, warning that their effect on society was quite the opposite to what was intended. He claimed that their inhabitants had "the sensation that everything that was common was bad and that there was no need to take care of it." Yet even if the "primitive defects" of the existing housing estates were repaired, something that Hrůza considered virtually impossible in the current situation, it would not resolve the housing estate crisis. Hrůza showed that not even the well-constructed housing estates in Western Europe, with sufficient services available, provided a satisfying living environment. He felt there should be a discussion about whether building large mono-functional housing estates, which in effect became "dormitories" separated both from the city centre and workplaces, was the right alternative. Apart from this general criticism, he also challenged the statistical use of categories such as average family, average flat, population density and walking distance. In his view, these could not capture the variety and interchangeability of human needs. Hrůza paid particular attention to the issue of public space in the housing estates. He appreciated that modern urbanists had abandoned traditional streets that mixed a wide variety of functions, but criticized the plans of the housing estates for failing to substitute new public space for the function of the traditional street. Pedestrian centres, such as those being constructed in new English cities or satellite towns of Stockholm, could not, in his view, fully replace the traditional street, because their vitality drew on a sufficient density of population. The existing construction of housing estates covered the land evenly with repeated apartment buildings (a system called "raining"),[44] not creating the necessary variation in the population density.[45] According to Hrůza, a new design of housing estates, which would also require a change in panel technology, was inevitable, because for one thing it would be impossible to move the usual "building systems" inside the cities for the planned redevelopment of the 19th century quarters.

Six years later, Hrůza expressed his doubts about modernist planning and urban planning practice in a systematic manner in his book entitled *Hledání soudobého města* [In the quest of a contemporary city]. This work was strongly influenced by the book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by American journalist and

43 HRŮZA, Jiří: Krize sídlišť? [Crisis of housing estates?]. In: *Československý architekt*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (1967), p. 1.

44 IDEM: *Hledání soudobého města* [In the quest of a contemporary city]. Praha, Obelisk 1973, p. 65.

45 Some issues later, Jiří Jindra from the Research Institute of Commerce responded to Hrůza's article. Drawing on extensive research of housing estates' retail shops and experience from west European cities, he pointed out the fundamental problems in the layout of the housing estates. According to him, this was the reason why Prague districts' commercial centres were grey, had few visitors and "minimal social atmosphere": "If we look at the Prosek housing estate, there is a commercial centre at the one end of the central axis, cultural and health centres at the other, services are located partly in the middle, and restaurants in several locations. Green areas are to occupy the natural centre of the housing estate. (JINDRA, Jiří: Sídliště očima obchodu [Housing estate through the lenses of commerce]. In: *Československý architekt*, Vol. 13, p. 21 (1967), p. 6.)

urban activist Jane Jacobs. In 1975, Hrůza actively participated in the publication of the Czech edition by writing an epilogue to the book and adding endnotes, in which he explained the American context and corrected some of the author's "mistakes."[46] According to Hrůza, Jacobs managed to express very precisely ideas that "had been in the air" for some time. Her book was published just at the time when theories of modernist urban planning were being confronted directly with their practical applications in real constructions for the first time, when the "simple theories" clashed with the needs of a complex life.[47] On the one hand, Hrůza pointed with irony to Jacobs's admiration for the "chaotic development" of old quarters with overcrowded streets and mixed functions, as well as her attempts to find "redemption in picturesqueness of the poorest quarters." Yet, on the other hand, he valued the emphasis Jacobs put on the vitality of cities, in which she differed from many critics who predicted their downfall. Apart from Jacobs, Hrůza also cited French sociological surveys dating from the 1960s, which pointed out the feelings of uprootedness among the inhabitants of newly built housing estates. According to these surveys, the monotony of the environment made the people feel as if they were just units of the same specimen reproduced in large numbers. Conclusions of the French research, which according to Hrůza also aptly described the reality of the Czechoslovak housing estates, demonstrated, on the one hand, the anonymity and feelings of loneliness in the city, and, on the other, the loss of privacy felt in the housing estates' flats. Yet, according to Hrůza, the first systematic criticism of modernism emerged "under extremely dramatic circumstances" in the Soviet Union in the 1930s.[48] The fact that it was a sort of a practical laboratory of different avant-garde architectural and urban concepts later led to another extreme in the form of socialist realism. This was, Hrůza felt, both "illuminating and alarming."[49]

For Hrůza, the failure to create an environment in the new parts of the city that could compete with the older parts "in picturesqueness, attractiveness and through

46 Compare JACOBSOVÁ, J.: *Smrt a život amerických velkoměst*. Czechoslovak architects have known this book since the 1960s (compare, for example, SEMRÁD, Stanislav: Organizace struktury sídlišť [Organization of the structure of the housing estates]. In: *Československý architekt*, Vol. 13, No. 8 (1967), p. 2). One of the first reactions to Jacobs in general can be found in the essay entitled "Flat and philosophy," written by the art theorist Jindřich Chalupecký (in: *Výtvarná práce*, Vol. 12, No. 22 (1964), pp. 1 and 7; No. 23 (1964), p. 6). The book was available in libraries in (West) German translation, published for the first time as early as in 1963: JACOBS, Jane: *Tod und Leben großer amerikanischer Städte*. Berlin, Ullstein 1963. The Russian translation of the book was published only recently.

47 HRŮZA, J.: *Hledání soudobého města*, pp. 49–59.

48 *Ibid.*

49 Apart from these sources of the criticism of modernism, Hrůza also cited the work entitled *Magic Architecture* by the Austrian-American architect, scenographer and theorist Friedrich Kiesler, published in 1947, and the work entitled *Manifesto against Rationalism in Architecture* by Austrian painter, architect and theorist Friedensreich Hundertwasser, published in 1958. He also mentioned Karel Honzík as representative of Czech thought on architecture and urbanism, who expressed his doubts as early as in the 1930s.

offering rich cultural life"[50] was evidence of a more general failure of urban planning itself. He attributed this to a lack of understanding of the city's physical structure, which is in essence "very conservative." He claimed that historically no society has ever managed to remodel settlements and cities to its needs. Feudal society was born out of the ruins of ancient cities. In the same way, capitalist society lived in mediaeval cities in the first period of its boom. Another cause was the underestimation of the importance that the deep-rooted and traditional forms of life in the city had for its inhabitants, for whom the city represented more than just a complex of functions. According to Hrůza, the major drawback of modernist urban planning was that it offered no alternatives in terms of living environment, levels of mechanization and different ways and forms of settlement. Yet, this should be one of the principal goals when shaping the present and future environment of man. By contrast, he claimed that one of the greatest achievements of Czechoslovak urban planning was that it avoided the most extreme forms of modernist planning, which had affected not only the centres of American cities, but also Moscow, where "it even came to threaten the dominant position of the historic Kremlin."[51]

The failure of modernist urbanism, according to Hrůza, only proves that predicting future social processes is extremely difficult. Urban planning should therefore aim at the greatest possible flexibility of city structures. This contention led the author to a surprising conclusion regarding the redevelopment of the historic quarters of Prague: He claimed that the historic quarters always served as a sort of "natural reserve" that could be used to satisfy the unanticipated needs of the city. In order to preserve sufficient flexibility of the city, overly excessive one-time blanket redevelopments should be avoided. The book *Hledání soudobého města* also shows a certain ambiguity in the author's attitude to the historic quarters of the late 19th century. On the one hand, Hrůza regarded them as an unsustainable example of speculative capitalism. On the other hand, he was surprised and somewhat puzzled by a shift in the way both experts and the public valued their architectural qualities.[52]

Hrůza presented the problems of Prague and other big cities in socialist Czechoslovakia as general problems faced by big modern cities and with no direct relation to the specific social order. He warned, for example, that the saturation of Czechoslovak cities with cars is "a reality which cannot be prevented by simply

50 HRŮZA, J.: *Hledání soudobého města*, p. 59.

51 *Ibid.*, pp. 73–83.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 93. A shift in the perception of older city quarters and recognition of their specific value can be already traced in some older Hrůza's texts (see, for example, IDEM: Praha: Město nebo aglomerace [Prague: City or agglomeration]. In: *Architektura ČSR*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (1971), pp. 73–81). For the changing perspective on the value of the late 19th century buildings compare in particular the work of Marie Benešová (see, for example, BENEŠOVÁ, Marie: Objevený Žižkov [Žižkov discovered]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 37, No. 6 (1978), pp. 304–306; compare also ŠTURSA, Jiří: Modernizace bytového fondu v Praze [Modernization of the housing stock]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 39, No. 10 (1980), pp. 441–446). For the development in East Germany, where the value of this architecture was recognized earlier, see LADD, Brian: Socialist Planning and the Rediscovery of the Old City in the German Democratic Republic. In: *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 27, No. 5 (2001), pp. 584–603.

believing that socialist cities would develop differently from capitalist cities."[53] In another part of the book, which highlights the economic impossibility of radical redevelopment of existing cities, he pointed out that the same applied to French, Soviet, British, Polish and American cities.[54] With the exception of a few sentences in the conclusion of the book, Hrůza's text drew very little on Marxist theory, even ignoring Marxist phraseology. In this sense, the most striking feature is the total absence of emphasis on equality in living conditions, one of the main postulates of socialist urban planning. There are, on the contrary, several examples clearly showing that Hrůza could imagine urbanism as an instrument of social stratification. For example, when discussing the revitalization of the historic centre, he suggested converting historic buildings into atypical flats, with a corresponding rent to reflect the costs of the reconstruction as well as the unique and attractive environment.[55]

Reflection of the Crisis in the Prague City Plans

The texts published by Hrůza clearly illustrate deeper frustration of the members of the architectural community over the results of the existing practice of mass housing panel construction and in general over the urban planning interventions in the Prague landscape. Since the end of the 1960s, scepticism over the application of modernist principles to urbanism gradually started to influence urban planning itself. The area most affected by criticism was panel-housing construction, in which modernist efforts were applied most rapidly and most vigorously and which was seen as most in need of a radical reform. Since the end of the 1960s, housing estate architects sought a more "urban character" and "human dimension" in the newly built quarters. In contrast to the empty spaces and solitary apartment blocks of the Jižní Město [Southern City] housing estate, imitations of the traditional urban environment, with half-closed, half-private yards (Jihozápadní Město housing estate), and later an imitation of town streets (Barrandov housing estate), gradually gained ground. There were also projects that reserved part of the public green area for particular panel buildings or housing estate complexes that offered clearly defined social stratification – with high-rise panel buildings at the centre, surrounded by four-storey, saddle-roof panel buildings on the inner perimeter and family houses on the outer perimeter.[56]

This trend was manifested for the first time in the urban planning competition for the Jihozápadní Město I housing estate, won by 33-year old Ivo Oberstein,

53 HRŮZA, J.: *Hledání soudobého města*, pp. 96–108, here p. 96.
54 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
55 *Ibid.*, p. 90. Hrůza warned that excessive care of the historic centre can transform it into "a theatre scenery, peculiar Disneyland" (p. 89).
56 Compare, for example, Vančura, Jiří – Fragner, Benjamin: Vyhlídky Prahy [Prague outlooks]. In: Technický magazín, No. 12 (1984), pp. 20–29.

mainly thanks to his efforts of offering a new concept of housing estate architecture.[57] His project made maximum use of the planned B metro line through a high concentration of flats and services within walking distance of the metro stations. The metro stations were to become the heart of the living centres of the housing estates. Oberstein drew inspiration from the liveliness of the traditional historic centres, adjusting his plans for housing estate centres according to the layouts of the Old Town or the Wenceslas squares. (However, as his later published projects for Jihozápadní Město II reveal, Oberstein planned mostly according to the layout of crane tracks, just as his predecessors had done, and the shape of the housing estate was determined by the reach of the extending arm of the crane.[58])

This change also affected the ambitious redevelopment projects of the Prague quarters of the 19th century. In order to maintain the urban character and "human dimension," the redevelopment projects preserved the street network and underground infrastructure, "only" replacing the existing buildings with panel housing. However, the height of the existing buildings was respected. The projects also included large underground parking areas and offered services on the ground floor of the new buildings. The redevelopment plans were complemented by detailed "urban landscape" studies, such as those of the Vinohrady and Žižkov quarters. Not only were the physical structures of these quarters mapped, but also their functions in the everyday life of the residents (neighbourly and family ties, significant landmarks).[59] Apart from architects, or urban planners, these projects also involved sociologists, most prominently Jiří Musil.

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57 The results of the competition were published in the journal *Architektura ČSR*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (1969). For a detailed description of the housing estate project, see OBERSTEIN, Ivo – KLÍMA, Milan: Jihozápadní město – podrobný územní plán [South-West City – A detailed land-use plan]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (1971), pp. 10–21. Within the same journal number, compare the critical article by Jiří Hrůza, who criticized the project for being "over-architectonized." He maintained that after this trend has fallen out of fashion, in some 10 years, when it gets to be constructed, it will have already lost its original appeal. (HRŮZA, Jiří: Nad územním plánem Jihozápadního města [On the land-use plan of the South-West City]. In: *Ibid.* p. 8.) However, in a recent interview with the author of this text, Ivo Oberstein mainly attributed his success to the fact that more experienced colleagues did not participate in the competition because they were occupied with the politics of the Prague Spring. Interview with Ivo Oberstein, 24 May 2018, Prague, conducted by Petr Roubal, stored at the Archive of Oral History of the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

58 See Redakční beseda na téma: Výstavba a přestavba městských center [Editorial board discussion on the issue: Construction and redevelopment of city centres]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 45, No. 7 (1986), pp. 296–306, here p. 305; OBERSTEIN, Ivo – KLÍMA, Milan: Praha Jihozápadní město II: Studie pásového rozvoje [Prague South-West City II: Study of the belt development]. In: *Československý architekt*, Vol. 19, No. 5 (1973), pp. 209–215.

59 *AIPR*, *Průvodní zpráva urbanistické studie Žižkova II* [Accompanying report of the urban planning study of Žižkov quarter II]. Praha, Státní ústav pro rekonstrukce památkových měst a objektů, September 1985; *Ibid.*, Sociodemografická studie: ÚPnZ – Staré Vinohrady [Socio-demographic study: Land-use of the area – old Vinohrady quarter].

Since the mid-1970s, scepticism over modernist urbanism was also reflected in the urban plans of Prague. *The City Plan of the Agglomeration of Prague and the Central Bohemian Region*, which was approved in 1971, remained relatively unaffected by this shift, despite the fact that Jiří Hrůza was the main project architect and the head of the team of authors for the plan.[60] Using mathematical models and other "progressive urban planning methods", the plan focused primarily on placing Prague's development in a broader regional or national context. Reflections on the consequences of the previous city development were put aside. Criticism of modernist urbanism was reflected to a greater extent in the land-use plan of 1976.[61] The first point of the overall conception of the plan stressed that any further transformation of Prague must focus on continuous redevelopment of the existing city and that any construction on the undeveloped land should only be used for temporary resettlement of residents from the redeveloped areas. In contrast to the previous conceptions, the authors of this *Master Plan* no longer included some of the quarters in the redevelopment (mainly the Vinohrady and Letná quarters and part of the Dejvice quarter). The plan also reflected long-term calls by architects for experimental construction that would allow them to test new technologies as well as new layouts and ways of housing.

The urban plan no longer referred to zoning as its basic principle and promoted mixed urban functions. It required the "creation of mono-functional zones only where driven by hygienic or operational needs, and otherwise aims for reasonably mixed functions as this contributes considerably to the revitalization of the city."[62] The plan paid close attention to the functioning of the existing and newly-built housing estates and sought ways of transferring some of the employment opportunities from the city centre to the housing estates in order to reduce pressure on transport infrastructure, revitalize local environment and facilitate employment for women. The plan stressed that, apart from hygienic standards, the construction of large housing estates must also pay attention to "psychological and aesthetic aspects," in particular to the completion of all work before the new residents move in, as well as to diversity and expressiveness in the new construction.[63] The concept of "work opportunity" was important for the change in the urban-planning discourse, as it showed a clear departure from the previous conceptions of Prague.

This was no longer a plan for an industrial metropolis designed to meet the needs of the working class (both of which require zoning), but rather a plan creating "opportunities" for a consumer of city politics. In the *Master Plan* of the early 1960s, urban planning conformed to the national economic plan, thereby focusing on planning for production capacities, transport, housing and recreation of the workers of

60 *Ibid.*, *Pražská-středočeská aglomerace: Průvodní zpráva k územnímu plánu* [Prague-Central Bohemia agglomeration: An accompanying report to the land-use plan]. Praha, Útvar hlavního architekta – Terplan 1971.

61 *Ibid.*, *Směrný územní plán hlavního města Prahy* [Master plan of the capital city of Prague]. Praha, Útvar hlavního architekta 1976.

62 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

the production centre. This focus disappeared from the latest city plan. By contrast, the needs of the city dictated the changes in the productive forces, forcing "dirty works" outside the city perimeter and absorbing agricultural land.

The following Prague city plan, approved by the Czech government in January 1986, went even further by highlighting "the appeal of traditional city avenues, squares and waterfronts, with their social and commercial functions."[64] The task of housing construction was to foster "housing differentiation," that is to respect the specific needs of housing, particularly for families with small children, students and senior citizens.[65] It was also considered necessary to "create new technical conditions for the concentrated construction of family houses," which were to represent about 15 percent of all new housing.[66] This plan also rigorously applied the principle of the protection of land, and, unlike its predecessor, envisaged no further construction of large housing estates.

"Urban Planning Politics" and Building Industry Practices

By the mid-1970s, urbanists succeeded in promoting a new conception of working with the city space in strategic plans and specific projects. Nevertheless, their efforts to bring about a genuine urban change in the form of living centres of housing estates, mixed social functions and increased population density proved to be a failure. These changes required a fundamental change in the design of the economic plans, technological innovation and political change in terms of participation by the citizens. For urbanists, whose influence seldom extended further than the regional level of national committees, it was virtually impossible to achieve this change. A series of critical texts on the issue of housing estate construction published in the journals *Architektura ČSR* [Czechoslovak architecture] and *Československý architect* [Czechoslovak architect] (published as *Sovětská architektura* [Soviet architecture] until 1955) may serve as a good example of professional frustration the Prague urbanists felt. By publishing articles in professional journals, the architects sought means of entering the complex power game between the party and state authorities in the role of investors on the one side, and big construction enterprises in the position of suppliers on the other. Through various strategies and tactics, described as "urban planning politics" by Ivo Oberstein, one of the main architects of housing estates, the architects sought to regain control over further destiny of

64 *Ibid.*, *Územní plán hlavního města Prahy 1986* [Land-use plan of the capital city of Prague 1986]. Praha, Útvar hlavního architekta 1986, p. 12. An important role in the design of the plan was played by the previously adopted government resolution (*NA*, f. Úřad vlády ČSR/ČR, Praha – Usnesení vlády, inv. No. 164/1985, Resolution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Government No. 164 regarding the report on the implementation of the urban planning strategy of the construction and redevelopment of the capital city of Prague, dated 6 July 1985).

65 *AIPR*, *Územní plán hlavního města Prahy 1986*, p. 11.

66 *Ibid.*, p. 180.

their projects.[67] Their main strategy was to win over investors, that is political power, and present the construction enterprises as the main culprits of the bad situation of the housing estates. However, the architects' attempts to remedy the situation were unsuccessful in most cases, because they came up against the common interest of both the investors and suppliers to build as many cheap flats as possible and as quickly as possible. While the political interest of the investors was to respond to the housing needs as rapidly as possible, the economic interests of suppliers were to build the simplest, yet the most expensive parts of the housing estates' complexes. Only in the second half of the 1980s did the critical architectural discourse turn away from criticizing the construction enterprises. It was now state socialism as a system that was held responsible for the failure of the construction enterprises.

The crux of the dispute centred on the architects' efforts to defend the original housing estate projects from "equalizing tendencies of the building industry,"[68] that is, from the suppliers' attempts to reduce all construction work not directly related with the construction of flats. For example, the architects sought in vain to defend the original project of the Jižní Město housing estate, which envisaged a number of high-rise buildings, so as to break the monotony of the housing estate and serve as natural gravitation centres. In 1973, the authors of the project, Bohumil Kříž and Jiří Hyliš, described the external pressure that forced them to create "an economizing alternative of the complex study" so that they were obliged to use unified eight-storey buildings, compatible with crane technology. In the article, they complained about feeling alone in their endeavour to create a satisfactory living environment in the Jižní Město housing estate: "[…] we had to supply the obligations and initiative of some of the partners who were in charge of preparing the construction, as architects are, unfortunately, often the only active advocates for the future residents and the only defenders of the interests of the entire society."[69]

One of the strategies the architects employed in order to prevent undesired changes in the projects was to anticipate any future pressures and design projects in a way as to make any further changes complicated, if not impossible. There is ample evidence of this in a record of the editorial board discussion among several housing estate architects in 1986, in which they gave helpful tips on how to "fight" suppliers. According to Jiří Hrůza, the architects had to deal with the fact that as urban planners they had a major influence on "what would go where," but very little on "when it will be done."[70] The main issue between the architects and the suppliers were the public amenities of the housing estates, the construction of which was continually postponed, and sometimes they were not built at all. An example of a successful strategy towards the suppliers, mentioned by Ivo Oberstein, entailed merging housing and social functions in the project of the cultural

67 Redakční beseda na téma: Výstavba a přestavba městských center, p. 303.

68 KŘÍŽ, Bohumil – HYLIŠ, Jiří: Jižní město v Praze – 3. obytný soubor [South City in Prague – 3rd residential complex]. In: *Architektura ČSR*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (1973), pp. 70–79, here p. 73.

69 *Ibid.*

70 Redakční beseda na téma, p. 300.

centre at the Jihozápadní Město housing estate (the author being Tomáš Brix). In this case, the supplier could not evade building social infrastructure, because it would also entail not complying with the obligation to build a predetermined number of flats. In this way, the architects managed to include the cultural centre in the next five-year plan.[71] Drawing on past practice, the architects knew that some buildings had priority and others would never be constructed, and therefore tried to avoid mono-functional buildings for local public amenities in their projects. Architect Martin Kotík shared his experience with planning public amenities for the Jihozápadní Město housing estate: "We knew that if we built a centre with a big supermarket that was adequate for a certain number of residents, and then a number of other shops and services, only the supermarket would be built and anything else would be brushed aside."[72] The final project of the social centre was therefore conceived as a comprehensive structure in which all the individual parts were mutually dependent in terms of their functions and construction.

The architects also looked for allies to help them enforce their ideas and exert pressure on the housing estate investors, usually national committees. The architects informed the political authorities about the detrimental "ideological influence" of the distorted or incomplete projects, invoking general party proclamations and government resolutions about "socialist lifestyle" and "living environment of socialist cities." In this argument, the architects received support from sociologists, who, in contrast to them, mastered the language used for describing the "ideological influence" of the housing estates. By criticizing "uprootedness," "alienation" and the like, the architects involved were skating on thin ice beyond the safe position of "professional criticism." By cooperating with sociologists, they could avoid suspicion of exceeding their authority and making subversive criticism.

The most prominent of the sociologists who explored the issues of housing was Jiří Musil. During his fellowship at the University of Glasgow lasting several months in 1963, he carried out research on one of the worst slums of contemporary Europe – the quarter of Gorbals – having thereby an opportunity to familiarize himself in detail with an example of *the worst practice.* He could also consult the most prominent critics of modernist planning in Great Britain, Michael Young and Peter Willmont. Musil made good use of his experience, among other works, in a short book entitled *Sociologické problémy asanačních čtvrtí* [Sociological problems of the quarters planned for redevelopment] published in 1966. In this book, he analyzed the areas designated for redevelopment (the cities of Kladno and České Budějovice, and the residential quarter of Vinohrady in Prague) and provided a manual to its "sensitive" realization. Musil's research on the issue of housing estates during the era of the so-called "normalization" culminated in his crucial work *Lidé a sídliště* [People and housing estates].[73] Cooperation of Jiří Musil and other sociologists with architects is illustrated by a record of their joint debate, published at the beginning

71 *Ibid.,* p. 306.
72 *Ibid.,* p. 303.
73 MUSIL, Jiří a kol.: *Lidé a sídliště* [People and housing estates]. Praha, Svoboda 1985.

of the 1980s in the journal *Československý architect*.[74] In this debate, architect Jiří Lasovský appealed to Musil and other sociologists to help clarify the conditions that strengthen local community and to contribute to the formulation of "society-driven interests" that could be enforced with the investor.[75] According to Lasovský, architects and sociologists viewed the living environment of housing estates in a similar way and therefore stood on the same side against the investors and suppliers. Sociologist Lubomír Kotaček then proposed to formalize this cooperation and anchor the participation of social scientists in urban planning in law, similar to the participation of public health officers.[76] Nevertheless, Musil pointed out that the starting positions of architects and sociologists were diametrically opposed: while the former sought a change in the behaviour of individuals by transforming the material environment, the latter analyzed normal behaviour of people and were sceptical of any possibility of a permanent change in social reality.[77]

The architects involved also managed to achieve at least temporary successes through forming coalitions with various ministries. With special interest in the protection of land resources, the Ministry of Agriculture was extremely important for the Prague urbanists. When planning redevelopments, the architects also relied on the Ministry of Culture and the national heritage offices, which pressed suppliers for a change in technologies that would respect the existing character of the city, at least in terms of the city landscape.[78] Often there were also interventions in the housing estate plans by other ministries and big industrial enterprises, which sought construction of their own premises or high-quality accommodation for their employees. For example, one of the high-rise buildings at the Jižní Město housing estate that had, according to the architects, a crucial "city-forming" effect, was retained in the plans even against the will of the supplier thanks to a new "investor," the state enterprise Prague Restaurants, which planned to use it as a residence for apprentices and a dormitory for employees.

However, the partial successes that the architects could claim credit for due to various coalitions brought little change to the fact that until the end of the 1980s their ideas of a necessary correction of modernist planning were not reflected in practice. "Crane urbanism," which ignored the "human dimension," continued to be the dominant method in the construction of new housing estates, whereas the existing housing estates remained merely incomplete remnants of the original plans.

74 Architektura, sociologie a sídliště [Architecture, sociology and housing estates]. In: *Československý architekt*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (1982), pp. 177–179.
75 *Ibid.,* p. 179.
76 *Ibid.,* p. 178.
77 *Ibid.,* p. 177.
78 Compare, for example, Nová stavební soustava pro Prahu [A new construction system for Prague]. In: *Architektura ČSR*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (1986), pp. 13–19.

Conclusion

Frustration finally led a number of urbanists to seek an alliance with the awakening Prague civil society, providing it not only with professional arguments but often also with illegally obtained planning materials.[79] Criticism of the prefabricated panel-housing estates moved from the pages of academic journals to the pages of daily press and became formulated as a problem of the whole economic and political system.[80] At the end of the 1980s, the younger generation of architects became involved in the struggle over the Basic Communication System of Prague and a road planned to intersect the Stromovka park. They also fought for the preservation of the Žižkov quarter and other quarters endangered by redevelopment plans, and they even participated in the (eventually unpublished) document of the Charter 77 on the state of architecture in Czechoslovakia (even though there were only seven architects against, for example, four dozen historians among the signatories of Charter 77).[81] This mobilization of architects and urbanists goes beyond the framework of this study, yet it should be said that it was a logical step in the 40-year development of relations between Prague urbanists and political power. The changes brought about by Khrushchev's speech in 1954 first fulfilled the visions of the interwar architectural avant-garde of transforming urban planning into social planning. Shaping the city and living environment of the socialist man became a professional issue, which the urbanists could resolve by means of visions of interwar urban modernity. However, it soon became evident that the power the urbanists acquired over urban planning did not reach far enough to enable them to influence the actual form of the housing estates and other, primarily traffic, infrastructure projects. The failure of the first housing estates gave further impetus to the existing concerns over the validity of the modernist principles in urban planning, which had been infiltrating Czechoslovakia from the West since the mid-1960s. Despite some consensus among the urbanists at the beginning of the following decade on the necessary changes in modernist ambitions, no fundamental change occurred in construction practice until the end of state socialism. The urbanists involved learnt that their professional expertise gave them influence over city planning, but no political power over financial resources, technological

79 Ivan Vavřík recalled: "[…] by coincidence, I came by the Žižkov quarter's redevelopment plans. And so I simply stole them, or let us say I borrowed them permanently." (HORSKÝ, Jiří: *Žižkov (za)chráněný: Katalog výstavy* [Žižkov rescued: Exhibition catalogue]. Praha 2012, p. 64.)

80 Compare, in particular KRÁLÍČEK, Václav: Proč společnost platí architekty [Why architects are paid by society]. In: *Mladá fronta* daily (23 May 1987), p. 3.

81 Compare, for example, ŠEVČÍK, Jiří – MITÁŠOVÁ, Monika (ed.): *Česká a slovenská architektura 1971–2011: Texty, rozhovory, dokumenty* [Czech and Slovak architecture 1971–2011: Texts, interviews, documents]. Praha, Akademie výtvarných umění 2013, pp. 48–53; HORSKÝ, Jiří: Žižkovem sem, Žižkovem tam, I–V [Wandering through Žižkov, I–V]. In: *Československý architekt*, Vol. 35 (1989), No. 11, pp. 1 and 4.; No. 13, pp. 1 and 4.; No. 16, p. 4; No. 18, p. 4; No. 24, pp. 1 and 4.

tools or work forces, all of which were necessary to direct the development of the city. Having the responsibility for urban planning, but being unable to influence the final shape of the city eventually led to a feeling of frustration among the urbanists. After exhausting different subversive tactics, they often crossed the narrow professional boundaries and addressed the broader public. By turning a professional debate into a political debate, the urbanists contributed to the delegitimization of state-social governance at the end of the 1980s. However, this also weakened their own professional position and their influence on the post-November development of the city.

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Translated by Blanka Medková

“He Who Leads – Controls!”

Corporate Management and Rigours of “Socialist Control” in Czechoslovak Enterprises in the 1980s

Tomáš Vilímek

French economist Henri Fayol included control among five fundamental managerial functions as early as in 1916; subsequent specialized and general books on management also accentuate its importance, and sometimes even refer to it as the “royal function.”[1] Every manager simply needs to verify whether reality matches the original plan. The above also applies to the socialist manager who, according to one of the period publications on principles of efficient management, was supposed to plan and organize work of others, coordinate activities of individuals and collectives, motivate and make decisions, and – last but not least – educate and control.[2] The author of the work drew from an extensive survey involving leading economic managers from the General Mechanical Engineering Works Production and Economic Unit (PEU), and stated that successful management of enterprises required not only professional expertise, but also appropriate “political maturity,”

1 FAYOL, Henri: Administration industrielle et générale: Prévoyance, organisation, commandement, coordination, controle. In: *Bulletin de la Société de l’industrie minérale*, No. 3 (1916). Published for the first time as a book in Paris by Dunod in 1918; for the last time also in Paris by Dunod in 1999. Cited according to TRUNEČEK, Jan: *Znalostní podnik ve znalostní společnosti* [A knowledge enterprise in a knowledge society]. Praha, Professional Publishing 2003, p. 55. The list of titles on management functions and roles would be quite extensive and should include, in particular, authors such as Peter F. Drucker, Henry Mintzberg, John Adair, Kea H. Chung, Günther Wöhe, Robert C. Appleby, etc.

2 STŘÍTESKÝ, Miroslav: *Zásady efektivního řízení pro hospodářskou praxi* [Principles of efficient management for economic practice]. Praha, Svoboda 1979, p. 27.

which is an indispensable and irreplaceable prerequisite for a successful performance of a leading managerial role. The manager thus should not forget that he is also a political leader, an intransigent "advocate of the policy of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia" characterized by his "devotion to the cause of socialism," promoting the economic policy of the Communist Party, and exacting toward both himself and others. He recommended a period of at least 15 years for the preparation of general managers and their deputies; a 10-year period was supposed to be sufficient for the preparation of middle-level managers.[3]

In 1979, a book on the theory of control was published as well. Its author rejected the "petit bourgeoisie monitoring control" emphasizing internal professional checks without any centralized management, and outlined no less than nine "methodological principles of socialist control" many of which – such as prevention, optimization, flexibility, or efficiency – had already been routinely applied for a long time in market economy countries. The essential difference consisted in the principle of control comprehensiveness, which was presented as a dialectic unity of political, social, economic, technical, and spiritual aspects, as well as in the interpretation of the principle of objectiveness in respect whereof the author stated that "a socialist control subject must conscientiously promote the strengthening of the socialist system and protection of socialist property and support social efficiency in controlled activities." The book required those exercising control to conscientiously prefer "objective social interests […] to narrow national, regional, industry-related, group, or individual interests." All of the above was overarched by the principle of the leading role of the Communist Party which, as a "centre of knowledge," was automatically assigned the role of the key element of the control system.[4] In practice, the above principle was to be implemented by enterprise-level party organizations which, according to the statute of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, were "entitled to check how the management of the enterprise or institute perform tasks of the economic policy of the state and the party."[5] While the "right of control" respected the principle of "one responsible leader," and thus should not have substituted control activities of corporate management, it obliged every member of the party to adopt its economic policy and be actively involved in checking and controlling its implementation at his or her workplace. The enterprise-level organizations of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia were thus supposed to confront potential signs of "local patriotism" and attempts to gain unjustified advantages at the expense of the society, with "party affiliation" prevailing over superior-subordinate relations.[6]

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 125 and 139.

