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THE CITY
IDENTITY – MEMORY – MINORITIES

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Thematic Issue

THE CITY – IDENTITY – MEMORY – MINORITIES

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INTRODUCTION TO THE THEMATIC ISSUE THE CITY – IDENTITY – MEMORY – MINORITIES

Every city derives its character from its own history. This history finds its roots in the layout of the city, its monuments and memorials, its symbols, but also in the structured memory of its inhabitants. Some places in a city absorb several temporal layers of memory and the oldest can, with time, slip away in temporary or permanent forgetting. It is not always a question of natural processes; memory can be replaced in a violent or controlled manner: urban renewals, forced expulsion of a population, etc. However, a city also has the ability to flash back to its past: a walk through historic streets and quiet corners can bring back to the receptive walker what that space was like in the past. Often connected to the invocation of memories is nostalgia: valid and invalid phenomena. The preservation of a significant point on the timeline of a city requires a combination of the past with the present and the future: history loses its importance if it cannot be used for updating. People search in a city's history so that, with its support, they can master the present or, more precisely, project their interests into the past. That is, each of us has only those eyes granted to him by his time. In a city there are, to be sure, areas filled with meaning and also areas that, at least for the moment, are meaningless. However, one cannot exclude the idea that even, for example, uniform hypermarket chains, sweeping away differences among European cities that are historically founded or constructing their identity on history, are still waiting for their history.

In the current issue, mainly devoted to Slovak urban anthropology and, therefore, Slovak cities and their memories, are analyses of memories of urban worlds from several viewpoints. The unifying topic of the issue is, however, minority urban memories.

The Bratislava ethnologist **Peter Salner,** for example, drew fresh attention to the phenomenon of coerced loss of memory of the Jewish minority in the Slovak capital after World War II. As a consequence of the Shoah and postwar

waves of emigration, the Jewish Orthodox community, a majority in a minority, Zionists, but also some of the assimilated Jews disappeared from Bratislava, a city with a strong Jewish tradition. Judaism as one of the significant elements of Bratislava's memory, however, also faded into forgetfulness because of insensitive demolitions of former Jewish monuments. And finally: the group of Orthodox Jews and Zionists have not yet even become part of the newly forming Jewish memory built by secularized, assimilated Jews and Communists. Many of them, moreover, lack Bratislava roots. Salner's colleague, **Daniel Luther,** chose to write about the Czech minority who arrived programmatically in the city in the period after 1918 (the rise of the Czechoslovak Republic) and, in 1938, were expelled from there. At present, their existence is determined by the break-up of the federation (1992). Using them as an example, Luther introduced the contents and demonstrated the role of memory in the process of formation of contemporary minority identity. **Monika Vrzgulová**, the last of the three Bratislava researchers, using the example of research of memory of the distinctive social and occupational group of tradesmen of non-Jewish and Jewish origin between 1918 and 1938, convincingly applied the thesis of Maurice Halbwachs about the influence of social origin, living conditions and social strategies on human memory. Probably every memory, however, is a determined attempt to highlight the importance of one's own state (one's own group) for the over-all character of a city. What is interesting is knowledge about intergenerational transfer of memory in one social group. The Banská Bystrica researcher **Jolana Darulová** analyzed the contrast between two periods of the formerly important medieval mining town (1918-1945/1948) and the present. Her research on the city center, formerly a sort of heart of the city, shows how the source of memory can view the postmodern era with its propensity toward unification. The article by **Katarína Koštialová** is a vivid example of the manipulation of a city with memory. Using the example of an interesting, prestigious organization in Zvolen that has the full support of city hall, she shows the possibility of revitalization of certain segments of memory of the city in the subconscious of its inhabitants and visitors. The study of **Katerína Popelková** dealing with two traditional wine-growing cities in the Malé Karpaty (Modra and Pezinok) is, in its way, the most relevant for post-Socialist society. On the basis of many years of research, Popelková reveals mechanisms affecting memory in the development of the city. Memory, that is to say, is capable not only of slowing down the development of a city, but also of accelerating it if, for example, it is skillfully used in the development of tourism (Pezinok).

The current issue is essentially dedicated, then, to the functions of minority memory in a city. Methodically it emanates, just as the first Polish-Czech issue did, from anthropological and historical postmodern approaches. We are, however, introducing two new sections: a **Discussion** section, in which we can include, first of all, discussions of contributions relating to methodology in our field, the character of its sources, and the most important books in our specialization and, in the English version of the same section, **The city and its personalities**. This is in accordance with the propensity of contemporary post-Socialist societies toward individualization and, at the same time, in accordance with our methodological foundation. We start from the fact that the city and its inhabitants create an inseparable unity. In other words: urban worlds cannot be understood without empathetic insight into mentalities (ways of thinking and strategies of behavior) of those who inhabit, work, found families, create values and enjoy themselves.

Blanka Soukupová

PEELING THE BRATISLAVA ONION (Collective Memory in Incomplete Communities)[1]

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Abstract
In his memoirs, Günter Grass used the analogy of "peeling the onion" and he gradually peeled off layers of his memories. This procedure did not work in researching the Bratislava (not only the Jewish) society of the 20th century. Due to historic events, several significant city-forming elements of the inhabitants disappeared from the Bratislava demographic map (but also from the memory of most contemporaries). Prior to the Holocaust, Orthodox Jews predominated in the city. Today, they make up a negligible, even forgotten minority. A similar fate affected the Zionists, too. According to available data, 10,000 Jewish people left Slovakia between 1945 and 1949; of them, 90% chose Palestine/Israel as their target country. Migrants from the countryside replaced them. However, they were not able to make up for past losses, either in terms of quantity or quality. There was enough evidence that "peeling of onion" is not suitable if the studied sample does not represent a whole spectrum of a given environment. If this method were mechanically applied, it would result in a simplified picture of both the Jewish community and the city in which it lived. It is also important to consider the fact that the Holocaust influenced not only the demographic community structure, but also the value system of its members. Thus, there is the seemingly paradoxical procedure of "wrapping the onion up."

Keywords: ***Bratislava, Jews, collective memory, 20th century***

[1] This study has been written within the framework of the Excellency Center COPART and VEGA grant No.2/5105/25 entitled "The Diversification as the Factor of Identity Shaping."

Among the dominant sites of Rybné námestie (Fish Square) in the center of Bratislava was not only Saint Martin's Dome but also a beautiful Neologue synagogue. In the mid-1960s it gave way to more pragmatic needs of the developing city. It was replaced by the New Bridge and only the Holocaust Victims' Memorial symbolically indicates the former Jewish presence in this space. The inscription on the pedestal of the monument contains the Hebrew word "Zakhor!" and its Slovak translation "Remember!" The memorial is supposed to be a memento of the tragedy of the Jewish community, but at the same time it is also a silent memento for ethnologists. It warns us to approach human memory (individual as well as collective) cautiously and critically... On the basis of testimonies of two generations I try to illustrate how and why the picture of the Jewish community (but also the German, Hungarian and, in fact, the whole community of Bratislava) was (de)formed in the interwar period.

In his memoirs, German writer Günter Grass used the analogy of peeling the onion and gradually peeled one layer of memories after another. A similar technique is also routinely applied in ethnology. However, in the case of the Bratislava (and not only Jewish) society of the 20th century, this procedure has not proven useful. It turned out that the peeled onion is not complete and the resulting picture corresponded with this fact. Historical events of the recent past brought about partial or even total elimination (from the Bratislava demographic map and from people's memory) of important groups of city residents who had previously created the spirit of the city.

For my analysis I use findings of the projects "They Survived the Holocaust" between 1994 and 1997 carried out by the Milan Šimečka Foundation in cooperation with Yale University (see Vrzgulová 2002). Most of the 149 witnesses were born and/or lived in Bratislava. I map the generation of "children of the Holocaust" (born between 1940 and 1952) through more than 14,000 e-mails from the website established by Jewish emigrants from Bratislava. Its main goal was to organize a reunion that took place in May 2005, but the site also contains discussions and personal memories of the city. Almost all of the 202 participants have some personal ties to Bratislava (for more details, see Salner 2007).

According to the census of 1930, 14,880 residents of Bratislava (11.7 % of the population) declared their religion to be Jewish; in 2001, it was just a few per mille (278 individuals). The present-day Jewish community is a small heterogeneous, secular group of people linked together by ties of a common origin rather than by traditional values of Judaism.

Before the Holocaust, the Orthodox denomination prevailed in the city. In Bratislava, this denomination was personified by Khatam Sofer (Moshe Schreiber). Especially thanks to him, Bratislava (in Hebrew or Yiddish still called Pressburg) earned the name of "the second" or "Hungarian" Jerusalem. His authority illustrates the fact that, from the year of his arrival in 1806 until the forced expatriation of his great grandson in 1942, the position of the main city rabbi was exclusively taken by his descendants. Until now, Orthodox Jews still commemorate his personality and respect his decisions related to halakha.

At present, Orthodox Jews in Bratislava are only a negligible, even a forgotten minority. Most of them perished in death camps and those who had survived the Holocaust left Slovakia (for more details, see Salner 2000). Authentic memories of contemporaries are only partly substituted by older memoir literature published abroad (Gold 1932, Cohn 1999, Grünhut 1972, Kohút 1991 etc.). In his memoirs, Bratislava native Cohn (1929) illustrates that the affinity to one's own city and the personality of Khatam Sofer still influence (not only) his thinking and acting. After all, he gave proof of this by his active participation in the renovation of Khatam Sofer's tomb (for more details, see Salner-Kvasnica 2002). In the above-mentioned memoirs, he writes: "Pressburg was a great center of Judaism in which the study of the Talmud and Torah provided life energy, the substance of our daily life. Synagogues and study rooms were on every corner and Jews studied the Scripture there with great intensity and tender devotion. In Pressburg, Jewish family life flourished and the city became a home for many students and scholars. As a matter of fact, the Pressburg "Great Yeshiva" was one of the topnotch institutions not only in Central Europe but in Europe as a whole." (Cohn 1999:21-22)

The extinction of the once numerous Orthodox community meant that the fame of the renowned rabbi is still present in the city, but not his influence. The fostering of traditional values that he summed up in the legendary sentence "khadash asur min ha-Torah," which means "all that's new the Torah prohibits" (Myers 1997:36), has not become part of the normative system of the community. Although Sofer's name is known to and proudly remembered by all Bratislava Jews, most of them reject Orthodox Judaism. Especially on his "yarzeit" (the memorial day of his death), his grave resembles old Orthodox Pressburg rather than the present secular Bratislava. But for the people of today Khatam Sofer is not a role model; he is more a formal symbol of the long-gone past.

This fact is related to the forcible transformation of the community and ensuing changes in its structure. In the interwar period, about 80 % of the

Bratislava Jews were Orthodox. The dominant position of traditional Judaism is also illustrated by large-scale activities of various associations. The most frequent were religious associations with Orthodox orientation. Also important were charity and educational (mostly religious) activities. In Bratislava, there were also a number of athletic and scout clubs. The Zionist movement was especially active in this respect, as it deliberately prepared its members for harsh conditions in the new homeland. Professional associations were also common (for more details, see Grünsfeld 1932: 179-185, Grünhut 1972: 169-170; Salner 1997: 67-68).

Even a cursory analysis shows that values of different branches of Judaism were often incompatible. These differences persisted even during the Holocaust. Although the regime planned the "final solution" for all Jews, the Orthodox were more jeopardized than the rest of the community due to their visibility and their refusal to make compromises on religious matters. Besides "official violence," "spontaneous" attacks by some Bratislava residents were also directed against them. This situation is described by Cohn (1999:33): "Without a word – no questions, no warnings, no explanations – one after another the three men started to beat my father. First they beat him with their fists; they kicked him while laughing devilishly. I cried out for help, but nobody came to rescue us. I begged them to stop. I shouted as much as I could while they were beating him. The local police did not help although they had never before been anti-Semitic. They only looked on. The Hlinka Guards left my father on the street, bleeding, motionless and almost unconscious. Proud of what they had just done, they triumphantly marched away. Only thanks to God's grace did we escape death. My father moaned slightly. My first thought was that he was dying, that they had killed him. But he slowly got up and we silently walked back home. We never spoke about this attack. Attacks like this became commonplace, so there was nothing to speak about. We only thanked God that we were still alive."