4 MYNÁŘ, Antonín: *Teorie kontroly: Cílové ovlivňování a úloha kontroly* [Theory of control: Target influencing and role of control]. Praha, Svoboda 1979, pp. 155–159.

5 Statute of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 29 May 1971. In: *XIV. sjezd Komunistické strany Československa* [XIV Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia]. Praha, Svoboda 1971, pp. 628–653, here p. 651.

6 RÁZUS, Milan: *Stranická organizace a uplatňování práva kontroly* [Party organization and exercise of the right to control]. Praha, Svoboda 1981, pp. 14 and 79.

Control was considered to be of utmost importance and the proclaimed principle "he who leads – controls" was becoming topical particularly in moments when the "central allocation mechanism" of economy was showing obvious symptoms of serious economic difficulties. At the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, there was an accumulation of a number of negative factors, both economic (the second oil shock, increased prices of raw materials imported from the Soviet Union) and political (the Soviet invasion to Afghanistan, Polish crisis), which naturally had an impact on the social situation in Czechoslovakia. In the first half of the 1980s, the economic situation got significantly worse. The adopted "Package of measures to improve the system of plan-based management of the national economy" of March 1980 emphasized not only the need to increase productivity of labour and to reduce the consumption of materials by production processes, but also the necessity to make managing and controlling activities of corporate managements more effective. Yet, it did little to change the negative trend. There was no turn for the better, as initially expected. On the contrary –domestic production was stagnating in 1981 and 1982.[7] It is definitely not accidental that several publications on management issues, which were characterized by a specific ambivalence, were produced between 1979 and 1981. As a matter of fact, they required socialist managers to approach control matters as representatives of a specific expert group capable of taking into account new capabilities of computers and work organization methods; however, they were also expected to provide adequate conditions for people's control from the bottom up, as well as to fully support control activities of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia a membership card of which most of them owned.

Although there was some reduction of the material intensity of production processes, the expected improvement of managerial activities did not happen; at the end of the day, scepticism of corporate managers, who most frequently reacted to the campaign for intensified control activities by formal reports on occupational safety audits and sticking to planned salary appropriations, only grew deeper. After all, the submitters of the "Measures to improve the control system in the national economy and state administration" – Prime Minister of the Federal Government Lubomír Štrougal and Minister-Chairman of the People's Control Committee (PCC) František Ondřich – complained that many managers did not feet the need of control, and thus did not pay adequate attention to it. Even more than five years after the adoption of the "Principles of ensuring control in the national economy,"[8] many managers did not accept it as a permanent part of their managerial activities; as

7 See PRŮCHA, Václav et al.: *Hospodářské a sociální dějiny Československa 1918–1992* [Economic and social history of Czechoslovakia], Vol. 2: *Období 1945–1992* [The 1945–1992 period]. Brno, Doplněk 2009, pp. 673 and 699.

8 Regulation No. 5/1975 Coll.: Principles of ensuring control in the national economy and state administration, approved by resolution No. 3 of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic dated 9 January 1975. In: Poslanecká sněmovna Parlamentu České republiky [Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic) [online]. Jednání a dokumenty, Sbírka zákonů [Meetings and documents, Collection of legal acts] [cit. 2017-03-20]. Available at: *http://www.psp.cz/sqw/sbirka.sqw?cz=5&r=1975*.

a result, it was necessary "to improve the quality of work of all control authorities and managers […] and to create prerequisites for a higher objectivity and efficiency of control."[9] The question was whether the goal could really be achieved, considering the characteristics of the Czechoslovak corporate sphere, such as the "sucking reflex," the uncompromising "game for the plan,"[10] permanently tense relations between suppliers and customers, and the monopoly of enterprises to information on their real production capacities.

Improving Control by Additional Checks: The Hectic Period of the First Half of the 1980s

Communist Party leadership used the well-proven approach of passing new resolutions, massive economic propaganda, and follow-on checks of controllers. As early as in July 1981, the Federal Government approved measures aimed at improving the control system of the national economy, and Minister Ondřich submitted new "Principles of control in the national economy and state administration" to the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in April 1982; these were promulgated in the Collection of Legal Acts in June.[11] In the very introductory part of the document, the implementation of the economic policy of the party was proclaimed conditional to thorough and consistent control, which was supposed to constitute an integral part of management. Acting in accordance with the traditional slogan "he who leads – controls," corporate managers were obliged to conduct, within their areas of responsibility, systematic checks predominantly focused on the fulfilment of state and economic plans, standard and improvements of control activities, thorough investigation or examination of complaints and initiatives of workers, and also suppression of anti-social phenomena, such as waste of resources, corruption, bureaucracy, and violations of socialist laws. Considerable importance was assigned to People's Control Committees and

9 *National Archives*, Prague (hereinafter *NA*), Fonds (f.) Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee, Inventory Number (IN) 482/1981, Report on the situation and standard of control in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, including a rationale of proposed measures, 30 June 1981.

10 MLČOCH, Lubomír: *Chování československé podnikové sféry: Soubor deskriptivních studií* [Behaviour of the Czechoslovak corporate sphere: A set of comparative studies]. Praha, November 1988 [samizdat], pp. 26–28. The subtitle is rather misleading; it is a compact work divided into chapters. In 1990, the original samizdat work was published by the Institute of Economics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague. For the present study, I decided to use the samizdat version (with handwritten notes of economist Otakar Turek).

11 *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee – Presidium, Volume (Vol.) P 38/82, Minutes of the 38th meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 22 April 1982, Item 1, Principles of control in the national economy and state administration and the establishment of additional enterprise-level people's control commissions.

the position of the Chief Controller (Section 28), who was supposed to oversee that interests of the state were consistently promoted.[12]

Even the very first audits of the implementation of the "Package of measures" and "Principles of control" showed that it would be a very demanding task. In 1982, problems with meeting the planned targets were found in two thirds of almost 1,100 audited enterprises, most of them concerning the quality and diversity of products intended for the domestic market. While enterprises were using traditional "objective difficulties," such as lack or absence of raw materials needed for the production, obsolete machinery, or shortage of labour, as arguments, the authors of a report produced in January 1983 were convinced that "most of the deficiencies stem from subjective reasons, consist in people and their political maturity, professional competence, and moral and political qualities."[13] Activities of enterprise-level party bodies exercising the "right of control," for which summary reports of corporate managements containing only basic plan fulfilment information without any deeper analysis of the application of the "Package of measures" and "Principles of control" were often enough, were also deemed rather unsatisfactory. Trying to activate the membership base in its attempt to deal with various symptoms of rampant "social corrosion" – pilferage or misuse of property in socialist ownership, damaging the customer, corruption, falsification of plan fulfilment figures, etc. – the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia adopted a "Letter to party bodies and organizations to deepen the efficiency of the combat against violations of principles of socialist law, morality, and discipline" in February 1983, which together with the documents referred to the above constituted basic framework of the party leadership's contemplations on how to deal with the obvious economic stagnation.[14]

As proven by ample analyses from the following period, most of the hopes of the power centre in this respect remained unfulfilled. One of the factors unquestionably contributing to the situation was the fact that socialist managers had been preferring, fairly understandably, interests of their enterprises to "society-wide"

12 Regulation No. 66/1982 Coll.: Principles of control in the national economy and state administration approved by the resolution of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic dated 14 April 1982. In: Poslanecká sněmovna Parlamentu České republiky [online]. Jednání a dokumenty, Sbírka zákonů [cit. 2017-03-20]. Available at: *https://www.psp.cz/sqw/sbirka.sqw?cz=66&r=1982*.

13 *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee – Presidium, Vol. P 57/83, Minutes of the 57th meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 5 January 1983, Item 18, Results of the audit aimed at determining how party organizations exercise the right to control the fulfilment of tasks of the economic policy of the party and the state under conditions implemented by the Package of measures to improve the system of plan-based management of the national economy.

14 *Ibid.,* f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee, letters and telex messages of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, File No. (FN) ÚV 4/83, Letter of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to deepen the efficiency of the combat against violations of principles of socialist law, morality, and discipline, February 1983.

ones, failing to automatically identify themselves with the idea that what is good for society must inevitably be good also for the enterprise. In his inspiring samizdat work on the behaviour of a socialist enterprise, economist Čestmír Kožušník characterized the behaviour of managers as a result of pressures from their superiors and subordinate members of the working community. In his opinion, the managers preferred "calm work with a minimum number of conflict situations." At the same time, dealing with the internal environment of the enterprise was an extraordinarily stressful and conflict-producing job. "If it is possible to achieve acceptable results by controlling and influencing the external environment or those who determine the criteria and evaluate whether a manager is successful or not, it is an easier way to success than direct and demanding control of subordinates," summarized the author.[15] In short, socialist managers realized that an accidental audit prompted by a complaint of a dissatisfied employee could cause them substantially greater complications than an audit by superior economic entities – HQ of the parent company, general HQ of the Production and Economic Unit (PEU), or superior ministry – which they, thanks to a specific "hypertrophy of external links,"[16] often knew about well in advance. However, an external audit always posed a potential risk, and many times the enterprise manager learned the hard way that relying too much on his carefully built network of clientelistic relations or his seemingly unshakeable cadre profile might not be advisable, as illustrated, for example, by the case of Miloslav Zapadlo, Managing Director of the Škoda Automobile Works in Mladá Boleslav, in 1978.[17]

As a matter of fact, even the testimonies of some representatives of corporate managements interrogated in the summer of 1987 by a special working commission of the Central Auditing and Revision Commissions of the Communist Parties of Czechoslovakia and Slovakia in connection with the case of Stanislav Babinský, the "King of the Orava Region," provide a telling proof of the feeling of one's own untouchability. Babinský, the chairman of Jednota Consumer Cooperative in Dolný Kubín and ex-Managing Director of Okresný priemyselný podnik [District industrial enterprise] in Trstená, was sentenced in the summer of 1987 to a lengthy prison term for serious economic crimes the beginnings of which dated back to the second half of the 1970s. During the trial, he named a number of top-level party and government officials – Vice Chairman of the State Planning Commission, General Director of the Ferrous Metallurgy PEU, ex-Deputy of the Federal

15 KOŽUŠNÍK, Čestmír: *Úvahy o předpokladech ekonomicky racionálního chování socialistického podniku* [Reflections on prerequisites of an economically rational behaviour of a socialist enterprise]. Praha 1985, p. 21 [samizdat].

16 MLČOCH, L.: *Chování československé podnikové sféry*, p. 10.

17 See VILÍMEK, Tomáš: Mladoboleslavská škodovka v období normalizace (1968–1989) [The Škoda Automobile Works in Mladá Bolesva during the normalization period]. In: VILÍMEK, Tomáš – TŮMA, Oldřich (ed.): *Česká společnost v 70. a 80. letech: Sociální a ekonomické aspekty* [Czech society in the 1970s and 1980s: Social and economic aspects]. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2012, pp. 63–175, here pp. 110–116.

Minister of Interior, and others – whom he supplied goods at bargain-basement prices, organized hunts for, or presented with artefacts. "Most of the comrades failed to notice that Babinský was dragging them into his nets under the pretext of the development of his enterprise," the commission concluded. After his arrest, his wife was visiting various functionaries, threatening that if her husband was not released from prison, she would contact Radio Free Europe.[18] When, for example, an ex-Deputy Director of the Komárno Shipyard was confronted with the commission's findings that he had unlawfully received a present from Babinský, namely furniture worth 30,000 Czechoslovak crowns, he refused to pay the sum and was resentful and surprised that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was dealing with such "trivialities." His only punishment was a party reprimand and admonition.[19]

There was a significant increase of various checks and audits focused on the implementation of the "Package of measures," "Principles of control," and "Letter of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia" of February 1983 in the first half of the 1980s. However, party leadership could not be satisfied with their outcome. Until 1989, the checks and audits thus only checked previous checks and audits, revealing identical deficiencies over and over again. Criticism of control activities of top managers weaves like red thread through every final check or audit report; they allegedly underestimate control, do not create appropriate prerequisites for it in their enterprises, and tend to explain – often repeatedly – identified shortcomings by tense relations with their suppliers or shortage of materials required for the production, without even trying to look for internal reserves. A January 1984 report summarizing results of audits performed in almost 400 Czechoslovak enterprises saw internal control mechanisms, which often concentrated on marginal problems only, as particularly unsatisfactory. In-house controllers and auditors were criticized for taking over information from operating and economic units without checking it. Corporate managements generally showed a tendency to tolerate identified faults and defects, which was the reason why "cases in which deficiencies and shortcomings are revealed only by external control bodies and dealt with only on their initiative are not exceptional."[20]

18 *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee – Presidium, Vol. P 59/88, Minutes of the 57th meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 5 February 1988, Item 1, Results of the investigation undertaken with party members in relation to Okresný priemyselný podnik and Jednota Consumer Cooperative in Dolný Kubín.

19 *Ibid.*, Annex IV/4, Results of the investigation undertaken with party members in relation to Okresný priemyselný podnik and Jednota Consumer Cooperative in Dolný Kubín, 5 February 1988.

20 *Ibid.*, Vol. P 98/84, Minutes of the 98th meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 31 January 1984, Item 1a, Report of the outcome of the audit and implementation of principles of control in the national economy and state administration.

Leading managers were repeatedly castigated for not penalizing their employees adequately for poor quality production. In June 1983, Miloš Jakeš, Chairman of the Central Auditing and Revision Commission of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, notified the party's Presidium of an extensive audit of the quality of goods earmarked for export, which had taken place a year ago and revealed, *inter alia,* that a full quarter of the products manufactured by enterprises falling under the Federal Ministry of General Mechanical Engineering were defective. It was the automobile factory in Mladá Boleslav which accounted for the highest share of the faulty products – alarming 98.9 percent. The list of internal causes of the situation was dominated by lack of technological discipline, undemanding entry, interim, and final quality checks, problems with discipline in the workplace, and – last but not least – production fluctuations manifested by all-out effort, or "storming," at the end of the planning period. Standing out among external causes of the low quality were deficiencies in relations between suppliers and customers, and therefore low demands that the latter placed on the quality of supplied products and materials. "As to production organizations," the report's authors concluded, "it is still better to meet planned goals, albeit with low-quality products, than to fall short of them, as the economic impact is much worse for them in the latter case."[21]

In December 1984, Attorney General of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Ján Feješ informed the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia that losses caused by low-quality products had reached almost one billion Czechoslovak crowns in 1983; moreover, he added that the estimate was conservative. In his opinion, the phenomenon was causing both material and also "political and moral" damage. He expressly ascribed the responsibility to top managers who either did not demand any compensation for rejects from their subordinates at all, or demanded just a token compensation; as a result, workers were confirmed in their attitude of "irresponsibility, indifference, and negative approach to the performance of their duties." According to the Attorney General, poor-quality production losses of the Vrchlabí subsidiary plant of Továrna obráběcích strojů [TOS – Machine tools factory] in Rakovník amounted to more than 1.5 million Czechoslovak crowns, but its employees were prescribed only 5,000 Czechoslovak crowns as compensation.[22] In one of the 24 enterprises audited in 1985, auditors assessed the damage at more than 350 million Czechoslovak crowns.

21 *Ibid.*, Vol. P 74/83, Minutes of the 74th meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 20 June 1983, the item on Information 3 and Table 1, Information on the outcome of audits of quality of selected items of Czechoslovak machinery and non-machinery export goods, carried out by FTD [Foreign trade department] of INSPEKTA in 1982.

22 *Ibid.*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee, IN 7852/1984, p. 9, Information of the General Attorney's Office on the legal situation with respect to enforcing responsibility for low-quality production, 10 December 1984.

However, compensations from culprits were exacted very exceptionally, and the tab for 99.4 percent of the total loss was picked up by organizations.[23]

Another repeatedly revealed deficiency was a widespread trend to gundeck plan performance reports in favour of the enterprise. In practice, it consisted in various methods used to "fulfil a plan by pencil," such as reporting work in progress as finished products to meet bonus payment criteria. In this respect, results of audits of state authorities and state security bodies vindicate the opinion of Ladislav Mlčoch who saw various methods of falsifying economic results as a symptom of "system regularity" of the centrally planned economy in his publication (originally samizdat) on the behaviour of the corporate sphere.[24] In February 1986, for example, the State Security was investigating, using indications obtained from its own "informant network," a case of production plan fulfilment gundecking in the rough machining shop of Škoda factory in České Budějovice. Police officers found unfinished castings worth almost 700,000 Czechoslovak crowns in the shop, which had been reported as finished in the January performance report. When interrogated, the shop foreman confessed to the falsification, but he also stated that, as far as he could recall, the plan had always been fulfilled in the manner outlined above every month, the only difference being in how long the deficit took to make up for in the next month.[25] At the same time, reactions of the employees to the ongoing investigation also found their way to the ears of economic counterintelligence officers. No one was apparently too willing to impose disciplinary measures, and the employees, including top managers, were busy guessing who could be the informant, as the police must have been tipped off. One of the workers, also involved in internal control mechanisms, downplayed the case, jokingly observing that if the guardians of the law had come at the end of the third quarter of the previous year, they would have found 10 wagonloads of unshipped castings.[26] At the same time, an extensive audit conducted by the People's Control Committee of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in April 1987 revealed that more than a half of the audited enterprises had been gundecking their economic results, most commonly by premature invoicing of finished products and/or artificial reductions of stock levels.[27]

23 *Ibid.*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee - Presidium, Vol. P 42/87, Minutes of the 42nd meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 21 April 1987, Item 7, Report of the outcome of the audit of compliance with socialist laws and discipline in the performance of tasks assigned to organizations.

24 MLČOCH, L.: *Chování československé podnikové sféry*, pp. 171–174.

25 *Archive of the Security Services*, Prague (hereinafter *SSA*), f. Object files (OB), Archival Number (AN) OB – 450 ČB (České Budějovice), Part 7, Scan 265, Minutes of the interrogation of comrade P. M., České Budějovice, 3 February 1986.

26 *Ibid.*, Scan 305, Reactions to the completed investigation of police officers concerning the falsification of January 1986 economic results of the rough machining shop of ŠKODA České Budějovice, 25 February 1986.

27 *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee - Presidium, Vol. P 42/87, Minutes of the 42nd meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 21 April 1987, Item 7, Report of the outcome of the audit

Checks and audits invariably revealed violations of work discipline, unfounded provision of benefits and perks to employees, and substantial gaps in the utilization of working hours. According to reported audits, enterprise managers showed not only a tendency to underestimate the importance of prevention and supervision, but often also "false solidarity and appeasement."[28] Almost every audit revealed inexplicably long loans of the enterprise's equipment, unusually favourable sales of materials to employees, or cost-free DIY manufacture of various consumer goods by employees. For example, the management of the national enterprise Továrny mlýnských strojů [Mill machinery works] in Pardubice permitted its employees to make TV antennas or household accessories or to repair their own cars without making sure whether they did it after working hours.[29] Illegal entrepreneurship flourished in some enterprises as well, with their employees repairing private vehicles even during working hours and using spare parts from handy warehouses to do so. In August 1988, for example, the police came across information that one of the plants of Poldi Kladno was selling used company cars under suspicious terms and conditions. An expert witness first determined the price of the vehicle which was usually fairly low, given the condition of the car. However, the transaction was not hurried at all, and spare parts for the vehicle continued to be issued for as long as several months, which meant that the lucky buyer selected in advance finally got an almost new vehicle for the price of an old one.[30]

Police bodies criticized that corporate managements were not exercising their duty to report both petty and serious crimes. In an overwhelming majority of embezzlement or pilferage cases, finding the perpetrator was a result of monitoring and investigation activities of the police and economic counterintelligence. Between 1979 and 1983, enterprises accounted for only eight to nine percent of reported cases of economic crime.[31] According to an analysis of economic crime in 1984, socialist organizations helped reveal just nine percent of cases, while the contribution

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of compliance with socialist laws and discipline in the performance of tasks assigned to organizations.

28 *Ibid.*, Vol. P 140/85, Minutes of the 140th meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 9 October 1985, Item 8, Results of the audit of how the Letter of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to deepen the efficiency of the combat against violations of principles of socialist law, morality, and discipline is applied in practice.

29 *SSA*, f. Collegium of the Minister of Interior of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Minutes of the 6th meeting of the Collegium held on 12 June 1984, Item 6, Report on the audit of tasks arising from the Letter of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to deepen the efficiency of the combat against violations of principles of socialist law, morality, and discipline, and assigned by the governments to prevent unjustified enrichment, 8 March 1984.

30 *Ibid.*, f. OB, Registration Number (Reg. No.) 22581 (SONP Kladno), Vol. 5, Závod Doprava Poldi SONP Kladno – cr[iminal] activities of managers, Kladno, 3 August 1988.

31 *Ibid.*, f. Collegium of the Minister of Interior of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Minutes of the 6th meeting of the Collegium held on 3 July 1984, Item 2, Table 2, Percentage shares of entities reporting registered cases of economic crime between 1979 and 1983.

of secret collaborators of the police was almost 40 percent, and together with other elements of the National Security Corps almost 80 percent.[32] Between 1983 and 1985, internal control and audit bodies accounted for only 1.5 percent of reported cases.[33] In late February 1984, the Department of Economy of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia criticized the underestimation of the importance of control by top economic managers. In its opinion, enterprises failed to make use of a relatively long period of time since the "Principles of control" to "create the best possible conditions for a demanding and thorough implementation of control." As a result, "control has not yet become an integral part of management work."[34]

Same Deficiencies Over and Over Again: Control during the Perestroika Period

Various audits undertaken in the second half of the 1980s indicated that the situation was not getting much better, which was the reason why the Communist Party leadership decided to publicize the most pressing negative phenomena in 1985. The public was presented a classical scenario in which the desirable rectification was achieved only after an appropriate intervention of leaders.[35] Soon thereafter, papers published by enterprises, regional dailies and the *Rudé právo* newspaper started publishing more articles harshly criticizing carefully selected cases of revealed maladies many of which had been uncovered by economic counterintelligence (the 9th directorate of the National Security Corps). In April 1986, i.e. more than three years after it had been drafted, the leading newspaper of the Communist

32 *Ibid.*, Minutes of the 7th meeting of the Collegium held on 3 September 1985, Item 2, Analysis of the situation in the field of economic crime, protection of economy, and incidents and emergencies in Czechoslovakia's national economy, including proposed measures.

33 *Ibid.*, Minutes of the 4th meeting of the Collegium held on 8 April 1986, Item 4, Analysis of the outcome of the implementation of the Package of measures of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and RMIs [Republic Ministries of Interior] of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Czech Socialist Republic and Slovak Socialist Republic No. 9/1983 against unlawful enrichment in 1985.

34 *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee – Presidium, Vol. P 98/84, Minutes of the 98th meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Item 1a, Annex II: Report of the Department of Economy of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia concerning the report on the outcome of the audit and evaluation of the implementation of control principles in the national economy and state administration, 22 February 1984.

35 *Ibid.*, Vol. P 143/85, Minutes of the 143rd meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 11 November 1985, Item 1g, Report on activities of the Presidium, Secretariat and Commissions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia since the 15th meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in June 1985.

Party also finally published the abovementioned "Letter of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia" of February 1983.[36]

However, auditors still kept coming across fictitious invoices, unregistered stocks, unused machinery imported from the West, and utterly inadequate protection of property, which played into the hand of embezzlers. In 1988, for example, an extensive audit undertaken by the People's Control Committee in almost 600 enterprises revealed that more than two thirds of them lacked adequate protection of premises. The fact that results of previous audits of superior ministries had not indicated any serious problems was seen as particularly astounding.[37] "There are still cases of misrepresentation and falsification of various plan-fulfilment indicators and economic results," warned those who had performed a similar audit in May of the same year, "the objective of which is to gain an unjustified title to rewards and bonuses." In one of the plants of Vodohospodářské stavby [Water management structures] Bratislava, the auditors uncovered a fictitious sale of stocks which had in fact never left the plant's premises.[38] There were repeated cases of unjustified depreciation of fixed assets, namely incorrect transfers from the category of capital expenditures to that of fixed assets, inadequate records, or failures to make proper book entries upon their disposal or liquidation. In this regard, the finding of the People's Control Committee of October 1988 is downright unbelievable: "For example, Ředitelství výstavby spojů Praha [Directorate of communication infrastructure development Prague] was depreciating a prefab apartment block for a period of approximately one year since it had been demolished, and finally sold the nonexistent building for a price equal to its net book value to Výstavba hlavního města Prahy [Development of the capital city of Prague]."[39]

All the directives and guidelines which were supposed to "improve" the management and planning system notwithstanding, the inability of the Czechoslovak economy to step out of a "vicious circle"[40] of low productivity of labour and low efficiency, high consumption of materials, hoarding of stocks, and growing lagging

36 Letter of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to deepen the efficiency of the combat against violations of principles of socialist law, morality, and discipline. In: *Rudé právo* (19 April 1986), p. 3.

37 *NA*, f. People's Control Committee of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (PCC-CSSR), Cardboard Box (CB) 499, Vol. 4, Report on the outcome of the audit of the fulfilment of tasks assigned by Resolution of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic No. 127/1987, on the outcome of the audit of compliance with socialist law and discipline in the implementation and fulfilment of tasks of organizations, 31 October 1988.

38 *Ibid.*, Information on the situation in the area of combat against negative phenomena, 30 May 1988.

39 *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, Report on the outcome of the audit of the fulfilment of tasks assigned by Resolution of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic No. 127/1987, on the outcome of the audit of compliance with socialist law and discipline in the implementation and fulfilment of tasks of organizations, 5 October 1988.

40 KADLEC, Vladimír: Rostoucí inflační tlaky ve stagnující ekonomice [Growing inflation pressures in a stagnating economy]. In: *Ze zásuvky i z bloku* [From the drawer and from the notepad], Vol. 2, No. 6 (1985), p. 38 [samizdat].

of technological development behind the West was increasingly obvious. Since 1986, it is thus possible to speak about the "agony of the centrally planned economy."[41] In that moment, the party leadership decided for the last attempt, which was not to be just an "improvement," but an extensive restructuring of management mechanisms and structures. In November 1987, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia approved the "Comprehensive document for the restructuring of the economic mechanism of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic," whose authors, according to Václav Průcha, pinned their greatest hopes on the very term "comprehensive."[42] It was a truly ambitious and extensive attempt to make changes, which was, to a substantial degree, a reaction to events taking place in the Soviet Union. Its principal objectives included improving the efficiency of Czechoslovakia's national economy, maintaining the existing living standard, enhancing material incentives of managers and workers, and increasing the social utility of production. A fundamental change, which was seen by many top economic managers as an earthquake, was a decision to rebuild the existing structure of corporate management. In January 1989, the mammoth Production and Economic Units, comprised of dozens of enterprises and plants with tens of thousands of employees, were to be transformed into state-owned enterprises, resulting in the elimination of the intermediate management link between enterprises and ministries. The process naturally involved many conflicts and was anything but a smooth and trouble-free solution.

According to economist Otakar Turek, the ideological content of the so-called perestroika documents – i.e. the "Comprehensive document" of 1987 and the State-Owned Enterprise Act of June 1988 – was limited to a rather one-sided deduction along a "new management tools – higher interest of enterprises – healthier economy" line, and the work relied rather too much on the automatism of reform legal acts.[43] The collective of the authors of a September 1989 work on the reform of the economic mechanism in Czechoslovakia noted that one of the characteristic features of its preparation and implementation was departmentalism, with the drafting of different legal acts entrusted to central bodies (State Planning Commission, Ministry of Finance, other industrial ministries and departments) which, however, logically tended to retain their existing functions and were opposed to a curtailment of their vast powers. However, the proclaimed decentralization of the corporate sector did not take place, and the organizational concentration in the industry showed a substantial increase between the spring and the summer of 1989.[44]

41 PŮLPÁN, Karel: *Nástin českých a československých hospodářských dějin do roku 1990* [An outline of Czech and Czechoslovak economic history until 1990], Vol. 1. Praha, Karolinum 1993, p. 304.

42 PRŮCHA, V. a kol.: *Hospodářské a sociální dějiny Československa 1918–1992*, Vol. 2, p. 702.

43 TUREK, Otakar: *Hospodářská politika pro nejbližší období reformy* [Economic policy for the nearest period of reform]. Praha, April 1989, p. 3 [samizdat].

44 MLČOCH, Lubomír – KLUSOŇ, Václav – TUREK, Otakar: *Přestavba hospodářského mechanismu: Deskripce tradičního modelu, východiska řešení a hospodářská politika přechodu* [Restructuring the economic mechanism: Description of the traditional model, starting points,

The initial attitude of corporate managements to the restructuring process was positive, as illustrated by an increased level of "initiatives from below" when individual proposals to establish a state-owned enterprise were submitted. However, it soon became obvious that superior bodies accepted only a minimum number of these proposals. General directorates had no interest whatsoever in the independence of their subordinate units, and saw their transformation into head offices of state-owned enterprises as the only possible rescue option. A literal "fear of managers" thus set in at ministries and general directorates, resulting in a rejection of 50 to 80 percent of the total number of 1,500 individual proposals,[45] which contained, apart from a supporting rationale provided by the management, also positive recommendations of trade unions and Communist Party organizations. The reaction of socialist managers did not take long: under the uncompromising pressure of general directorates, accompanied by corruption, hidden threats, and dissemination of misleading or false information about their inability to deal with massing economic difficulties, they responded by a steep decline of interest in the independence of their enterprises. The authors of a June 1988 comprehensive report evaluating the first stage of the formation of state-owned enterprises even concluded that some Production and Economic Units "were conducting an excessive number of audits the purpose of which was to show the incompetence of managers."[46]

The situation was indeed very tense and chaotic, as indicated by the party's, and especially the State Security's reports. While ministries and PEUs were reproaching socialist managers of enterprises wishing to become independent for unpreparedness and low responsibility toward society-wide interests, the managers were not hiding their disappointment over the new state-owned enterprises often being just renamed former Production and Economic Units. The State Security's network of informants therefore picked up a wide range of very critical statements addressed to the party leaders who were accused of "voluntarism" and wishful thinking. According to a State Security report, the rejection of the proposal to establish the state-owned enterprise České keramické závody [Czech ceramic works – ČKZ] in Horní Bříza combined with a subsequent slashing of ČKZ's capital investment allocations by the superior PEU of the company, for which an explanation that "the funds were divided only among loyal companies" was given, made the workers and top managers of the company not only stop believing in the reform process, but even openly criticize the "party Mafia" at the superior ministry and Production and

and the economic policy of transition]. Praha, Institute of Economics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1989, pp. 21–26.

45 PRŮCHA, V. a kol.: *Hospodářské a sociální dějiny Československa 1918–1992*, Vol. 2, p. 703.

46 *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee - Presidium, Vol. P 75/88, Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 10 June 1988, Item 1, Comprehensive report on the first stage of the restructuring of organizational structures of the production-technological, scientific and research, and asset base of the national economy into state-owned enterprises.

Economic Unit.[47] Some workers of companies in the Karviná District claimed that the general directorates of PEUs had turned into main offices of mammoth enterprises in which chaos was reigning because of their ill-conceived organizational structure. They attributed the lamentable situation and slow implementation of reforms to the fact that "there was practically no change among the people in the party and state leadership who had implemented the existing economic system in the past."[48] Even some staffers of the State Planning Commission (SPC) were showing their disenchantment, claiming that "the problem of the society is, in their opinion, that people are continuously lied to […] in the ideological sphere, the party does not react to fundamental problems of the society at all, and SPC officials, including party members, thus listen to the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe."[49] Some staffers of the Federal Ministry of Transportation and Communications also believed that the ongoing changes did not stand much of a chance; one of them concluded that "due to rooted conservatism and bad experience with previous reforms, everybody is trying to evade the perestroika, no one wants to risk, and the new thinking must match the political climate."[50]

The issue of control naturally lost nothing of its importance even during the period of hectic changes in the late 1980s. As a matter of fact, it was rather the other way round. Managements of new state-owned enterprises were expected to step up internal audits and make the maximum possible use of employees in them. According to a January 1988 directive on the implementation of the comprehensive reform of the economic mechanism, all elements of the control and audit system were to focus on the fulfilment of obligatory tasks of the Five-Year Plan. In doing so, they were to consider whether requirements of economic organizations for social resources were justified, or not. The audits were also supposed to analyze causes of discrepancies between all-society needs and behaviour of enterprises, reveal reasons of the bad economic performance of the latter, and – last but not least – improve the position of customers and consumers. People's Control Committees were expected to carry out comprehensive audits especially in cases "when organizations submit excessive requirements for all-society resources."[51] The Enterprise Act no longer explicitly contained the traditional "he who leads – controls" slogan, in fact

47 *SSA*, f. Ninth Directorate of National Security Corps, CB 61, Monthly information for the leadership of the Ninth Directorate of National Security Corps for the month of May, 10 June 1988.

48 *Ibid.,* f. A 34/1, Inventory Unit (IU) 1326 C, Weekly information on the situation in the Czechoslovak economy 1988, Information Bulletin No. 6, 1 September 1988.

49 *Ibid.*, State Security Information Bulletin on the situation in the Czechoslovak economy, 5 August 1988.

50 *Ibid.*, f. Ninth Directorate of National Security Corps, CB 61, Monthly information for the leadership of the Ninth Directorate of National Security Corps for the month of June, 14 July 1988.

51 *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee – Presidium, Vol. P 58/88; Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 29 January 1988, Item 1, Directive on the implementation of the comprehensive reform of the economic mechanism.

a proclamation presenting the desired state of affairs as reality, which even the author of the work on theory of control quoted above took notice of.[52] However, Section 51 of the Enterprise Act ordered enterprises to create an "effective system of control" guaranteeing continuous oversight of the fulfilment of state plan outputs, quality of production, and protection of state-owned property and environment. Control was to constitute an integral part of management and also help harmonize the development of the enterprise with interests of the society and employees.[53]

Most of the hopes of the party leadership remained unfulfilled. It seems that socialist managers realized a specific "asymmetry of the distribution of risks" of potential entrepreneurial activities, with positive results gobbled up by the state budget and a potential failure paid for by the company. As a matter of fact, the centre obviously intended to retain decisive powers and to transfer most responsibilities to enterprises, which were expected to self-finance themselves.[54] Bearing in mind previous unsuccessful attempted reforms, corporate managements logically assumed that, after the likely failure of the reform campaign, everything would return to business as usual, and it would therefore be advisable to keep hiding reserves from superiors. Any attempt at a reform stood a chance of success only if it could restore the economically demanding parametric environment. However, it would require the ability of central bodies to "defend the system" – even at the expense of social friction – against the pressure of enterprises trying to negotiate.[55] At the end of the 1980s, however, the power establishment was neither strong enough to implement such extensive measures nor had ultimately enough time to do so.

Why, as a Matter of Fact, It Did Not Work? System Limits of Control and the Behaviour of Socialist Managers

It should be noted that the unsatisfactory state of control could not be explained by inattention on the part of socialist managers. On the contrary – period surveys indicate that control accounted for a substantial part of the time they spent at work. One of the surveys, which took place in 1979 and dealt with an unspecified sample of industrial enterprises, showed that control activities accounted for up to 40 percent of the worktime of general managers, between 50 and 60 percent of that of their deputies, and even as much as 70 percent of the worktime of lowest-level managers – shop foremen, line managers, shift foremen.[56] In the 1980s, František Zita, an employee of ČKD Praha, published several articles on activities of the mechanical

52 MYNÁŘ, A.: *Teorie kontroly*.

53 Act No. 88/1988 Coll.: Act No. 88 on state-owned enterprises of 14 June 1988. In: Poslanecká sněmovna Parlamentu České republiky [online]. Jednání a dokumenty, Sbírka zákonů [cit. 2017-03-20]. Available at: *www.psp.cz/sqw/sbirka.sqw?cz=88&r=1988*.

54 See MLČOCH, L. – KLUSOŇ, V. – TUREK, O.: *Přestavba hospodářského mechanismu*, pp. 38 and 59.

55 See TUREK, O.: *Hospodářská politika pro nejbližší období reforem*, p. 50.

56 See MYNÁŘ, A.: *Teorie kontroly*, p. 190.

engineering company's management in the *Organizace a řízení* [Organization and management] journal, in which he concluded, *inter alia,* that managers ascribed greater importance to influencing and control than to decision-making, in respect whereof, moreover, they felt they were not independent enough. The survey showed that managers were forced to adopt up to two thirds of their decisions by external factors, and they made just one third of them on their own initiative.[57] Later, the same author was monitoring over 30 managers at different levels, trying to establish how they were identifying management-related problems. His conclusion was that top economic managers were dealing mainly with problems that they themselves had identified. By mapping their workday, the author also found out that they devoted, on average, almost 30 percent of it to control activities performed on their own initiative. As to production (deputy) managers, control initiatives accounted for over 47 percent of their workday.[58]

Throughout the existence of the central planning economic system in Czechoslovakia, party and state bodies kept adopting various directives and laws which were supposed to make control an effective tool of the economic policy of the governing party. Socialist managers were sacrificing a substantial amount of time to control activities, and citizens were urged, in repeated propaganda campaigns, to become actively involved in the fight against various abuses and negative phenomena. Still, audit authorities at different levels kept discovering cases of violation of the "he who leads – controls" principle, the pillorying of carefully selected cases in the media notwithstanding. Where should one look for the causes of the almost fatal failure of control and audit activities of the system which was, in a way, obsessed with control? How could one explain that the professional group, which the power establishment put so much hope into, was unable to meet the power establishment's expectations and failed to build the shining "enterprise of the future" which was in 1979 outlined as an "enterprise with a brimming, mass initiative of all employees who are guided by all management bodies and in every segment of their activities in a planned and conceptual manner, and in which the initiative itself is developed according to a plan, harmonically, intentionally, and is strictly goal-directed and consistent with higher interests and needs?" The reason might be that enterprises were a long way from being led by "the wisest and politically most mature people" who saw the meaning of their lives in the "dedicated service to the working people and socialist society."[59] The failure to control the implementation of the party's economic policy, and hence also the failure of the policy itself, was due to the "nonparametric nature of the planning system," which utterly unrealistically presumed that "local elements of the planning system would fully identify

57 ZITA, František: Rozhodování v řídící práci ředitele [Decision-making in managerial work of a manager]. In: *Organizace a řízení*, Vol. 12, No. 6 (1982), pp. 28–37, here pp. 31 and 36.

58 IDEM: Úloha subjektu při identifikaci problému v řídící práci [The role of the subject in the identification of a problem in managerial work]. In: *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (1985), pp. 88–98, here p. 91.

59 It should be noted that the author anticipated that the "enterprise of the future" could appear within 20 years, i.e. in 1999. STŘÍTESKÝ, M.: *Zásady efektivního řízení*, pp. 204–207.

themselves with objectives of higher-level hierarchical elements, would not have any local interests of their own, and would provide undistorted information with the best of intentions."[60] The same holds true for the abolition of the "principle of equivalency," which meant the company's revenues were no longer dependent on its true contribution to the society and the amount of products the enterprise was selling, but were determined by directives of the power centre.[61]

In his 1988 work mentioned above, economist Lubomír Mlčoch defined the socialist enterprise as a "complex cooperative socio-economic system – a coalition of internal and external subjects linked by certain common material interests."[62] He included socialist managers and top party and trade union functionaries in the enterprise into what he called a "control group" which together with white collars, worker aristocracy, and rank-and-file workers constituted a specific internal coalition. On the other hand, members of the so-called external coalition included representatives of superior power bodies (district and regional committees of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, National Committees), representatives of the superior organization on the vertical axis (PEUs, ministries, State Planning Commission), suppliers and customers, and representatives of price-setting authorities. At the same time, various authors have agreed that, insofar as the fulfilment of prescribed objectives was concerned, even the most centralized allocation system gave a socialist enterprise enough room to maneuver, which, according to Zdislav Šulc, the author of the remarkable samizdat work *Stát a ekonomika* [State and economy], ultimately resulted in the central order being exactly what the enterprise wished to be ordered.[63]

As early as in 1969, Otakar Turek noted a specific paradox of the central planning economic system, namely that the centre had seemingly unlimited powers, but there was, at the same time, a widening gap between "formal powers," which tended to expand, and the "real range of action," in which the centre was able to influence economic processes.[64] Economic policy was, as a matter of fact, schizophrenic, being characterized by a dichotomy of officially proclaimed objectives and social values on the one hand and true and real goals and procedures on the other hand. The result was an irremovable conflict between the "management vertical" and the "inverted management pyramid." The situation in which the "school-marks" given to superiors of enterprises (PEUs, general directorates) by central authorities

60 MLČOCH, L.: *Chování československé podnikové sféry*, p. 20.

61 TUREK, Otakar: Hospodářská politika v období přestavby hospodářského mechanism [Economic policy during the restructuring of the economic mechanism]. In: *Politická ekonomie*, Vol. 36, No. 6 (1988), pp. 575–592, here p. 576.

62 MLČOCH, L.: *Chování československé podnikové sféry*, p. 70.

63 ŠULC, Zdislav: *Stát a ekonomika: Příspěvek k teorii hospodářské politiky* [State and economy: A contribution to the theory of economic policy]. Praha 1985 and 1987, p. 48 [samizdat].

64 Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, f. Otakar Turek, Vol. 6 (digitized), Czechoslovak economic reform as a conflict process, spring–summer 1969, p. 29.

depended on the fulfilment of the plan by subordinate companies was calling for a coalition between enterprises and their superior organizations against the planning centre, and naturally was not contributing too much to effective control. The result was a specific "coalition structure of the economy," a joint ownership form shared by political and power structures above enterprises and control groups of enterprises.[65] The enterprise thus could apply the abovementioned "suction reflex" to maximize resources obtainable from all channels of planning, pricing and financial credit system to ensure as much revenue as possible.[66] This, of course, had serious economic consequences (low efficiency, production for the sake of production) and resulted in all-society interests being put on a back-burner. "The objective of enterprises employing long-term planning is not to predict future needs of the society, but to create their own long-term comfort," is how Zdislav Šulc summarized his observations of many years.[67]

Čestmír Kožušník fittingly noted a "law of the opposite" which made the final effect of political directives substantially different from initial expectations. In his opinion, every political pressure ultimately hit a barrier defined by the economic system and people's behaviour, which could perhaps move a bit, but never could be completely eliminated.[68] Socialist managers were obviously aware of systemic, political, and social limits of control and were trying to adjust it to in-house conditions. At the same time, it is obvious that control guidelines and directives the implementation of which was most successful were those matching interests of enterprises, such as full employment or some social policy aspects, as much as possible, or those which the enterprise management knew were crucial in the evaluation of their managerial performance. It should be noted that it was not a manifestation of pure egotism, but rather a system-prompted and to a fairly great extent rational reaction the ultimate result of which, however, was a substantially weakened performance of the Czechoslovak economy and a contribution to the "atmosphere of social irresponsibility," as well as a general "stagnation of legal awareness," as a report of the People's Control Committee fittingly concluded in October 1988. Its authors arrived at a mournful finding that "many managers even are not interested in a thorough identification of shortcomings and deficiencies, as they sometimes participate in them, or are afraid that they would find themselves in a conflict and have to impose stricter measures."[69]

65 MLČOCH, L. – KLUSOŇ, V. – TUREK, O.: *Přestavba hospodářského mechanismu*, p. 109.
66 MLČOCH, L.: *Chování československé podnikové sféry*, pp. 73–75.
67 ŠULC, Z.: *Stát a ekonomika*, pp. 28–30.
68 KOŽUŠNÍK, Č.: *Úvahy o předpokladech ekonomicky racionálního chování socialistického podniku*, p. 52.
69 *NA*, f. People's Control Committee of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (PCC-CSSR), CB 499, Vol. 3, Report on the outcome of the audit of the fulfilment of tasks assigned by Resolution of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic No. 127/1987, on the outcome of the audit of compliance with socialist law and discipline in the implementation and fulfilment of tasks of organizations, Prague, 5 October 1988.

The systemic conditionality of the failure of control can be very illustratively demonstrated on ubiquitous and diverse forms of plan fulfilment gundecking and the existence of "social comfort,"[70] manifested in low working morale and partial tolerance to rife pilfering or provision of reciprocal services. There was hardly any audit that did not reveal over-the-limit stocks, incorrect invoicing, or falsified economic performance reports. The reason was a specific "one-percent risk," which divided the world of success and bonuses from that of pillorying and looking for culprits. A typical sign of a good manager was his ability to meet the planned goals to 101 percent, or to negotiate an adequate reduction of the plan during the year.[71] A socialist manager thus had to first wage an exhausting battle for parameters of the plan, during which a "control group" was hiding surplus stocks and overrating material consumption of the production process, applying, in other words, the "inverted fire extinguisher" strategy, i.e. the maximization of inputs and minimization of outputs.[72] He was subsequently struggling with many obstacles – which were both his fault and accidental – in order to fulfil essential plan figures. In so doing, he was forced, especially by tense relations between suppliers and customers, which were clearly dominated by the former, to create various reserve funds and so-called "black warehouses" permitting him to flexibly react to a potential stoppage of deliveries or to reward reliable suppliers by wining and dining them or by presents. A 1984 case of the manager of a Central Bohemian district service enterprise, who created a secret fund amount to 222,000 Czechoslovak crowns to pay, on average, a 10,000 reward to suppliers for a priority delivery of machines, is an example of what was a common way of doing business back then.[73]

At the same time, the centre was aware that enterprises were concealing their realistic capabilities, and was thus applying a principle of an automatic year-on-year increase of planned production while retaining the allocations of raw materials and labour. Moreover, it was trying to drain the enterprises' reserves by political pressure, both one-off (extraordinary shifts on the occasion of party congresses, elections, party or regime anniversaries, etc.) and continuous (brigades of socialist labour, socialist competitions). The enterprises, on the other hand, were developing effective countermeasures and were actively looking for diverse forms of "wanted substitutions" enabling a combination of production variables and alternative

70 TUREK, Otakar: *Podíl ekonomiky na pádu komunismu v Československu* [The contribution of economy to the fall of communism in Czechoslovakia]. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 1995, p. 62.

71 *Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic*, f. Otakar Turek, Vol. 6 (digitized), Czechoslovak economic reform as a conflict process, spring–summer 1969, p. 25.

72 ŠULC, Z.: *Stát a ekonomika*, p. 107.

73 *SSA*, f. Collegium of the Minister of Interior of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Minutes of the 6th meeting of the Collegium held on 12 June 1984, Item 6, Report on the audit of tasks arising from the Letter of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to deepen the efficiency of the combat against violations of principles of socialist law, morality, and discipline, and assigned by the governments to prevent unjustified enrichment, 8 March 1984.

outputs that permitted the "control group" to maximize enterprise revenues while exerting minimum efforts.[74]

As time went by, corporate managers succeeded in developing defensive mechanisms which eliminated, fairly effectively, a risk of criminal prosecution. However, it was not 100-percent elimination, as shown in the case-history part of the presented study. Faced with a situation in which the enterprise management in many respects resembled a "controlling staff of purchasing officers,"[75] its members lacked any motivation whatsoever to disclose true levels of stocks. At the same time, fictitious reporting of the fulfilment of some items of the plan was no secret for central bodies. Some minor (and sometimes even not so minor) transgressions were perceived as an inevitability brought about by the system in an effort to maintain social peace in enterprises. The problem was that the level of acceptance had been continuously changing and often dependent on the size and importance of the enterprise and/or the extent and level of clientelistic links that the management had accumulated. Most machinations with plan fulfilment figures did not end before the court, but were instead dealt with by disciplinary measures or party reprimands instead. In November 1986, for example, an intervention against three top managers of the Vítězný Únor and Paskov coal mines, who had allegedly falsified the coal production figures and thus caused damage in excess of three million Czechoslovak crowns, was discussed at a meeting of the Regional Prosecutor's Office in Ostrava. The General Manager of the Ostravsko-karvinské doly [Ostrava-Karviná mines – OKD] present at the meeting provided information about disciplinary measures imposed – dismissal from their positons and fines – but he asked the public prosecutor not to initiate criminal proceedings, as the atmosphere in the mines had allegedly been rather tense and sentencing the accused would have had an adverse effect on the plan fulfilment.[76] The deputy general manager of Železárny a drátovny [Ironworks and wire factory] in Bohumín responsible for quality control and business development got off only with a party reprimand for his failure to effectively audit the fulfilment of the enterprise's export plan and permitting premature invoicing goods worth close to two million Czechoslovak crowns in 1987, although they were shipped only in January 1988.[77]

Throughout the "normalization" period, the topmost party leaders were acting on the premise that the exercise of the corporate management authority had to be based mainly on sanctions and penalties. On the one hand, socialist managers were required to uncompromisingly enforce socialist laws and, in cooperation with party and trade union bodies and security authorities, monitor the cadre situation in their enterprises, educate their subordinates in political matters, carry out disciplinary measures, and provide information on potential anti-regime acts and their actors.

74 ŠULC, Z.: *Stát a ekonomika*, p. 122.

75 MLČOCH, L.: *Chování československé podnikové sféry*, p. 48.

76 *SSA*, f. Ninth Directorate of National Security Corps, CB 63, Weekly information NSC Directorates, Week 49, 1–7 December 1986.

77 *NA*, f. People's Control Committee of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (PCC-CSSR), CB 499, Vol. 3, Imposing a reprimand and a fine on Dipl. Ing. F. S., 31 October 1988.

On the other hand, they were supposed to contribute to the implementation of social policy measures, make working environment improvements, and, above all, ensure social peace in the enterprise. It should be noted that the managers were generally aware that meeting the expectations of the party leaders was basically impossible, reacting to the specific problem not unlike that of squaring the circle by attempting not to escalate the situation in their enterprises unnecessarily. It is true that cases of minor pilfering, tampering with the time clock, or drinking alcohol at work were regularly pilloried on pages of enterprise magazines, but the sanctions imposed on the culprits (whose names usually were not disclosed to readers) seldom matched the severe tone of the authors of the texts.

As to products not meeting applicable quality standards, the management's approach was even more cautious, as they knew it was difficult to pin the blame on a specific person or persons. Most production processes were using obsolete machines.[78] Moreover, their regular maintenance was rendered difficult by their intensive use. Combined with poor-quality material inputs, and frequent downtimes followed by "storming" to catch up with the plan, it is hardly surprising that enterprise managers were more than reluctant to impose any sanctions. Too severe words addressed to employees during "10-minute meetings" would have resulted, as a minimum, in jokes targeting the management, but also in open criticism of ubiquitous symptoms of the central planning and management system's dysfunctionality. In the Závody Vítězného února [Victorious February factory] national enterprise in Hradec Králové, for example, welders in some workshops reacted to words criticizing their poor performance of assigned tasks by openly accusing top managers of incompetence and inability to provide enough materials for the production and lack of interest in the quality of protective personal aids. The chairman of the trade union organization sided with the welders, and even organized a petition demanding improvements of working conditions and more convenient working hours.[79]

When discharging their duties, enterprise managements were forced to make use of both formal and informal in-house structures. Without their loyalty, albeit conditional, they were unable to effectively counter the pressure of the power centre and play the "plan game" successfully. Any disciplinary measures against "skillful purchase officers" would thus probably have backfired at them. Any "control group" that would have attempted to make the bonus policy and corporate directives more stringent would have indisputably embarked upon a "strategy of self-destruction."[80]

78 The *Analýza ekonomiky ČSSR* [Analysis of the economy of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic], a February 1989 document of the Office of the Presidium of the Czechoslovak Government, admitted that Czechoslovakia's technological and technical lagging behind the West was equal to one or two generations of machines, in some industries to more than 15 years. The average age of machines used in the processing industry was even more than 20 years. (See *Analýza ekonomiky ČSSR*. Praha, Office of the Presidium of the Czechoslovak Government, February 1989, p. 3.)

79 *SSA*, f. Intelligence information, Information Memo No. 29, 24 July 1981.

80 MLČOCH, L.: *Chování československé podnikové sféry*, p. 104.

An excessive pressure on subordinates was threatening the cohesion of the in-house coalition and substantially increasing the risk of complaints – both anonymous and signed – which dissatisfied employees addressed to various party, state, and trade union bodies. It should be noted that complaints about the situation in economic organizations and bodies accounted for the second most numerous group of complaints, surpassed only by complaints about the situation in the supply of goods and services and followed by housing-related complaints ranking third. Between 1978 and 1987, the average number of such complaints received by party and state organs was about 24,000 a year.[81] As one would expect, more than one unpleasant external audit was prompted by a complaint. Party leaders assigned a lot of significance to these manifestations of the specific participation of citizens in countering the undesirable phenomena, which was the reason why the system of their categorization and systematic evaluation had been developed in the late 1970s.

An extensive analysis of anonymous complaints submitted from 1982 to 1987 shows that their writers criticized mainly diverse forms of unlawful personal enrichment, waste of resources, and violations of the socialist morale. In the abovementioned period, the number of anonymous complaints increased from 13,000 to more than 19,000 a year, with complaints concerning the situation in economic organizations accounting for an enormous share of the growth. While relevant authorities registered less than 6,000 complaints of the above type in 1985, there were more than 7,500 of them two years later. At the same time, subsequent investigations showed that every second complaint was justified. According to the report, the rising number proved that employees of enterprises were often unable to openly criticize prevailing shortcomings, and were thus turning to supreme bodies, hoping that the latter would put them right. The authors were choosing the anonymous form because they feared both direct and indirect sanctions from the enterprise management. As a matter of fact, even those who signed their complaints often did not want their names disclosed, being afraid of subsequent bullying at their workplace. Socialist managers were not very amenable to any criticism, including a constructive one. The authors of the analysis state that "this is also corroborated by findings of auditors to the effect that top managers of organizations in which the anonymous complaints are investigated are often more interested in

81 Calculated on the basis of *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee – Presidium, Vol. 77/83, Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 26 August 1983, item on Information Memo No. 2, Table 1 – Review of the number and topics of complaints, announcements and initiatives dealt with in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic between 1978 and 1982; *Ibid.*, Vol. P 140/85, Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 16 October 1985, Item 9, Table 1 – Review of the number and topics of complaints, announcements and initiatives dealt with in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic between 1980 and 1984; *Ibid.,* Vol. P 79/88, Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 21 August 1988, Item 7, Analysis of anonymous complaints and submissions and a proposal of further steps in the matter.

information which would help them identify the writer rather than in the content and significance of the complaint."[82]

Complaints posed considerable threat for enterprise managers because they were beyond any control whatsoever. The above held true especially with respect to complaints addressed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, its General Secretary, President, People's Control Committees, or Central Commission for Supervision and Auditing of the Central Committee. As a matter of fact, many elements of external corporate coalitions – directly superior economic, party, and trade union bodies – did not hesitate to warn the "control group" of the impending threat, or to sweep the complaint under the rug, claiming that it was unjustified, or even anti-socialist. Still, it seems that the increase of various complaints was in fact the most tangible outcome of repeated appeals to workers to engage themselves in control and audit processes.

May the Missiles Fly Where They Wish: Three Case Histories of Control Failures

The final part of the study presents three case histories involving corporate management, which were supposed to demonstrate the vigilance and uncompromising attitude of "socialist law." They illustrate the systemic conditionality of the uncovered acts, defensive strategies of the accused, as well as the atmosphere prevailing in enterprises at the time. All of them occurred during a period of an increased "sanction mood" of the party leadership, which was trying, albeit unsuccessfully, to make managerial and control activities of socialist managers more effective.

The very first case of Tesla Třinec, an enterprise manufacturing, *inter alia,* integrated circuits for the Czechoslovak People's Army, is, in a way, extraordinary. The first snippets of information indicating that there might be something wrong with the company reached the economic counterintelligence service as early as in June 1982. Security authorities started investigating suspected serious violation of technological discipline resulting in damage exceeding 6 million Czechoslovak crowns; moreover, national defence capabilities were also allegedly put at risk. The investigation dragged on for several years, and in 1986 the State Security finally concluded that responsible economic leaders, including the enterprise's General Manager, Production Manager, and Head of the Integrated Circuits Division, had committed a criminal act of sabotage (Section 97 of the Penal Code), whereupon the Public Prosecutor put them in custody. In the summer of 1987, however, the Regional Court in Ostrava sentenced them, together with lower-level managers (who had been accused of violating duties related to the operation of a socialist organization according to Section 129 of the Penal Code), to prison terms from 20 months

82 *Ibid.*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee – Presidium, Vol. P 79/88, Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held on 21 August 1988, Item 7, Analysis of anonymous complaints and submissions and a proposal of further steps in the matter.

to four years.[83] The defendants appealed the verdict, and the Public Prosecutor, dissatisfied with the prison term length and the qualification of the criminal act, did the same. In November 1987, the Supreme Court of the Czech Socialist Republic concluded that the defendants had indeed violated their duties, and had even urged their subordinates to skip one of the mandatory steps in the manufacture of integrated circuits, but their motivation had been to gain unjustified benefits for their company and to meet extraordinarily tight parametres of the plan. None of them had allegedly been qualified enough for their positions, and, in the opinion of the court, they could really have believed that the integrated circuits were of good quality even without the power stabilization step, although an expert opinion provided by the Federal Ministry of Electrical Engineering Industry claimed the opposite. The damage was dramatically reduced to a few dozens of thousands which had been paid in bonuses. The defendants were released and subsequently prosecuted only for embezzlement of property in socialist ownership (Section 132 of the Penal Code).[84]

The well-preserved and fairly extensive investigation file contains a lot of valuable information on why the so much promoted and strictly requested "socialist control" was often without any effect whatsoever. As a matter of fact, the intentional violation of technological discipline was a relatively frequent phenomenon in Czechoslovak enterprises, and Třinec-based subsidiary of the industrial concern Tesla Rožnov made a fatal mistake in underestimating the meticulousness of military representatives who were taking over the integrated circuits, which were to be used in missile systems. The core of the problem was that the plant's production capacity had not matched the volume of assigned tasks which, however, had to be fulfilled, literally at all costs. The General Manager and Production Manager were therefore putting pressure on the Head of the Integrated Circuits Division who in turn was passing it on his subordinates. The stumbling block was the manufacturing step in which the integrated circuits were to be stabilized in special fixtures to be more reliable and to earn a Class B designation. However, the enterprise was desperately short of the fixtures. In addition, the situation was complicated by fluctuating production necessitating a "storming" at the end of the month; unstabilized circuits were piling up in the shop housing the fixtures. The plan had to be met, and it was fulfilled, so to say, by a stamp which assigned the Class B designation even to integrated circuits which in fact had not passed the stabilization stage. Critical comments and warning of the Chief Process Engineer were swept aside as a pamphlet, while the Production Manager himself made the Head of the Quality Control Department see reason.[85]

83 *SSA*, f. Counterintelligence investigation files, Archival No. 907175 MoI (Central Office), Proposal for archiving the personal file of the ELEKTRON operation, Ostrava, 28 January 1988.

84 *SSA*, f. Investigation files, Archival No. V-18002 OV (Ostrava), Ruling of the Supreme Court of the Czech Socialist Republic, Prague, 12 November 1987.

85 *Ibid.*, Protocol of the interrogation of Witness Č. F., Třinec, 14 May 1986. The names of persons interrogated in the matter and mentioned in the quoted documents dealing with the case have been anonymized in the article.

In February 1983, during the acceptance procedure, the army representative came across discrepancies in reports on technological discipline compliance, and immediately notified the managements of the Třinec subsidiary and the parent company in Rožnov. He was assured that the circuits for the army were of good quality, as allegedly indicated by a negligible number of complaints from other customers. In November of the same year, however, the situation recurred, and a new army representative found out that up to 40 percent of the circuits he was supposed to accept had not passed the stabilization stage, and were thus incorrectly designated as Class B products, which were more expensive.[86] A month earlier, an in-house audit determined that up to 20,000 integrated circuits in the warehouse had not passed the stabilization stage, but bore the designation of the top quality class. Serious discrepancies were also revealed by an audit group from the General Directorate of the Tesla Industrial Concern in March 1983, which the Production Manager and the Head of the Integrated Circuits Division responded to by an order to retroactively add data on the performance of all mandatory technological steps on Product Manufacture Forms. However, the situation was beyond saving, and an extensive audit in the second half of 1985 resulted in the start of criminal proceedings a year later.[87]

Testimonies of witnesses and interrogations of the accused not only confirmed many of the conclusions of the audits, but they also clearly showed their fundamental limitations. Although the enterprise had appointed, as a result of the "Principles of control in the national economy and state administration" document, a senior audit officer in 1982, who regularly submitted audit reports to the General Manager, his activities were in fact focused on occupational safety, salary limits, and fulfilment of planned goals. While the Quality Control Department did perform entry, inter-operation, and final checks, which the General Manager did not forget to mention during his interrogation in September 1986, its findings went unheeded.[88] On the other hand, the Chief Process Engineer stated that the Production Manager had questioned the importance of the inter-operation checks, had been pushing for meeting the planned goals at any cost, and repeatedly had not accepted a proposal to initiate disciplinary proceedings against a shop foreman who had specifically issued orders to skip the stabilization fixture step.[89] The shop foreman in turn stated that he had had no other option, as the enterprise's management had repeatedly refused to do anything about the fixtures which were not available in sufficient numbers and suffered from defects. A shift foreman provided a colourful account of the pressure exercised by the managers who habitually visited workshops on

86 *Ibid.*, Protocol of the interrogation of Witness L. B., Ostrava, 3 December 1985.
87 *Ibid.*, Protocol No. 34/1985, on the audit on technological discipline compliance in the manufacture of digital integrated circuits designed for classification at the Tesla Rožnov Industrial Concern Enterprise, Třinec Subsidiary, Rožnov, 31 October 1985.
88 *Ibid.*, Protocol of the interrogation of Accused K. S., Třinec, 25 September 1986.
89 *Ibid.*, Protocol of the interrogation of Witness Č. F., Třinec, 14 May 1986.

critical days at the end of the month and calling those present "a bunch of morons" for not being able to meet the planned production figures.[90]

The managers first claimed that they had not known about the violation of technological discipline; later, they were using generally practiced objective reasons, such as obsolete and inadequate machinery, defective measuring instruments, labour shortage, and, last but not least, too demanding objectives of the plan and too high workload, as their arguments. The General Manager of the Třinec plant, who had received the "Loyal Employee" award in 1981, was pointing, for example, to the fact that his three deputies, Chief Financial Officer, Technical Development Manager, and Business Development Manager, as well as the Chief Purchasing Officer, had been attending extra-mural university courses from 1982 to 1984. As such, they had been taking a day off every Friday, and the "whole burden of enterprise management" had thus been resting on him, and he therefore had not had time to carry out thorough checks and audits.[91] While the Production Manager was reticent, insisting, together with his boss, that he had not known about anything, the Head of the Integrated Circuits Division was defending himself by drawing attention to, *inter alia,* an event during which the General Manager had been calming down worried foremen right on the shop floor, claiming that nothing would happen if they met the planned goals. He had allegedly been downplaying the problems with the army contract, joking that missiles of the Czechoslovak People's Army flew everywhere except where they were supposed to fly. As a matter of fact, the General Manager was allegedly more interested in the jobs of his daughters and furniture in his house than in problems of his company.[92] The General Manager countered by saying that he had been the chairman of the vetting commission of Tesla Rožnov in 1970, which had then expelled the Head of the Integrated Circuits Division from the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia for his "anti-social attitudes during the years of crisis."[93]

It should be noted that similar technological discipline violations were by no means uncommon in Czechoslovak enterprises. The culprits often used objective reasons and the necessity to fulfil the plan as their arguments; it was also invariably very difficult to determine who exactly was responsible. In the case described above, the managers were, in a way, lucky. On the one hand, they obviously underestimated the army inspectors; on the other hand, even the "slipshod" integrated circuits were of such quality that they did not cause any incident or accident and produced only a minimum number of complaints. The only remaining problem was thus the undeserved bonuses paid out for meeting the planned objectives. As a matter of fact, none of the customers (except the army) found the fact that it had paid, often unnecessarily, for goods allegedly falling into a higher quality class,

90 *Ibid.*, Protocol of the interrogation of Witness J. D., Ostrava, 30 May 1986.
91 *Ibid.*, Protocol of the interrogation of Accused K. S., Ostrava, 22 October 1986.
92 *Ibid.*, Protocol of the interrogation of Accused B. Ř., Ostrava, 4 November1986; Protocol of the interrogation of Accused B. Ř., Ostrava, 13 November 1986.
93 *Ibid.*, Protocol of the interrogation of Accused K. S., Ostrava, December 1986.

but not meeting the required parameters. In the critical year of 1983, the Třinec factory invoiced some 40 percent of the integrated circuits it produced incorrectly. The price difference was from three to six Czechoslovak crowns a piece.