Avri F. (1953) and other witnesses confirm that the experience just mentioned was by no means exceptional, and that attacks were mostly aimed at Orthodox Jews: *I think that the worst thing I've ever learned, and which is related to Slovak, not German, anti-Semitism, happened during the days of the outbreak of the war, on September 1, 1939. My uncle, my father's brother, was an attorney, Dr Gustáv Fischer. He lived on Palisády and was waiting for a bus when two young bullies approached him and asked him if he was a Jew. He didn't even have to answer because he looked like a Jew and maybe they actually knew him. They dragged him into a nearby house and beat him and left him there. Later my mother told me that my uncle had been beaten up and that it wasn't sure if he was going to survive. I wanted to go see him in the hospital, and I went, and I saw him in bed there; I don't know if he saw us and if he was conscious, but I do know he died the next day. He had internal bleeding and so on. A few days later, his wife – they didn't have children – could not cope with it and she committed suicide. She jumped out of the window and died, too. So, this was something that had already happened in our family before the death camps and all those things.*

Religious people, if they survived, usually fled Slovakia right after the war. The primary destination was Palestine/Israel, although for many reasons many Orthodox Jews preferred overseas democratic countries. Traditional Judaism left Bratislava not only physically. Customs, values and beliefs also disappeared from people's memory and from the memory map of the Jewish community. It was the same with Zionists. The key thesis of their ideology was relocation to the new homeland with the view of establishing a modern Jewish state. After the Holocaust, it was Zionism that offered, especially to young people, a positive outlook, including the possibility of returning to the lost faith. This situation and the role of the Zionist movement (in her case of Hashomer Hacair) were best described by Chava Š. (1935) as follows: *In September I started attending high school and my brother had already been long active in the Zionist movement Hashomer Hacair, and I also joined in. That need to be part of something was very strong. We loved Hashomer Hacair, which was on Zochova 3. There were two buildings there – one for the Jewish Community, and we had religious school there and next to it was a building for Jewish youth organizations. Down in the gymnasium was Hashomer Hacair, in the middle there was Makabi Hacair and on the upper story were Bnei Akiba and those more religious groups. We had a great time there. Nobody ever mentioned the Holocaust. We buried it somewhere and didn't want to talk about it. We wanted to be young, healthy, bring new ideas... and I think that those who were our leaders saved us, psychologically saved us. We had had a bad childhood, but we had a nice adolescence. As a matter of fact, we had nothing; it was the post-wartime times, but we didn't care; we had our parties and first loves and friendships and winter and summer camps; we were happy we were about to live something important.*

She was not the only one. According to available data, between 1945 and 1949 about 10,000 people left Slovakia, 90% of them for Palestine/Israel (Jablonková 1998, see also Büchler 1998: 80; Bumová 2006: 122). The success of Zionist efforts paradoxically meant the victory of ideas and simultaneous destruction of the movement in Slovakia. Only fragments of the initial mem-

bership stayed. Campaigns of Communist power against Zionism and cosmopolitism caused erstwhile activists to be unwilling to speak either about the movement's goals or their own activities. Zionism also fell out of the spectrum of memories of the Bratislava Jews.

As is apparent, most of the community left Bratislava – either forcibly or voluntarily. In their place, newcomers from various parts of the Slovak countryside came. However, these could not measure up to the old community either in terms of numbers or content. They did not know the history of the city. Their perception of its history and affinity to Jewish traditions were different. The decision to stay in Slovakia was linked in the minds of many Jews with deliberate assimilation. This strategy followed from a loss of faith after the Holocaust, but also from the conviction that the Communist orientation of the country guaranteed that the past would not be repeated. This went hand in hand with the Slovakization of their original, mostly German surnames. The Fund of the Plenipotentiary for Home Affairs in the Slovak National Archives contains many applications for surname changes in 1945 and 1946. Their explanations are very interesting and they help us understand both people's motivations and the climate of the period:

I have a German-sounding last name that I wish to change to the Slovak-sounding one since I belong to this nationality and I always have; I am applying for a surname change from German to Slovak because I deem it undignified to have a German name; As a Slovak I do not want to use a German-sounding name; I am taking the liberty to humbly ask you to process my application swiftly as I am in the process of applying for a small business license and, since I am baptized, as is my wife, I would like to cut myself off from the past and start a new life in accordance with my change of religion; I don't want my old surname to remind me of the old regime; I wish to start my new job with a Slovak last name; I have a non-Slovak sounding name and my brother submitted a similar application so I would like to ask you to handle my request also. I was persecuted because of my race, imprisoned by the Gestapo in Auschwitz (I have a tattoo on my forearm). I have always considered myself to be Slovak although my religion is Jewish, so I am asking you to change my surname; I am applying for a surname change because my surname is at odds with my thinking and feelings; I do not wish to have a surname of German origin, particularly because my husband was shot by the Gestapo; I humbly ask for expeditious processing of my application as my wife is a state-employed teacher; I do not want to have any trouble that might follow if I kept my original surname Kohn (for more details, see Salner 1998).

Many reinforced these attitudes of the period by joining the Communist Party. Membership offered (at least seemingly) safety and better career outlooks. At play were also other factors: gratefulness for the liberation of the country by the Red Army, the conviction that the Communist Party would create a just social system. Motives of revenge, opportunism, and fear cannot be ruled out either. And many of those who acknowledged their background rejected religious elements. Only a small part of those who stayed in Slovakia admitted to being Jewish (see Salner 2000).

Their decisions (whether motivated by conviction or pragmatic reasons) were also reflected in their personal lives. They often concealed their Jewish origin even from their own children. These "children of the Holocaust," i.e., people who were born between 1940 and 1955, were reaching adolescence at the end of the 1950s and mostly in the 1960s. People came to their Jewish identity in various ways; some through their homes and others (often against the will of their families) from outside impulses. After August 1968, most members of both the young and middle generations chose emigration. In comparison to the period after the Holocaust, it is interesting to analyze the choice of destinations. While in 1945 and 1946 Palestine/Israel prevailed, after the Soviet occupation the situation was more complicated.

First of all, it must be said that most members of the community in the productive age chose to leave the country. In the young and middle generations the number of those who left relative to those who stayed in the country is much larger than in the rest of the population. Heitlingerová (2007: 139), on the basis of her own experiences, tried to explain this situation. As she writes: "Because of their more cosmopolitan education, better command of languages and better knowledge of the West, they didn't fear emigration as much as many other Czechs and Slovaks. In contrast to their non-Jewish counterparts, they could rely on various forms of help from relatives, Western Jewish organizations and/or Jewish host families." This view was also confirmed by a sample of people at the reunion. Of the 202 individuals born between 1940 and 1952 only 28 (13.8%) stayed in Slovakia. 86.2% of the people from this sample chose emigration. Changes in value orientations, compared to the period after the Holocaust, illustrate destination preferences: 30 people (14.8%) chose Israel (additional data showed that Israel was the country of first choice for more than these 30 people, but some, for various reasons, moved to the USA, Australia, Germany, etc.; nevertheless, even taking these facts into account, Israel was a much less frequent destination than in the 1940s). Most people (34, or 16.8%) chose the

USA; another 13.3% live in Canada. From the regional perspective, the majority of the people chose countries in Central and Western Europe (see Salner 2006).

These data illustrate the direction and the mass scope of emigration (as well as its impact on the life of the Bratislava community). The data should not be taken too generally, but they do indicate prevailing trends. At least 174 individuals born between 1940 and 1952 left Slovakia. Among current members of the Bratislava Jewish Religious Community there are only 136 people in this age group. It is apparent that most of the members of this generation emigrated and only a minority stayed in Slovakia. Impacts of this fact on the community and individuals can be illustrated by an e-mail by Tamara K. (at present living in Montreal): *Sunday evening when I looked around and saw all those people engaged in conversation standing around me in groups I realized what a big loss this has been for our home country when all of us able and precious people left it. And even though we have found happiness in our new homes and we would not trade them for anything, still we were robbed of the chance to spend our lives together with our childhood friends. And I was sad when I realized how we attacked like a swarm of locusts those who did stay in Bratislava and we stirred up all those emotions and then we packed up and left.* (A complex analysis of the impact of emigration of the Jewish community would also need to take into account the emigration of the generation of parents (who at that time were middle aged) and the absence of the generation of children born abroad).

The last straw to show the dark side of the regime was the trial of Rudolf Slánský. At that time, many members of my sample were already old enough to be able to perceive what was happening around them. This is confirmed by reactions to the e-mail in which one contributor characterized Communism as a criminal regime, but not as primarily anti-Semitic: "Communism is an ideology and it doesn't fight against nations but against other ideologies. I argue its intention wasn't to want to wipe out Jewry." This opinion resulted in a broad and often emotional polemic. Besides arguments, it brought many personal experiences of the sample members. They show how they remembered those times as well as Bratislava. People spoke about their parents' or other relatives' incarceration; they recollected forcible relocations, expulsions from work, troubles in school or workplace. Perhaps the strongest impression was left by their emotional personal reflections on childhood experiences: "I can't take this any longer; I'm so shocked I can't even argue. But I don't know how it was possible to conceal all that from the children – I would go to see my

father in the prison, to Příbram, Leopoldov etc., but that was after some time. At first we didn't even know if he was alive. When my father touched my pinkie through bars, they punished him with solitary confinement and he was forbidden to keep in touch with his family. That's just a small detail, by the way. Anybody can read my mom's memoirs. I recommend them, although this may sound strange from her own daughter" (Táňa L., Sweden). The above-mentioned memoirs (Langerová 2007) published in Swedish and English portray a very impressive picture of how "high politics" of the 1950s was mirrored in the life of a concrete Jewish family.

This example is extreme in a way, but the topic also evoked negative feelings in other people. As one of the directly afflicted stated: "This topic is VERY painful, although you wrote exactly what I didn't feel like writing. There are many among us whose parents were in jail and we did not grow up in the most healthy of climates" (Magda B., Israel).

In another case, childhood memories are related to forcible vacation of the apartment and later also relocation from Bratislava, when her father was placed in "production." Consequences of dramatic events still remain in people's minds: "I'm also haunted by bad childhood memories when my dad was kicked out of work (in one hour). Then they kicked us out of our apartment and we lived in Lafranconi (outskirts of the then-Bratislava) where you also lived in Auntie Hajlig's basement, and we lived one story above you, at my mother's aunt's place in one room. And in Pukanec (with my mom's relatives), where my sister was born, they sent us to the movies on Sunday so that we wouldn't cry when dad was leaving for Bratislava where he worked in 'production.' All this remains burnt into one's mind, one's soul." (Minka N., Germany). This e-mail had an unplanned continuation. In the book *Censored Life*, Ladislav Porjez described the circumstances under which he met Minka's father during his visit to Bratislava: "I was struck when in one of the ditches I was passing by I saw my former classmate from the Michalovce high school digging with a pick. It was engineer Bernard Schönbrun, who after the liberation kept his second, more Slovak-sounding name Knežo, under which his Aryan papers had saved him from transports. 'Hi Berco,' I bellowed, 'are you volunteering for public works?' My friend Berco leaned on his pick for a moment and then he angrily shouted at me. 'What volunteer work, you ass? They kicked me out of the office and this is what I have already had to do for two months.' I was taken aback so I asked tactlessly: 'And what did you do?' Berco was mad: 'Do you live on Mars, moron? Or don't they give Jews the sack in Mother Prague?'"