The case of the General Manager of Plant 07 Tesko of Armabeton Praha confirms the finding of economist and Charter 77 signatory Zdislav Šulc. In his opinion, leading managers were continuously operating on the verge of the "socialist law."[94] When dealing with assigned production tasks in the environment of the "economy of scarcity," company managers, their deputies, and members of lower management tiers could not comply with all legal acts and regulations in effect even with the best will in the world, as these documents were very labyrinthine and often contradicting one another. Moreover, the tense relations between suppliers and customers always had a substantial effect on any specific application of a general control or audit function. The power centre was aware of the situation, and partly tolerated it. The problem consisted in the level of tolerance being variable, or, in other words, being significantly higher with respect to those showing good performance results. An unsuccessful initiative of corporate management could be regarded as "anti-socialist behaviour" or serious dereliction of job duties, and subsequently result even in criminal proceedings, which leading representatives of the nationalized business and corporate sphere learned the hard way in the 1950s, when they were sentenced to many years in prison in kangaroo trials as alleged saboteurs and "wreckers" of the national economy.[95] Documents of the political police dating back to the 1980s contain many cases involving socialist managers. After all, the Penal Code in effect at that time contained a special chapter comprising sections on criminal acts against economic discipline, the most frequently applied of which were, in addition to Section 129 mentioned above, Section 125 (disruption of management, planning and control of the national economy) and Section 127 (violation of duties related to the handling of financial funds and material assets).

The investigation of the second case presented here was also lengthy. In February 1984, the State Security started examining, under the code name "Operation Suk," a loss-generating contract which Armabeton's Plant 07 had delivered in the summer of 1982 in the Federal Republic of Germany.[96] The object of its interest was the plant's general manager who was suspected of permitting exports of poor-quality timber to West Germany in 1981. A carpenter by professional training, he had held various positions in the company since 1947 and been repeatedly decorated for successful performance of job-related duties, the last decoration being an award to the winner of the socialist contest on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising in 1979. He joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in May 1955 and was a propagandist of the District Committee of the Communist

94 ŠULC, Z.: *Stát a ekonomika*, p. 209.

95 Compare TŮMA, Oldřich – VILÍMEK, Tomáš: Incidents in Czechoslovakian "Socialist Management" between 1956 and 1989: Conflict and Reconciliation. In: *Divinatio: Studia culturologica* [Sofia], Vol. 42–43 (2016), pp. 187–240.

96 *SSA*, f. Files of active counterintelligence operations, Arch. No. 780920 MV, scan 5-1, Proposal for the starting of a signal file co[de] na[med] "SUK," Prague, 17 February 1984.

Party of the first district of Prague between 1962 and 1977. During the crisis years of 1968 and 1969, he proved himself as a staunch supporter of "proletarian internationalism," which was probably the reason why he was appointed, in November 1969, the General Manager of the plant, in which he had held the position of Chief Engineer since 1958, although he did not have any university education. His cadre profile was next to ideal – his father was also a member of the party and his wife was an office worker at the Ministry of National Defence. Still, just one major slip-up was enough to trigger an investigation which established, *inter alia*, that he enjoyed a reputation of a law-abiding citizen in his neighbourhood, but also made an impression of a "comrade with a lukewarm attitude to the state system," as he did not engage in any social activities, did not discuss political issues with his neighbours, and took only sporadic part in events organized by elements of the National Front, allegedly preferring to go to his country cabin with his family on weekends.[97]

In 1981, his plant managed to win an attractive contract for a wooden prefab building for the Municipal Transport Authority of the West German city of Regensburg. However, the customer identified serious quality defects of the wooden prefab elements when assembling the hall. A claim was lodged, requiring a replacement of the defective material. Although the hall was ultimately built, albeit with a minor delay and after a number of complex rigmaroles and mishaps, the company lost 0.5 million Czechoslovak crowns on the contract, of which 150,000 was "credited" directly to the Plant Manager. Nothing was happening for more than a year and a half, but then the case came to attention of the State Security, which started an investigation, initially on the grounds of suspected sabotage (Section 97 of the Criminal Code). When interrogated in August 1984, the Plant Manager assumed full responsibility for the unsuccessful contract, and the explanation of his steps is a very good reflection of the practices that were commonplace in those days. When the plant won the contract, it immediately started looking for good quality timber in various sawmills. However, inspections of the purchased goods revealed that the timber was usually one or two levels below the quality required by the West German customer. When interrogated, the Plant Manager admitted he could have complained about the poor quality at the Czechoslovak suppliers, but he was doubtful about the outcome. He chose not to inform his superiors and try to resolve the problem using his own ways and means. He relied on previous experience with similar buildings in the German Democratic Republic and Yugoslavia, which Armabeton had built using materials the quality of which was similar to those that were to be used in the West German project. Moreover, the parent company also urgently needed hard currency to buy machinery for one of its plants, which meant the contract had to be delivered literally at all costs. He and a small group of his co-workers reached the conclusion that the timber met Czechoslovak standards, and thus might meet the West German customer's requirements as well. Given the delivery date of the project, there was also simply not enough time to procure

97 *Ibid.*, scan 39-1, Investigation report, Prague, 31 August, 1984.

timber meeting the quality requirements. He ultimately had to notify his superior about the complaint of the West German customer and the gravity of the situation; however, Armabeton's General Manager did not show too much willingness to help him. He and his process engineer therefore subsequently visited a number of sawmills, trying to buy better timber. They ultimately succeeded, and the timber which was the subject matter of the complaint ended as firewood in Germany.[98]

The investigation soon expanded to include employees of the foreign trade enterprise (arranging the contract) all of whom jointly criticized especially the fact that the case had allegedly harmed Czechoslovakia's business reputation abroad.[99] A typical feature of the investigation was the effort to put the blame on someone else, on another link of the supply chain. Typically, no one ever asked the essential question during the investigation – why the Czechoslovak timber companies had failed to supply good quality timber to Armabeton. Archival documents do not provide any indication as to whether the Plant Manager ultimately ended up before the court. However, criminal charges on the grounds of a delivery of a particularly defective product or service (Section 128 of the Criminal Code) were brought against him only in September 1985.[100]

The last case represents an interesting example of how enterprise coalitions, often assuming the form of extensive clientelist networks, were operating. In May 1982, the State Security focused its attention on the Director of Ústav pro výzkum motorových vozidel [Research institute of motor vehicles] in Prague, and opened an active file on him, codenamed "Hever."[101] As a matter of fact, the State Security suspected him of a criminal act consisting in a violation of duties in the operation of a socialist organization (Section 129 of the Criminal Code). He allegedly committed the criminal act by not having discharged, since 1977, his duties of the head of a state test laboratory, thus permitting the automobile factory in Mladá Boleslav to supply its low-quality products to both domestic and foreign markets. Although the Evaluation Board of the Office of Standardization and Metrology had unanimously decided that the tested Škoda 105 and Škoda 120 models were to be assigned Quality Class 3 rating, which meant an up to 30 percent penalty for the manufacturer, he, together with the General Manager of AZNP and the leadership of the General Headquarters of Československé automobilové závody [Czechoslovak automobile works], took steps enabling the car manufacturer to evade the sanction.

Informants of the economic counterintelligence service reported that the abovementioned General Headquarters had tried to push the state test laboratory to a new test, claiming that AZNP had undertaken to immediately rectify any identified defects. At the same time, the automobile factory was attempting to obtain a one-year postponement of the planned mandatory evaluation of another

98 *Ibid.*, scans 33-1–38-1, Minutes of the testimony of V. R., Prague, 21 August 1984.
99 *Ibid.*, scans 46-1–53-1, Minutes of the testimony of M. T, Prague, 10 September 1984.
100 *Ibid.*, scan 62-1, Assessment of the "SUK" personal file, Prague, 11 November 1985.
101 *Ibid.*, f. Files of active counterintelligence operations, Arch. No. 763719 MV, Vol. 1, scan 6-1, Proposal for the starting of a personal file codenamed "HEVER," Prague, 28 May 1982.

model (Škoda 120 LS), claiming that it had been unable to meet the required quality standard because of sterner rules applying to imports of some components and parts. After lengthy negotiations, the cars were ultimately given Quality Class 2 rating, which was, according to the informant, an obvious concession made by the Director of the Office of Standardization and Metrology, who was "rewarded" by a sale of a Renault car tested by the Research Institute of Motor Vehicles to his brother-in-law in the summer of 1979.[102]

While the danger of a hundred-million penalty was staved off, the quality of the cars did not show any improvement, and a growing number of complaints both at home and abroad ultimately resulted in an investigation of the Czech Trade Inspection Agency (ČOI) in the third quarter of 1980, the results of which were alarming. A total of 785 Škoda cars were checked at 15 dealerships, 10 sales centres and one regional warehouse, of which 591 did not meet requirements set forth in relevant standards. The results showed that up to 80 percent of owners of new Škodas would have had to surrender their roadworthiness certificate if a stern approach had been applied. The inspectors found the fact that the Jarov sales outlet in Prague had sold a car expressly forbidden to be sold two days earlier particularly serious. The investigation resulted in more than 4,500 cars the aggregate value of which was CZK 262 million being withdrawn from sale.[103] The results of the Czech Trade Inspection Agency's investigation were subsequently confirmed by a January 1982 audit of the People's Control Committee of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, which also noted that exports of the substandard vehicles to Western markets resulted, for example, in extra complaint-handling costs of approx. CZK 8,000 per car, i.e. about 15 percent of the retail price in Czechoslovakia, in Switzerland.[104]

The State Security thoroughly vetted the principal suspect who had joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in 1945, graduated from the Czech Technical University in Prague in the early 1950s, and subsequently worked at the Ministries of Domestic Trade and General Engineering. He was appointed the Managing Director of the Research Institute of Motor Vehicles in 1960. He also received the Outstanding Work Award in 1970; in a January 1971 evaluation, his superior noted that he was an expert and conscientious worker with a sense of responsibility, but he also mentioned certain negative aspects of his behaviour without going into further details.[105] It was later established by informants that he had sympathized with the

102 *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, scans 27-1–28-1, Sale of a R-30 car by the Research Institute of Motor Vehicles to c(omrade) from the Office of Standardization and Metrology, Prague, 8 October 1979.

103 *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, scans 7-1–11-1, Document No. 1: Report on the quality audit of ŠKODA cars at dealerships and sales outlets of MOTOTECHNA National Enterprise, 23 October 1980.

104 *Ibid.*, Vol.1, scan 35-1, Proposal to initiate criminal proceedings in the "HEVER" operation, Prague, 6 May 1982. The 1980 price of an average Škoda car in Czechoslovakia was 52,000 Czechoslovak crowns (see *Statistická ročenka České a Slovenské Federativní republiky 1990* [Statistical yearbook of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic 1990]. Praha, Státní nakladatelství technické literatury 1990, p. 272).

105 *SSA*, Files of active counterintelligence operations, Arch. No. 763719, Vol. 1, scans 57-1–58-1, Expert opinion, Prague, 25 January 1971.

reform process in the 1960s. He allegedly reacted to the August 1968 intervention by ordering all cars of the institute away lest they be requisitioned by the Soviets. He did not prevent various meeting and rallies proclaiming support of A. Dubček and condemning the occupation by "fraternal armies." It was also found out that he was corresponding with ex-employees of the institute who had emigrated after August 1968; when interrogated, Mr. K explained he had been trying to talk them into coming back. He was reproached for his not thorough enough attitude to people who had been expelled from the party and also for giving, after 21 August 1968, and at least in one case, the personal file to the individual the file pertained to, although he knew the person in question intended to destroy it.[106]

In May 1982, a request for his detention was rejected and the person concerned ultimately retired. In November 1984, his file was closed and archived, the reason being that responsible authorities had repeatedly failed to decide what steps should be taken against him.[107] It seems that he was saved from criminal prosecution by his numerous ties to various state and party representatives who appreciated his loyalty toward AZNP's General Manager or the General Manager of the Czechoslovak Automobile Works. This case is a very good example of the conditionality of sanctions against top-level managers. After all, audit bodies at various levels repeatedly complained that "in some cases, it is difficult to take remedial measures and eliminate bad practices, as managers sometimes find and enjoy undue protection of party officials and functionaries."[108] In most cases like the one described above (unless the individual in question enriched himself excessively), the matter was hushed up or resolved by a disciplinary reprimand and a party punishment.

Communist Party leadership assigned a great deal of importance to control, and the principle proclaimed in the media – "he who leads controls" – was becoming particularly topical at times when the central planning economy was showing obvious symptoms of serious economic difficulties. Diverse directives and resolutions on improving the efficiency of control and audit activities in the national economy were passed over and over again, economic propaganda was running at full swing, and managers were urged to uncompromisingly combat any violation of the "socialist law" in their enterprises. Audits of how audit and control activities were performed thus continued until 1989, revealing the same deficiencies and shortcoming over and over again. Where should one look for the causes of the almost fatal failure of the audit and control activities of the system which was, in a way, literally obsessed with control? The presented study maps the pitfalls of "socialist control" in Czechoslovak enterprises during the 1980s and, using archival sources of the

106 *Ibid.*, Vol.1, scan 12-1, Official record, Prague, 10 May 1982.

107 *Ibid.*, Vol.1, scans 65-1–66-1, Assessment of the "HEVER" personal file, including a proposal of its archiving, Prague, 20 November 1984.

108 *NA*, f. Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Central Committee – Presidium 1971–1976 (1261/0/6), Vol. 38, AU 39, Item on Information 1, Informative report of the Central Audit and Review Commission of the CPC on the content of complaints and letters received in 1971, and on lessons learned from and experience with their handling, 22 March 1972.

Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the State Security, not only identifies the systemic conditionality of the non-functionality of control and audit mechanisms, but also proves, on the basis of specific case histories, that socialist managers succeeded in developing fairly effective defensive mechanisms against the pressure of the power centre. Members of Czechoslovakia's corporate management were evidently aware of systemic, political, and social limitations of control and audit activities and managed to adapt them, relatively successfully, to the needs of their enterprises, which, however, often did not match those of the whole society and thus were ultimately weakening the performance of Czechoslovak economy.

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Translated by Jiří Mareš

Prague Chronicle

Unreached 90th Birthday of Milan Otáhal

Oldřich Tůma

Milan Otáhal was born on 9 June 1928 in Vsetín. In 1947, he graduated from a secondary school in Frýdek-Místek. His university studies were interrupted by a serious disease, but he graduated in history at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in the summer of 1953. He started working at the Institute of History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, and later became the Head of the Department of Modern History. In the early normalization years, he was dismissed from the Institute. He was among the first signatories of Charter 77. In 1989, he was a member of the Historical Commission of the Civic Forum Coordination Centre. In the spring of 1990, he returned for a short period of time to the Institute of History, and in November 1990 he became a senior researcher and head of one of the departments of the newly established Institute for Contemporary History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. There he devoted himself to academic work until his retirement; however, he was involved in a number of research projects and published intensively even thereafter. He passed away on 9 October 2017.[1]

1 The reader can find essential information on Milan Otáhal's life in the publication *Historik v soudobých dějinách: Milanu Otáhalovi k osmdesátým narozeninám* [A historian in contemporary history: To Milan Otáhal on the occasion of his 80th birthday]. Ed. Oldřich Tůma – Tomáš Vilímek. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2008, p. 275. The book also contains a selective bibliography of Milan Otáhal's works between 1952 and 2007 (pp. 277–285).

At first sight, the brief biographic data presented above rank Milan Otáhal among the Czech historians sharing the same fate, who not only reflected 20th century history in their works, but also lived and co-created it. Throughout most of Milan Otáhal's professional life, the two roles overlapped and complemented each other. Just like many other members of his generation after the war, he fell for the magic of ideas of a better, socially just and fair society. He believed the communist regime, whose ardent builder he initially was, would bring such a society. However, even his academic works from this period withstand criticism and have been useful until now.[2] Step by step, he assumed a critical attitude toward the regime and kept trying to transform the Institute of History into an independent and modern academic establishment. He belonged to a group of historians who was trying to analyze postwar Czechoslovak developments in an unbiased manner. He thus became part of intellectual efforts which were laying the groundwork, both through results of research and through social attitudes, for an attempt for an all-society renaissance.

However, the events of 1968 were extremely fast-paced. Before the efforts to implement a universal social reform could succeed, and much earlier than discussions of historians could materialize into a new, politically unbiased interpretation of the most recent history, the developments in Czechoslovakia were forcibly interrupted by a military intervention. In those August days, Milan Otáhal immediately joined the group preparing the well-known "Black Book" describing the early days of the resistance against the occupation. Titled *Seven Days in Prague,* the document took an incredibly short time from preparation to publication and release, almost unimaginable in those days, as it was published in the autumn of the fateful year, albeit only as a publication intended for internal use within the Institute of History.[3] He and his colleagues were subsequently subjected to criminal prosecution for the "Black Book," although the normalization regime ultimately did not find the resolve to bring the matter to court.

Milan Otáhal was watching the advent of Gustáv Husák and the onset of the normalization process from afar, namely from Bloomington, United States, where he had arrived early in 1969 for an internship. After a year in the US, he returned to an utterly different political and social, and hence also personal, situation. His professional career was wrecked for a long time to come: just like many others, he had to leave the Institute of History, and he was expelled from the Communist Party. Given the circumstances, it was an advantage of sorts that he was granted a disability pension. He spent the next two decades under permanent supervision of the State Security. Even so, he was actively participating in independent historical research: he was a co-publisher of the samizdat *Historical Studies*, a co-author (together with Petr Pithart and Petr Příhoda under a common pen name Podiven) of an unconventionally

2 This applies particularly to the publication titled *Zápas o pozemkovou reformu v ČSR* [Struggle for land reform in Czechoslovakia]. Praha, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1963.

3 *Sedm pražských dnů, 21.–27. srpen 1968: Dokumentace* [Seven days in Prague, 21 to 27 August 1968: A documentation). Praha, Institute of History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1968; Reprint: Praha, Academia 1990.

approached work named *Češi v dějinách nové doby: 1848–1938* [Czechs in the history of a new age],[4] and he also intervened in a discussion on Charter 77's document "Right to history" sent to the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in 1984.

The fall of the communist regime allowed Milan Otáhal to resume a full professional career. For a short while, he worked at the renewed Institute of History where he (together with Zdeněk Sládek) prepared and published a set of documents on events of November 1989, *Deset pražských dnů* [Ten days in Prague], a pendant of sorts to the "Black Book."[5] He once again returned to a topic he had studied prior to 1989 (which had also been the leitmotiv of Podiven's musings on Czech past), namely the history of Czech-German relations, and participated (together with Bohumil Černý, Jan Křen, and Václav Kural) in the publication of a collection of studies named *Češi, Němci, odsun: Diskuse nezávislých historiků* [Czechs, Germans, transfer: A discussion of independent historians].[6] After joining the Institute for Contemporary History, he focused primarily on Czechoslovak history between 1968 and 1989, and influenced the historiography of this period in a truly significant manner. He designed and implemented a number of projects concerning mainly the two normalization decades (history of the opposition and independent initiatives, the role of students and intellectuals in the fall of the communist regime, history of the society, etc.). His bibliography from that period contains dozens of items. And it must be noted that he was at that time an old age pensioner, i.e. of an age when many authors prefer to rearrange, improve, make additions to, and edit old texts.

In the early 1990s, he prepared two significant editions of documents. The first one dealt with the onset of the normalization process,[7] the other (in cooperation with Růžena Hlušičková) documented activities of the Democratic Initiative, an independent group of the second half of the 1980s, whose attitudes and opinions were relatively close to those of Milan Otáhal.[8] He also soon attempted to make a first assessment of the role and significance of the dissent. Otáhal's – at that time unusually critical – view of the ability of the dissent to address broader segments of society presented in his work *Opozice, moc, společnost 1969–1989: Příspěvek k dějinám "normalizace"* [Opposition, power, society 1969–1989: A contribution to the history of the "normalization"][9] prompted a discussion which proved to be very fruitful for further reflections concerning the relationship between opposition

4 Praha, Rozmluvy 1991; 2nd edition: Praha, Academia 2003.

5 *Deset pražských dnů, 17.–27. listopad 1989: Dokumentace* [Ten days in Prague, 17 to 27 November 1989: A documentation]. Praha, Academia 1990.

6 Praha, Academia 1990.

7 *Svědectví o duchovním útlaku 1969–1970: Dokumenty. "Normalizace" v kultuře, umění, vědě, školství a masových sdělovacích prostředcích* [A testimony of spiritual oppression 1969–1970: Documents. "Normalization" in culture, the arts, science, education, and mass media]. Praha, Maxdorf 1993.

8 *Čas Demokratické iniciativy 1987–1990: Sborník dokumentů* [The time of the Democratic Initiative 1987–1990: A collection of documents]. České Budějovice, Foundation of the Democratic Initiative for Culture and Politics 1993.

9 Praha, Maxdorf 1994.

and society.[10] He later returned to historiography of the normalization period, its concepts, interpretations, and desiderata in a summarizing publication titled *Normalizace 1969–1989: Příspěvek ke stavu bádání* [Normalization 1969–1989: A contribution to the state of art].[11]

With his knowledge of a broad spectrum of sources and using distinctive interpretation formulas, he continued to examine issues concerning anti-regime opposition, its relationship with society, and causes and context of the collapse of the regime in further studies which were published very quickly one after another. The book *Podíl tvůrčí inteligence na pádu komunismu* [The share of creative intelligentsia in the fall of communism][12] is dedicated mainly to activities taking place in various intellectual environments and is more or less independent of the traditional dissent at the end of the 1980s, which culminated in the establishment of the Circle of Independent Intelligentsia in 1989. A truly breakthrough event was a project focusing on the role of students in November 1989, which was led by Milan Otáhal together with Miroslav Vaněk. In the book they wrote, *Sto studentských revolucí: Studenti v období pádu komunismu. Životopisná vyprávění* [A hundred student revolutions: Students during the fall of communism. Biographic narratives],[13] which was one of the project's outcomes, Otáhal and Vaněk used the method of oral history in a very modern and inspiring way on a very broad group of respondents. It became an important contribution to the understanding of what had occurred in November 1989, but also one of the cornerstones of establishing and constituting oral history as an important sub-discipline of modern history. Milan Otáhal subsequently returned to the topic of the relationship between the students' community and the communist regime once again, covering a broader period of time, but focusing mainly on the years 1968 and 1989, in his book *Studenti a komunistická moc v českých zemích: 1968–1989* [Students and communist power in the Czech Lands: 1968–1989].[14]

Otáhal's encyclopaedic knowledge and extensive research of sources undertaken during the last 20 years culminated in a book presenting a summarizing and well-arranged account of the history of anti-regime opposition after 1968: *Opoziční proudy v české společnosti 1969–1989* [Opposition trends in Czech society 1968–1989].[15] In spite of his deteriorating health condition, Milan Otáhal continued to be active as an

10 It was especially Vilém Prečan who assumed a critical attitude toward Otáhal's views (*Novoroční filipika 1995: Disent a Charta 77 v pojetí Milana Otáhala* [New Year's philippic 1995: Dissent and Charter 77 in Milan Otáhal's conception]. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 1995). Milan Otáhal then reacted by an article titled "Philippic instead of a dscussion, or the creation of myths" published in *Soudobé dějiny* (Vol. 2, No. 1 (1995), pp. 93–107).

11 Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2002.

12 Brno, Doplněk 1992.

13 Praha, Nakladatelství Lidové noviny 1999.

14 Praha, Dokořán 2003.

15 Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2011.

author and researcher even in the last decade of his life. He made a major contribution to several projects dealing with the history of Czech society during the communist period and published a number of interesting studies on selected subtopics.[16]

* * *

Milan Otáhal probably does not rank among historians who enthral by their flowery and refined literary style or lightning-fast adoption of the latest methods and use of "in" terminology. The importance of his work consists mainly in thoroughness, factual reliability, and systematism which he used to approach and interpret his topics. However, this does not mean he was just rewording sources. One of the strengths of his texts is also his fresh and novel interpretation in respect of which he could keenly and resolutely discuss, by no means avoiding conflicting debates. The abovementioned polemic with Vilém Prečan has in a way become a legend. Both the facts that Milan Otáhal researched and the interpretations he presented in his texts will remain indispensable pieces in the mosaic of knowledge of and reflections on our contemporary history.

Milan Otáhal will continue to be with us also in another way. He was a pleasant and capturing narrator and debater. He spent hours and hours talking to young and fresh colleagues at the institute. He seemed to offer his life and research experience in an inconspicuous manner, as if between the lines. However, he refrained from mentoring and definitely was not forcing his opinions and knowledge upon anyone. I believe that many historians, both at the Institute for Contemporary History and certainly also elsewhere, may regard themselves, in a way, as his pupils. Although not all of them may realize it, and although he himself would not, in all probability, have claimed any credit for it.

The Czech version of this obituary, entitled Nedožité devadesátiny Milana Otáhala*, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 24, Nos. 1–2 (2017), pp. 241–251.*

Translated by Jiří Mareš

16 E.g., Česká společnost na počátku tzv. normalizace [Czech society in the early years of the so-called normalization]. In: TŮMA, Oldřich – VILÍMEK, Tomáš (ed.): *Pět studií k dějinám české společnosti po roce 1945* [Five studies on the history of Czech society since 1945]. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2008, pp. 10–68; Ze života dělníků za tzv. Normalizace [From the life of workers during the so-called normalization]. In: IDEM (ed.): *Opozice a společnost po roce 1948* [Opposition and society after 1948]. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2009, pp. 110–175; O vztahu společnosti k normalizačnímu vedení [On the relation of the society to the normalization leadership]. In: IDEM (ed.): *Česká společnost v 70. a 80. letech: Sociální a ekonomické aspekty* [Czech society in the 1970s and 1980s: Social and economic aspects]. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2012, pp. 247–284.

Prague Chronicle

Central European Historian Bedřich Loewenstein (1929–2017)

Tomáš Hermann

"Our inner search is sometimes guided by external circumstances."[1] – "Science is a great, abstract operation, a reversed Saturn, whose children keep devouring their parents and which is also living on individual motives and human qualities, on ambition, but also fairness and, after all, on 'the search for truth,' which is an end in itself."[2] – "Well, each of us should seek to rectify the spiritual character that was bestowed upon us, but not to falsify it, so as to live till the end of our life as we are."[3] The above quotations briefly illustrate the non-negligible fact that, in spite

1 LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: Historie má pomáhat žít: Golo Mann (1909–1994) [History should help live: Golo Mann (1909–1994)]. In: *Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 1, No. 6 (1994), pp. 800–807, here p. 800.

2 IDEM: Retrospektiva: Několik úvah k vlastním osmdesátinám [A retrospective: A few reflections on one's own 80th birthday]. In: IDEM: *Občanská společnost a její krize: Eseje historické a filosofické* [Civic society and its crisis: Historical and philosophical essays]. Brno, Centrum pro studium dějin a kultury 2015, pp. 423–443, here p. 443. This autobiographic text of Loewenstein was published for the first time in *Dějiny – Teorie – Kritika*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2009), pp. 257–272.

3 Golo Mann in a letter to Bedřich Loewenstein, 21 May 1966. The letter is cited in an annex to Bedřich Loewenstein's article "History should help live," which is a commented selection from correspondence between Loewenstein and Golo Mann dating to 1966–1980. (*Soudobé dějiny*, Vol. 1, No. 6 (1994), pp. 808–816, here p. 808).

of the life of Bedřich Loewenstein being characterized by strong discontinuity attributable to historical events of the 20th century, a typical feature of his thinking and work is a significant continuity of the examined issues, including his personal experience and knowledge of the environment that he came from, which he subjected to multi-faceted historical reflection. Both his rich scientific essays and his more extensive works hide his personal experiences and motivations mentioned above. Although he unfortunately has not left behind any comprehensive memoirs or autobiography, which would have been of such a huge value (and many of his younger colleagues kept asking him to write them), they are partly substituted by frequent explanatory forewords and epilogues, essays, or interviews. They show, in an unostentatious manner, but ever so strongly, that multi-layered works of Bedřich Loewenstein, that "quiet, gentle man, who always seemed to be deep in thought,"[4] which generally command utmost attention and concentration from the reader, always hide dramatic tension. His work thus embodies the eternal Nietzschean question about the usefulness and harmfulness of history for life: "The asceticism of pure historism is not my method; our questions, life experience, and antipathies constitute a legitimate part of the interpretation."[5] In the brief and certainly incomplete presentation of Loewenstein's journey, we should therefore see that the "'the search for truth,' which, after all, is an end in itself" has its social and public dimension and always seeks answers to topical and serious questions of the day.[6]

4 MLYNÁRIK, Ján: *Ruzyňské meditace* [Ruzyně meditations]. Praha, Ipeľ 1999, p. 113.

5 LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: Preface to the German edition (1987). In: IDEM: *Projekt moderny: O duchu občanské společnosti a civilizace* [Project of modernity: On the spirit of a civic society and civilization]. Praha, OIKOYMENH 1995, p. 11.

6 The following outline prepared upon request of the editorial board of *Soudobé dějiny* is based on my previous two biographies some parts of which I have taken over, but in a reviewed and amended form: Loewenstein Bedřich, historik [historian]. In: ŠTRBÁŇOVÁ, Soňa – KOSTLÁN, Antonín (ed.): *Sto českých vědců v exilu: Encyklopedie významných vědců z řad pracovníků Československé akademie věd v emigraci* [One hundred Czech scholars in exile: Dictionary of foremost Czech émigré scholars coming from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences]. Praha, Academia 2011, pp. 377–381; HERMANN, Tomáš: Historik ve víru dějin a dlouhé století ve Víře v pokrok [The historian in the maelstrom of history and the long century in faith in progress]. In: *Dějiny – Teorie – Kritika*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2009), pp. 273–297. This issue of the *Dějiny – Teorie – Kritika* review contains a block of texts titled "History of the Faith in Progress? On the 80th Birthday of Bedřich Loewenstein" (pp. 253–355), which consists of contributions presented at a colloquium held on 16 July 2009, in Villa Lanna Villa in Prague. My most important literary source is a block titled "Documents and evidence / Dokumente und Zeugnisse" included in an anthology by: PREČAN, Vilém – JANIŠOVÁ, Milena – ROESER, Matthias (ed.): *Překračování hranic aneb Zprostředkovatel Bedřich Loewenstein: Jubilejní spis k 70. narozeninám evropského historika / Grenzüberschreitungen oder Der Vermittler Bedřich Loewenstein: Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag eines europäischen Historiker* [Crossing the borders or mediator Bedřich Loewenstein: Anniversary treatise on the 70th Birthday of a European historian]. Praha – Brno, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic – Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic – Supplement 1999, pp. 266–359 (for a general assessment, see, in particular, the article by František Svátek "Překračování hranic: Zamyšlení nad životem a dílem českého a evropského intelektuála Bedřicha Loewensteina" [Crossing

The beginning is the "first shocking experience"[7] caused by Nazism and its consequences. Bedřich Loewenstein was born on 29 June 1929 to a Czech-German-Jewish family in Prague, and grew up in a culturally diverse, secularized, liberal, and bilingual environment. He later referred to his nationality as "Central European," and frequently spoke of his "Prague identity." His father Arnold Loewenstein (1882–1952), a renowned oculist and Professor of Ophthalmology at the German University in Prague, emigrated in March 1939 to Great Britain, where he joined the Institute of Ophthalmology of Glasgow University. Loewenstein's two older brothers, who left together with their father, served in the Czechoslovak foreign army in Great Britain. The Gestapo prevented Bedřich and his mother from joining Arnold and the rest of his family. His mother was held for some time in the Pankrác Prison, and Loewenstein himself was expelled from secondary school on racial grounds. He was saved from being sent to a concentration camp by a mistaken birth date, escaping only with a forced labour stint in a factory. After the liberation in 1945, his older brothers had to exercise a lot of effort to have their mother and brother released from so-called protective custody and exempted from the expulsion programme. Only then he was allowed to attend grammar school in the 7th district of Prague, which he graduated from in June 1949.[8]

The Christian reformist environment of students in postwar Academic YMCA had a particularly formative effect on him, being a place where thoughtful young people drawing from the pre-war tradition were congregating. Influenced by works of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Emanuel Rádl, he started studying philosophy and history in 1949 at what was then the Faculty of Philosophy and History of Charles University. His first text was published when he was still attending grammar school

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the borders: A reflection on the life and work of Czech and European intelectual Bedřich Loewenstein], pp. 352–359); also, for example, a preface by Golo Mann in Bedřich Loewenstein's book *Plädoyer für die Zivilisation* (Hamburg, Hoffmann und Campe 1973, pp. 7–10); an interview of Jan A. Dus and Tomáš Hájek with Bedřich Loewenstein in *Křesťanská revue*, Vol. 59, No. 7 (1992), pp. 206–209; papers by Bernd Ulrich and Vilém Prečan in Bedřich Loewenstein's book *Wir und die anderen: Historische und kultursoziologische Betrachtungen* (Dresden, Thelem 2003, pp. 431–434). Some information was provided or explained directly by Bedřich Loewenstein. As to archival sources, I have made use especially of the Archives of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (Prague), Fonds of the Institute of History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Cardboard Box 101 (personal file of doctorand Bedřich Loewenstein, which includes documents since Loewenstein's application for a job in the the Institute of History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences until the end of his work there in 1970), and Cardboard Box 107 (defence of the dissertation of Graduate Historian B. L.).

7 LOEWENSTEIN, B.: Preface to the German edition. In: IDEM: *Projekt moderny* [Project of modernity], p. 10.

8 For an autobiographic view of the family background in a sociological context, see IDEM: Auf der Suche nach bürgerlicher Gesellschaft: Zwischen Schrumpfbürgertum und theoretischer Besinnung. In: HETTLING, Manfred – ULRICH, Bernd (ed.): *Bürgertum nach 1945*. Hamburg, Hamburger Edition 2005, pp. 61–84.

in February 1948, in Peroutka's *Dnešek*.[9] He also disseminated typewritten articles and a students' magazine among his friends. Another review of Loewenstein was published in *Křesťanská revue* as late as in 1950. However, his commitment, based on the atmosphere of public lectures, discussions, and conferences in the YMCA environment, and hence his openness in debates with young enthusiastic members of the Czechoslovak Union of Youth or the Communist party about socialist orientation, soon got him into trouble. In June 1951, the Faculty Council proposed his expulsion from the university for his allegedly negative attitude to the "people's democratic rule" and the Soviet Union, more specifically for his statements about the Korean War and his opinions concerning the domestic political situation. His appeal against the expulsion addressed to the dean was not successful, and he thus had first-hand experience of rampant Stalinism flourishing at the university.[10] He was employed as a construction worker and was later inducted into the army where he spent two years. We know from Loewenstein himself that he had two juvenile manuscripts prepared at the time he was inducted into the army: *Příspěvky k novému humanismu* [Contributions to new humanism] and *Věštci, pionýři, proroci* [Soothsayers, pioneers, prophets] ("philosophy of history written on the knee," as he himself put it).[11] Although we do not know their contents, both titles were a typical example of topics of postwar discussions, while also anticipating Loewenstein's lifelong philosophical interests: the "aspect of future," underlying Loewenstein's great historical narration in his late *opus magnum,* is revealed as early as in his juvenile intentions which we do not know very much about.

It was only after his army service that Loewenstein was permitted, upon his request, to continue, from autumn 1953, his studies on the basis of an exemption granted by the Ministry of Education. However, the same ministerial decision permitted him to major only in history after the involuntary break. He finished his university studies on 18 June 1956 as a graduated historian, submitting his MA thesis entitled *Počátky německého demokratického hnutí* [Beginnings of the German democratic movement], the mentor of which was Josef Polišenský. He then worked as an editor in the *Dějepis ve škole* [History lesson at school] and *Zeměpis ve škole* [Geography lessons at schools] magazines published by the State Pedagogic Publishing Company. He also started writing articles based on his thesis. Then an opportunity to apply for a research assistant's job at the Institute of History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences arose. Loewenstein was accepted on 1 October 1957, and subsequently advanced to the positions of senior research assistant (1 October 1960) and scientific assistant (1 June 1961). He changed his orientation started working on Johann Gottfried von Herder, which he was guided to by his mentor František

9 T. G. Masaryk o politických stranách [T.G. Masaryk on political parties]. In: *Dnešek*, Vol. 2, No. 46 (19 February 1948), pp. 717–718. The article was not signed.

10 The documents concerning Loewenstein's expulsion from the faculty, in particular Loewenstein's appeal, have been reprinted as a facsimile and published together with their German translation in *Crossing the borders*, pp. 331–341.

11 LOEWENSTEIN, B.: Kauza B. L.: An (auto)bibliography Kauza B. L.: (Auto)bibliografie [The case of B. L.: An (auto)bibliography]. In: *Ibid.,* p. 300.

Graus. This step deepened and expanded the broad spectrum of topics touched upon in his thesis. He defended his dissertation titled *Rané liberální a demokratické hnutí v Německu: Předpoklady, počátky, problematika (1789–1832)* [The early liberal and democratic movement in Germany: Prerequisites, beginnings, issues (1789–1832)] on 29 November 1961, earning the degree of candidate of historical sciences (his opponents were Josef Polišenský and Karel Kosík).

While a doctoral student, he married Marie Stryjová (1931–1977), an editor and Czech writer, repatriated from Ukrainian Volhynia in 1947. The couple had two daughters, Miriam (born in 1958, a Koreanist at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University), and Šimona (born in 1964, a philosopher working in Berlin).

Although not a party member, Bedřich Loewenstein remained a researcher at the Institute of History until 1970. He first published various parts of his dissertation in different periodicals.[12] Although his position at the institute had initially been uncertain and shaky, it was gradually getting better during the 1960s as a result of a general loosening of the political situation in Czechoslovakia. Loewenstein became renowned as an expert on modern and contemporary German school of thought. Apart from specializing in historiography and selected German history issues, especially pre-March liberalism, experiences of the Great War, or Weimar anti-democratism, he started using an interdisciplinary approach to historical and social topics, general problems of the European civilization crisis, and also to philosophic and methodological issues. Most of his specialized and more general studies concentrated on the so-called *Sonderweg*, i.e. the special path of Germany's evolution, as well as on psychological, social, and ideological prerequisites of Nazism. He published his studies and frequent reviews in a number of specialized and cultural periodicals, particularly in *Československý časopis historický*, *Filosofický časopis*, *Dějiny a současnost*, *Sociologický časopis*, *Orientace*, *Tvář*, and others.

In 1965, he was granted a research fellowship in Mainz under a scholarship programme of the Institute for European History (*Institut für europäische Geschichte*), and several West German universities started inviting him to deliver lectures and presentations. One of them, at the Free University (*Freie Universität*) in West Berlin, served as the basis for a brochure entitled *Irrationalismus und Zivilization*, which was published in the Federal Republic of Germany in three languages.[13] He also

12 See, in particular LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: K charakteru německého liberalismu 1830–31 [On the nature of the German liberalism 1830–31]. In: *Československý časopis historický*, Vol. 8, No. 6 (1960), pp. 814–842; IDEM: Débuts et problèmes du mouvement démocratique naissant en Allemagne. In: *Historica: Les sciences historique en Tchécoslovaquie / Istoricheskie nauki v Ckekhoslovakii / Historical Sciences in Czechoslovakia / Historische Wissenschaften in der Tschechoslowakei*, Vol. 4. Praha, Academia – Institute of Czechoslovak and World History 1962, pp. 38–39. For a series of subsequent related articles and studies, see IDEM: Kauza B. L.: (Auto)bibliografie, pp. 304–306.

13 IDEM: *Irrationalismus und Zivilisation / Irrationalism and civilisation / Irrationalisme et civilisation: Zu den ideologischen Voraussetzungen des Nationalsozialismus.* Braunschweig, Internationale Arbeitskreis Sonnenberg 1965; Czech version: IDEM: Iracionalismus a civilizace [Irrationalism and civilization]. In: *Filosofický časopis*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (1966),

took part in preparing a selection of works written by authors of the critical theory of the Frankfurt school of thought. He translated articles by Theodor W. Adorno and Jürgen Habermas into Czech.[14] As a "revisionist intellectual," Loewenstein became a partner for younger Western intellectuals and established contacts with many historians, including Golo Mann, Ernst Nolte, Kurt Sontheimer, Eberhard Jäckl, Georg Iggers, Hans Lemberg, and others. During the fruitful and relatively stable decade, Bedřich Loewenstein established himself as an unskippable co-founder of contemporary Czech historiography. His position was unique not only because he was an unprivileged non-party man in the structure of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences' institutes dealing with humanities, but also because of the broad coverage of his studies and his profound knowledge of extensive areas of modern historiography. In the period of the step-by-step release from dogmatic Marxism, he participated in the opening of new horizons. His regular provision of detailed information in dozens of reports and reviews earned him respect across the professional community, which was also one of the reasons why he was even then regarded as a "mediator."

The years of the so-called Prague Spring and its consequences, i.e. from 1968 to 1969, were, in a way, the first climax of Loewenstein's systematic work which had taken several years, but also brought about its sudden forced interruption. Let us mention just the principal and best-fitting titles from the author's broad portfolio of works. A popularization monograph about Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in the "Portrayals" series of Svoboda Publishing House led by historian Josef Macek is an example of his larger works of the time. It is basically an essay-like synthesis on German 19th century liberalism, which goes far beyond the framework of a biography, venturing to the realm of history of political ideas and ideologies.[15] The fresh flow of ideas and mature new views of the book exceeded every conceivable scheme.

The topic was to be reflected in follow-on studies on Bonapartism, but these unfortunately did not materialize. On the other hand, works on the Czech school of political thought or on war experience were represented by an essay entitled "Czech right-wing radicalism and the Great War" published in the fundamental collection of the Czech historiography of the 1960s, *Our living and dead past* published

pp. 45–60. The text is elaborated in the most detailed manner in Loewenstein's book *Plädoyer für die Zivilization*, pp. 35–54.

14 ADORNO, Theodor W. – HABERMAS, Jürgen – FRIEDEBURG, Ludwig von: *Dialektika a sociologie: Výbor z prací představitelů tzv. frankfurtské školy* [Dialectics and sociology: A selection from works of representatives of the so-called Frankfurt School]. Praha, Svoboda 1967. According to information provided by Bedřich Loewenstein, he was invited to take part in the project mainly because of the difficult translation of Adorno's works (those of von Friedeburg were translated by Lubomír Holub). He himself followed, in particular, the work of Adorno and Max Horkheimer, respecting both as men offering a possibility of a non-dogmatic concept of Marxism, but he did not incline or identify himself with them.

15 LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: *Otto von Bismarck*. Praha, Svoboda 1968.

in 1968. Its analysis of anti-democratic trends was an impressive corrective of the euphoria over Czech democratism in those days.[16]

Cooperation with foreign historians was crowned by a major international symposium, "Fascism and Europe," which Bedřich Loewenstein had been preparing from 1967 and which took place in Villa Lanna in Prague on 28–29 August 1969. Loewenstein's keynote paper with the same title (*Our living and dead past*) occupied 80 pages of the two-volume proceedings of the conference. The document was printed, but its distribution was forbidden.[17] Loewenstein amended the text even after his expulsion from the Institute of History and František Červinka wanted to use it to grant Loewenstein the degree of Associate Professor, but that also did not happen. In 1969, Loewenstein declined the offer of professorship from the University in Buffalo, United States, because he felt so tied with his homeland that he had chosen to defy the new situation by work at home. However, the decision of the Audition Board dated 22 April 1970 did not extend his employment contract, and Loewenstein thus was, together with a number of his colleagues, dismissed from the institute under the pretext of "restructuring."

Except for a few copies, the printed collection of his studies under a Berdyaev-like title *Medieval times of the twentieth century* was withdrawn and destroyed.[18] In the preface to the book, he explained his objective as an attempt at a dialogue between topical issues of today and of the past and between domestic and global trends: "The deeper common theme of these few studies on Nazism and its prerequisites

16 IDEM: Český pravicový radikalismus a první světová válka [Czech right-wing radicalism and the Great War]. In: GRAUS, František (ed.): *Naše živá i mrtvá minulost: 8 esejí o českých dějinách* [Our living and dead past: Eight essays on Czech history]. Praha, Svoboda 1968, pp. 158–184 (in 1970, the essay was published also in Italian); see also LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: Německý válečný zážitek a iracionální kritika civilizace: Trend od světové války k fašismu v ideologické a kulturně sociologické perspektivě [The German war experience and irrational criticism of civilization: From the Great War to Fascism in the ideological and cultural-sociological perspective]. In: *Československý časopis historický*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (1966), pp. 521–547.

17 IDEM: Faschismus und Europa. In: *Fašismus a Evropa / Fascism and Europe: Mezinárodní symposium. Praha, 28.–29. srpna 1969* [International Symposium Prague, 28–29 August 1969], Vol. 1., Praha, Institue of History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences 1970, pp. 209–289. The text in the wording of the 1971 amendment was published only recently. IDEM: *Civilizace a fašismus: Studie z let 1969–1971* [Civilization and Fascism: Studies from the years 1969–1971]. Praha, Institute for Contemporary History of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic 2003. See also the author's report on the colloquy, written for *Československý časopis historický* and not printed. IDEM: Fašismus a Evropa: Glosy k mezinárodnímu sympoziu / Der Faschismus und Europa: Glosse zum internationalen Symposion [Fascism and Europe: Comments on the international symposium]. In: PREČAN, V. – JANIŠOVÁ, M. – ROESER, M. (ed.): *Překračování hranic*, pp. 342–351.

18 LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: *Středověk dvacátého století: Několik úvah nad fašismem a jeho předpoklady* [Medieval times of the 20th century: A few reflections on Fascism and its prerequisites]. Praha, Czech Socialist Academy – Horizont 1970. One of the few preserved copies is found in the *libri prohibiti* fonds of the library of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic under File No. XC 2284.

is therefore mainly the issue of civilization and barbarism in the 20th century: the issue of threat to humanity (and humankind) by forces of the 'new Medieval Ages' (I am using the term because of lacking a more fitting one). It is true that these issues go beyond the traditional field of professional historiography, but they are still historical issues in the best sense of the word. Unfortunately, they also go beyond boundaries of purely academic debates."[19] A ban on any publishing activities followed. It thwarted, *inter alia,* a planned synthesis of results of many years of research into prerequisites of Nazism in Germany, their parallels, and European civilization connections.

The period since his dismissal from the Institute of History until the end of 1978 was again very difficult for Bedřich Loewenstein and his work. However, it was also – and quite unexpectedly – very important both for him and for others. From autumn 1970, he was employed as an interpreter and translator of the Commercial Office (from 1973 the Embassy) of the Federal Republic of Germany in Prague, in the first few years without any permission of Czechoslovak authorities. However, in the period of Willy Brandt's so-called Eastern policy and the establishment of diplomatic relations with East European countries, Loewenstein enjoyed protection of his employers and the government in Bonn (through some of his West German colleagues).

His status during the so-called normalization period was thus rather exceptional, although he had been watched, interrogated, harassed, and repeatedly and unsuccessfully contacted by the State Security since the summer of 1970. Still, he was able, under very conspiratorial rules, to make use of his position very successfully. Thanks to his access to diplomatic courier-delivered mail, he established one of the important communication channels between the domestic dissent and foreign countries, which was used to exchange books, correspondence, and many other documents. He co-organized a collection for the family of his imprisoned colleague, historian Jan Tesař. He, for example, arranged the transport of the complete archives of Karel Kaplan, and co-initiated the well-known *Acta persecutionis*, which brought information about the persecution of Czechoslovak historians to their Western counterparts.[20] In the period preceding Charter 77, it was a tremendous and hitherto not fully appreciated contribution. With Charter 77, the connection that Loewenstein took care of until his emigration grew even more important. Loewenstein's case is an important piece of the mosaic of paths taken by Czech historiography and independent unofficial works of those times.[21] He could continue his professional

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7.

20 *Acta persecutionis: A Document from Czechoslovakia. Presented to the 14th International Congress of Historical Sciences.* San Francisco, 1975.

21 See, in particular, the author's own gripping and informationally valuable depiction of those times: LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: Útržkovité vzpomínky zprostředkovatele [Sketchy recollections of a mediator]. In: MANDLER, Emanuel (ed.): *Dvě desetiletí před listopadem 89: Sborník* [Two decades before November 1989: A collection]. Praha, Maxdorf 1993, pp. 45–55. See also the contributions of Jan Křen "Pěkná a nepěkná vzpomínka na Bedřicha Loewensteina" [A nice and a not so nice memory of Bedřich Loewenstein] and Eberhard

work only privately. Even so, he produced a series of samizdat essays and studies, focused predominantly on modern civilization and civic society issues. Thanks to Kurt Sontheimer and Golo Mann, some of them, the core of which was represented by a new plan of the normative concept of civilization, were published in Germany in 1973 under the title *Plädoyer für die Zivilization*.[22] The offer of professorship at the Free University in West Berlin was a new chance to resume his regular profession and to continue in his interrupted work. After many years of permanent pressure of authorities and the tragic death of his wife in 1977, Loewenstein decided to accept it. The application for a permission to emigrate had been repeatedly rejected, but he ultimately succeeded, having been told that his return was undesirable. He left Czechoslovakia in January 1979.

Between 1979 and 1994, he was professor of modern history of the 19th and 20th centuries in Berlin, and thus earned a place in German modern historiography. He lectured and wrote about the pre-March times, national movements of the 19th century, utopian socialism, Great War, peace projects and comparisons of revolutions, Austrian and Czech history, history of the Age of Enlightenment, or economic theories of the 17th and 18th centuries. The second peak in Loewenstein's work came at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, when he synthesized his earlier partial studies supported by several years of additional research and study into two major books: *Entwurf der Moderne* and *Problemfelder der Moderne*.[23] This is where his long-term topics, whose roots date back to the 1960s and the beginnings of the "normalization," can be found at another level of a consistent approach. Insofar as the first book was concerned, it took Loewenstein some years to confront his studies, originally written in limited samizdat conditions, with new Western literature. In the second publication, he developed its political theory part trending toward the issue of civilization and violence, against the backdrop of social history. New

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Jäckel ("Acta liberationis: Prag, 21. Februar 1992") in *Crossing the borders*, pp. 266–270 and 271–298. Křen's text contains a declaration of a group of Czech historians concerning the manipulative disclosure of a list of State Security agents, first published in *Literární noviny* on 20 August 1992, in which they forcefully protested against the unjust denigration of Bedřich Loewenstein's name (pp. 268–270). A documentary annex concerning the persecution of Czechoslovak historians and the preparation of the *Acta persecutionis* publication is attached to Jäckel's text.

22 See footnote 6. The volume with Golo Mann's preface (pp. 7–10) consists of three principal parts: the first of them, on dead ends of civilization, i.e. on civilization processes of rationalization, their gaps, and relapses of romanticism as a source of irrationalization; the second one, with the most detailed elaboration of the original lecture on the issue of irrationalism and civilization; and the third and longest one, following the tradition of the normative concept of civilization since the Age of Enlightenment and the concept of progress against the backdrop of the origin and formation of anti-liberalism in the "German ideology."

23 LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: *Der Entwurf der Moderne: Vom Geist der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft und Zivilization.* Essen, Reimar Hobbing 1987 (in Czech: *Projekt moderny: O duchu občanské společnosti a civilizace* [Project of modernity: On the spirit of a civic society and civilization]. Praha, OIKOYMENH 1995); IDEM: *Problemfelder der Moderne: Elemente politischer Kultur.* Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1990.

shifts in Loewenstein's orientations are represented by studies on symbolism and historical anthropology, i.e. research of social and psychological topics primarily based on an interdisciplinary approach. In 1988, Loewenstein also founded the Berlin colloquy for history and psychology, one of the products of which was a collection titled *Geschichte und Psychologie*.[24] He provided an insight into the "normalization" atmosphere behind the Iron Curtain in a series of articles on pages of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* daily and in a more extensive work on the history of Prague.[25] The final wish formulated in the original edition, namely that Prague become a centre of cultural productivity and free life again one day, was, according to Loewenstein, a beseechment of something he had already stopped believing in by then.

November 1989 brought a new possibility of a part-time return and reintegration into the Czech environment to the second height of Loewenstein's career. He temporarily lectured at Charles University. According to his own words, he would have wished more time to do so, but he was not given the opportunity. He started publishing in a broad spectrum of domestic professional periodicals and almanacs, and he also published new books, such as *On nationalism and revolutions*, or a representative set of essays dating to the 1985–1995 period entitled *Us and the others*.[26] Loewenstein's texts with unusual and original formulations of topics sounded far from and incomparable to the multitude of both previously unpublishable and new works flooding the market at that time. This is also one of the reasons why a substantial segment of Loewenstein's works remains underrated and open for us. The 1990s also brought new topics which Loewenstein used mainly as an essayist and author of scientific publications. Step by step, he kept returning more and more to issues related to Czech history, although his principal place of work remained in Germany, where he cooperated with the Collegium Carolinum Institute in Munich (his annual meetings of lecturers and researchers in the field of Czech studies in Bad Wiessee, cooperation with the *Bohemia* journal, etc.) and where he was tirelessly providing and mediating information on Czech production. Later studies from the last two decades of his career include, for example, another extensive publication called *Civic society and its crisis* from 2015.[27]

Having finished his active professorship, Bedřich Loewenstein and his second wife moved from Berlin to the peaceful region of Franconia. However, he did not stay there for long; after an offer of a German publishing house to put together

24 IDEM (ed.): *Geschichte und Psychologie: Annäherungsversuche.* Pfaffenweiler, Centaurus 1992.

25 BÖHM, Fritz [LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich]: *6mal Prag.* München, Piper 1988 and 1990. The book was written upon an order, but the author approached it as a mixture of narration, subjective judgments, and reflections (for example, one of the chapters is titled "From Josef Švejk to Iosif Stalin").

26 LOEWENSTEIN, Bedřich: *O nacionalismu a revolucích* [On nationalism and revolutions]. Praha, Lidové noviny 1991; IDEM: *My a ti druzí: Dějiny, psychologie, antropologie* [Us and the others: History, psychology, anthropology]. Brno, Supplement 1997 (in German: *Wir und die anderen* – see Footnote 6).

27 See footnote 2.

an anthology on the "idea of progress," he resolved to rethink the old topic which combined and integrated his postwar philosophical starting points and his lifelong work and experience. After roughly a decade of studies, the imaginary third peak in Loewenstein's work came. He concentrated on a spectrum of cultural-historical, philosophical, and social topics which had constituted the connecting line of his research interests since his youth, presenting them in a work titled *Faith in progress: The history of a European idea*.[28] The book is a great synthesis of Loewenstein's historical and philosophical line of thought, reveals many half-forgotten authors and connections in the history of the European school of thought, and indeed gives an account of Loewenstein's lifelong work.

Having experienced Nazi and Stalin's times himself, Bedřich Loewenstein put his efforts into many years of research of, in particular, German history of the 19th century, whose results made him respected both at home and among researchers abroad. In the 1960s, in connection with the above, he was mediating and co-creating new approaches to research of ideological, psychological, and social prerequisites of Nazism. He was the key person for comparative international research and in the initial cooperation between the Czech and (West) German historiography in this field, as well as in the interdisciplinary dialogue on crises of the 20th century. Loewenstein was a historian who was intensively mediating mutual views on solutions of significant modern history topics between Czech and German historiography for a long time. In his historical works, shifts to more general issues of crises of the 20th century, modernism and modernity, civic society, European nationalism, and normative concept of the European civilization are combined and integrated with results of other disciplines which he also had a considerable command of, such as sociology, social psychology, anthropology, history of schools of thought and philosophy, economics, and political sciences. The succinct scientific-essay style relying on an unusual thesaurus of published sources gives Loewenstein's works a typical look which has never been broadly popular, but which has always led to original and appreciated results.

The personality and work of Bedřich Loewenstein will merit a more detailed study, reflections, and analyses, also because of their important political and social connections. As to the legacy of his works, it necessarily holds true that they partly belong only to the history of historiography of the times in which they were written. However, there is something permanent and open in them, something that calls for a reconsidering. I have repeatedly convinced myself that returning to many texts of Bedřich Loewenstein and reading them again makes sense. It is not too common that specialized historical works are able to repeatedly address readers anew so inspiringly or urgently. It is because of their philosophical charge, their author's lifelong earnestness, the researcher's honesty, evenhandedness, concealed irony, dedication to tough topics in which, however, the reader can easily lose

28 IDEM: *Der Fortschrittsglaube: Geschichte einer europäischen Idee.* Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2008 (in Czech: *Víra v pokrok: Dějiny jedné evropské ideje* [Faith in progress: The history of a European idea]. Praha, OIKOYMENH 2009).

orientation or strength to continue, and perhaps also something else. As a matter of fact, Loewenstein as an author does not want to make the reader's life easier, to entertain him or her, or to simplify the world he describes. On the other hand, he wants to show how complicated it is, how immeasurable and open its risks are.

The Czech version of this obituary, entitled Středoevropský historik Bedřich Loewenstein*, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 25, Nos. 1–2 (2018), pp. 13–22.*

Translated by Jiří Mareš

Review

A Country on the Boundary

Pavol Jakubec

SMETANA, Vít: *Ani vojna, ani mír: Velmoci, Československo a střední Evropa v sedmi dramatech na prahu druhé světové a studené války* [Neither war, nor peace: The Great Powers, Czechoslovakia and Central Europe in seven dramatic stories on the eve of the Second World War and the Cold War]. Praha, Lidové noviny Publishing House 2016, 664 pages, 33 photographs, bibliography, index of names, ISBN 978-80-7422-358-7.

There is probably no decade more dramatic than that from 1938 to 1948 in Czech and Slovak history. It encompasses multiple changes of borders, as well as of the social and political situation of the communities defined by them; under the pressure of tense circumstances, millions of people were forced to leave their homes and to look for new ones; millions lost their lives in genocides or on the battlefield. In the end of the mayhem, Europe was divided and the world faced a new global conflict. A scholar studying this period faces many challenges. We now have access to a tremendous amount of sources, both published and unpublished; our knowledge is influenced by abundant reflections. Moreover, new works emerge against the backdrop of an interpretation tradition, which is usually formulated on the basis of a nation-state principle; it is up to the historian's intellectual audacity and erudition whether he or she dares step out of or beyond its boundaries.

It is usually synthetic accounts that prompt such thoughts. Although *Neither war, nor peace* is neither a synthesis nor a "consistent monograph on Czechoslovakia's

role on the international scene" (p. 7), many readers will accept it as such – thanks to an attractive concept based on episodes, namely short dramatic stories, and an excellent style. It would be appropriate to appreciate how Smetana follows on from Tolstoy's *War and Peace* when thematizing the civilization clash between the East and the West on the experience of Czechoslovakia, a country on the boundary.[1] The developments in Poland offer an alternative scenario. In my review, I will also use an example of another relatively small European country, Norway, whose political leaders have often had to deal with similar dilemmas.

Smetana indicates the structure he intends to use already in the subtitle of his book; the primary level is that of the relation between the Great Powers and Czechoslovakia, the secondary one is Czechoslovakia's relation to its own political anchoring in a maze of international relations. The author abandons the tradition here. As a matter of fact, a significant feature of works related to the reviewed one by their topics has been a tendency to examine policies of the Great Powers primarily through the prism of their impacts on Czechoslovakia. In this respect, there has often been an tendency to a lenient evaluation of Czechoslovak foreign policy and its place in a broader context. What we are encountering here is a logical consequence of the situation in which most of Czech and Slovak historiography of that period is basically a contribution to the respective national histories. This is not a Czech or Slovak specific. Robert Frank recently noted that history of international relations was difficult to internationalize.[2] Thinking outside this box, Smetana has produced a novel study in *international history* – the approach the author identifies himself with (p. 8). However, his proposition about *diplomatic history* being outstripped in the 1970s is too strict; the discussion about innovations and the attitude to international relations is by no means over.[3] Probably the latest methodological initiative

1 See also BUGGE, Peter: "Land und Volk" oder: Wo liegt Böhmen? In: *Geschichte & Gesellschaft*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (2002), pp. 404–434; HLAVÁČEK, Petr (ed.): *Západ, nebo Východ? Česká reflexe Evropy 1918–1948* [West or East? Czech reflection of Europe 1919–1948]. Praha, Academia 2016.

2 FRANK, Robert: L'historiographie des relations internationales: Des "écoles" nationales. In: IDEM (ed.): *Pour l'histoire des relations internationales*. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France 2012, p. 27.

3 E.g., ELMAN, Colin – ELMAN, Miriam F. (ed.): *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists and the Study of International Relations.* Cambridge, Massachusetts – London, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press 2001; GIENOW-HECHT, Jessica: What Bandwagon? Diplomatic History Today. In: *Journal of American History*, Vol. 95, No. 4 (2008–2009), pp. 1083–1086; HOBSON, John M. – LAWSON, George: What Is History in International Relations? In: *Millennium*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2008), pp. 415–435; HOGANSON, Kristin: Hop Off the Bandwagon! It's a Mass Movement, Not a Parade. In: *Journal of American History*, Vol. 95, No. 4 (2008–2009), pp. 1087–1091; REYNOLDS, David: International History, the Cultural Turn and the Diplomatic Twitch. In: *Cultural & Social History*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2006), pp. 75–91; SCHWEITZER, Karl W. – BLACK, Jeremy: The Value of Diplomatic History: A Case Study of the Historical Thought of Herbert Butterfield. In: *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (2006), pp. 617–631; SCHWEITZER, Karl W. – SCHURMANN, Matt J.: The Revitalization of Diplomatic History: Renewed Reflections. In: *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2008), pp. 149–186; ZEILER, Thomas W.: The Diplomatic History

is the so-called *new diplomatic history*: using a set of institutionalized practices, diplomats become co-creators of specific policies rather than mere go-betweens or mediators between governments and organizations.[4]

* * *

One should appreciate the fact that Smetana does not avoid an analysis of several mutually incompatible "images": Czechoslovakia's "image" in Europe, the "image" of European great powers in Czechoslovakia, and, finally, Czechoslovakia's perception of its own "image." Actually, the concept of episodic "dramatic stories" indicates that the author is going to focus on a particular unravelling of a (foreign) policy dilemma. While research of value systems, information flow, and perceptions as processed by different players and their influence on key choices and formulation of policies enjoys a long-standing tradition in the discipline of international relations, it deserves more attention in historiography. After all, as George F. Kennan noted: "[I]n international […] life, what counts most is not really what happens to someone but how he bears what happens to him" [5] This is why it is good that Smetana does not pretend to be an "omniscient" narrator. He openly points at the fact that top-level political actors operate in an environment where unequivocal answers are rare, but which is rich in impressions and, in tight circumstances, also in *wishful thinking*. Emphasis on factual reliability of political intelligence plays along; as a matter of fact, a diplomat accredited to a foreign government is both a go-between/mediator *and* a correspondent, and – thanks to his experience and required knowledge of the local political situation – also as a first-instance analyst.

In the author's probe into events of the autumn of 1938, especially Zdeněk Fierlinger and Jan Masaryk failed to pass muster, their reputation as being at home among Moscow or London elites notwithstanding.[6] We can see it as a synecdoche of sorts, with the analysis confirming the notorious attitude of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain: viewed from London, Czechoslovakia was a remote, unknown,

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Bandwagon: A State of the Field. *Journal of American History*, Vol. 95, No. 4 (2008–2009), pp. 1053–1073.

4 IKONOMOU, Haakon A. – KNUDSEN, Dino: New Diplomatic History: A Short Introduction. In: IKONOMOU, H. A. – KNUDSEN, D. (ed.): *New Diplomatic History: An Introduction.* Copenhagen, PubliCom – University of Copenhagen 2015, pp. 5–11.

5 From a letter which George F. Kennan addressed to Dean Acheson on 4 December 1950; quoted by John L. Gaddis, *George Frost Kennan: An American Life* (New Haven, Yale University Press 2011, p. 413).

6 Some British personalities also fueled Masaryk's reputation (see DOCKRILL, Michael: The Foreign Office, Dr. Eduard Benes and the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile, 1939–1941. In: *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (2009), p. 701). Fierlinger, known as "their [i,e the Soviets's] man" among diplomats posted in Moscow (p. 350), could not be a reliable informant (see BERRY, R. Michael: *American Foreign Policy and the Finnish Exception: Ideological Preferences and Wartime Realities.* Helsinki, Suomen Historiallinen Seura 1985, p. 244; ŻURAWSKI vel GRAJEWSKI, Paweł Radosław: *Brytyjsko-czechosłowackie stosunki dyplomatyczne, październik 1938 – maj 1945.* Warszawa, Wydawnictwo DiG 2008, p. 389).

and possibly artificial state. Even Harold Nicolson, a diplomat and *anti-appeaser*, noted in mid-September 1938: "Vita [Sackville-West] says that if it is as artificial as all that, then it should never have been created. "[7] At the same time, Smetana presents a picture of the self-contradictory policy of the Soviet Union, the eastern ally. The result of the analysis is a substantial weakening of the "Munich treason" trope – with a supplement that the United Kingdom, not being Czechoslovakia's ally, did not have any obligations toward the republic (p. 70). "Unprofessionalism, misunderstandings, mistrust" (pp. 69–75) – this unholy trinity was squeezing the already scarce enough room for maneuver of Czechoslovak foreign policy. The conclusion is even more important in the light of the fact that it was under the circumstances described above that the groundwork for developments taking place in the next several decades were laid.

The issue of guarantees of Czechoslovakia's post-Munich borders is not a frequent topic in historiography, although it was, from Prague's viewpoint, closely associated with the overall situation of the Second Republic. Smetana leaves the reader with no doubts: "Curtailed Czechoslovakia was indeed an object rather than a subject of international policy" (p. 102). Unlike Poland, which surprisingly – despite its participation in the dismantling of its southern neighbour – appeared as one of the guarantors of the future Czechoslovakia (or Czecho-Slovakia) in British deliberations in October 1938.