Life could be made unpleasant not only by forced relocations, but also by the allocation of one or more rooms in one's apartment to complete strangers. This was often not the only repression: "They did not kick my mom and her two daughters (my sister and me) out of the apartment, but they placed a family in our place. We lived under constant supervision, if that could be called a life. I still vividly remember how my mom would stroll by the police office each day while my dad was kept in Bratislava. I don't like to go back to this topic; it's still too painful, even today" (Magda B., Israel).

Amir S. (Israel) illustrates the harassment experienced by small business owners. In addition to direct repressions, he points out the phenomenon of fear present in the whole of Slovak society (for more details, see Kamenec 1992). But fear had a special place in the Jewish milieu, where memories of the Holocaust were still alive: "I would add that I well remember how my father feared they would kick him out of the Party. He was an entrepreneur and, in addition to huge taxes, he also paid in another way – with his membership in the Party. He knew very well that the moment he lost his Party membership card he would lose his business. The father of our neighbor was in jail because they "proved" that he had been hiding a transmitter in a Jewish cemetery and was sending messages to Israel."

An attempt at some generalization of memories and experiences also points to the ubiquitous fear that influenced everyday life of (Jewish) people:

"Unfortunately, this was not just some Jewish paranoia and, as somebody said, 'The fact that you are paranoid doesn't mean you're not being followed by the secret police.' I do not claim that at the time it was only Jews who were persecuted. There were many groups of freethinkers that the Communist regime did not like, but they were persecuted because of their views and not because they were 'Jews.' Many Jews changed their names in order not to be harassed. Some committed suicide to avoid being arrested. Many were fired from their jobs, but many were unlucky enough to have been arrested and spent time in prison on not very clear charges. Anyhow, Jews lived in constant fear of when and from where it was going to strike them again. Of course, they tried to protect their children and, as much as possible, held information back from them" (Dada K., Israel).

The voluminous e-mail correspondence also mirrors the fact that the majority of this sample group are the first generation born in Bratislava. They lack the historical background; their relationship with the city and community is limited to what they could learn through their own experience. Similarly,

their religious feelings are lukewarm. They confirm the thesis of Heitlinger (2007:114) according to whom "...in most Czech and Slovak Jews of the post-war generation, Judaism did not inspire as strong emotions as mentions about the Holocaust, Israel, communism or anti-Semitism." Still, especially during the holidays, childhood memories or religious thoughts also come to the forefront: "I was most moved by the picture of the Heydukova synagogue. I also remember how, on many holidays, we ran around the backyard or told jokes and looked at boys. I could kick myself for not even going to look there when I was in Bratislava" (Tamara K., Montreal). "I, too, was moved by that picture of the synagogue on Heydukova. I was recollecting how we played chase in the yards and how Ďula-bácsi came to scold us because we were too noisy – and we gathered nuts in the garden there..." (Katka K., London). Rather telling is also the remark of Viktor R. who regards as one of the highlights of his stay in Bratislava the moments when he and his childhood friend could stand in the synagogue on those places where their fathers once used to gather and pray.

Also interesting are e-mails about religious education. Although several people from the sample group write about this topic, they do not disconfirm Heitlinger's thesis, as they still constitute a minority. The main character of many stories was Mr. E., who used to prepare boys for their bar mitzvah. What stayed in the memories of his pupils were not only Orthodox religious facts he taught them, but also memories of his unorthodox teaching methods. But it seems that in spite of their unconventional nature they bore fruits: "In all Bratislava, there wasn't a single child who would not go to Mr. E's classes." (Peter D., Israel). "I will never forget the words he told me when he was teaching me for my bar mitzvah, 'Where are you now, dear son? while he was pulling my peyes." (Tomy K., Israel); "I wished it had stopped with pulling my peyes. What about those slaps and banging on the table? That's nothing? And I'm not mentioning that his pupils had to use umbrellas to stay dry from his saliva." And next day the same contributor (Michal D. from Israel) added: "I didn't go to Mr. E. only to get bar mitzvah classes. He taught me for a good deal of years. That was some 'folklore'! (I remember some of my classmates who, because of his special methods, burst into tears and Mr. E. then wiped their eyes with his used handkerchief...That was fun.)"; "Just now Ivan is telling me how he used to lecture him while, of course, pulling his ear, 'Read, son, read.' As a matter of fact, this method must have worked because, when we came to Israel in 1968, Ivan could read Ivrit (modern Hebrew) almost perfectly and he found ulpan (Hebrew study center for new emigrants to Israel) even easier (Soňa V., Toronto);

These activities were also seen from another angle: "At any rate, it was no small thing that during that regime we could gin at least some knowledge of our faith. In that way continuity was ensured. We should thank Mr. E. for undertaking that task. And he wasn't a teacher? How many so-called teachers are there in the world that shouldn't even be let near children?" (Róbert Sch., Switzerland);

Only a small group declared that they practice religion and that they more or less keep kashrut (kosher), Shabbat (the Sabbath), holidays or other mitzvot (commandments).

It is important to mention that education (not religious, but secular) played an important role in the value system of the postwar generation of the Slovak Jewish youth (and of their parents). Practically everyone graduated from some sort of high school, mainly vocational. After high school graduation many went on to university, but again emphasis was on a pragmatic choice of study. Motivation (and influence of the older generation) to get an education is illustrated by an excerpt from a long narrative by Tomi N. from Germany: "After grade school, I went to a chemistry high school and, as I found out at the reunion, so did many other friends. Having some 'bread in our hands' was in line with the ideas of our parents' generation. After this first step, I went to Comenius University in 1965 to study chemistry, which, at that time, was taught in a compulsory combination with physics. (...) Because according to the 'doctrine' of those times, and experiences of maybe all our parents, only a higher level of education and hence also better chances to succeed in life and career provided 'protection' from the surrounding society. Besides that, what you have in your head nobody can take away from you. That was based on their experiences."

It is interesting to note how Bratislava appeared in reminiscences of those people who left the city almost forty years ago. What prevailed was nostalgia, childhood memories, but also the human factor in the form of a desire to renew personal contacts with friends. One e-mail written by one of those few who had stayed in the city warned against possible disappointment due to heightened expectations: "Please, do be aware that 'a reunion is a reunion is a reunion.' There will be a lot of schmoozing and recollecting. Do not expect anything more or less. If your excitement grows 45 days before the reunion, you're going to be disappointed. But if you expect us to look awful, to have big bellies and bald heads, then it's possible this reunion will leave you psychologically empowered." (Fero A., Bratislava).

Among the e-mails, there were some practical advice and experiences gained during recent visits of the town, but also criticism of things that did not work. These were also confrontations with what the city used to look like in their youth:

"Youth has rosy spectacles, and I still think about what they used to say about Bratislava (during the figure-skating championship when they planted thousands of flowers), that she's a beauty on the Danube. I don't know if she's really a beauty; they tore down half of the Old Town – below the Castle, but the rest is in rather good shape (and expensive). The city is starting to have a pleasant atmosphere again; one can sit in a café on the promenade; the girls are pretty. (...) You'll surely confirm that sledding was the best on Kuzmanka, and romantic strolls at Slavín, the fish salad was the best in that store across the street from Manderlák, the cream-filled pastries in the 'Children's Confectionery,' the string cheese at St. Michael's Gate and the beer in the 'Privy Bar' at the Danube." (Soňa V., Toronto).

Those who live in Bratislava tried to correct (sometimes quite tactlessly) these idealized expectations: "The house across the street from Manderlák is not there anymore, the 'Children's Confectionery' was turned into a beer bar – they are remodeling right now, but the bar will stay there because better business than a beer bar could only be a 'marihuana bar.' Nowadays, you can get string cheese and steamed cheese everywhere and Slovakia has problems with the EU because the best bryndza cheese is made only when EU food safety norms are violated; besides, Romanians insisted (although they are not in the EU) that the original bryndza was theirs, so I don't know. The 'Privy Bar' is no longer there and youngsters go boozing all over the place. Nobody can even keep track of them."

The outside perspectives were useful not only to those who were coming from abroad, but also for the locals. It is not surprising that a long e-mail sent by Eva L. from Toronto called "Going shopping" was unofficially considered the best e-mail ever sent to the website: "This e-mail is intended for those who use shopping as successful short-term therapy, fun and entertainment. Those who have everything better skip this e-mail and go to more important topics. Since some of you will have only a little time, we can exchange advice/experiences about where to go shopping. Before you start:

1. Put on your thick skin. The remarks of a shop assistant shouldn't discourage you from reaching your goals. The conversations I experienced were as follows: 'Can you please show me that yellow sweater?' 'We don't have your size.' (How did she know what my size was and for whom I was buying it?)

'Can you please show me that first bag?' 'You can't afford that one.' (Has the word already spread?)

'Can you please show me that ashtray?' 'I can't, it's only for foreign guests.' (Which passport should I quickly pull out?)

'Excuse me. That ice cream is leaking. The container is cracked. Could I have a napkin?' (A burst of laughter in the background). 'That woman wants a napkin! Look at the sign, madam, this place is in the B price category, madam.'

At the cashier's in a grocery store I was stopped by a security guard who told me 'Open and show me your bag!' 'My bag? Why? I'm a foreigner; I'm not used to this kind of treatment.' 'You can even be from Hungary, for all I care. I'm still gonna search you.'

'Please, do you have size 4 slippers? I'll show size 11, that's all we have.'

2. Be careful with handbags, passports, necklaces and credit cards. Leave them in the hotel safe. You should be especially careful when using your credit card in the Duty Free shop at the airport. If they know you're traveling home you might later receive bills for jewels from all over the world that would be hard to explain. Changing money is easy, but look at the exchange rates as they are different at each counter.

3. Ask for a tax-free stamp when making larger payments. Count on the fact that at the airport you won't be able to find a customs officer to stamp it, and throw it in the box at the airport. Then wait...keep waiting...

4. You can purchase duty-free items on the plane. I believe that in Prague, when changing planes, according to new EU laws, we are not allowed to buy duty free.

5. (You can buy) beautiful and affordable Carlsbad porcelain (yes, I do need one more set, as in those dishwashers everything gets chipped) and good presents like a cake tray or a tea set on Štúrova street and on Korzo.

6. Leather goods, sheep skin jackets, cardigans in the summer for half price in Mikuláš or in the Dunaj department store.

7. Garnet cuff links, earrings – Leningradská.

8. Sentimental foods (custard, chocolate-covered cherries) – in Dom potravín, Teta or Prior.

Well, I'm already tired. It's time to have coffee and a chestnut tart (made with beans) in the Slovan gallery (the movie theater has disappeared).

I welcome your advice and connections. Many things have changed, names of streets, prices, but some things – the more they change the more they stay

the same. Please, take it with humor; I don't want to offend anyone; I'm just sharing my experiences. Happy shopping. I wish you successful shopping, good sales, safe transport of purchased goods back home. And do buy luggage insurance, but that's a different story."

Soňa V. from Toronto said in surprise: "...so nothing has changed? I thought you were describing the times when we were still home (of course, the difference was that often many goods were not available)."

People sent several amused comments, factual remarks (especially touching upon the issue of money exchange) and warnings against pickpockets (especially "wherever there are too many people in one place like in public transportation" and in taxi cabs).