The subsequent small "dramatic story" revolving around the fate of the Czechoslovak gold reserves shows why the reviewed work is so useful and beneficial. Financial aspects of foreign policy viewed from a historical perspective tend to be a domain of a small community of specialists. Although vitally important, as proved, for example, by political representations in exile during the Second World War, it rarely appears in political historiography.[8] Smetana succeeded in presenting both the technical and the political dimensions of the case. However, one must mention that, apart from the well-known British politicians listed by the author, Labourite leader Hugh Dalton also took a brief note of the case.[9] Insofar as the medialization of the case is concerned, it is to Smetana's credit that he does not present any categorical conclusions in matters in respect whereof he does not have enough support of sources. However, his strict assessment of the restrained Czechoslovak tactics, which lacked enough resolve to make use of the case for propaganda purposes (p. 144), is that of a historian aware of subsequent developments rather than that of an exile politician whose uncertain, albeit improving situation dictates him to prefer prudence to assertiveness in relations with key partners. It is also possible that a different approach would have been counterproductive. In his memoirs,

7 NICOLSON, Harold: *Diaries and Letters, 1930–1939.* London, Collins 1966, p. 360, entry for 15 September 1938.

8 See KUKLÍK, Jan: *Do poslední pence: Československo-britská jednání o majetkoprávních a finančních otázkách, 1938–1982* [To the last penny: Czechoslovak-British negotiations on property rights and financial issues, 1938–1982]. Praha, Karolinum 2007.

9 PIMLOTT, Ben (ed.): *The Second World War Diaries of Hugh Dalton, 1940–1945.* London, Jonathan Cape 1986, pp. 94 and 144., entries dated 24 October 1940 and 28 January 1941.

"Jock" Colville mentioned that Winston Churchill, careful about the reputation of his co-workers, was extremely critical to a hail of criticism falling on Robert Boothby, who was accused in the case.[10]

It is undoubtedly attractive for the reader to immerse into a geopolitical "drama," into the still not fully resolved issue of the genesis of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, *alias* the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and the failure of the parallel trilateral negotiations of military representatives of France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union taking place in Moscow in August 1939. Unlike previous narrations, the picture canvassed by Smetana is incomparably more comprehensive, as it contains, *inter alia,* a positive assessment of Polish diplomatic tactics in the spring and summer of 1939 (p. 202). In our traditional climate, burdened with anti-Czechoslovak attitudes of Józef Beck, it is an interesting, but substantiated precedent. Critical comments addressed to the British intelligence service seem to be justified; however, it would be appropriate to say that there were a lot of snippets of information of a varying level of reliability circulating in the air on the eve of the Second World War (see p. 191). Seen through the prism of the indisputable fact that geopolitics fully prevailed over ideology in the summer of 1939, it is possible to agree with the author's statement that "'Polish stubbornness' was a mere pretext" (p. 246).

The axis of Smetana's story is the Second World War. The development of the relationship between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union was far from harmonic; on the contrary, as the end of the conflict was approaching and different visions of the postwar arrangement of the world were coming to the fore (compare pp. 274 and 352), internal disputes within the coalition became more prominent. The author fittingly wrote: "The imaginary curve of politics of the Great Powers […] was oscillating between partial victories, sometimes of the universalistic principle, at other times of the realist principle" (p. 253). On this political chessboard, Czechoslovakia was represented by exiled politicians led by Beneš. He ultimately succeeded in achieving a dual continuity – that of the occupied republic and that of himself as its president. In connection with the "federalist moment" which prevailed in the United Kingdom and across the Atlantic, the absence of the Habsburgs is rather surprising – their "shadow" was legitimately and justifiably noted by many historians.[11] Smetana's well-conceived analysis contains quite a few inspiring observations; I appreciate that he allocated a sizable amount of space to the so-called Polish question. Especially Soviet plans for postwar arrangement have been subject to lively discussions for quite some time, but the author's conclusion to the effect

10 COLVILLE, John: *The Churchillians.* London, Weidenfield & Nicolson 1981, p. 181.

11 BRANDES, Detlef: *Großbritannien und seine osteuropäischen Alliierten, 1939-1943. Die Regierungen Polens, der Tschechoslowakei und Jugoslawiens im Londoner Exil vom Kriegsausbruch bis zum Konferenz von Teheran.* München, Oldenbourg 1988, pp. 74–75, 284; MAIMANN, Helene: *Politik im Wartesaal: Österreichische Exilpolitik im Grossbritanien, 1938 bis 1945.* Wien – Köln/R. – Graz, Böhlau 1975, pp. 94–97; Reiner Franke collected circumstantial evidence of Beneš' preference of the anschluss to the Hapsburgs; FRANKE, Reiner: *London und Prag: Materialien zum Problem eines multinationalen Nationalstaates, 1919–1938.* München – Wien, Oldenbourg 1982, p. 458.

that "we still cannot be quite sure [about them]" (p. 290) holds true even today. However, it is not possible to overlook Moscow's preparations to take control over Central Europe, or –in the words of Donal O'Sullivan – to build a reversed "cordon sanitaire" in favour of the Soviet Union.[12]

In connection with unending "disputes about Beneš" one might ask: What was the Czech "contribution" (p. 313) to Smetana's "allied drama"? Certainly not a negligible one, especially for the "turn to the East," whose climax was the signature of the friendship and mutual alliance treaty. O'Sullivan characterized Czechoslovakia as the "first Soviet satellite."[13] In February 1944, Norwegian Foreign Minister Trygve Lie, himself rather accommodating toward Moscow, even predicted the birth of the Czechoslovak Soviet Republic (soon to be followed by Finland).[14] Smetana's analysis confirms that President Beneš assumed an almost submissive attitude toward Soviet representatives even at the early stage of the war (compare p. 316) and chose an unilateral orientation at the time when he was a "*persona grata* in London, Moscow, and Washington" (p. 321); it is, at the same time, fair to Beneš, as it does not withhold the fact that significantly pro-Soviet attitudes had spread among Czechoslovak exiles regardless of consequences for relations with the British hosts (compare pp. 325 and 505). One may conclude that Czechoslovakia became a *test case* of Soviet policy toward a significantly weaker ally (p. 331), i.e. an object on a boundary of sorts in international politics. However, it was hardly the proclaimed "bridge" – that idea was declined by Moscow as the treaty between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union had been signed, at the latest (p. 344). In a broader context, Antoine Marès was thinking along lines similar to those of Smetana when using a metaphor of a seismograph.[15] The liberation of the Carpathian Ruthenia worked as a litmus paper of sorts, with Beneš' secretary Edvard Táborský pointing out that "the President does not have any other option but to *pretend* [emphasis in original] that we fully believe Stalin's promises" (p. 341). The Czechoslovak role in the key partnership thus remained "accommodating," but hardly "respectable at the same time" (pp. 357 and 505).

When looking at postwar tribulations of Central Europe, Smetana concentrates even more on perceptions, which the representatives of Western democracies could have drawn from local developments. It is, again, appropriate to praise the perceptively written "Polish pages" of the story, which do not attempt to hide the fact that the imaginary line between liberation and new occupation was precariously thin (pp. 376, 378, 380, 410, generally p. 502) – just like the line between hope and fear of a new world war, this time between the West and the East, the outbreak of

12 O'SULLIVAN, Donal: *Stalins "cordon sanitaire": Die sowjetische Osteuropapolitik und die Reaktionen des Westens, 1939–1949*. Paderborn, Schöningh 2003.

13 *Ibid* pp. 172–174.

14 *Nasjonalbibliotek Oslo* (ďalej *NBO*), Håndskriftssamlingen, signature (sign.) Ms. fol. 2653:9, WORM-MÜLLER, Jacob Stenersen: *Dagbøker* [Diaries], Vol. 9, p. 94, entry dated 2 February 1944.

15 MARÈS, Antoine: En guise d'introduction. In: IDEM (ed.): *La Tchécoslovaquie – sismographe de l'Europe au XX^e siècle.* Paris, Institut d'études slaves 2009, p. 9.

which Beneš had thought possible already in London (pp. 347 and 382). Insofar as the key question, namely why the advance of US troops in the spring of 1945 halted in West Bohemia, is concerned, the author concludes that military priorities prevailed over political ones, with the Czechoslovak government not making any significant effort in favour of an alternative scenario. From the viewpoint of Western observers, two situational aspects were prominent while the republic was being liberated; the fact that the presence of the Red Army did not play into the hand of the Communist Party, and a marked contrast with the situation in Poland: "Although Czechoslovakia was in a much better position to influence Soviet policy than Poland, it lost its chance due to extreme acquiescence" (p. 412, compare with p. 416). One has to agree with Smetana again.

Ambitions to mediate between the Great Powers of the anti-Hitler coalition notwithstanding, Czechoslovakia was losing significance as a subject of international relations, and was increasingly turning into a mere object of them; in Smetana's words, initially an "indicator" or a "test case," it turned to, in the spring of 1948, a "catalyst (p. 417) of bipolar Europe. While the author pillories the judgment of Czechoslovak diplomats during the Munich crisis, Laurence Steinhardt, the US Ambassador to liberated Prague, was not doing much better in his eyes (pp. 450–452). The function of an "indicator" on the eve of the Cold War – just like the increasing volume of the US economic aid (p. 429), as opposed to that provided to Poland – challenges the deep-rooted image of the United States disinterested in Czechoslovakia and Central Europe. At the same time, however, Smetana diagnoses an incapability to effectively support civic parties vis-à-vis an unfavourable geographic position and the "Munich complex": "[…] it is remarkable how little US policy could come up with to retain this 'outpost' [to combat communism] and how slow it was in implementing that little" (p. 443). The picture of British diplomacy is a bit more positive – the work and moderate optimism of Ambassador Philip Nichols were influenced by experience acquired in the wartime London (compare p. 476) which his American colleague could not rely on. However, even Nichols did not see any possibility of weakening Soviet influence without Czechoslovakia's initiative. At the end of the day, there was nothing like that; according to Steinhardt, "the principal feature of Czech mentality […] which could be described as sullen obedience toward an unquestionable authority" (p. 490), in this case Moscow, won the upper hand.

The story about the "Victorious February" as the catalyst of the trans-Atlantic collective security arrangement (p. 508) is well-known. One might add that the events in Prague prompted a willingness to re-evaluate geopolitical attitudes also in Norway, at that time ruled by the Labour with a reserved attitude toward the West and having good relations with Moscow.[16] The similarity can be illustrated

16 See ERIKSEN, Knut Einar: *DNA og NATO: Striden om norsk medlemsskap innen regjeringspartiet 1948–49* [Norwegian Labour and the NATO: The dispute about Norway's membership in the ruling party 1948–1949]. Oslo, Gyldendal 1973, pp. 73–80 and 83–87; LIE, Haakon: *Skjebneår, 1945–1950* [Fateful years, 1945–1950]. Oslo, Tiden 1982, pp. 264–267; RISTE, O.: *Norway's Foreign Relations*, pp. 198–201; SVERDRUP, Jakob: *Inn i storpolitikken, 1940–1949* [Into the big politics, 1940–1949]. Oslo, Universitetsforlaget 1996, pp. 193–195.

using a telling example: while Anthony Eden did not receive an invitation to visit Prague (p. 475), Winston Churchill had had to wait for an invitation to Oslo until the country was anchored clearly in the West.[17] Smetana also joined the intermittent discussion about the viability of a Czechoslovak version of finlandization, and his attitude toward this option is positive (p. 494). However, his justified comparison of the presidents of Czechoslovakia and Finland, Edvard Beneš and Juha Paasikivi, ignored a significant difference; as a former subject of the tsar, the latter had undoubtedly accumulated more experience with the Russian mentality and made repeated use of it when negotiating with Moscow.

* * *

Edvard Beneš is the central character of Czech and Slovak history during the period under scrutiny. It is thus natural to ask: How does Vít Smetana view Beneš?

First and foremost, there is "less Beneš" in the reviewed book than we tend to see in books on similar or related topics. The reason is the author's preference of the view of the Great Powers, i.e. the perspective of the players whose deliberations and decisions had a greater influence on the processes under study. As a matter of fact, the global conflict which Smetana's work is centered on escalated the power asymmetry between the "Big Three," to be joined by the rehabilitated France, and other members of the anti-Nazi coalition, often operating in difficult exile conditions (since 1942, their relations were being cultivated the United Nations organization in the making). Despite all his creativity and unquestionable successes, Beneš was unable to play as important a role as he had been accustomed to in the League of Nations in Geneva.

Smetana makes it clear that the "President Builder" did not belong to politicians who arouse sympathy easily. Even his unbreakable optimism, sometimes (especially as regards the Soviet Union) bordering on naivety, did not help. Similarly, Beneš' leaning toward academism, often perceived as a manifestation of excessive self-confidence or even egocentrism, did not play into his hands.[18] Under the

17 *NBO*, Håndskriftssamlingen, sign. Mss. fol. 2656:5, WORM-MÜLLER, Jakob Stenersen: *Historiske opptegnelser* [Historical notes], Vol. XVI, p. 6 (entry for 18 June 1946).

18 In an account of a dinner hosted by Labourite politician Philip Noel-Baker in the beginning of February 1944 on the occasion of Beneš' return from Moscow, Norwegian historian Jacob Stenersen Worm-Müller noted: "Then it started." He referred to a "lecture" (Beneš stated, *inter alia,* that the war would be over already in 1944) and wording indicates that the experience was by no means unique. (*NBO*, Håndskriftssamlingen, sign. Ms. fol. 2653:9, WORM-MÜLLER, J. S.: *Dagbøker*, Vol. 9, p. 94, entry for 2 February 1944.) already the 1950s, Henry L. Roberts pointed out that the generation of the 20-years-old of the summer of 1914, who subsequently played a major role in the shaping of politics between the wars, was overtlyconfident in their own realism and. (ROBERTS, Henry L.: The Diplomacy of Colonel Beck**.** In: CRAIG, Gordon A. – GILBERT, Felix: *The Diplomats, 1919–1939.* Princeton (New Jersey), Princeton University Press, p. 580.) Although Beneš did not belong to this generation, he was young enough to share some of their mental characteristics, such as the above-mentioned confidence.

circumstances, the substantiated claim of the equivocal, even confused diplomatic signaling, which did not contribute to the credibility of Czechoslovak foreign policy, lacking an apparent *red line*, is a serious accusation. According to Smetana, Beneš failed to vindicate himself as a top-ranking diplomat in the autumn of 1938 (p. 72). To some extent, his reputation was rehabilitated by the faith in the unsustainability of the Nazi-Soviet alliance (p. 315). The author also notes that, insofar as contacts with the Soviets were concerned, Beneš was prepared to revisit "the very foundations of his own political concepts," including "postwar cooperation of the Great Powers," a prerequisite of Czechoslovakia's independence (p. 345). Even so, he retained some credit in the eyes of the Brits, and in 1947 and 1948 was seen as the only relevant counterweight against Soviet hegemony about to establish itself in the liberated republic (p. 478). It would be worth giving a thought as to how and to what extent these developments were affected by the president's volatile attitudes, as Smetana correctly asks the question: "Beneš negotiating with whom?"

* * *

Vít Smetana ranks among historians with an extraordinarily broad scope. His monograph is based on the study of archival sources at home and abroad and of a number of published documents and memoirs. In addition, he often uses sources which have left a rather unjustly weak footprint in Czech and Slovak historiography. In the beginning of the review, I noted that one can no longer expect total heuristics from researchers today. However, it is a pity that the author did not reflected the rich monograph on Czechoslovak-British relations during the Second Republic and the Second World War by Polish historian Paweł Radosław Żurawski vel Grajewski,[19] which, in my opinion, presents a more balanced analysis of Czechoslovak foreign policy than, for example, the books by Marek Kazimierz Kamiński.[20] Although Smetana offers rich contextualization, an explanatory note would be useful here and there; for example, why and how could Moscow use the Åland Islands issue as a "crucial" pretext in the summer of 1939? Similarly, the evaluation of the *Council on Foreign Relations* as "the most influential think-tank" (p. 240, see p. 433) remains unexplained: why should it be regarded as unquestionably more influential than the sister *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, especially if we consider the power of American isolationism between the wars? As to details, labelling Edward H. Carr as a philosopher (p. 328) is rather surprising, as is the transformation of Grace Tully from a female assistant to a male one (p. 592, fn. 139), anglicized transcription of a Slavic name taken *litteratim* from a quoted source ("Izhipska," p. 379), or

19 ŻURAWSKI vel GRAJEWSKI, R. P.: *Brytyjsko-czechosłowackie stosunki dyplomatyczne*.

20 KAMIŃSKI, Marek Kazimierz: *Edvard Beneš kontra gen. Władysław Sikorski: Polityka władz czechosłowackich na emigracji wobec rządu polskiego na uchodźstwie 1939–1943.* Warszawa, Instytut Historii PAN – Wydawnictwo Neriton 2005. A newer – and more biased – of his two works is not reflected by the author (IDEM: *Edvard Beneš we współpracy z Kremlem: Polityka zagraniczna władz czechosłowackich na emigracji, 1943–1945.* Warszawa, Instytut Historii PAN – Wydawnictwo Neriton 2009).

a mutilated surname of Soviet diplomat Boris F. Podcerob (p. 574, fn. 377; p. 582, fn. 120). The somewhat anonymous "International Bank" where Czechoslovakia applied for a credit in 1947 (p. 476) was, of course, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Still, in a book as voluminous as the reviewed one, it is hardly possible to avoid all minor flaws.

* * *

In his monograph, Vít Smetana managed to prove his erudition and to make good use of his long-term focused interest in the period of Czech and Slovak, but also European history in question in a convincing manner. However, this does not inhibit his presentation of the "dramas" as open-ended stories. Furthermore, he inclines to discuss rather than toformulate categorical statements. In conclusion, *Neither war, nor peace* should become a classic – as a colourful canvas of historical plots stretched taut in a strong frame, which is what I was trying to outline in my review. My reservations, however, are mostly of a nature that makes one recall the adage *non omnia possumus omnes*.

The Slovak version of this review, entitled Krajina na rozhraní*, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 24, No. 3 (2017), pp. 403–416.*

Translated by Jiří Mareš

Review

Swing Music and Its Fans in the Protectorate

Vít Hloušek

KOURA, Petr: *Swingaři a potápky v protektorátní noci: Česká swingová mládež a její hořkej svět* (Šťastné zítřky, sv. 23) [Swing fans and "zoot suiters" in the Protectorate night: Czech swing kids and their bitter world (Happy tomorrows, Vol. 23)]. Praha, Academia 2016, 922 pages, ISBN 978-80-200-2634-7.

Youth subcultures are not a very frequent topic among Czech historians. It is naturally mentioned in connection with studies of political history, and even more in connection with social history, particularly in the second half of the 20th century. We thus have interesting books about rock and folk communities, their fans, and their persecution by the communist power during the so-called normalization.[1] We even have some documents on various subcultures of the 1990s,[2] but we still lack information on some remarkable and perhaps even important (in the context of the period) subcultures of the first half of the 20th century. Fortunately, in the case of swing music fans during the Protectorate, we now can, thanks to Petr Koura's work, speak about the deficit using the past tense.

In terms of its scope and contents, Koura's book is impressive. It is the outcome of the author's long-term research of sources based not only on archival documents,

1 There is no need to list the names of the researchers and their works here, as they are mentioned in the introductory chapter of Koura's book, which can hereby be referred to.

2 VLADIMÍR 518 (ed.): *Kmeny 90.* Praha, Yinachi – Bigboss 2016.

preserved memories, or a meticulous and exhaustive (in the best sense of the term) analysis of period press, but also on oral history techniques used to obtain testimonies of the few surviving contemporary witnesses who had personal experience with (or themselves belonged to) the Protectorate swing music community and its fans. It must be noted that if anyone decides to focus his or her attention on the topic of swing kids in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia from now on, he or she will hardly come across anything substantial that has not been covered by Koura. We may hope for some local tidbits of information on the lifestyle of the "Grebes" ("Potápky") and "Parasol Mushrooms" ("Bedly") outside Prague, but we can hardly expect that anyone will advance Koura's comprehensive and essentially complete research work to a higher level, both qualitatively and in terms of content.

In his research efforts, Koura adhered to methodological principles and techniques of cultural history, which can be viewed with sympathies. It is a logical choice, unless one intends to deal with swing music in the Protectorate from a viewpoint of musical science, or to reduce the colourful reality of the Protectorate by viewing through a prism of social history. The "genre" of cultural history permits (subject to the author's sense of proportion) both preserving an overall picture and giving enough room to interesting micro-stories and micro-events. Moreover, the latter are never an end in themselves in Koura's text; they are always used to appropriately illustrate a given aspect of the life of swing kids under the Protectorate. In this respect, it is also necessary to appreciate how Koura not only based his research on rigorous historiographic approaches, but also applied a sensible measure of sociological concepts. He thus established a very good starting position staking out his research field and also defining characteristic features of the youth subcultures he was examining, including specific attire, distinctive speech, social background, or geographic occurrences of the "Grebes."

However, Koura's does not deal solely with the "Grebes" and "Parasol Mushrooms," but also with the social and political situation, they were forced to live in. The "National Socialism and jazz music" chapter describes the official attitude of the Nazi regime toward jazz very well. The author took a good grasp of the roots of its hatred of jazz music and its perception of jazz music as "Judo-Negroid degenerate art," presenting Nazi criticism between jazz music through the prism of the general trend of Nazi aesthetics. Equally interesting and (not only) period-relevant are his thoughts about the relationship between jazz music and freedom, or, in other words, jazz music and democracy. It may be worth giving a thought to whether the repressions against jazz music did not make its fans, in many cases totally apolitical at first, not just anglophiles, but ultimately also democrats and active opponents of various dictatorships of the 20th century.

In addition to aesthetic contexts and political reflections, however, this chapter of Koura's book is a very knowledgeable guide through institutionalized mechanisms of the repression of jazz music and its fans in the Third Reich. Similarly, it is necessary to appreciate the factual richness of and the author's erudite approach to the chapter dedicated to the evolution of jazz dances and their transfer to the territory

of Bohemia and Moravia. Here, too, Koura's book will serve as an indispensable and reliable starting point of any future research of this topic.

However, the core of the book is, in my opinion, chapter 6 ("Swing as a generational phenomenon and a manifestation of resistance") and subsequent chapters dedicated to the life and problems of swing music fans in the Protectorate, their relation to the occupation regime, and the attitude of Nazi and Protectorate authorities toward them. We may, or may not, fully accept the relationship between the phenomenon of swing music fans and the preceding Czech dandyism as thematized by Koura; however, we must appreciate his erudition going beyond the time scope of the main topic of his book. The chapters mentioned above constitute the heart of the book not just from the viewpoint of its contents, but also from that of historiography. In each chapter, these text segments represent a concentration of results of Koura's meticulous research of sources, which are very well arranged and integrated into a plastic description of the lifestyle of the swing subculture in the Protectorate. Koura mentioned the importance of American musical movies of the second half of the 1930s, pointed out the role of the funmakers' movement (whose members viewed swing kids through a rather ambivalent optics), and analyzed lyrics of the *pop music* of the period influenced by swing music and topics related to "zoot suiters," as well as attacks of the Protectorate media against swing music fans. There is also a knowledgeable, interesting, and funny etymological insight into the origin of the term "Grebe" ("Potápka") (pp. 501–512). It is also instructive to realize how smooth the transition of the Protectorate "Grebe" into the post-February "Hooligan" ("Pásek") was, and that all different dictatorships existing on Czech territory in the 20th were treating independent manifestations of youth subcultures. Equally valuable for analyzing the nature of the transient 1945–1948 period from the viewpoint of a swing music fan is the finding that even the "Nylon Age" was not an idyllic time of dancing frolics. The "small" everyday history as described here indicates the same phenomena of a decline of the democratic perception of politics and society as, for example, the history of "great" political ideas.[3]

Also interesting is a comprehensive presentation of the so-called Circular Correspondence among jazz music fans toward the end of the Protectorate and shortly after liberation (pp. 575–583). The factors which are needed to understand the period context include not only information about the persecution of Jewish jazz musicians and consequences of the closing of Czech universities, but also an analysis of the censorship of swing music and lyrics. Naturally, the analysis of practices that swing musicians were resorting to in order to be able to play British and American hits is also worth mentioning. However, Koura described darker aspects of those times as well, for example the policy of the Board of Trustees for the Education of Youth, focused on propaganda in favour of the Third Reich and interventions against the "Grebes." Koura has also presented innovative interpretations of the reasons and forms of cooperation of Czech jazzmen with the Interradio propaganda

3 See BRENNER, Christiane: *Mezi Východem a Západem: České politické rozpravy 1945–1948* [Between the East and the West: Czech political discourse 1945–1948]. Praha, Argo 2015.

station addressing Anglo-American soldiers and using swing music in its broadcasting (pp. 735–738). The fates of jazz musicians in Theresienstadt and concentration camps unquestionably invite further research. Here too Koura's work represents the so far most comprehensive overview and a "must" starter for future studies, at least insofar musicians coming from the Czech Lands are concerned. Koura has managed not only to sort out known facts, but also to bring new information or interpretations, even on a topic covered as frequently (although often superficially) as the Ghetto Swingers Big Band.

Indeed, if we were to reproach Koura for anything at all, there would be just three comments, and even these do not problematize or question his work; they rather indicate that even a text supported by many years of research and as comprehensive as it can be may have its limits.

The price paid for the effort to capture different aspects of the swing subculture as comprehensively as possible is that the reader sometimes has a difficult time to find his or her way in the book. Perhaps it would have been better to be more sparing in segments not dealing with the main topic of research. This applies, for example, to the chapter titled "Czech youth on the eve of the Nazi occupation," which anyone reading the book primarily because of the "Grebes" and his or her interest in jazz and swing music can skip without any problem at all. It is of course interesting to note the activities and organizational forms available to Czech youths in the late 1930s, and it is obvious that the lifestyle and milieu of Czech swing music fans overlapped into other subcultures, such as tramping, and vice versa. Yet a slight reduction of the text would make even the voluminous book easier to orientate in. I permit myself a similar statement with respect to the "Swing youth after the demise of the Protectorate and their artistic reflections" chapter, although it never hurts to remind the reader of the high level of continuity in a lot of things between the time of the German occupation and the first two decades of the rule of state socialism.

The second, perhaps subjective and nostalgic, comment is that Petr Koura could have paid more attention directly to swing music. The preface clearly indicates that the author did not approach the topic of the Protectorate swing kids from the position of a traditional jazz or swing music fan or enthusiast. However, those of us for whom such inspiration by music was one of the reasons of our interest in those years would certainly appreciate more "musical" and context information.[4] If for nothing else, then because of swing music being a *de facto* first phenomenon of a truly global pop culture. A slightly better knowledge of American and British swing would also be handy, for example, on page 65, where it was not necessary to refer to a rendition of the song recorded by the band of Billy Banks, but instead to its best-known version recorded by Duke Ellington and singer Ivie Anderson, which

4 As a matter of fact, even the presentation of Protectorate bands (pp. 92–112) is rather selective and conforming to later classifications and evaluations of their qualities. For example, the studio band of Sláva Emanuel Nováček, which managed to oscillate between dance music and swing throughout the war, or Gustav Brom's wartime band are missing on the list.

is an indispensable part of any representative selection of Ellington's recordings. To give the reader an idea of the period context, it would also have been advisable to place greater emphasis on debates between fans of *hot jazz* and *sweet music*, and also to pay greater attention to the role played by music of British jazz and dance bands in Czechoslovakia and later also in the Protectorate, which was, until 1945, more available than that of US big bands, and was thus an extraordinarily strong source of inspiration for swing music fans in occupied Europe.[5] After all, even the BBC was intensively and successfully using British jazz and dance music as a part of its programmes intended to influence the population of Nazi Germany and occupied countries.[6]

And this brings us to the third potential minor improvement of the text. Koura was very honestly and basically successfully trying to set the Czech "Grebes" and "Parasol Mushrooms" into an international context of other swing music subcultures in other countries. The fourth chapter of his book provides a knowledgeable account on American *zoot suiters*, Latin American *pachucos*, French *zazous*, German and Austrian *Swing-Boys*, *Schlurfs,* and *Swings*. Here it was possible to make a comparison with some other countries of occupied Europe, such as Belgium or the Netherlands, which were, together with France and Great Britain, unquestionably among the countries with the most developed swing music communities in Europe, whose youths were also demonstrating phenomena similar to those of the "Grebes" or *zazous* that were, just like in other countries, encountering repressions by local quislings and German invaders. It would also have been interesting to make a comparison with Mussolini's Italy, where, if truth be told, the level of repressions against jazz music was lower compared to Germany.[7] A somewhat broader comparison would also have shown that attacks against jazz and swing music were by no means limited to Germany and other non-democratic regimes of those times; similar elements of criticism (including anti-Semitism and, in particular, criticism of jazz as a "primitive nigger" music style) can be found, especially in the 1920s, in Western Europe and the United States as well.

The book contains a truly minimal number of minor inaccuracies or erroneous interpretations. On page 121, Koura claims that Filippo Tommaso Marinetti was a government minister. He was actually "only" a member of the Italian Academy (*Accademia d'Italia*) and an unofficial ambassador of Italian culture, however sometimes more influential than official members of the Italian government. The photograph of Django Reinhardt, a Gipsy guitar and banjo player, with jazz composer and expert Dietrich Schulz-Köhn dressed in a German officer uniform (p. 210) was

5 Compare PHILLIPS, Damon J.: *Shaping Jazz: Cities, Labels, and the Global Emergence of an Art Form*. Princeton – Oxford, Princeton University Press 2013.

6 See BAADE, Christina L.: *Victory through Harmony: The BBC and Popular Music in World War II*. Oxford – New York, Oxford University Press 2012.

7 See MAZZOLETTI, Adriano: *Il Jazz in Italia*, Vol. 2: *Dallo swing agli anni sessanta*. Torino, EDT 2010, pp. 173–286, HARWELL CELENZA, Anna: *Jazz Italian Style: From Its Origins in New Orleans to Fascist Italy and Sinatra*. Cambridge – New York – Melbourne – Delhi, Cambridge University Press 2017.

probably taken shortly after the occupation of Paris in the summer of 1940 rather than in 1944. The dressing style of US jazz singer Cab Calloway (p. 282) had been developing gradually since the mid-1930s, and it is thus not possible to say that he was spoofing *zoot suiters*; being a proper concert eccentric, he was rather a source of inspiration for them. The fact that the author of the *Hipsters Dictionary* did not take it too seriously is something else. The hypothesis suggesting a connection between Foglar's Vonts and *Edelweisspiraten* (footnote 608, p. 312) is difficult to judge. It would perhaps have been worth mentioning that Inka Zemánková and the orchestra of Karel Vlach recorded Czech versions of songs from the movie *Singing Girl* in November 1944 (p. 433). There is at least a third period version of the "Wunderbar, wunderbar, wie du heute tanzst" song, played by the Michael Jary band and sung by then popular Rudi Schuricke (p. 651).[8]

As a whole, however, hats off to Koura's work. The extent and quality of his research as well as the presentation of its results are impressive, and the same applies to Koura's stylistics. Basically, Koura perused all Czech language and most of German language publications on the topic, and, in particular, undertook a comprehensive research of sources, as mentioned above. His book is thus an indispensable well of information not only for fans of swing music of the 1930s and 1940s, but mainly for historians who focus or will focus on the history of this period in its cultural, social, and political context.

The Czech version of this review, entitled Swing a jeho posluchači v době Protektorátu, *was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 24, No. 3 (2017), pp. 417–422.*

Translated by Jiří Mareš

8 Michael Jary: Wunderbar, wunderbar, wie du heute tanzt (*sic*). In: Youtube [online]. 7 June 2010 [cit. 2017-09-18]. Available at: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXKVDTl_SoY*. It is interesting to note that the German version of Běhounek's song "My love is jazz" became one of just a few Czech swing songs with an electro-swing version. See Wunderbar (Wie Du Heute Tanzt (*sic*)). In: Youtube [online]. 16 November 2012 [cit. 2017-09-18]. Available at: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kjffqt6yLI*. Channel of user Andy La TOGGO.

Review

Czechoslovak Leviathan

Karol Szymański

ROUBAL, Petr: Československé spartakiády (Šťastné zítřky, sv. 22) [Czechoslovak Spartakiads (Happy Tomorrows, Vol. 22)]. Praha, Academia 2016, 405 pages, ISBN 978-80-200-2537-1.