My analysis has confirmed that a critical approach to the seemingly unquestionable slogan "Zakhor! Remember!" is needed. It indicated that "peeling of the onion" is not appropriate in situations when the sample studied does not encompass the full spectrum of a given setting but only a bigger or smaller part of it. Mechanical application of the method results in an incomplete and hence simplified picture of the past of the Jewish community and city in which it lived. Therefore, another approach suggests itself – that of "rolling the onion up." In further considerations of this topic, one should take into account the fact that the Holocaust changed the map of Slovak Jewry (including that of Bratislava). It mostly impacted on its geographic structure. Many perished, others emigrated. They were replaced by Jewish newcomers from the countryside. The recent tragedy was reflected in their rejection of Judaism; they lacked an affinity to the city and its history. Consequences of the Holocaust also reprogrammed the memory of the community, its institutions and its members. Once-leading currents ceased to exist or lost their influence and once-marginal segments moved into the center of memory. It can be said that in Bratislava after 1945 secular Jews with leftist orientation, whose ideas corresponded with the general climate of the period, prevailed. The public, but also some experts have accepted as a fact that currently important parts of the community also played an equally important role in the interwar period. Their interpretations have become the leading and even the only perspective not only on the present, but also on the Jewish community of the interwar period.

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CZECH MINORITY IN A SLOVAK CITY: IDENTITY AND MEMORY. (A case study from Bratislava)[1]

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Abstract:
On the model example of the Czech community, this paper focuses on the formation of the collective identity of an ethnic minority in a present-day city. The emergence of the community, its development in the 1st half of the 20th century as well as the forced departure of most of the residents of Czech nationality from the city during WW II have been firmly etched in the historical memory of the minority members and represent the cornerstones of their identity. In the 2nd half of the 20 century, processes of integration and assimilation took place. Revitalization of the Czech community after the division of Czechoslovakia points to the importance of macro-social processes in the formation of minority communities.

Key words: ***collective memory, identity, Czech community, Bratislava***

My paper focuses on the diversification of an urban community in a period of great political and social changes and on implications of these processes for the formation of individual and collective identities. According to current findings of urban ethnology, it is apparent that the process of diversification of a stabilized social structure brings about, in multiethnic cities, conflicts between ethnic communities as well as smaller informal groups (family, friends, colleagues). The studied setting is Bratislava, which, after the split up of Czechoslovakia, became the capital of the Slovak Republic. My analysis of research findings focuses on:

[1] This paper was researched in the frame of a project of the Scientific Grant Agency at the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and Slovak Academy of Sciences – VEGA No. 2/5105/25.

a) the process of formation of the Czech community in the city and forcible expulsions of the Czechs before WW II that influenced the formation of individual identities of people of several generations. These historical events resonate in the historical memories of contemporaries until today;

b) evaluation of these processes in the Czech community, which used to be a majority in the city and now are in the position of an ethnic minority.

Czechs in Slovakia, just like Slovaks in the Czech Republic, became an ethnic minority as a consequence of the political act of the division of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic on the 1st of January 1993. Activities of Czechs in Slovakia have their historical reasons and political contexts. From the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 throughout the whole interwar period as well as after WW II, the Czechs who relocated to Slovakia came from another part of the same state unit. Together with Slovaks, they were a so-called state-forming nation and their legal social position in Slovakia was in no respect different from that of the rest of the population. Their national identity, just like their Czech, Moravian or Silesian origin, was interconnected with the common Czechoslovak identity of belonging to the same state and they found their home in Slovakia in the tolerant climate of peaceful coexistence with the rest of the population. This was also facilitated by the linguistic proximity of both nations. Majtánová (1999) sums up the position of a Czech in Slovakia in the period of the former common state: "Czechs who permanently lived in Slovakia considered Slovakia their home – their homeland. Of course, in addition to the existence of central political, state and other bodies, these sentiments were also backed up by the bilingual federal TV and radio, easy availability of newspapers, equal opportunities in employment and career paths, mixed companies and institutions" (Majtánová, 1999).

The split of the Czechoslovak federation put Czechs in Slovakia in a position where they had to come to terms with the loss of their homeland and with the fact that instead of being members of the national majority they now belonged to an ethnic minority. They had to rethink the meaning of their Czechoslovak identity and decide between either leaving Slovakia as their homeland or the Czech Republic as their country of origin, i.e., decide between Czech and Slovak citizenship. In the Slovak environment, many of them experienced the "role of a stranger." This also resulted in disrupted family ties, existential problems and heightened sensitivity to social relations. The changes in individual identities were also related to the possibility of becoming active members of the ethnic minority, i.e., of accepting a new collective identity: "Before the demise

of Czechoslovakia, the Czechs living in Slovakia were not in a minority position; the Czech community was never organized; there were no barriers that would detach them from the dominant nation and homeland. Their homeland was Czechoslovakia as a whole" (Majtánová, 1999).

A unique problem of Czech-Slovak relations was the history of Czechs and Slovaks in their common state which, to a high degree, influenced their opinion about the division of the republic in 1993 and their views on the new identity of citizens with minority status. As Majtánová writes, the Slovak and Czech minorities "were formed under unusual conditions and their characteristics are not typical. This is due to the relations of both nations before the creation, during the existence and after the demise of the common state, when its formation and demise happened twice during the relatively short period of seventy years" (Majtánová, 1999).

The objective of this paper is to shed light on the background of these processes and to look at the extent to which historical memory influences the identity of a minority.

Theoretical and Methodological Background

A study of the 1st half of the 20th century points to common collective attitudes, goals and interests of communities formed on an ethnic principle. Similar processes of group formation could also be observed after 1989 when all urban ethnic minorities mobilized. We need not emphasize the important role played by collective identity in the formation and maintenance of collective ties. Collective identity is a supra-individual category and, in my understanding, it expresses the commonality of values, cultural habits, traditions and history. These sources of cultural identity were decisive for the formation of the Czech community in Bratislava in the period of the division of the Czechoslovak Federation. Especially their common history, related to the first years of the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic when Czechs moved to Bratislava on a mass scale and to their forcible relocation before and during WW II, points to the need to study their historical memory. In this concrete context, collective identity and historical memory are closely interconnected.

The above-mentioned historical events of the programmatic politically organized arrival and departure of a large ethnic group are also an interesting research topic from the perspective of the study of migration processes. In the case of Bratislava, the arrival of the Czechs induced similar tensions to those

we encounter in present-day cities with a large ethnic diversity. At the time of their mass arrival, the Czechs importantly changed not only the demographic structure but also many aspects of everyday reality and the spiritual dimension of the community. They left their mark on the economic, social and cultural life, social relations, lifestyles and habits and other spheres creating the unique character (identity) of the city. Its "Czechoslovakization," but also "Slovakization," began. Diversification of the urban community caused by the growth of this "foreign element" and deepening of its heterogeneity, but also later expulsion of already integrated residents and reduction of diversity, are, from the present-day perspective, model situations for the study of implications of forcible, state-led interventions into developmental continuity.

The study of ethnic issues in historical societies encounters several problems. Given the time lapse, we cannot speak with eyewitnesses of events; testimonies are indirect, reduced and often dated. News of the period painted the picture of interethnic relations in the usual schematic fashion as "Us" vs. "Them." They usually conveyed values, goals and intentions of their own group and those of the other group in a confrontational fashion. For instance, for the census of 1921, the following instructions on how to declare one's identity were issued: "Everyone who was born of a Slovak father and Slovak mother, everyone whose mother tongue is Slovak is a Slovak."[1] Thus, critical reading of the period news must distinguish between the declared and the "lived" identity (Bittnerová, 2005: 10), created by everyday life in which one's own identity and difference is validated through experiences from social interaction and communication. Some contradictory stances and reports on the degree of conflictuality of interethnic relations in concrete historical situations can also be explained on this basis.

In the process of the transformation of post-socialist society and the formation of the Slovak republic, ethnic and national identity has had an important function. In my understanding, these concepts express the "difference between conscious identification with a certain ethnic group and its culture and conscious identification with a certain national-political subject formed by this ethnic group (Moravcová-Turková, 2001: 158). In the Czech-Slovak space, the concept of *national identity* was replaced by citizenship complemented by the term nationality in the meaning of the ethnic identity of an individual.

[1] An article published in the republican press Bratislavský denník (The Bratislava Daily) 25 January 1921, p. 1.

For the purposes of collecting my research data on the studied topic, I proceeded from excerpting written sources and archive documents to researching the Czech community in Bratislava. I also used a survey[2] to collect data, and its summarized findings are presented in the publication "Minorities in the City" (Luther, 2004: 9-56).

Integration of the Czech Community in the Interwar City

At the beginning of the 20th century, Bratislava was a multiethnic city. The largest groups were Germans, followed by Hungarians, Slovaks, Jews and other nationalities. However, the population was, to a large degree, Hungarized although Germans were the dominant social and economic force.

Germans were the strongest economic and social layer in the city. They considered themselves to be autochthonous, culturally developed and tolerant of other ethnicities. They justified their own importance by "the right gained over the course of centuries through our work, diligence, virtue and conscientiousness."[3] They regarded the city as unquestionably "theirs" and they did not show open resistance towards the aggressive Hungarian minority. This was probably related to the size and degree of integration of the German community, the facts that they could freely use their mother tongue and that they had their own religious and cultural life etc., so they did not feel as threatened as, e.g., Slovaks. Command of the Hungarian language was very important in the public and economic sphere and command of German was another advantage in terms of individual success. Still, "what prevailed in the urban elite, which was, in spite of assimilation, still dominated by ethnic Germans, was covert resistance to Hungarization" (Mannová, 1999: 61). Their cultural model to emulate was Vienna and the developed German world, but they also looked up to Budapest. They regarded themselves as "Hungarian Germans" and also, according to their statements (although not made in a really free climate), as

[2] The research was conducted in 2004. Given the number of active members of the Bratislava Czech Community we gave out 150 questionnaires (return rate 40%). Respondents were not selected according to some particular key; the only condition was that they be of Czech ethnicity, reside in Bratislava and be of age. We also asked about their (or their parents') presence in the city before 1938. In 2004 in Bratislava, there were 8,693 residents of Czech ethnicity (Czech, Moravian, Silesian), i.e., 2.04% of the population. Source: Štatistická ročenka hlavného mesta SR Bratislava 2005. Štatistický úrad SR – Krajská správa v Bratislave. (Statistical Yearbook of the Capital of the Slovak Republic Bratislava 2005. Bureau of Statistics of the Slovak Republic – District Office in Bratislava).

[3] Pressburger Zeitung, No. 34, 6. 2. 1919, pgs. 1-3. The article was published In: Bratislava, 1977 : 263.

Hungarian patriots. Their ties with Hungarians were so close in the ethnically mixed city that they were regarded as ethnically nondescript *Pressburger, Kraxlhuber*. They considered themselves to be old settlers, i.e. autochthonous residents of the city.

I attempt to characterize the ethnic position of the Hungarians through some Slovak and German attitudes with a different degree of empathy towards Hungarians. According to them, they behaved like the ruling nation, they "took their privileged position for granted" and they "never envisioned that their national borders could be shattered by any power in the world" (Medvecký, 1934: I. /374). In terms of its culture and population, the initially German city was gradually becoming Hungarian (in 1910, the number of German and Hungarian residents was already balanced). The principle of the Hungarian public administration was characterized by the statement: "slave-like submission to those on the top; tyranny towards those on the bottom," in which strong deference towards Budapest can be sensed. Cultural affinity to and open admiration of the Hungarian metropolis were an important point of orientation.

The number of Slovaks and their social influence in the city was steadily decreasing because of the assimilationist policies of the Hungarian government. As one of the memoirs of the social climate before WW I says: "Bratislava was not as German-Hungarian as is often thought. Slovak could be heard mainly in marketplaces, suburbs, around factories. There was less of it in the inner city streets as it was used more inside people's homes, usually in those rather poor ones. The Slovak element was usually poorer and hence silent, hidden. It came together only with difficulty; there wasn't enough cohesion, it was fragmented..." (Krčméry, 1931: 64). About a half of the Slovaks in the city belonged to the working class. Alongside them, there also lived Czechs, who constituted a small group of residents. The platform of common activities was the Slovak division of the workers' association "Forward" and the association of Czech workers "Brotherhood." More than 120 other associations were German, Hungarian and mostly German-Hungarian (Mannová, 1991: 68-69).

The Austro-Hungarian monarchy ceased to exist in 1918 and the era of the Czechoslovak city began. We do not know exactly how many people were expelled or left the city voluntarily, but it was a substantial number. Unrest related to army-assisted forcible incorporation of the city into the newly created republic contributed to the situation. From the news of the period, it is clear that it was mostly Hungarian families who left the city. The mass population influx to the newly established capital was mostly represented not only by

Slovaks but also by Czechs. Their number can only be estimated, as the first census of 1921 did not record Slovak or Czech nationality – only Czechoslovak nationality. But place of birth and length of residence in the city were recorded. These data indicate that about 15,600 Czechs and fewer than 12,000 Slovaks moved in the city (Sčítání lidu, 1921). The Czechs were a rather numerous group (about 17%)[4] who identified themselves as Czechoslovak. Bratislava was not only a multiethnic city, but also a city of immigrants.

The political goal of the Czech immigrants was to build Czechoslovak political, educational, cultural, social, health-care and other institutions. Among the main tasks was the reform of the Hungarian educational system in order to swiftly educate the new Slovak intelligentsia. For instance, during the first year of the existence of the republic, Czech experts in Bratislava took part, to a large degree, in the restructuring of the Hungarian university to a Czechoslovak university, in establishing a business school, a secondary comprehensive school, a library, a music school, and so forth. The number of students enrolled in these schools was the best proof of the importance of these efforts. While, in the last years of the Hungarian era, only 4% of the Slovak children went to in elementary school, in the first year of the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic the figure was 97%; secondary comprehensive school went from 4% to 65%, and secondary school attendance for girls rose from 2% to 55% (Matula 2006: 37). Activities of Czechs in Slovakia were accepted at the beginning with gratitude and respect: "The Czechs placed in all offices are capable, qualified clerks, professors, and teachers who fulfill their duties with laudable enthusiasm and to the great benefit of all." (Holuby 1958: 102)[5]. But merit bred problems.

How did the German and Hungarian residents, until then dominant, come to terms with the new situation? In general, it can be said that they did not accept the new republic as theirs. They were a serious obstacle to social change because they held important offices and posts.[6] After the regime change, the Hungarian community found itself in a difficult situation as they felt the impact of the disruption of the continuity of their statehood and ties with their home

4 In 1921, Czech together with Slovaks constituted 42% of residents, compared to 30% of Germans and 24% of Hungarians.

5 The article by J. Ľ. Holuby "Slováci a Česi" (Slovaks and Czech) was originally published in Slovenská čítanka (Slovak Reader) in Prague in 1925.

6 Dr. J. Jesenský, for instance, wrote: "Various municipal, county, district, administrative, financial, railroad and judicial bodies have been occupied by foreigners. It is necessary to purge Slovakia of them and fill all position with our people. Many of them will turn into Slovaks in merely 24 hours, many will become our best friends only to stay in their offices..." In: Medvecký, 1934: Vol. I., p. 323.

nation. They gave up their positions of the ruling nation only reluctantly. In the city, they constituted the class of state bureaucrats directly jeopardized by changes in the public administration. The Germans from Bratislava were overtly more loyal to the new political regime since, as the class of entrepreneurs, they took into account the economic implications of their positions. However, they were more outspoken when it came to a higher visibility of Slovaks and Czechs in all spheres of the life of the city. They published the following opinion in their daily Deutsche Zeitung: "Important first class citizens are real cuckoos in the good German nest; they are aliens and newcomers... A good German loathes to hear that unpleasant language that has replaced Hungarian as the state language" (1922). In 1924, a Czech living in Bratislava wrote: "Nowhere else is old Austria moldering as much as in Bratislava. Every time somebody else is holding the flag: one time it the domestic element, then the corrupted element, then the bureaucrat, and the next time it is the clergy."[7] Difficulties of Slovaks and Czechs in the city were testified to, e.g., by the mayor of Bratislava Dr. Krno who, after almost 15 years of the existence of the republic, wrote: "Still today, a Slovak or a Czech cannot go to city hall, to his local representatives, with trust. This is because the elements of the so-called old settlers have been tightly holding on to their positions."[8]

One component of the political and ethnic conflict right after the formation of the new republic was anti-Czech propaganda. Its goal was to break the ties between both nations, and its main slogan was that the Czechs wanted to rob the Slovaks of their mother tongue and their faith. In this respect, it was in line with the ideas of the Slovak Catholic clergy and political parties with national orientation. Especially problematic was the employment of Czechs at the expense of Slovaks, the resistance of Czech teachers to religious education in the schools and also the use of the Czech language in official communication and schools. The anti-Czech attacks occurred more or less intensely during the whole interwar period. Factors in their background were described by a supporter of Czechoslovak unity Karol A. Medvecký (1934: I./375): "Besides a religious and moral breakdown, some Czechs have also brought to Slovakia their political sentiments, mindless bureaucracy, clientelism, untamed egoism,

7 By the domestic element is meant the German-Hungarian community, in the period press Jews were labeled as the corrupted element; many complaints about behavior of the municipal office point to the power of bureaucrats, and by the clergy are meant activities of local priests. Slovenský denník 22. 7. 1924, s. 1.

8 The daily newspaper Politika (Politics) 1932, no. 4, p. 39.

and national chauvinism, which was abused by Hungarian sympathizers to discredit Czechoslovak unity."

This paper does not provide enough space for a more detailed characterization of ethnic relations in the first Czechoslovak republic which, despite many difficulties, were kept within the limits of a democratic regime, acceptance of national claims, ethnic differences and customs. The fostering of Czechoslovak identity had an important impact on changes of the situation in the city and on attitudes of the German-Hungarian community toward Czechs and Slovaks. Although, officially, the "ruling nation" was the Czechoslovaks, German and Hungarian residents constituted an equal political force in the urban community. In daily life, mutual tolerance prevailed. This was very different from the era of Hungarian dominance in the city. At the beginning of the 20th century, Bratislava was an open, multicultural city.

Change in the tolerant character of the city was induced by the nationalistic orientation among German residents and by the politics of the strongest Slovak political parties. Among their programmatic goals were Slovak autonomy, departure of the Czechs and vacancies for jobs for Slovak applicants. In Bratislava they had no significant civic support.[9] Anti-Czech activities started to take place after 1932 (the assembly of the Hlinka Slovak People's Party) where a nationalistic program exemplified by the slogan "One God, one nation, one leader" was set up. The programmatic slogans of "Slovakia to the Slovaks" and "In Slovakia speak Slovak" were especially aimed at the Czechs living in Slovakia. While the former expressed the demand that Czech state employees leave Slovakia, the latter had a linguistic and cultural background and was aimed at Czech teachers.

Interethnic relations in the city gained sharp edges after Austria was annexed by Nazi Germany (12 March 1938). There are testimonies about the conceited demeanor of one part of the Bratislava Germans who inclined towards the Henlein's political current. Fascists in uniforms marched through the streets and cases of physical attacks on Jews and demolition of their businesses occurred. Social life also showed traits of German chauvinism and separation of ethnic communities. One example of theses developments is a newspaper comment about wine cellars of the Bratislava Germans: "Wine cellars are empty because only Germans and Hungarians go there. Slovaks and Czechs go elsewhere. But when some Slovak or Czech wanders in, joy is great and he is served with enthusiasm. But the fact is that they only visit a German

9 In the local elections of 1935 the People's party gained 3 seats, in 1938 it was 6 seats out of total 48 seats in the municipal council.

wine cellar either by mistake or out of ignorance of the local situation."[10] In this unfavorable social climate, thousands of Czechs decided to leave Slovakia. According to methodologically different statistical surveys, either 44, 2,000 or 28,000 Czechs left (Bystrický, 2000: 30). With the declaration of an autonomous Slovak Country in 1938, political power in Slovakia was taken over by the Hlinka People's Party and this move was accompanied by the introduction of totalitarian practices.

The totalitarian regime influenced the development of Slovak towns by ideological interventions into their structure and social relations. This discontinuous development was induced by the state dirigisme, constraints put on civil liberties and rights of certain groups of the population while privileging some others (political, ethnic, religious, economic), but also by forcible deportations. During the period of autonomy, 80 Jewish families were deported from the city and, during the wartime Slovak State, most Jewish citizens were deported to concentration camps.

Disintegration of the Czech Community

In Slovakia, Czechs constitute a rather large population group. In the first phase they arrived within the scheme of state aid to Slovakia. The reason for this organized movement of people from one ethnic milieu to another was that after the fall of the Monarchy there was a lack of politically reliable Slovak intelligentsia who could run the state and ensure its defense. Also, it was important to reform the educational system as teachers in Hungarian education had been fostering an assimilationist program, i.e. Hungarization of the Slovak people. Therefore, most of the Czechs who moved to Slovakia were soldiers, police officers, civil servants, teachers, railroad employees, postmen and also, in Bratislava, entrepreneurs.

After the declaration of autonomy in 1938, the main theme of the domestic policy in Slovakia was ethnic cleansing of the country from "undesirable elements." One of the measures was the program of expulsion of the Czechs. The government, via various legislative provisions and international treaties, launched the expulsion of one part of the Czech civil servants and tried to take over Czech companies and the whole private sector (Rychlík, 1989; Šisler, 1989). According to available data, about 62,000-63,000 people were expelled (Bystrický, 1997).

10 Daily newspaper Slovenský denník, 1 July 1938, p. 4

However, expulsion plans elaborated by local authorities revealed that, even after twenty years of the existence of Czechoslovakia, the Czechs were not fully replaceable and authorities could individually take this fact into account.

The population expulsion had both an individual and social dimension. The expellees, of course, condemned this act as unjust and as ingratitude for their work. Much criticized also was the manner in which the expulsion was carried out. They had to face a journey filled with insecurity because of the bad situation in the protectorate ruled by Nazi Germany. Many of the expellees were leftists and they expected repressions. In the memories of those who were children at that time, we can find their parents' fear and loathing of the regime of the Slovak State. At first, the Slovak society perceived the expulsions as inevitable and just. Nevertheless, in some individual cases, the local community took into account individual characteristics, and the human dimension of the issue outbalanced its "overall benefit." Ordinary people showed them their gratitude.

An example of this unequal evaluation was events that took place at Bratislava University. Czech professors at the Faculty of Philosophy were under continuous pressure from Slovak students to teach in Slovak. The professors backed up their disagreements not with the state language law but with a pragmatic argument: "I wouldn't lecture in bad Slovak even if my life depended on it as I know how offended I would feel if I had to listen to a speaker with bad Czech."[11] There was also an item of news in the press that, at the opening ceremony of a new student dormitory, the Czechoslovak premier delivered his speech in Slovak, even though he was a Czech. However, a Czech professor who for years had been teaching in Slovakia delivered his speech in Czech. This was considered to be disrespectful and stubborn insistence on the concept of a unified Czechoslovak nation that was quite unpopular in Slovak society. The decision to discharge these Czech professors was accepted. The situation was different with professors at the Faculty of Medicine, about whom this decision was questioned. It was emphasized that they were irreplaceable and their merits in building the faculty and education of Slovak physicians were praised.

A legal and, first of all, moral problem related to the expulsion was the fact that Czechs had merits in the creation of Slovakia as an independent territory, demarcation of its borders and in the economic and cultural development after 1918. This concerned state employees who had lived in Slovakia for 10-20 years, and who in many cases lived in mixed families with Slovak partners, or

11 Daily newspaper Slovenský denník, 13 November 1937, p. 1

they had children who were born and raised in Slovakia. Their right to live in Slovakia was unquestionable; therefore the expulsion was based on agreements with the government in Prague, but also on some judicial prevarications and personal pressures. After the annexation of the Czech lands by Nazi Germany, the fascist Slovak government utilized the legal system of the former Czechoslovakia, according to which Czech citizens in Slovakia did not have a domicile in Slovakia and, therefore, they were not eligible for Slovak citizenship. Czechs became citizens of the Reich and fell under its jurisdiction. The German government negotiated with the Slovak government, but did not accept the request for the total "solution of the Czech problem" and expulsions were stopped. Therefore, in Slovakia, about 30,000 people of various professions who lived in complicated social situations and encountered political pressures and derision stayed (Bystrický 2000: 29).