What was the cost of the Czechoslovak Spartakiads held regularly between 1955 and 1985? How many spectators and gymnasts participated in them? What did they eat and drink? And where were they accommodated? Was the birth rate in Czechoslovakia influenced by the five-year Spartakiad cycles? Did the "Spartakiadian murderer" really exist? Or more broadly – how did the communist powers manage to transform the Spartakiads into an effective instrument of their policy and ideology? And how did their position on the former Sokol movement's tradition of group gymnastics evolve over time? Responding to the above and many other related questions will be much easier now after the publication of Petr Roubal's book *Czechoslovak Spartakiads* by the Academia Publishing House in the series Happy Tomorrows. The book is a comprehensive and sound compendium on the history, organization and significance of these extraordinary events on a global scale.

As the author points out in the introduction, it was not his intent to cover all the issues that might possibly come to the reader's mind in relation to the phenomenon of the Spartakiads. Roubal planned to address "only" four themes in his book. This enabled him, on the one hand, to trace the evolution of the Spartakiads in their broader socio-political and cultural context and, on the other, to re-examine key

aspects of these issues, their essence as well as influences on them. Roubal focused on four essential questions: What was the origin of the Spartakiads? What was their visual message? How were they organized? How did the public respond to them?

This scheme was also reflected in the structure of the work. The core text of the book (excluding the introduction, conclusion and footnotes) is conceived as four parts, despite being divided into five chapters: "Genealogy of the Spartakiads," "Symbolism of the first Spartakiad in 1955," "Symbolism of the 'Normalization' Spartakiads," "Organization of the Spartakiads," and "Society and the Spartakiads." In order to respond to the second question above regarding the Spartakiads' visual legacy – so diametrically different in the 1950s and the "normalization" era – the author had to research and analyze these two periods separately, consequently describing them in two separate chapters.

This structure fully corresponds to the author's aims, allowing him to classify and systematize his rich material, while remaining clear and consistent (with the possible exception of the chapters on the symbolism of the Spartakiads, in which the announced chronological framework is not strictly followed). The first three chapters, in which Roubal thematically draws on his previously published studies and expands on them, constitute the strongest part of the book. The opening chapter on the genesis of the Spartakiads accounts for approximately one third of the book's core text, and the two chapters on symbolism together occupy about the same space (with the chapter on the "normalization" period being longer). The chapter on the organization of the Spartakiads is somewhat shorter (about one quarter of the core text), and the least attention (one might add disproportionately little attention, since this chapter covers about one tenth of the core text) is devoted to the response of society to the Spartakiads and the reflection on them.

A common theme of the first three chapters of *Czechoslovak Spartakiads* is the history of a specific form of social communication using the symbolism of the body and its movement. The author presents readers with a unique visual-political strategy aimed at creating an image of a single collective body (nation, people, society in general) by using a gathering of individual bodies, publicly performing synchronized gymnastics. In the first chapter, Roubal traces the roots of the Spartakiad tradition back to ancient times. It is, however, modern age theories of "body politics" which define the relation between the human body and power that he sees as pivotal to this tradition. He then finds direct inspiration for the initial stages of the Spartakiad tradition in the emerging emancipation movements of the 19th century and in the way these movements visualized their aspirations for an ideal national collective. His focus is on the German Turner movement, and especially on the Czech Sokol movement, which was inspired by the former, yet also formed in opposition to it (for example in contrast to the Turner movement, it emphasized, with reference to ancient ideal, the aesthetics of gymnastic performance). Roubal follows its development, looking primarily at the organization, practice and symbolism of the *Sokol Slets* (Sokol movement festivals), which came to be labelled "mysteries of democracy" in interwar Czechoslovakia. He also draws attention to the rival interwar Olympic Games and Worker Spartakiads, which were organized

by left-wing parties so as to illustrate the communists' position towards the Sokol movement in the postwar period. This position evolved from efforts to take over the Sokol movement and use it, through its "athletization" and sovietization project, to return to traditional mass gymnastic performances. In this context, Roubal describes the last Sokol Slet held in 1948 as a battlefield between the Sokol movement and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which, as soon as it seized power in the February coup, sought its own ritual pattern in order to suppress the content of the Sokol movement and replace it with a Soviet model and socialist interpretation.

In the second part of the book, the author discusses the symbolism of the first Spartakiad held in 1955, and, for the sake of completeness, though to a lesser extent, also the second Spartakiad held in 1960 – two events according to Roubal significantly influenced by the style of socialist realism. Following a detailed analysis of individual performances at the Prague Strahov stadium, the author draws two key metaphors for these early rituals and describes the principles of their organization. First is a *metaphor of a mosaic*, in the ideological context of which the performing social, professional, age or gender groups, arbitrarily and unambiguously defined by the central power, lacked any significance in themselves but acquired it – just like the individual pebbles of a mosaic – only as parts of a bigger, perfectly organized whole (people, socialist society, etc.). This corresponds to the second *metaphor of mechanism*, which views the human body as an instrument with certain attributes and symbols, and society as a complex of mechanical elements – human components. Roubal also draws attention to the displays of social engineering strategies in the Spartakiad parades. He shows, on the one hand, how the communist government sought radical social change and the creation of "a new man," and, on the other, how paradoxical tensions and conflicts in the semiotic world of socialism impaired its effectiveness and influence and led to a pragmatic reformulation of the Spartakiad principles.

In the third section – after briefly outlining "the first truly post-Stalinist," interim and experimental Spartakiad in 1965 and the circumstances under which the Spartakiad of 1970 was cancelled – Roubal delves into the symbolism of the Spartakiads "with a human face," that is, the three consecutive Spartakiads held during the period of "normalization" in 1975, 1980 and 1985. He writes about the major changes in the programme and organization, metaphor of human body movement, modernization of gymnastics, and primarily about the transformation of the symbolism of the Spartakiad performances. With all of this he illustrates the pragmatic, if not outright cynical, shift from the principles that had governed the previous Spartakiads, towards a new concept and programmatic, propagandistic use of the Spartakiads. This entailed a transition from (and return to) the metaphor of a mosaic towards the *concept of social coherence* and from the metaphor of mechanism towards a *metaphor of an organism*, that is, principles that had been already applied at Sokol Slets. Roubal recounts in general terms the change in attitude towards the Sokol movement, which the communist regime representatives finally acknowledged (though under the condition of permanent ideological redefinition) as part of a modern national tradition and newly used for the purposes

of the "normalization" Spartakiads. In this context, he also remarks on the return to the Sokol concept of "emancipation through segregation," which, as part of the "normalization" gender engineering that accented differences between genders, became a basic organizational principle of the Spartakiad ritual.

Roubal's analyses result in a synthetic description of the Spartakiad model, which developed at the beginning of the 1970s and remained virtually unchanged until the last Spartakiad. A certain teleology can be traced in his conclusions, which stated that during the "normalization" the Spartakiads represented a goal, a completion and the creation of a certain alchemic formula, whereas previous Spartakiads were merely studies, attempts and a series of mistakes made in the process of work. The "normalization" model reflected the Communist Party's feeling of lacking legitimacy as well as their fear of any change or innovation. However, according to Roubal, it was also a conscious choice by the regime. By using proven symbolic and propagandistic patterns and fixed ways of communication, the ruling elites strongly conveyed the basic message of peace and social order stability, which were to provide space for the free realization of family and personal values. Roubal also highlights the gradual, often profound, albeit concealed, sociocultural changes in Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and 1980s, which reflected the global trends of social, demographic and technological modernization.

The next part of the work looks into different aspects of the organization of the Spartakiads, which are presented in this book as the biggest and, in terms of organization, the most challenging, yet also the most successful, logistic project of state socialism in Czechoslovakia. Here, Roubal draws on the characteristics of the expert discourse on the Spartakiads – both "technical" and "scientific" – which appeared in different expert discussions on the issues of gymnastic practice, aesthetic concepts and organizational preconditions at universities, scientific conferences or in publications. This was later reflected in the formulation of official strategies and principles of the Spartakiads. The organizational structure of the "normalization" Spartakiads that Roubal describes might seem ironic if state centralism is taken into account. At the top of the organizational structure stood the Czechoslovak Union of Physical Education and Sports, along with the temporary staff for every consecutive Spartakiad; however, no single, permanent institution was responsible for the coordination and continuity of the Spartakiads. Roubal describes a step-by-step timeline of the Spartakiad five-year plan and how it looked in practice – first, ideological and gymnastic preparations were carried out from local to central level, followed by the organization of the all-nation cycle of Spartakiad performances, culminating with festivities in Prague. In this chapter, the reader will learn, for example, about the transporting of the Spartakiad participants, their accommodation and catering conditions, and the official decrees regulating their stay in the capital. The layout of the Strahov stadium, which the author describes in detail, not only made it possible to maintain discipline among the participants, but also embodied the Spartakiad mythology and provided space for ritual transgression.

At the end of the chapter, Roubal analyzes the budget of the Spartakiads (obtaining accurate data was difficult because financing came from different sources).

However, he views it through the lenses of moral economy, rather than any market category or mechanism. From this perspective, strictly financial calculations were secondary and – in the case of an event of such importance for the communist governments – seemed neither feasible nor desirable. The author reaches the conclusion that Spartakiads were relatively "cheap" spectacles and tools of the communist regime (even if only because of the tens of thousands of unpaid participants). Still, in this context, the "price" was something completely different. The ritual was a gift from the government to the people, who accepted it with gratitude and assisted in its preparations, but lacked the freedom to decline it. However, in a similar way, the regime lacked the freedom to abandon the role of the "donor" and to cancel the Spartakiads, even if they became economically unprofitable.

In the last section, Roubal describes the attitudes of Czechoslovak society towards the Spartakiads. These ranged from outright opposition (a phenomenon that Roubal says was only marginal and difficult to capture), to different kinds of passive resistance as "a weapon of the weak" (this included ignoring or avoiding participation in Spartakiads, and also ridiculing them, as in the works of film director Jan Švankmajer or songwriter Jaromír Nohavica), and total acceptance (the author says it is virtually impossible to measure the extent of this attitude, yet he finds it fundamental in order to assess the more general attitude of society towards the socialist system, a problem that appears to him to be ahistorical). Roubal pays special attention to the different ways through which the society adapted, appropriated and hybridized the "ritual framework" of the Spartakiads, offered to them by government, to their own needs. In this context, he writes about "the consumption of the Spartakiads" by the participants and different "trade-off" tactics with the regime. For Roubal, the most interesting attitude is active participation in and enthusiastic acceptance of the Spartakiads, which he feels cannot be seen merely as a result of long-term propagandist activity. He sees these attitudes as a confirmation that for some people, regardless their other motives, participation in the Spartakiads could have been a profound experience and a ritual worthy of their sincere involvement.

The conclusion covers several pages and plays an important part in the book's structure. With incisive strokes of his pen, Roubal first portrays the end of the 1980s, when the squares and streets in Czechoslovakia witnessed a completely new type of collective body – anti-communist political manifestations, which during the Velvet Revolution generated a sense of genuine unity, togetherness and civic *communitas*. He then explains how new social rituals, characteristic of a free market and liberal democratic society, were formed after 1989. Against this background, he describes the failed attempts to continue the tradition of the Spartakiads and to celebrate the Slets of the renewed Sokol movement – and more generally, also the end of mass public gymnastic displays as a specific cultural form.

The book *Czechoslovak Spartakiads* is the result of Roubal's lengthy research into this phenomenon, and his references include archival materials and an impressive amount of scholarly literature and essays. He draws not only on key archival

documents (from the collections of the National Archive, the Archive of the Security Services, the National Museum Archive, the Military History Archive and also from sources – for the first time used to such an extent – stored in the so far unorganized Archive of the Czech Sokol Movement) and printed materials (daily press and literature from the period), but also on film documents and photographic records (often still unpublished) and, importantly, oral testimonies given by former organizers and participants in the Spartakiads. The author cites approximately 200 scholarly works, mostly in Czech, English and German, and to a lesser extent also in French, Slovak and Russian. The scope of the author's research is impressive. The footnotes, without being a distraction, apart from their obvious documenting and complementing role, provide the reader with information on where to look for context or additional information on the issues discussed.

Fortunately, the author also avoids the pitfall of excessive theorizing in his book. As he admits in the introduction, it was not his intent to expand on widespread theories, since addressing a number of issues and delving into exhaustive discussions on some of the problems would not only negatively affect the publication's basic framework, but also require methodological and speculative skills beyond his competence. Despite this, Roubal – in slightly coquettish contrast to his own assertion – touches on a number of concepts and theories, some of them very unorthodox in the context of the theme researched. To give an example, he shields himself – albeit not uncritically – on the one hand, with the classic concept of the social contract (referring back to Thomas Hobbes) and Michel Foucault's theories of biopower and body politics, and, on the other hand, with the theories of modern cultural anthropology that are essential for his interpretation of Spartakiads, such as the concepts of Mary Douglas and Victor Turner, which interpret the human body as a potential metaphor of national or political community. Roubal draws on research into Soviet rituals (Rolf Malte, Karen Petrone, Christel Lane), the tradition of Turnfests (for example, Volker Rodekamp) or the role of sport in the German Democratic Republic (Molly Wilkinson Johnson). He also adopts Clifford Geertz's already classic concept of ritual, as well as the modern concept of moral economy, applying both to the conditions of Czechoslovak socialism. One wonders whether any interesting findings might have been brought into this interpretation of the Spartakiads (and, if so, what they would be) by the modern theoretical concepts focusing on affection-driven behaviour (for example in the works of the literary historian Rei Terada), which investigate, among other things, internalization and the spread of emotions in the context of phenomena such as a sense of togetherness, mass behaviour and collective body.

A meticulously documented factual account and erudite references (though they are limited, in line with the author's intent) to various theoretical concepts lie at the core of Roubal's scholarly work. Together these form a competent, universal and inspiring monograph on the phenomenon of the Spartakiads. The publication is concrete, compact and concise, as well as logically structured. The author presents his arguments with discipline, avoiding uninformative or repetitive passages. Roubal writes in clear, intelligible and vivid language, which illustrates his keen

interest in the research theme. At times, this may create the impression that one is reading an interesting historical novel, with an intriguing plot and elements of suspense, a colourful political, social, cultural and moral background, strong protagonists (both individual, such as Miroslav Tyrš, and collective, such as members of the Sokol movement or the communist governments) and interesting digressions from the main subject (e.g., the legend of the "Spartakiad murderer" or the fate of the writer František Kožík, whose poetry and prose accompanied all the Spartakiads). There are also several recurring themes that firmly and consistently tie the whole narrative together, such as the issue of the continuity and discontinuity of the Spartakiads (on the organizational, personal, ideological or symbolic levels) and the Sokol movement tradition or gender engineering, which was to a greater or lesser extent reflected in the form of the gymnastic displays. There is not a large amount of photographic material accompanying the written narrative, but it is carefully selected and valuable.

As a historian, Roubal maintains a necessary distance and objectivity; yet more than once the research theme provides him an opportunity to display a sense of humour. An example of this is when he describes the difficulties encountered when the Soviet flag, which had always been raised at the stadium, is replaced by an ordinary red flag, which was not associated with any anthem that could be played. Elsewhere he points with irony to the lack of originality in the mottos of the consecutive "normalization" Spartakiads ("For Peace, for Socialism," "For Peace – for Socialism" and "For Socialism – for Peace") or remarks aptly on the effect of the ritual on its creator and "priest," the then Czechoslovak president Gustav Husák, who was moved to tears during a performance by parents and children.

Apart from the occasional use of irony, a certain air of nostalgia for the Spartakiads is also increasingly evident in Roubal's text. This is particularly obvious in the closing section of the book, in which, availing himself of the words of the Czech writer Ludvík Vaculík, the author demonstrates his appreciation of the tradition of the Sokol Slets and Spartakiads, perceiving them jointly as a happy cultural heritage, even if unused after 1989. Roubal looks at the Spartakiads through the lenses of the present era, which is characterized, according to him, by a plethora of rituals of mass entertainment, as well as by a lack of social and political rituals that would be both official and emotionally engaging – an era offering, instead of unified aesthetic, disciplined and elegant coordination of bodies in joint gymnastic performances, an aesthetic of an individual, idealized and sexualized body of advertising. Seen from this perspective, the Spartakiads appear to be a solid and optimal alternative of a consensual equilibrium between the public and the private, an alternative that could theoretically have been born in any political system and which fills a space in the public sphere that could have been occupied by far worse forms of collective physical presentation.

However, perhaps the greatest merit of Roubal's book is that the author avoids quick and easy judgements, shows the complexity of the processes he describes and reveals the contradictory character of some phenomena related to the Spartakiads. This includes, for example, a polemic with the contention of modern historiography

that in order to preserve its organizational and program independence, the Sokol movement refused financial support from the state and city budgets during the preparations of the 1948 Slet (despite having previously received hundreds of millions of Czechoslovak crowns from these budgets). Pointing to some ambiguities related to this decision, Roubal sees it in the broader context of the ideological-political struggle taking place in Czechoslovakia after the seizure of power by the communists. Similarly, the author challenges a common interpretation of socialist realism as a dogmatic, all-embracing aesthetic, by showing that during the organization of the first Spartakiads, it was applied in a purely pragmatic manner and subordinated to other principles, which were of central importance to the communist regime (for example, the principle of gender segregation).

Roubal's expanded analyses result in a portrayal of the Janus-like character of the mass displays at Strahov stadium and the Spartakiads in general. The author describes, for example, how the ambivalent effect of the "autonomous field of ritual" during the Spartakiads weaved both representatives of the power and participants – performers and spectators on the stands – into a net of mutual dependence. He also points out that the ritual of the Spartakiads – despite the semblance of modernity and inspiration in innovative trends in world gymnastics – drew its existence from a logic typical of pre-modern, traditional or even rural societies. With reference to the aesthetic and artistic representation of the Spartakiad performances, he mentions specific contradictions and ambiguities characteristic of them. Using the opposing categories of anachronism and avant-garde, he points, on the one hand, to the durability of some traditional (even obsolete) solutions and means of expression, and, on the other, to unconventional performances and ideas, such as the plan to organize gymnasts in the stadium according to Piet Mondrian's abstract paintings. This idea, planned for the Spartakiad of 1990, was never put into practice.

The author also points out the ambivalent connection of apparently antinomic elements in the scenarios of the Spartakiads, but stresses that this was dictated by propaganda objectives. He draws attention not only to constantly present dialect affinity of socialist realism and modernist leftist avant-garde in the Spartakiads (as highlighted by German culturologist Boris Groys),[1] but also gives examples of conflict-free transition from socialist realism to pop-culture (for example, the phenomenal success of the pop song "Poupata" ("Flower Buds") in the performance of the junior women in 1985) or from simple gymnastics to sophisticated "higher" culture (the use of classical themes of the Czech composer Bedřich Smetana during the 1975 Spartakiad and *Synfonietta* of Leoš Janáček during the 1980 Spartakiad).[2]

1 See GROYS, Boris: *Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin: Rozpolcená kultura v Sovětském svazu. Komunistické postscriptum* [Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin: Divided culture in the Soviet Union. The communist postscript]. Praha, Akademie výtvarného umění v Praze 2010.

2 Although Roubal makes no reference to it, the creators of the Spartakiad may have cleverly and premeditatedly built on the success of the Czech emigrant Jiří Kylián's ballet in the Netherlands Dance Theatre two years earlier, which used *Symfonietta* as a musical accompaniment.

In his research into the symbolism and organization of the Spartakiads, Roubal uses as a point of reference specific rituals taking place in the Soviet Union. He also refers to the activities of the Sokol movement in the United States and to the export of Spartakiad know-how to friendly foreign states (he mentions, for example, the author of Spartakiad musical pieces, Ivo Fibiger, who founded a tradition of collective gymnastic displays in Algeria). In principle, the perspective he adopts in his book is solely "occidental," or rather Eurocentric with a focus on Central Europe, particularly (and almost entirely) Czechoslovakia and Germany. Roubal applies this approach mainly when writing about the development and history of the Slets and Spartakiads against the background of modern Central European history.

Unfortunately, he also abandons any attempt to provide broader context for the period by comparing the Spartakiads with similar political rituals in other countries or on other continents. Therefore, his account includes no mention of postwar Turnfests in Leipzig or Youth Day celebrations in Belgrade, which resembled Czechoslovak Spartakiads. Also, not mentioned are other events which – despite their different character – were also called Spartakiads (the Warsaw Pact countries took turns in organizing summer and winter "Spartakiads" for friendly armies, and Youth Spartakiads were also held in the Polish People's Republic). There were also other mass rituals of political character held in the Eastern Bloc countries, celebrated jointly (May Day parades or the Peace Race cycling event) or locally (harvest suppers or religious gatherings in Poland). Due to this lack of a broader international perspective, the reader might not fully grasp the exceptional character of the Czechoslovak Spartakiads – a phenomenon which was unique in its form and had no international equivalent.

Another weakness in Roubal's monograph is his failure to describe the Spartakiads on local level in more detail. He also focuses his attention on gymnastic performances, omitting almost completely other sporting or tourist events organized under the umbrella of the Spartakiads, as well as the final parades of the Spartakiad participants through the streets of Prague and other cities. However, including these additional matters, as well as others that were only hinted at by the author – and developing on them – would, of course, considerably increase the size of the book at the expense of its compactness, so much so that it might perhaps even have to be divided into two volumes.

Petr Roubal refers to Thomas Hobbes's treatise *Leviathan* from the second half of the 17th century, in which the political metaphor of a collective body of state appears for the first time. Roubal outlines another incarnation of this metaphor – with Turnfests, Sokol Slets and communist Spartakiads – when describing the image of a collective body as an instrument of power and political communication under the changing historical conditions of the past two centuries. In this context, postwar Czechoslovakia appears to be a specific form of a *Leviathan* state that fully controls public life and deprives its subjects of their freedom and sovereignty. At the same time, it ensures their security and provides their basic needs while not interfering in their private lives. Roubal emphatically states that from his perspective the

Czechoslovak communist regime was not totalitarian. The total political ambition of the power circles is one thing; the socio-political reality that failed to realize these ambitions is something different. He builds his arguments on the analysis of the many facets of the Spartakiads. He also wonders rhetorically to what extent the Spartakiads represented a specifically communist ritual or whether they were something that could have developed in any political system.

The author often mentions how far the Spartakiads reached into the daily life of the Czechoslovak population and how this ritual served the "politicization of the private." He also points out the social success of the Spartakiads (unlike the May Day parades, for example), an issue not yet fully explored. He claims that the Spartakiads not only compensated for the absence of other institutions and rituals of social life under conditions of a specific political and epistemological vacuum, but were also very soon regarded as popular festivals. Roubal writes that – unlike other communist rituals – the Spartakiads left the participants and actors enough space for self-realization, since the communist regime only set the ritual framework, which the participants could, to a certain extent, fill with their own individual content. Society also found different ways of adapting the circumstances to its needs. This was particularly true with regard to the Spartakiads. *The privatization of the political* therefore began to outweigh *the politicization of the private* – the ritual ceased to serve only the representatives of power, and the power started to yield to the rules of the ritual.

One positive aspect of this pioneering view of the Spartakiads is undeniably that it challenges the demonized image of this ritual. Still, I feel that Roubal has not fully realized, or has perhaps trivialized, the rather treacherous and not so evident aspect of the effect of the ritual. He has consequently not reflected on the totalitarian essence of the communist regime in his conclusions. The author sees the Spartakiads as Bakhtin's carnival inversion of established values; he notes the different ways the participants appropriated the ritual, as well as the blurred borderlines of the ritual framework and the consensual character of its content. Yet he fails to see the much more complex processes hidden behind the Spartakiads and the fact that these processes still played an important role during the last Spartakiads, converting them into an extended arm of the totalitarization of society. The Spartakiads can also serve as an example of how people were subjected to "normal" (albeit festive), "routine," often trivial – and imperceptible – dose of indoctrination.

According to Roubal's narrative, in the world of *double reality*[3] of communist Czechoslovakia, the content of the Spartakiads set by government became seemingly secondary, while the motivation, the thoughts and the displays by the ritual participants became trivial. The author says that what went on in people's heads was unclear – what mattered was that they agreed to participate in the ritual and obeyed its rules, discipline and legibility. But it is not clear why Roubal does not

3 See LIEHM, Antonín J.: From Culture to Politics. In: SILNITSKY, Frantisek – SILNITSKY, Larisa – REYMAN, Karl (ed.): *Communism and Eastern Europe: A Collection of Essays.* New York, Karz 1979, p. 13.

go deeper and does not apply the concept of *imagined community,* which he sees in other respects as essential, to the "Spartakiads society." And why he raises no questions about the effect of Orwellian *doublethink*, such as what sense of self it created in the Spartakiad participants. How did their participation in the Spartakiads affect their sense of self-awareness and identity (including the ethical aspects of this)? In fact, the constituent features of the Spartakiads, as described by Roubal, fulfil the ambition of the communist powers to create "a new man." Ironically, the separation of the private and public (or political) in the Spartakiads, as described above, was perhaps their greatest achievement, resulting in a depoliticization of society and the complete destruction of any sense of civic awareness. Accepting the framework of the ritual and the privatization of the Spartakiads made the ritual stronger, not weaker. The participants in the ritual were robbed of their independence. Realizing the emptiness of the ceremony, their own impotence and lack of influence, they became demoralized. Aestheticization and idealization, which are closely related to the Spartakiads, also had an ethical dimension, because – as Roubal states – if something was attractive, it also had to be good. This, however, means a redefinition of beauty and goodness, and also the usurpation of the sphere of these "high values" by the communist power.

As a result, while society did not accept the official Spartakiad discourse and comply with its propaganda and rules of behaviour, it did become "contaminated" and indoctrinated by it on a subliminal level. Demoralization, oppression and "self-totalitarization"[4] of society were the result of more subversive processes – such as the restriction and control of social imagination, or misuse of collective images and symbols by separating them from their original values. This was accompanied by changing meanings and distorting attributes, separating concepts and emotions from the objects of thinking and feelings, and the negation of historical evolution and contexts. One example of the effects of controlling social imagination is the redefinition and transformation of the Sokol tradition as a source of national pride, meticulously described in the book. Ironically, all this could be seen as laying the groundwork for later when the population readily abandoned the outdated form of the Spartakiads in favour of a new pattern conforming to the free-trade system – a system that is equally void, yet reflects and satisfies the same Leviathan-like needs as the previous system.

Moreover, as I see it, a certain analogy can be established between, on the one hand, the way Roubal defines Spartakiads and their role in the power system and,

4 Roubal mentions (on p. 216) Václav Havel's definition of "normalization" as "timelessness," he makes, however, no general reference to his concept of "self-totalitarization" of the society, according to which the citizens drawn into the structures (including rituals) of the regime, start to consider them as a matter-of-course and inevitable, and through this involvement they help to create a general norm, exert pressure on other citizens and become thus tools of totalitarianism. (See HAVEL, Václav: Moc bezmocných [Power of the powerless]. In: IDEM: *Eseje a jiné texty z let 1970–1989: Dálkový výslech* (*Spisy*, sv. 4) [Essays and other texts from 1970–1989: Disturbing peace (Writings, Vol. 4)]. Ed. Jan Šulc. Praha, Torst 1999, pp. 241–249).

on the other, "newspeak" – a concept that combined pragmatic and ritual elements that also served the needs and practice of the existing political power, and furthermore sought immediate and maximum effect. Perceived in this way, the practice of the Czechoslovak Spartakiads would not contradict the totalitarian ambitions of the communist powers – on the contrary they would, as I see it, rather embody the totalitarian ideal under which ritualization is closely related to pragmatism[5] in order to achieve the maximum effect and general acceptance.

All the issues raised in this book review provide a solid base and a good starting point for further discussion and debate – and that is definitely positive! Despite the limits set by the author and the above-mentioned objections, Petr Roubal has produced an excellently written and a historically and ideologically comprehensive account of a phenomenon which reflects the socio-political history of Czechoslovakia and other Central European countries under Soviet rule. Furthermore, the book makes the reader eager to read more on these issues, possibly in a sequel to *Czechoslovak Spartakiads*.

The Czech version of this review, entitled Československý Leviathan*, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 24, Nos. 1–2 (2017), pp. 207–217.*

Translated by Blanka Medková

5 I am referring here to the concept of "newspeak" of Michał Głowiński as described in his work *Nowomowa po polsku* (Warszawa, Wydawnictwo PEN 1990, p. 8).

Review

A Family Colonized by the State?

On a Book about Family Policy in the Czech Lands in the Previous Century

Květa Jechová

RÁKOSNÍK, Jakub – ŠUSTROVÁ, Radka: Rodina v zájmu státu: Populační růst a instituce manželství v českých zemích 1918–1989 [Family in the interest of the state: Population growth and marriage in the Czech Lands 1918–1989]. Praha, Lidové noviny Publishing House 2016, 283 pages, ISBN 978-80-7422-378-5.

The book starts with the authors' explanation why they expanded the original objective of their research. Unlike the grant project, which monitored the evolution of family policy in the Czech Lands under totalitarian regimes (1939–1989), the new book covers the time from the birth of the Czechoslovak Republic until the demise of the communist regime (1918–1989). The authors believe that looking at a longer period of time helps capture and understand the continuity of social problems and the search for their alternative solutions in a better way. It should be noted that their goal was to show how the state increases its interventions into the private sphere through family policy.

The book is divided into three chapters. The first one, "(Un)controlled evolution of family policy," summarizes what happened during the seven decades covered by the book. The second one, "Organization of family care," deals with transformations of family policy institutions. The third one, "Expert discourse between ideology

and law," analyzes the discourse and legal standards and regulations to find an explanation of the changes referred to above.

One would expect a characterization of various forms of the state in the beginning of the story of state interventions into family policy. Indeed, one would expect a question whether there is any difference between family policy of a democratic country and that of a totalitarian or authoritarian one. The authors obviously did not consider such a difference important; as a matter of fact, they chose an unusual chronological perspective for their family policy account, merging the time of the democratic First Republic and the German Protectorate into just one period from 1918 to 1945. As a matter of fact, they believe that "the radical changes of political regimes in the country notwithstanding, there was a significant continuity in the populationist discourse, both at the personal level and at the level of opinions. We do not believe that the frequent perception of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia as a non-Czech period, in which any links to previous and subsequent periods are very difficult to find, is correct" (p. 9).

The authors are convinced that "history as a scientific discipline is not competent to judge what was 'good' or 'bad' in history, although it is often asked to do so. However, its methodological tools enable it to state, in a verifiable manner, 'what' happened, and also to try to explain 'why' it happened."[1]

However, by waiving an evaluation of the family policy of the democratic state and the totalitarian or authoritarian one, they do not distinguish between a pro-natalist policy the goal of which was self-preservation of the nation, and a populationist policy influenced by a master race ideology.[2] It was actually this ideology which co-determined family policy practices and projects in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. When explaining the populationist policy, historians should not forget to pay attention to how "racial hygiene" was implemented in the Czech Lands and how scientists participated in the German racial policy concept.[3]

In the first chapter, I miss a characterization of historical changes of eugenics as a professional term used in biology, anthropology, historical demography, and medicine, as a scientific concept, and as an ideological notion.[4] While eugenics is mentioned on several occasions in connection with the family policy concept in the subsequent sections of the book, they are, in the absence of an initial definition, incomprehensible or even misleading for the reader. If eugenics is perceived only

1 RÁKOSNÍK, Jakub – TOMEŠ, Igor, et al.: *Sociální stát v Československu: Právně-institucionální vývoj v letech 1918–1992* [Social state in Czechoslovakia: Legal and institutional developments between 1918 and 1992]. Praha, Auditorium 2013, p. 1. Radka Šustrová was a member of the team of authors of this collective monograph.

2 See PROCTOR, Robert N.: *Rasová hygiena: Lékařství v době nacismu* [Racial hygiene: Medicine under the Nazis]. Praha, Academia 2009.

3 The Law for the Protection of the Genetic Health of the German Nation, which the Reich had adopted in 1935, was in effect also on the territory of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia from 1941.

4 At that time, there were important "racial hygiene" experts lecturing at the German University in Prague.

as a way to improve the quality of the population, it is possible to agree with the authors' statement to the effect that "the issue of the quality of the population was found to be a permanent topic of debates of Czechoslovak sciences and politics throughout the period under scrutiny" (p. 120).[5]

Attempting to find an independent starting point, a detached view that would save them from ideological errors, the authors declare that they "tried to treat both Nazi family policy in the Protectorate and communist family policy after 1945 with due respect, as alternatives of a competitive model of social arrangement of industrial modernity, the fact they are hardly compatible with […] values of Central Europeans in the early 21st century notwithstanding" (p. 12). In my opinion, the effort to be "neutral" does not contribute to a better understanding of the issue: on the contrary, it obscures its substance.