As a consequence of the war, most of the Germans and one part of the Hungarians were expelled after 1945. This political and social revenge led to speedy assimilation of the rest of the German and Hungarian residents with the Slovak majority. A consequence of the Holocaust was assimilation of some of the Jews and emigration of others to Israel (Salner, 2004). Czechs returned to the city in only small numbers[12]; they became an integral part of the mainstream population and they gradually assimilated linguistically. These were turning points that changed the multiethnic development of the city. It was also markedly impacted by the communist regime with its planned economy within the scheme of which mass population influx from other parts of Slovakia took place. This resulted in the social and cultural unification and domination of Slovak ethnicity – both in terms of numbers and culture. In the former Czechoslovakia, Czechs were in the majority and, in the Slovak part of the republic, they were not considered an ethnic minority and had no minority community life. In Bratislava there was only the Moravian Club (Slovácký krúžok), active since 1922.

The Czech Minority in the Independent Slovak Republic

In the recent social process after 1989, the multicultural character of the city has been gradually restored. But this multiculturalism is of a different quality from that known from the interwar times. Activities of minorities have been

12 In 1950 in Bratislava there was 9 296 and in 1980 there was 12126 residents of the Czech nationality.

revived; they started to reformulate their relations with the majority and their activities have made them visible. The Czech minority[13] has also become part of this multiculturalism, although inadvertently.

In the process of the restructuring of post-communist society, attention started to be paid to themes that can be considered as occurring repeatedly in history. They are related to problems of coexistence in the ethnically and religiously multifaceted central-European space. It appears that, in times of great social changes, it is only a matter of time when they resurface. Currently we are also witnessing a gradual escalation of the Czech-Slovak conflict. It was progressing in accordance with the transformation process when economic and political interests and ideas about the further development of the country started to be justified on the basis of historical examples and experiences. On one hand, there was the myth about the "old golden age" of interwar Czechoslovakia when ethnic relations were successfully regulated by a democratic framework; on the other hand, there were reminiscences about the big conflict of the political struggle for Slovak autonomy, the formation of the Slovak State and the expulsion of Czech residents.

The Czechs in Slovakia also became a party to and victims of these conflicts. The division of the common state put many in a difficult situation. Therefore, according to estimates, several hundreds of families moved to the Czech Republic. Citizens with Czech citizenship living in Slovakia, expected – as politicians had promised – to get citizenship of both new states, but, according to Czech law of that time, they had to choose only one[14]: either Czech and the status of foreigner in their Slovak homeland or Slovak and foreigner status in the country of their origin. This was a serious dilemma in which an important role was played by the historical memory of the Czech community in Slovakia. Memories of the fascist Slovak State and the wartime expulsion of the Czechs were revived and worries about the "old-new" Slovak Republic emerged.

At that time, people of Czech nationality were an integral part of Slovak society. According to Miškufová there were generational differences in the degree of their assimilation. The oldest generation born in Slovakia of

13 In the city the regional organization of the Czech Association in Slovakia and the Local Club of Czech Citizens are active. According to its bylaws, the mission of the Association is to "maintain the Czech identity as well as the identity of next generations of the Czechs, Moravians and Silesians in Slovakia."

14 Slovaks laws made possible for citizens of the Czech nationality to have dual citizenship. At present, they can also apply for dual citizenship in the Czech Republic.

Czech parents in the interwar period is aware of its Czech roots, but is to a large extent assimilated. The degree of assimilation of younger generations who came to Slovakia from the Czech lands between 1945 and 1992 is much lower. They mostly live in mixed marriages and only a small percentage of their children are of Czech nationality (Miškufová, 2000: 154). The survey among the Czech community indicates that the Czechs in the interwar period consciously maintained their mother tongue as a preferred ethno-cultural trait as a well as a sign of their declared Czechoslovak identity. In the critical period before the establishment of the Slovak State and during its existence, the majority Slovak society ascribed to them the position of an ethnic majority. The generation of grown-up children of the first generation living in Slovakia has a different attitude to their mother tongue and origin. Due to war events, in the setting of Bratislava (and the whole of Slovakia) the process of assimilation was faster.

To identify the pillars of collective identity, it was also important to know the perceived importance of the above-mentioned historical events and conflicts. The question related to the activities of the Czechs in Bratislava shows that the arrival of Czechs in Slovakia is mostly interpreted as generous aid to the Slovaks in their struggle against Hungarians (76%), less as a career opportunity (12%), and that the arrival of the Czech employees was important in the first years of the existence of the republic (65%) but also during its whole existence (31%). This is also how the opinions that the Slovaks have never shown adequate gratitude to Czech merits in building of the republic are interpreted. However, people are of the opinion that in Bratislava anti-Czech attitudes in interpersonal relations occurred only rarely (37%) or did not occur at all (27%) and a rather large group was of no opinion or not sure (30%). The expulsion of the Czechs is viewed as a necessary measure (62%) or as a forcible act (38%). None of the respondents viewed it as fair to the Slovaks.

In contrast to these, there was a question related to the political intervention from Prague that worsened anti-Czech feelings in Slovakia and precipitated the declaration of the Slovak State. The occupation of Bratislava by the Czech gendarmerie and military troops (on the night of 9 March 1919) and arrests of Slovak politicians induced numerous demonstrations, skirmishes with the military and street shooting. Nowadays, these events are almost unknown among the members of the Czech community (63%), and the rest leaned towards the view – in line with the Czech or Czechoslovak public opinion of that time – that it was a good decision.

Reflections on historical events show that positive sides of the Czech presence in the city are rather firmly anchored in memory; the negative ones are losing their accuracy or are left out of the collective memory. Only those events and memories that are meaningful for the formation of the collective identity and for the continuation of the community have been preserved. Ethnological analyses backed up by survey findings point to main factors that influence the process of the formation of the Czech minority in Bratislava after 1992. These were disagreement with the division of the common state, the previously unknown minority status, attitudes of Czech and Slovak politicians and state bodies toward the claims of the citizens of Czech nationality in Slovakia, reactions of the Slovak society to the declared Czech nationality, family tradition, cultural awareness and historical memory.

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COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND URBAN IDENTITIES[1]

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Abstract
My paper focuses on the construction of the collective memory of certain social groups in an urban space. I studied issues related to re/construction of the collective memory and related group identities in two separate but interrelated research probes.

In the first case, I looked at the way in which the picture of a city was constructed in biographic narratives of the members of a group of small business owners and tradespeople as part of the urban middle class who lived in the studied city between 1918 and 1948. I studied this heterogeneous group (members of the Slovak majority as well as the Jewish minority) in the years from 1987 to 1997 and, through an analysis of their biographic narratives and oral histories I strove to reconstruct their way of life and their place in city life in the first half of the 20th century through their values system and everyday active participation in urban life and culture.

In the second field research I focused on efforts and concrete steps of present-day urban elites and political representatives (members of the municipal council, local government and employees of the City Hall) in the creation of the image of the city.

Both pieces of field research were carried out in the same city and they encompass a broad spectrum of issues related to social and collective memory, identity of the individual, as well as reflection on the urban space in the memory of certain social groups, and also the presence or absence of this specific group in the public space of the city and in the collective memory of its inhabitants.

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In my paper I use the concepts of collective memory, identity, identification which have been at the center of interest of social scientists in Central Europe since the mid-1980s. In Slovakia, more attention has been paid to the concepts since the late 1980s and also in relation to political and social changes after 1989.[2]

Keywords: ***collective memory, identity, identification, urban space***

I. Image of the City and Collective Memory of One Social Group

Memory – either individual or collective – has become the center of attention of historians, but mostly ethnologists, anthropologists, psychologists, social psychologists, sociologists, philosophers and other social scientists. *In the first place,* it can be said that it represents the actualization of the past. It is important for the continuity of the individual, group, community. It represents a psychological and intellectual reconstruction portraying a selective picture of the past. This past is not only the past of a concrete personality, because individuals always move in a certain social context – such as the family, peer group, gender, occupational, religious, ethnic group and the like. As Halbwachs proposed, in this sense every memory can be regarded as collective. Memory is an elementary building block of identity: perception of the self and others, and it matters what kind of optics we use: whether the individual or that of a certain social group.[3]

When speaking about *social identity* we mean the identity of an individual that can be ascribed or acquired; as the main social categories defining the individual's social identity I regard his/her age, gender, occupation, family, social class, place of residence, religion ethnicity and the like.

Standard definitions of *identity* are based on observations that social interaction between individuals or groups is possible only when its actors start to perceive each other and distinguish each other as social subjects. It means that

2 See Bauman, Z.: Identita ve světe, který se globalizuje. *Individualizovaná společnost,* Praha, Mladá fronta 2004, p. 166-181. (Identity in the Globalizing World. *The Individualized Society.* Czech translation.)

3 For a more detailed discussion see e.g. Rousso, H.: Paměť není co byla. Bartošek, K. (Ed.), *Dějiny a paměť.* Praha 1993, s. 25-30. (Memory is Not What it Used To Be. *History and Memory*)

they themselves either acknowledge their own identity and difference from others – enabling them to distinguish themselves from other groups – or these attributes are ascribed to them from the outside.

As the social identity of an individual is related to the performance of certain social roles that an individual should, according to social expectations, fulfill, the study of social identity focuses on the social membership of an individual and on his/her individual perception of this membership. In my research I tried to reconstruct, on the basis of oral histories and biographic narratives, the acts of members of the social group of small business owners and tradespeople, their self-reflection as members of this particular group, but also construction of the picture of the city in their memories as influenced by their social membership. In this concrete case there is some overlap of the concepts of social and collective identity, or they are used in parallel. I use the term social group to denote a group of people who are aware of their group membership and understand their group as a concrete, definable unit. In my understanding, the *social group* is the basic building block of social structure; it is a group of people interconnected by special relationships. As its basic traits I regard interaction, cooperation, common collective norms, goals, values, feelings of belonging to the group, definition of authority and heterostereotypes, solidarity, integration and identification, structure: the existence of positions/statuses/roles, its extent and duration. But in my opinion, the *function* of the group in a setting, i.e., "the activity of the given group aiming at continuation of its existence and its survival," is its most important trait.[4] Similarly, the group can be distinguished from other collectivities by the fact that it has meaning and importance for its members and they are aware of this meaning/importance (Jenkins 1998).

In the recorded narratives, former small business owners and tradespeople reflect mostly the 1930s and 1940s. This was a politically and economically dramatic period: the aftermath of the Great Depression, the rise of fascism and Nazism to the European political scene and the growing influence of the Slovak autonomist movement in the Czechoslovak republic. The urban milieu in Slovakia was also characterized by delayed modernization, which was reflected in the social composition of the population, including the middle class. Small business

[4] For a more detailed discussion see Vrzgulová, M. (1997): *Živnostníci – kultúrotvorný prvok v mestskom prostredí*. Bratislava, ÚEt SAV, Dizertačná práca, 203 s. (Small Business Owners as the Element of Creation of Local Culture in the Urban Setting. Doctoral Dissertation)

owners and tradespeople, as part of the middle class, were an important economic and social power, although they were more or less jeopardized by transnational capital accelerated by industrial production and the growing position of new middle classes in the urban social structure. These also influenced their self-conscious evaluation of their own positions, power and influence in the city. To them the city was a space where strong social control determined behavior and actions. An individual had a clear idea about his/her social position, and what that meant for his/her personal, professional and social growth, what his/her roles were and how he/she should behave to be correctly understood, accepted and the like. On the basis of this knowledge they could articulate their goals and strategies of their achievement. In general, biographic narratives of members of this social group construct the urban space as a communication framework with these peoples as main actors: through their physical presence in their businesses, through the exercising of their trade, they were an integral part of the town's everyday culture and communication; through their behavior and activities, influenced by values and norms of their professional group, they participated in the creation of the urban culture.

In the first half of the 20th century, representatives of the studied social group experienced two changes of the political regime – the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 and its breakup after 1938. They more sharply remember and more often recollect the latter – when the democratic regime was replaced by totalitarianism in 1938 and 1939. However, with the exception of Jewish entrepreneurs, this fact is mentioned only marginally in their narratives. This is one example of what psychologists call selective perception: in each situation with its almost infinite number of facts we select only those that are important to our objectives and disregard the rest (Berger 1991:55). Therefore, for instance, "Aryanizations" – confiscation of Jewish property in the war-time Slovak State, are not a strong theme of biographic stories of non-Jewish entrepreneurs no matter whether they profited from them or not. "Aryanizations" are mostly mentioned in relation to the value system of the then entrepreneurs and their negative impact upon it. "Aryanizations" are used as a parallel to the later period of nationalization of private property in February 1948 that destroyed small business owners as a whole (Vrzgulová 1998).

In all biographical narratives there is a strong auto-image of the entrepreneur as a public personality, an opinion maker, a role model to be emulated, and the like. Owners of businesses and stores regarded themselves, and usually were also regarded by others, as personalities with strong opinions, with

a positive affinity to the space in which their lived and did their business. Competition and relations between and among individual entrepreneurs are often described in a simplified way, downplaying differences and clashes. This is undoubtedly also due to the fact that much time has passed since the actual events, which endows their interpretation with romantic undertones. Distortions can also be caused by incorrect interpretation of narratives on the part of researchers when they *hear something other than what has been said*. This risk is also always present in the study of the present, although its likelihood is higher in historical reconstructions. Historian Ľubomír Lipták pointed to specificities of historical experiences and hence of the memory of a generation, group or individual. The awareness of historical coordinates in the life of individual people helps the researcher to better understand their reflection on a certain historical event or their own life (Lipták 1992).

While non-Jewish entrepreneurs, after the creation of the war-time Slovak State, also construct the picture of the city in an almost unaltered way (they reflect the change of the regime and politics primarily through their impact on their own lifestyle and business), their Jewish colleagues' biographies portray "another" city. Implementation of anti-Jewish laws led to narrowing of their communication space to the family, relatives, and friends, and brought about changes in their standing in the urban social structure, the loss of business and ultimately of their civil and human rights. Simply, the public space ceased to belong to them, and they reflect on it in this way.

Having their business, together with their private lodgings,[5] located in the city center – central squares and the adjacent business street, was a clear sign of social status of members of the studied social group. Jewish entrepreneurs had to leave these spaces, which were THE most highly valued in the social topography of the city. To them, that fact meant not only a loss of property but also a loss of status, and it concerned also the life of the majority although this majority did not realize it and often still does not.

The life stories of Jewish small business owners and tradespeople living in the city in the first half of the 20th century represent the specific memory of a subgroup that used to be an important part of the urban space. Their autoimage contains statements about their efforts not to attract attention to their "otherness"; the theme of assimilation and the Jewish identity in a society

[5] Contrary to the present, for small entrepreneurs of the first half of the 20th century, these two worlds – professional and private, were closely intertwined

marked by modernization processes is also often voiced. Memories of representatives of this social group also focus on the interwar period (esp. the beginning of the 1930s), on the period of the wartime Slovak State and the Holocaust, as the cornerstone of Jewish identity after 1945, and on frustrated expectations in the postwar period.

In their biographies, Jewish residents of the city articulate their affinity to Jewry and Jewish identity in a very similar way symptomatic of the urban milieu of Western Slovakia of the first half of the 20th century. All of them stated their lukewarm affinity to Judaism and they considered their families to be more or less assimilated. The positions of Jewish respondents in relation to their own identity oscillated between complete assimilation (not to differ, to be on equally good terms with both Jewish and non-Jewish fellow citizens) to practicing Judaism according to the Torah (mostly "Neologue" Judaism) emphasizing concrete non-conflictual relations with the majority in everyday situations. Almost without exception, the interwar period resonates in their memories as the time when communication barriers broke down and were replaced (at least on the surface) by norms and values accepted in the whole social space in everyday forms of public (in the neighborhood, in business and professional life, in offices, schools, interest and professional associations, cafés and streets) as well as private contacts.

Multifaceted plurality, typical for the urban space of Central Europe, was also present in the studied city. Its residents differed in terms of their ethnicity and religion as well as their culture. It can be said that it was this horizontal differentiation that, on the one hand, offered possibilities for interaction while, on the other, it contributed to the constant presence of differences, and even *contradictions*, that are in the memory of the members of the Jewish minority interlinked with ambivalent evaluation of their everyday communication with the majority. There is much similarity in the way they describe their own position in the city: they largely belonged to the urban middle class, which was reflected in their social status, lifestyle and everyday interactions. It was also reflected in the location of their businesses in the social topography of the city – in the historical center and the main business street. The intensity of contacts was higher in their own extended family and it was common to help needy people within their own group. With non-Jewish people they tried to maintain as non-conflictual relations as possible. The small size of the city and the power of social control did not permit for much deviation from social norms and expected behaviors in the public space.

The end of the 1920s brought a radical change. The regime change formally came in March 1939, but my Jewish respondents had felt the change in the social climate earlier than that – they speak about the general mobilization in 1938 that was followed by the creation of an autonomous Slovak country. Heightened activities of the Hlinka Guards, their classmates joining the Hlinka Youth on a mass scale, proclamations of support of the political orientation represented by the Hlinka Slovak People's Party, the increase in nationalist sentiments – all this marked the atmosphere in the city. Most contacts still remained unchanged, but the nature of many was already changing. Verbal attacks, confrontations, invectives in the local press became commonplace. Much of this was undoubtedly due to the fascist propaganda counting on the latent anti-Semitism of the population. The declaration of the independent Slovak State meant the end of the relatively calm previous period. Anti-Jewish laws and governmental decrees and abundant anti-Jewish propaganda disseminated by the media contributed to swift narrowing of the communication space of Jewish small business owners, and of the Jewish minority as a whole. Their opportunities for free existence and activities dwindled. In the memories of my respondents it is apparent that this new political reality completely overshadowed the results of Jewish assimilation efforts. The only possible mode of existence was the life in Jewish institutions in a strictly delineated space that was forced upon them. The city was gradually constructed as a "space without Jews," which, at the same time, was also a demonstration of the strength of new political forces. This situation is a textbook example of a process when the social location of an individual/group ascribed by the others conflicts with the self-perception of this individual or group, which leads to an identity crisis.

Members of the Jewish community were wrenched out of their routine way of life, marked against their will and pushed out of their usual frame of social communication. All social contacts narrowed down to the family, friends and neighbors. The urban public space ceased to be a Jewish space; usual patterns of behavior and social behavior did not officially apply to them any longer. People's reminiscences of this period are filled with ambivalent statements and judgments. What is important about these strongly emotional memories is the accuracy of facts and details that fatally impacted people's lives: names of denunciators, aggressive or sympathetic Guards members, those who confiscated Jewish property and the like. Memories of the year 1945 convey hopes for restoration of the prewar climate of tolerance and subsequent disappointment over political and social developments, when the respondents again isolated themselves from the broader society and turned inwards towards their own community or family.

The ordeal of the former small entrepreneurs (both Jewish and non-Jewish) is an active part of their individual, family or collective memory and, at the same time, it is an important basis of local memory. It is significant as part of the city as a whole and also provides crucial coordinates for present communication for those who still remember or who have not forgotten.

The official culture of remembrance or deliberate forgetting after 1948 and during decades of the communist rule purposefully omitted and marginalized the importance and the very existence of small business owners and tradespeople. First, in the first half of the 1940s, ownership of nationalized or dismantled workshops, small companies and businesses was transferred from Jewish to Slovak hands, which was followed by the gradual forcible expulsion of the entrepreneurs from the economic, social and cultural scene of the city.

What followed after 1948 was diametrically opposed to the social world of the small entrepreneurs. The main reason for their destruction was their lifestyle and the values they honored. The core of individual biographies is the system of traits of the groups – habitus, which is a generative principle of different and differentiating practices and opinions (Bourdieu 1998). Articulation and demonstrative verbalization of the *difference* of one's own social group within the urban community realized in the last phase of the existence of the political regime (records of narratives from 1988 and 1989) that strove to erase this difference from the social space and memory through social and physical destruction of its representatives, endowed the life narratives with specific meanings. As if by narrating their life stories, former small entrepreneurs tried to rehabilitate themselves in their own eyes and reestablish themselves in the symbolic hierarchy of the urban social space. Their acts, everyday practices, opinions, proclamation of collective interests on one hand endowed their existence with meaning, while explaining their logical interconnectedness with the local social space. And even though small entrepreneurs have always been a heterogeneous, richly diversified group, their fate after 1948 has become one of the unifying elements of their stories. Those almost 50 years that have passed since their common collective past have significantly influenced their perception and interpretation of their ordeal. The main determining fact was their interest in capturing and retelling their experiences through the prism of their status. They endeavored to logically explain their acts from the perspective of

social beings with their own position in real historical time and space to a person (researcher) without the same social and historical experience. What was important was not only who was speaking and what was being told – and how, but also to whom and when was this conveyed.

In the families of former small entrepreneurs the experience was handed down in family communication and also active in the following generation – the generation directly afflicted by various forms of discrimination by the official political regime. The awareness of group membership was also transferred in a weaker form to the grandchildren's generation, but the year 1989 and the ensuing political change also sparked a renewed interest induced by processes of social rehabilitation and property restitutions.

In the group of Jewish respondents, past experiences and memories of the Holocaust were often suppressed, and people often also concealed their Jewish background. Many members of the Jewish community chose to act in this manner due to their experiences and because they wanted to protect their children and relatives from experiencing similar intolerance and discrimination. The transfer of information within respondents' own families was often accelerated by "outside" interest in their experiences (an increasing number of research projects focusing on testimonies of Holocaust survivors in the 1970s and also later in the 1990s).

While tri-generational orally transmitted memory is rather unstable, reminiscences about traumatic experiences (the Holocaust, political persecutions) are more stabilized and anchored in the memory of the next generations.

But what about the official social memory of the whole local community? Pichler (Pichler 1999), in his study about searching for lost memory, writes that there are various strategies of remembering. He even speaks about the politics of remembering or forgetting, giving examples of national and communist politics of forgetting the undesirable. Collective experiences creating the basis of social memory of former small business owners and tradespeople, as well as memories of urban residents of Jewish origin, became a subject of this politics of forgetting or silencing. I agree with Pichler, who prefers the strategy of recollection of the issues related to the whole of state-building rather than just nation-building, as this enables more pluralistic capturing of the past; assembling of the common local (urban) memory from collective memories of particular components of the (in our case, urban) community. The best politics of remembering does not suppress the undesirable which we would rather forget: this way the history we never had a chance to experience could also become our

history. In the recent past, the acceptance of different experiences and their different reflections inspired resentment induced by this very difference but also by the kind of information these memories contain. Why is this so? It may be due to mental indolence preventing people from critically reflecting upon their recent past caused by last remnants of the totalitarian mentality in each of us. Perhaps it is difficult to accept the fact that it is possible to remember in various ways, or we cannot admit that one universal historical truth, one correct version of the past, is simply a myth.

II. Construction of the Image of the City and Local Identity

Related to the way of remembering and forgetting, or construction of local memory, is also the second piece of research that I have been carrying out since 2002. It is focused on urban local identity and local politics in relation to the construction of the image of the city both internally and towards the outside world. I was interested, among others, in the ways in which representatives of the city (municipal council, local government and City Hall) construct the history and image of the city for the current generation, what elements they use and what they want to achieve.