Jakub Rákosník and Radka Šustrová have recorded a number of social benefits and measures taken in support of Czech children and mothers in the Protectorate; however, they did not mention systematic anthropometric measurements of school-children and other "medical examinations" the purpose of which was to evaluate the population from a racial viewpoint. They did not mention preparations for sorting out children to those suitable for Germanization, and others who were to be resettled in Eastern regions. German historian Detlef Brandes states that the outcome of the anthropometric assessments was satisfactory for Germans: 85 percent of children in the Czech population met Germanization criteria.[6] The authors of the reviewed book undervalued these aspects in the policy of the occupiers, claiming that "after the war, the Czechoslovak state proceeded from a banal conviction that Czech youths had been de-nationalized throughout the occupation" (p. 45). Would not it be appropriate to say that only the defeat of the occupiers prevented the demise of the Czech population as a nation?

There were two different ethnics living in the territory of the Protectorate, each of which had a different social structure, different family and reproduction behaviour patterns, and more or less opposite life perspectives and future projects. All these factors were reflected in different family policies.

The Germans, who had perceived their inclusion in the Greater German Reich in 1938 as a victory, soon became directly involved in the war and were affected by the induction of men into the military and losses on the battlefield. As to the Czech population, unemployment was over. On the contrary, needs of the war industry demanded total deployment of all people fit for work. Hundreds of thousands of people, including women, most of them young, were drafted for forced labour in Germany threatened by bombing raids.

Due to the decreasing unemployment rate, the number of marriages was going up, including those which had been postponed due to the economic crisis.

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5 On p. 120, the authors admit that the term "eugenics" is interpreted in several ways. However, they do not say which of the interpretations they have been working with.

6 See BRANDES, Detlef: *Češi pod německým protektorátem: 1945* [Czechs under German protectorate: 1945). Praha, Prostor 1999, pp. 281–285.

Between 1938 and 1939, the average marriage age of both men and women dropped by one year. The high marriage rate continued even in the period of the harshest repressions after the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich. The immediate interest in avoiding the *Totaleinsatz* in the Reich was stronger than worries about future political developments.

The higher marriage rate was also reflected in a higher number of childbirths. Initially, it was a compensation of childbirths postponed due to the economic crisis; a later rise, which reached its peak in 1943, is attributed to childbirths of younger women. It was this time that numerically strong generations of women born after the Great War were entering the highest fertility age. Milan Kučera, a renowned Czech demographer, noted: "It is somewhat paradoxical that the number of women with children and the average number of children in families increased at the hardest times for the Czech nation. The reason was not an increased desire of women to have children; as a matter of fact, having a child was a way to avoid forced labour in Germany."[7]

The first chapter of the book is concluded by a section titled "Acceleration of the population growth in the normalized society" (p. 59). The title is, as a matter of fact, misleading. Since 1963, Czechoslovakia introduced a number of economic and social measures in connection with political détente and preparations of economic reforms. Their objective was, *inter alia,* to improve the sector of services, increase the standard of living, provide more free time, and support families, but not to accelerate population growth. Due to the interruption of the reform process in August 1968, however, the measures took effect only after Husák's "normalization" regime had come into power, contributing to its legitimization.[8]

The evolution of the organization of family care presented in the second part of the book is rather difficult to find one's way through. The reason is that the political framework is a merger of multiple types of state entities (the First Republic and Second Republic, and the Protectorate) into a single entity. Such a view is perhaps consistent with Jakub Rákosník's legal perspective, as social care legislation invariably took a long time to adapt itself to dramatic upheavals of the political system. Nevertheless, real life was not governed by regulations alone, and reacted very sensitively to political turbulences.

I miss a positive evaluation of the First Republic's family policy in the text. The new state, born in the heart of the war-torn continent of Europe on a principle of equality of all its citizens, granted equal rights to women, which would certainly merit some recognition. The limits defined by the structure of the population, declining natality due to demographic changes, population losses caused by emigration – all of them were already recorded and taken note of a long time ago.[9]

7 See KUČERA, Milan: Obyvatelstvo českých zemí ve 20. století [Population of the Czech Lands in the 20th century]. In: FIALOVÁ, Ludmila – HORSKÁ, Pavla – KUČERA, Milan – MAUR, Eduard – MUSIL, Jiří – STLOUKAL, Milan: *Dějiny obyvatelstva českých zemí* [History of the population of the Czech Lands]. Praha, Mladá fronta 1996, p. 333.

8 This gave rise to a paradox known as "Husák's children."

9 MUSIL, Jiří: Česká společnost 1918–1938 [Czech society 1918–1938]. In: *Ibid.*, p. 282.

Although the newborn state was not using the term "family policy" in its social measures, it can be proved that the steps it took in the fields of medical care, education, and support in emergencies were benefitting families. The newborn Czechoslovak state did not have any public institutions, only volunteer associations, at the time it was formed. However, the Czechoslovak Red Cross with Alice Masaryková as its president, the League against Tuberculosis founded under the auspices of and supported by President Masaryk, and others did a lot of good in the field of medical education, reduction of alcoholism, and care of the young generation from the early 1920s.[10] Health care became a part of patriotism. These facts should not be overlooked.

The disintegration of Czechoslovakia meant the demise of political freedom, as well as depression and hopelessness for Czech people. After the secession of the border regions where an eighth of the Czech nation had hitherto lived, the country was affected by the first mass migration of the 20th century in the autumn of 1938. Hundreds of thousands of Czechs arrived to what remained of Czechoslovakia in just a few months. It was necessary to feed, house, and employ them. Educated and qualified married women were the first victims of the changes in the labour market. Government Decrees No. 379/1938 and No. 390/1938 immediately expelled them from state and public service jobs.

In the authors' opinion, the "hitherto low political interest in family policy combined with constitutional and legal changes accompanying the establishment of the Protectorate made some political circles optimistic, as they believed 'the nation may be getting a new chance.'" The reality supported by statistical data on mortality and natality clearly showed that "first and foremost, the nation is reborn and rejuvenated in the family" (p. 32). The effort to protect national traditions was thus embodied in an increased interest in Czech families. Sociologist and economist Marko Weirich believed, like many other experts, physicians, and demographers, in the possibility and necessity of a system change (in his case also manifested by a leaning toward the estate model). New elites of the Protectorate were supposed to systematically fulfil principles of a pro-natality policy; family policy was expected to replace population policy. National Partnership thus planned a revision of marriage-related legislation and the strengthening of the family. In this respect, the inspiration of Czech elites by the political theory and practices of National Socialism is easy to distinguish.

The reconstruction of the state (the Third Republic) was to be a return to the democratic system. Support of families was considered to be one of the key tasks of the entire society. At the first postwar convention of Czechoslovak women, President Edvard Beneš used the following words to emphasize its importance: "The family is

10 The Women Houses in Prague's quarter of Smíchov, which were ceremonially opened by Alice Masaryková in 1932, were not intended for single mothers with children, as the authors claim (p. 105). They were built as a prestigious residence for emancipated, independent women.

the most fundamental and most organic social unit. Its importance will continue to increase as the social structure of today's society will change toward collectivism."[11]

The authors characterize the evolution of medical and social care institutions after the war by a slogan "United care – better care" (p. 96). They note the development of health prevention due to nationalization of social insurance, construction of birth centres, and gradual decrease of the infant mortality rate. However, they feel compelled to warn the readers that "the equalitarian policy practiced in obstetrics was reflecting equalizing tendencies present in postwar society and was expected to create new conditions for all expectant mothers. In this respect, it suited communist ideology, although the practices implemented at that time were focusing mainly on medical standards and avoided direct politicization" (p. 99). I must admit that I do not understand this comment. Was the medical care in obstetrics supposed to be differentiated in any way? And if so, according to which principles?

Act No. 265/1949 Coll., on family law, which the National Assembly adopted on 7 December 1949, was not fully appreciated at the time of its enactment, and remains underrated in the reviewed book as well.[12] It laid down an equal status for men and women in family and in society, an equal access to education and all offices and ranks, and eliminated any discrimination of children based on their origin. The act singled out family-related legislation from civil law in Czechoslovakia; this gave rise to a new legislation segment of family law. Finally, a universal legal act with nation-wide validity and effect was adopted.

Czechoslovakia's first years after the war were successful from the viewpoint of population increments. The high marriage rate was supported not only by full employment, but also the *de facto* demise of the institute of dowry and, first and foremost, the decrease of the legal age limit to 18 years. As historical demography data suggests, the age at which families were started was always a very sensitive birth rate regulator. However, the decision to decrease the legal age limit, which took effect in early 1950, was not primarily motivated by population criteria, but rather by efforts to win political support of younger and more radical voters.[13]

When considering issues of the family or population policy, the Czechoslovak communist regime cannot be suspected of being motivated solely by the necessity of ensuring enough labour sources. The statement claiming that family policy is one of the characteristics of totalitarian regimes and nationalist ideologies is not supported by evidence (p. 141). However, as noted by Alena Heitlingerová,

11 Sjezd čs. žen [Convention of Czechoslovak women]. In: *Československá žena*, Vol. 2, No. 46 (1946), p. 2.

12 The act in question was not a product of the "Two-Year Legislative Period." From the 1930s, Milada Horáková had been involved in its preparation. As a matter of fact, it was Milada Horáková, the then Secretary of the Committee for the Reform of Family Law, who drafted an articulated version of the document. At the time the law was enacted, she had already been in prison, awaiting the process which ended in June 1950 by a capital sentence for her.

13 It is interesting to note that, in the critical atmosphere of the 1960s, the decrease of the legal age limit was questioned not only by experts, but also by young people – respondents in a survey which was organized by the *Mladá Fronta* and *Smena* dailies in the summer of 1967.

population policies of socialist and capitalist states were fundamentally different in this respect. If there was not enough labour in advanced capitalist states, the lack could be easily eliminated by immigration from other countries, and the only concern was how to regulate the flow of immigrants. However, any immigration to socialist countries in the second half of the 20th century lacked political and economic prerequisites.[14]

In the discourse of experts (demographers, economists, etc.), the opinion claiming that the population optimum must be seen in the dynamism of reproduction prevailed. A comprehensive solution of the demographic problem must pursue a balanced (or at least manageable) share of economically active people in the population. The tool that was expected to achieve the above goal was permanent support of families with children.

Substitute family care mentioned in the historical overview (p. 78) underwent a significant renaissance in the free climate of the Prague Spring in 1968. SOS children's villages stemmed from citizens' initiatives, independently on the state, as a reaction to the publication of information about unsatisfactory conditions in foster homes. However, they started operating only at the time of the so-called "normalization," in the early 1970s (in Dubí at Carlsbad and in Chvalčov, off Brno). The authors should not have omitted this successful substitute family care option in their book.

The book by Jakub Rákosník and Radka Šustrová relies on an extensive list of specialized period publications as well as works that have not yet been published. These include statistical data analyses, conceptual proposals of economists, physicians or demographers, and reports on sociological surveys. Seven hundred editorial notes will direct the reader toward further study. It is a pity that some important concepts (such as that of Karel Anderle of 1918, or of František Pachner dating to 1939, and others) have not been presented in their entirety; moreover, they are not clearly distinguished from the authors' comments. It would have been definitely useful to mention whether and how a specific concept influenced practical politics. For example, is it correct to assume that the activist attitude of Marko Weirich at the time of the Second Republic brought him among collaborationists during the Protectorate?

The final part of the third chapter presents a number of period sociological surveys and expert studies the subjects of which comment on the employment of women in socialist Czechoslovakia. A contemporary witness can hardly be convinced by a statement that "the socialist state's project of the emancipation of women through employment was largely unsuccessful. Instead of the proclaimed liberation of women, a practice of a double, or treble load set in" (p. 204). The judgment ignores positive results of long-term efforts to harmonize women's employment and maternal role, such as the extended maternity leave, parental allowance, part-time

14 See HEITLINGER, Alena: *Reproduction, Medicine and the Socialist State.* London – Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 1987.

employment contracts and other social benefits which continue to be admired even abroad.

The authors also believe (or do they take over a feminist attitude?) that the high level of protection of women under labour law, guaranteed in 1965 by the Labour Code, is now an obstacle of equal employment opportunities for women. In my opinion, reviewing or softening the guarantees which labour law offers to women would be short-sighted. Although protective regulations may hamper the professional career of some women, they are a fundamental guarantee of safety or certainty for women in other professions. The population of women is not homogeneous, and the portfolio of women's jobs is increasingly richer and more differentiated. It was obvious, as early as at the end of the real socialism period, that families should be offered alternative solutions. Social support of motherhood should not be an obstacle to women's education and professional careers, and vice versa. One of the important traditions of our country is that women here have had equal access to education and employment for nearly 100 years. Now the fifth generation of women is looking for and finding suitable strategies of combining motherhood and professional careers. None of the previous social measures supporting the harmonization of motherhood and women's employment should be lost.

In this respect, it would be useful to mention two functions which were guaranteed by the state in the "real socialism" era and which facilitated the care of children in families: preventive medical examinations of schoolchildren and advance alimonies. Both of them are sorely missed today. As if by a miracle, the achievement in which we hold the first place in the world has been preserved – school meals. School canteens were a product of initiatives of municipalities and were established early after the war; from 1953 they have been in the purview of the Ministry of Education and they are a benefit for employed mothers and all children, their deficiencies and shortcomings notwithstanding.

The whole text of the reviewed book is carried in a slightly polemic tone and the book's photographic documentation is provoking. The reader is taken aback by a photograph on the book's cover, on which a smiling Nazi is lifting a handsome little boy.

The family policy study written by Jakub Rákosník and Radka Šustrová illustrates the growth of state interventions into the private sphere in the previous century. It was national states which took care of families throughout the 70 years after the end of the Great War until the end of the Cold War. However, having read the book I doubt whether such interventions are dangerous.

Since the demise of the "real socialism," an area of activities related to the functioning of families remained outside the purview of state authorities. However, it is not and cannot be completely taken care of by private enterprising. It would be advisable to define family policy segments that demand public support.

Are our families not endangered from a different direction today? Today's globalization processes are pushing state governments to privatize everything under the pretext of efficiency (but in fact in the interest of private profits), to dismantle

everything that has hitherto benefitted the comfort and improvement of the whole society, including medical care systems, public transport, or educational institutions.

Having read the *Family in the interest of the state,* I have more doubts than things I can be sure about. Whom is the book intended for? I guess it is intended for a broad cultural audience as a challenge. An appeal to hold discussions about the values, traditions, and interests of the nation. About the meaning and function of our own state.

The Czech version of this review, entitled Krajina na rozhraní*, was originally published in Soudobé dějiny, Vol. 23, No. 4 (2016), pp.763–770.*

Translated by Jiří Mareš

Summaries

Essays and Articles

Czechs Give Asylum to US Family
A "Different" Jazz Ambassador Herbert Ward through the Lenses of FBI Reports

Petr Vidomus

Czechoslovakia of the mid-1950s was a culturally isolated country where the Western gains were regarded suspiciously, to say the least. The regime's attitude toward jazz was softening very slowly, and many jazz activities bordered on illegality. In this situation, Herbert Ward came to Prague (1954), one of a few American Communists, who asked for political asylum in Czechoslovakia and became involved in the local music scene. Although an almost unknown jazz bassist to the general public (though he played with Sidney Bechet, Willie "Lion" Smith, Bud Freeman, etc.), in the late 1950s, however, he contributed significantly to the rehabilitation of jazz in communist Czechoslovakia. Ward became an invaluable asset for Czech jazz fans, and one of their tools in negotiating the position of their favourite genre with respect to the doctrine of Socialist Realism. Herbert Ward was not a part of the well-known cultural diplomacy projects arranged by the US Department of State (described by Von Eschen, 2004). His political activities were monitored by the FBI and, as a political refugee, he naturally took part in Czechoslovakia's communist propaganda. As a "jazz curiosity," however, he became part of the 1960s popular culture and the living myth of Czech jazz fans and musicians. Reconstructed from previously unknown archival records (FBI, State Security Archives), my paper portrays Ward's political activities and his ambiguous identity of a jazz musician *and* a young American communist.

"It Was the Poles" or How Emanuel Ringelblum Was Instrumentalized by Expellees in West Germany
On the History of the Book Ghetto Warschau: Tagebücher aus dem Chaos

Stephan Stach

The article investigates how the Holocaust distorted and exploited in Cold War debates on the example of genesis and reception of the book *Ghetto Warschau. Tagebücher aus dem Chaos* [Warsaw Ghetto: Diaries from Chaos]. The book is a translation of the essay *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w czasie drugiej wojny światowej* [Polish-Jewish relations during the Second World War], written by the Jewish historian and creator of the underground archive of the Warsaw Ghetto Emanuel Ringelblum while hiding from the German Occupiers in Warsaw in 1944. Ringelblum addressed his essay to the Polish reader discussing the relation of Christian Poles and Polish Jews under German occupation based on his own experience and the material he had collected. It was originally published in several portions in the Bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute, an early Holocaust Research Center based in Warsaw. The German translation was based on this publication and published in summer 1967 in a Stuttgart-based publishing house. However, the new title, introduced by its German editors, suggested it was Ringelblum's diary. Above that the blurb and many footnotes highlighted the role of Poles as perpetrators in the Holocaust, while minimizing that of Germans. As the article shows, the book was prepared by the *Göttinger Arbeitskreis ostdeutscher Wissenschaftler* [Göttingen Working Group of Eastern German Scholars], a Think Tank with close ties to the German expellee community, campaigning for a revision of the Polish western border. Göttinger Arbeitskries used the book and earlier on excerpts of Ringelblum's text for a smear-campaign in the West-German expellee press. Through the biased presentation and distorted context of the work these former *Ostforschers* sought to portrait Poles as eternal anti-Semites and the factual perpetrators of the mass murder of Polish and European Jews following their anti-Polish agenda.

Polish nationalist within the ruling Polish United Workers Party in turn exploited the book and the campaign based on it, which coincided with the anti-Semitic campaign in Poland. Though the Institute was not involved in the publication of the German book, the Polish national communists accused it of supporting German revisionism and "Zionists" abroad in their slander of Poland.

With Chinese Communists against the Czechoslovak "Normalization" Regime
Exile Listy Group and Its Search for Political Allies against Soviet Power Domination in Central Europe

Petr Orság

Some reform Communists who went into exile after the Soviet-led military intervention in Czechoslovakia, in August 1968, began to work in the Listy group led by Jiří Pelikán (1923–1999), a former Director of Czechoslovak Television, the publisher of the Rome-based exile bimonthly *Listy*, and, later, a Member of the European Parliament. In the search for political allies against Husák's regime of 'normalization' (the return to hard-line Communist rule), they tried to establish contact mainly with influential representatives of the West European Left. This article, however, examines an area of their involvement in exile, which has previously not received attention – namely, their efforts to develop contacts with Chinese Communists who in the period after August 1968 were vociferously speaking out at international forums and criticizing Soviet expansionism. The author demonstrates how the exiles tried to take advantage of this in order to strengthen their positions as members of the foreign socialist opposition to the normalization regime. When establishing these contacts, they could build particularly upon those that Pelikán had developed in China while working in the International Union of Students. In the second half of the 1970s his erstwhile Chinese colleagues, led by Hu Yaobang (1915–1989), rose to leading positions in the Party, thus creating considerable opportunities for the exiles to work with them. From China, they received continuous funding for their activities, while the Chinese were interested in the Czechoslovak attempt to reform state socialism in the late 1960s. The author acquaints the reader with visits by Listy 'envoys' to China, who acquainted their partners there with current developments in central Europe, including information about dissidents and the opposition movement. A special initiative as part of this collaboration was their attempt to get their own representatives involved in the Czech broadcasts of Radio Peking. Though they briefly succeeded in this, their plan to influence the content of transmissions to Czechoslovakia, and thereby make it an information source for listeners which would provide an alternative to state-controlled Czechoslovak mass media, ultimately came to naught: members of the Listy group worked at Radio Peking only as language advisers for the Czech broadcasts.

The Crisis of Modern Urbanism under the Socialist Rule
Case Study of the Prague Urban Planning between the 1960s and 1980s

Petr Roubal

Using the planning in Prague between the 1960s and 1980s as an example, the article deals with the transformation of the concept of a socialist city among urbanists

and architects. The author describes how the generation of the inter-war modernist avant-garde inspired by works of Karel Teige (1900–1951) started reasserting itself again after Khrushchev' s speech on architecture in 1954. Its influential member, Jiří Voženílek (1909–1986), became the Chief Architect of Prague. It was under his leadership that the General Plan of the Capital City of Prague was drafted at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s. The author analyzes the plan as an example of the socialist modernism and urbanistic optimism of its creators who believed that, subject to a correct application of principles of inter-war avant-garde architecture, an urbanistic transformation might become the base of a social transformation of socialism. The plan envisaged sacrificing not only all residential quarters of Greater Prague built at the turn of the century, but also the very principle of a traditional city with a network of living streets which socialist urbanists saw as an incarnation of all evils that the development of towns and cities had thitherto been governed by: mixing of functions, too high density of population, lack of light and air. New housing projects comprising high-rise prefab residential buildings set in greenery were to become the opposite of traditional streets. The article explains how criticism of the housing schemes, the chief representative of which was urbanist Jiří Hrůza (1925–2012), had been growing stronger since as early as the mid-1960s. Influenced by works of US journalist and urbanistic activist Jane Jacobs (1916–2006), he presented a comprehensive critique of socialist modernism and questioned they very principle of urban planning as a tool of social transformation. The intellectual skepticism was soon thereafter reflected in urban planning practices in Prague; they abandoned the modernistic principle of zoning and acknowledged the value (first urbanistic, later architectural) of traditional quarters. In the end of the article, the author analyzes how the urbanistic turning point was confronted with building industry practices and political preferences demanding rapid construction of flats and apartments.

"He Who Leads – Controls!"
Corporate Management and Rigours of "Socialist Control" in Czechoslovak Enterprises in the 1980s

Tomáš Vilímek

The study deals with issues of corporate management and pitfalls of the "socialist supervision" in Czechoslovak enterprises in the period of late socialism. Using documents of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the State Security, period texts and specialized publications, it shows how party organs and state authorities were unsuccessfully trying to make supervisory mechanisms and audits a functional tool of the implementation of the ruling party´s economic policy. The author analyzes the supervisory and audit mechanisms that were used, and outlines basic reasons of the almost fatal failure of supervisory activities of the system which was, in a way, obsessed with supervision and control. He explains the systemic

conditionality of the supervisory system which socialist managers often and in many respects bent to suit the needs of the enterprises they were in charge of; such situation naturally did not match the needs of the society as a whole. Using many specific cases as an example, the study graphically shows that members of the Czechoslovak corporate management community in the 1980s were fully aware of systemic, political and social limitations of the supervisory system which they managed to modify, fairly successfully, to suit intra-corporate conditions. The result was a situation in which the party leadership was reacting to increasingly obvious symptoms of the "agony of the centrally planned economy" by adopting various directives and guidelines to make the supervisory process more effective and to consistently promote the "whoever manages – supervises" principle. However, the anticipated effect did not materialize and, at the end of the day, the non-functional supervisory mechanisms made a substantial contribution to the collapse of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia.

Prague Chronicle

Unreached 90th Birthday of Milan Otáhal

Oldřich Tůma

Milan Otáhal (1928–2017) was a leading historian studying the contemporary history of Czechoslovakia. In the 1960s, he was the head of the Department of Modern History of the Historical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences; in the early 1970s, he lost his job at the institute and was expelled from the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. He was one of the first signatories of Charter 77 and was active in the historical samizdat as an independent historian. Since the 1990s, his scientific activity was connected with the newly established Institute for Contemporary History. His main focus was the history of the anti-regime opposition and of the society between 1969 and 1989, and the role of students and intelligentsia in the change of the political situation in the end of the 1980s. He wrote a number of factographically rich and interpretationally distinctive publications on these topics. The author of the obituary mentions principal contributions of Milan Otáhal to the knowledge and understanding of Czechoslovakia's most recent history, emphasizing that he was a historian who was not only intellectually reflecting the period he was living in, but who was also intensively experiencing and co-creating it.

Central European Historian Bedřich Loewenstein (1929–2017)

Tomáš Hermann

The author summarizes the life and in particular scientific career of historian Bedřich Loewenstein, describes areas of his professional interest and his intellectual orientation, reminds of his most important works published in Czech and German, and assesses his contribution. Loewenstein was born in 1929 in Prague, in a Czech-German-Jewish family, lived through the German occupation in difficult conditions, and started studying history and philosophy at what was then the Faculty of Arts and History of the Charles University, but was expelled two years later for political reasons. He was allowed to complete his studies later, and in 1957 started working at the Institute of History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, where he remained until his dismissal in 1970. He started intensive contacts with West German historians and other intellectuals during the 1960s, and organized an important international symposium, "Europe and Fascism", in Prague in 1969. Since the early 1970s, he was not allowed to publish and was employed as an interpreter/translator of the trade mission (since 1973 embassy) of the Federal Republic of Germany. Although watched by the State Security, he managed to make use of his position to establish an important connection between domestic dissenters and their supporters abroad, which was used to exchange publications and other documents. In 1979, he accepted an offer of professorship of recent history at the Free University in West Berlin, where he remained until 1994 and where he could develop and expand his research interests and devote himself to intensive publication activities.

For a long time, Bedřich Loewenstein was focusing on the German history of the 19th and 20th centuries; since the 1960s, he was also studying ideological, psychological, and social prerequisites of Nazism and later also more general issues of crises of the 20th century, modernism and modernity, civic society, European nationalism, and civilization. In this respect, he was able to integrate approaches and knowledge of other social sciences – sociology, social psychology, anthropology, philosophy, political science, and economy – in a prolific manner. He was a long-time and intensive intermediary of views and ideas between the Czech (or Czechoslovak) and German historiographies. His works, written in a concise, scientific-essayist style, earned him respect among colleagues both at home and abroad. His principal works include *Plädoyer für die Zivilisation* (Hamburg, Hoffmann und Campe 1973), *Entwurf der Moderne: Vom Geist der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft und Zivilisation* (Essen, Reimar Hobbing 1987; in Czech in 1995), *Problemfelder der Moderne: Elemente der politischen Kultur* (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1990), *My a ti druzí: Dějiny, psychologie, antropologie* [We and the others: History, psychology, anthropology] (Brno, Doplněk 1997; in German in 2003). A synthesis of Loewenstein's thinking about a broad spectrum of issues is presented in his book *Der Fortschrittsglaube: Geschichte einer europäischen Idee* (Göttingen,

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2008; in Czech: *Víra v pokrok: Dějiny jedné evropské ideje* [Faith in progress: The history of a European idea]. Praha, OIKOYMENH 2009).

Book Reviews

A Country on the Boundary

Pavol Jakubec

SMETANA, Vít: *Ani vojna, ani mír: Velmoci, Československo a střední Evropa v sedmi dramatech na prahu druhé světové a studené války* [Neither war, nor peace: The Great Powers, Czechoslovakia and Central Europe in seven dramatic stories on the eve of the Second World War and the Cold War]. Prague, Lidové noviny Publishing House 2016, 664 pages, 33 photographs, bibliography, index of names, ISBN 978-80-7422-358-7.

Using selected topics, the monograph describes the relationship of the powers to Czechoslovakia during the dramatic decade between 1938 and 1948. The reviewer comments on how these topics are dealt with in each chapter, appreciating the author's erudition, ample use of sources, as well as a broad contextualization and convincing power of interpretation. He concludes that Smetana's work deviates from traditional Czech and Slovak approaches to the themes in that it assigns priority to attitudes and motives of foreign political players and takes into account the international context in all its complexity the analysis of which leads the author to conclusions open for further discussion rather than to categorical judgments. The author's approach does not make the personality of President Edvard Beneš (1884–1948) stand out as much as is usually the case; instead, the author views President Beneš rather critically. According to the reviewer, Smetana's monograph, which he characterizes as a colourful canvas of historical plots stretched in a solid frame, should become a classical work for historians studying the period of the Second World War and beginnings of the Cold War.

Swing Music and Its Fans during the Protectorate

Vít Hloušek

KOURA, Petr: *Swingaři a potápky v protektorátní noci: Česká swingová mládež a její hořkej svět* (Šťastné zítřky, vol. 23.) [Swing fans and "zoot suiters" in the Protectorate night: Czech swing kids and their bitter world (Happy tomorrows, Vol. 23)]. Praha, Academia 2016, 922 pages, ISBN 978-80-200-2634-7.

The reviewer presents the monograph as the outcome of long-term, comprehensive, and almost exhaustive research of sources, impressive in both its content and its scope. The author concentrates on the Czech youth subculture associated with jazz (swing) music at the time of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (1939–1945), their lifestyle, habits, fashion, speech, and attitude to the occupation regime, as well as the attitude of Nazi and Protectorate authorities to them and the music they professed. He sets the topic into a broad historical, social, political, and cultural context, for example when describing in an erudite and gripping manner the evolution and propagation of jazz dances, formation and existence of similar youth subcultures in Western Europe and United States, or the survival of jazz and its fans in the Nazi Third Reich. The author covers in depth the criticism aimed at jazz and its fans in the Protectorate and repressions against them, analyzes the relationship between jazz music and freedom in an inspiring manner, and his interpretations and explanations abound with facts. The reviewer would personally welcome only a better arrangement of some parts and more attention paid to jazz music as such.

Czechoslovak Leviathan

Karol Szymański

ROUBAL, Petr: *Československé spartakiády* (Šťastné zítřky, Vol. 22) [Czechoslovak Spartakiads (Happy Tomorrows, Vol. 22)]. Praha, Academia 2016, 405 pages, ISBN 978-80-200-2537-1.

In his four-part book, the author deals with the genealogy of Czechoslovak spartakiads in the German Turner and Czech Sokol (Falcon) movements, different visual symbolisms of the spartakiads in the 1950s, 1970s, and 1980s, the organization of spartakiads, and the relation of the society to them. The extensive review presents the content and leading principles of the book, as well as its sources and theoretical foundations, and formulates some polemic arguments. The key of the author's interpretation of the phenomemon of the mass gymnastics events of different age, social and professional, gender-differentiated groups of population in arenas in the Czech Lands and Czechoslovakia since the second half of the 19th century until the 1990s is a multifaceted analysis of the political symbolism of the body and its

movements as a representation of ideals of the unity of the nation and the socialist society. In the reviewer's opinion, the book's meticulously documented factography, erudite use of different theoretical concepts, convincing argumentation and clear style have resulted in a compact, comprehensive, inspiring and attractive monograph. The reviewer only regrets that the author did not reflect a broad context of similar mass rituals in other countries of the Soviet Bloc and elsewhere to show the globally unique character of the Czechoslovak spartakiads. The reviewer also argues against the author s conviction that the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia was not totalitarian, presenting arguments for an opposite opinion in a different view of the role and effect of political rituals such as the spartakiads in relation to the society.

A Family Colonized by the State?
On a Book about Family Policy in the Czech Lands in the Previous Century

Květa Jechová

RÁKOSNÍK, Jakub – ŠUSTROVÁ, Radka: *Rodina v zájmu státu: Populační růst a instituce manželství v českých zemích 1918–1989* [Family in the interest of the state: Population growth and marriage in the Czech Lands 1918–1989]. Praha, Lidové noviny Publishing House 2016, 283 pages, ISBN 978-80-7422-378-5.

According to the reviewer, the two authors of the book under review convincingly demonstrate the massive growth in state intervention in the private sphere in Bohemia, Moravia, and Czech Silesia in the seventy years from the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic to the collapse of the Communist regime in late 1989. She does, however, have some doubts about their periodization, which ignores great political dividing lines in favour of continuities, and she is also disappointed in the authors' intentionally refusing to pass judgement on the topics they discuss. The reviewer would have liked to have read an assessment of interwar Czechoslovakia, which had sought to be a democratic and socially just state, and she would have welcomed discussion of the Nazis' intentions to eradicate the Czechs during the German occupation from mid-March 1939 to early May 1945. The reviewer remarks on some aspects of family policy in socialist Czechoslovakia, and concludes that the book under review is useful for the general public as a call for discussion about the social values and traditions and the purpose and operation of the State.

Authors

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politics in Central Europe] (with Lubomír Kopeček, Brno 2004), *Politické strany: Původ, ideologie a transformace politických stran v západní a střední Evropě* [Political parties: The origin, ideology and transformation of political parties in Western and Central Europe] (with Lubomír Kopeček, Prague 2010), *Politické systémy* [Political systems] (with Lubomír Kopeček and Jakub Šedo, Brno 2011), *Ztraceny v tranzici? Minulost a přítomnost politického stranictví ve střední a východní Evropě* [Lost in transition? The past and present of political partisanship in Central and Eastern Europe] (with Ladislav Cabada and Petr Jurek, Brno 2013), or *Party Systems in East Central Europe* (with Ladislav Cabada and Petr Jurek, Lanham (Maryland) 2014), and editor of a number of other publications.

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republice po roce 1989 [Divided by the past: Formation of political identities in the Czech Republic after 1989] (together with Adéla Gjuričová, Michal Kopeček, Jiří Suk, and Tomáš Zahradníček, Prague 2011).

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