In marketing and media politics, the following elements that can be used as building blocks in the process of creation of the image of the city crystallized:

Representative symbols of the city

– important objects and their meaning for local identity: the castle, the city tower inside the fortification wall; personalities – the famous lord of the castle Matúš Čák Trenčiansky, the famous writer Vojtech Zamarovský; locally important events – the Roman inscription carved into the castle rock as proof of the most northern presence of the Roman legions, etc.

History

– the role of the city in the history of the country – as a business and administrative center

– local history: local historic personalities, events, legends

the rector of the Piarist secondary school Jozef Branecký, the founder of the County Society for Natural History (Brančík), the re-discoverer of the Roman inscription in the castle rock (Stárek), national and cultural personalities who in the past lived in the city (S. Štúr, K. Štúr, Palacký, Dohnányi).

Myths and legends
– working with historical narratives, their dissemination and promotion, identification with them. Some legends are still alive in the collective memory of the residents and are part of their local identity, for instance:
– the legend about the Well of Love from the times of the Ottoman wars
– the legend about a secret passage to the castle and about the tomb of Matúš Čák
– about municipal executioners
– about the hermits St. Svorad and Benadik who lived on Skalka hill near Trenčín

Traditions
– their current forms – annual markets, fairs, festivals
– informing city dwellers about the origin and history of traditions (e.g. Skalka hill near Trenčín as the oldest pilgrimage place in Slovakia)
– creation of balance between commercial use of traditions and those that are still alive (e.g., a combination of the Christmas Market and a living Nativity)
– long-term attempts at revitalization of the city promenade

Education
– the history of local education vs. the current situation (establishing continuity with interrupted historical development of, e.g., parochial schools and their importance for the life of the city)
– the structure of today's educational institutions and their involvement in the process of identification with the city and creation of its image through: current local personalities (their portraits aired by the local TV), annual awards for *the child personality /celebrity*, annual meetings of writers – natives from the city, combined with a discussion in the municipal library

Sports
– the history of famous clubs and athletes
– the current hockey club, the legacy and celebration of successful players and their career in the NHL, their financial support for the construction of a hockey stadium for the youth – these are facts that contribute to the creation of the modern image of the city, mainly for the younger generation of its residents.
Culture and arts
– Trenčín as the co-founder of the ARTFILM film festival
– the city of the famous Bažant Pohoda open-air festival

– the city of trade fairs and exhibitions in the Trenčín Mesto Módy Exhibition Area
– the continuing absence of a municipal theater vs. growing activities of amateur theaters and ensembles of historical fencing

The above-mentioned elements are the main areas of local politics in film festival the creation of the image of the city and in the formation of the local identity of its residents. Effective tools are mainly interactive events for people of various ages organized in public spaces, working with school-age children, improving the communication of municipal institutions with the people, a good city website and the like. The city is among those regional centers in Slovakia that record positive economic growth and a low unemployment rate and offer a relative high quality of life, i.e., it is a modern and developing city. Despite this fact, its history along with the commemoration of it *is* an active, living part of people's local identity.

However, just as in previous decades, even before 1989, the process of commemoration of local personalities, important dates and historic monuments is selective, dated and serving a certain purpose.

The symbols representing Trenčín[6] were already promoted by the city officials (active in the area of tourism) in the first half of the 20th century.[7] Both current tourist guides and those from half a century back introduce to potential visitors the same city symbols. We can find there the Castle, below it St. Mary's Hill with the complex of religious monuments (the parish church of the Birth of Our Lady with the charnel house of St. Michael), the historic monuments zone basically congruent with the main square (consisting of religious monuments, a part of the municipal fortifications with a tower and urban architecture of the 17th–20th centuries). Also temples of various religions – Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish, are among representative showplaces of architectural and historical value. They are a demonstration of the religious diversity of the city's

6 I studied activities of employees of the Municipal Office in city tourism in 2004 and 2005. I also use my data from my own research carried out in the city in the previous decade.

7 The following quotation from the brochure *Trenčín Invites You* from the wartime Slovak state illustrates the fact that the city residents were aware of the tourism potential of their city and had a strong local identity: "Trenčín, an ancient Slovak town, with perhaps the richest and most interesting history among all Slovak towns, is making a rapid progress in terms of its culture and material development. As concerns natural beauties, it has beautiful groves, forests, fertile soil, a healthy climate, good water and a world known spa in the vicinity and it's a home of good Slovaks. Shouldn't it rightfully be called the pearl of the Slovak country?"(Trenčín vás zve. Trenčín: Tlač. Gansel, 1940, p. 3.)

past and present, its culture in the broadest sense, and perhaps also the tolerant climate of the city. Less frequently, the current offer includes monuments from the modern history of the city – functionalist buildings, evidences of modernization – the first railway station, the original and current post office, the Municipal Office building, educational institutions, the Court of Law, or urban middle-class villas in the Kollar neighborhood. At present, even mention of the former small business district demolished in the 1970s is missing. The official argument was inappropriate hygienic conditions, but the generation of former small entrepreneurs as well as the middle generation sees the demolishment in the context of communist ideology: in the minds of city residents the whole neighborhood was constantly reviving memories of the pre-communist era. Sidewalks, workshops, firms located in houses of small entrepreneurs were replaced by megalomaniac communist buildings of the District Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia, the District Army House and a shopping center. And although more than thirty years have passed since their construction they still have not been integrated into their surroundings and they are incompatible with the rest of the broader center.

The city creates its image not only through tourist guides which are constructs of a certain "desirable" picture of the city, but also through memorial plaques commemorating important personalities or events. After 1989, those personalities that communist ideologues considered acceptable were joined by local religious dignitaries, e.g., the rector of the Piarist school and the writer Branecký (1882-1962) or professionally successful natives from or residents of the city (painters, architects). In contrast, the memorial plaque of the leftist intellectual Clementis disappeared from the main square, just as the plaque commemorating the tragic death of unemployed Matúš Drgoň, who died during a strike of local textile mill workers, disappeared from the former Workers' House. Similarly, the local synagogue still lacks a memorial tablet to commemorate the tragic events of the Holocaust and its local form. Rather than remembering events pertaining to modern, and more problematic, history the re-constructors of local historical memory find inspiration in more distant events – the presence of Roman legions, the Middle Ages and history related to the castle.

Quotations and paraphrases from the local history of the royal burgh or the castle can often be heard at both regular and one-time events taking place in public spaces. Usually, these events involve parades in period costumes, jousting tournaments and the like, featuring elements of traditional culture of surrounding villages staged by local folk ensembles. The form and context in and through which these are incorporated into particular shows attest to the fact that the primary function of their exploitation in tourism is their visual appeal at the expense of historical accuracy, which, however, is not a rare occurrence in today's exploitation of historical facts.

Local history and the importance of the urban space in the historical development of the region and the country as a whole are at the center of attention of the local political elite. Local cultural heritage and its European contexts are stable parts of local identity while (logically) they also constitute one of the priorities of local policies. They are tools to help politicians to safely address the majority of their constituency, and through them they foster and realize their intentions related to local development. But ambitions of the political elite go even further: inspired by examples of European historic towns they also try to newly formulate and reconstruct the image of the city in the collective memory of its residents through the European context. Through this changed point of view they want to redirect reflection on history and the local cultural heritage away from the immutable historical space towards its perception as an asset endowed with new meanings and valuable not only in the local but also in the European context.

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INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS OF A TOWN – HISTORY AND PRESENT

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Abstract
Social and professional groups create a significant part of an urban community. It can be proved that business activities have existed ever since the Middle Ages in the town of Banská Bystrica: there were activities connected with mining and metallurgy (mines, smiths, etc.) and there were sawmills, textile factories, mills, and distilleries in the period of the establishment of manufactories and factories. Powerful local business families were formed in this context. The period between the two world wars was especially prosperous. A number of trades and shops were reconstructed. Later, during the socialist period, the tradition was interupted and, after 1989, business activities did not continue in the tradition of family business. Commercial activities in the town have now been influenced and homogenized by the establishment of famous-brand retail chains and restaurants offering foreign cuisine.

A professional group of miners in Banská Štiavnica had helped to create mining traditions. These traditions have been reproduced today – even after mine closings. Social activities of the town also reflect tradition.

Keywords: ***urban anthropology, industrial and commercial districts***

The main aim of this study is to point out significant changes in public town spaces which created town cores and were centers of trade, crafts and businesses for centuries. My hypotheses are as follows:

1) In 1989, after a long period of a totalitarian regime, when all the functions of the town were centralized under the aegis of Communist ideology, the town attracted its original functions back. It was closely connected with a growing number of small businesses based on the private ownership of former own-

ers and entrepreneurs and the free running of businesses by former owners (before 1948).

2) Mental images of industrial and market sections of the town depend on our preservation and presentation of crucial periods of our economic history and technical heritage.

Considering the time factor, I decided to analyze two periods: the period between the First and the Second World Wars and the period after 1989. Spatially, I focused on the town of Banská Bystrica because I have been dealing with this issue for more than two decades. I decided to do a survey of the middle class with the main focus on social and spatial stratification.[1] I deal with three questions in this study:

1. What were the specifics and features of the town of Banská Bystrica in terms of its history? What created the special atmosphere of the town?
2. How did industry, trade, crafts and businesses support such specifics and features? What are the most significant changes when we compare those two above-mentioned periods?
3. How do the current inhabitants perceive their own historical facts and do the images of the industrial and commercial districts of the town belong to the mental maps of the Banská Bystrica?

1. Economic and industrial features of the town

The town of Banská Bystrica (one of the seven royal copper-mining towns – Kremnica, Banská Štiavnica, Nová Baňa, Pukanec, Ľubietová and Banská Belá), flourished as a regional mining center and had a crucial position in the economic history of Slovakia, especially in the 15th and 16th centuries. During the next centuries, the economic importance and activities of the town changed significantly, but in 1925 an unknown author wrote the following words: *"Banská Bystrica is very significant in the area of market, finance and industry; it has many important factories, many historical buildings in the centre and it is a real town"* (Lupták, 1932).

The history of Banská Bystrica was connected with the exploitation of its abundant deposits of copper (and to a lesser extent of silver, gold, and iron). Banská Bystrica, together with other mining towns of Banská Štiavnica (nicknamed "Silver Banská Štiavnica") and Kremnica (nicknamed "Golden Kremnica"), was the most famous and the wealthiest free royal mining town in the region. The affluent Fugger and Thurzo families founded the prosperous "Ungarischer Handel" company (German for "Hungarian Trade") in 1494. Depending mainly on the mines around the town of Banská Bystrica, the company had become a leading world producer of copper by the 16th century (the company was dissolved in 1548). The copper deposits had been all but depleted by the 18th century, but there are still many places in the town which recall its rich and famous mining history (for example, some names of town districts and residential quarters – Na Troskách, meaning "On the Debris" or Hámor, meaning metallurgic manufacture). In the next centuries, the town became a center of several public and municipal institutions. Development of new industries also influenced the town of Banská Bystrica. Many new manufactories and factories[2] were established, but they were of little influence and importance, particularly because of the Great Depression in the first half of the 20th century.[3] But we can say that smaller businesses and crafts greatly influenced the town. Industrial zones of the town were situated in the close distance from the historic town centre. Most small shops and businesses were situated on the town square and in the nearby streets and most of them were family businesses. Shopkeepers and entrepreneurs lived in the centre of town (for example at the end of Lazovna Street near a former textile factory; today it is the well-known Slovenka Textile Factory).

During the period between the two World Wars of the 20th century there were tens of small shops and businesses situated right on the town square and in the nearby streets. (See also Darulova, 2006). Together with local industry, they supported the economic development of the town because they employed more than one-third of its inhabitants.

At the beginning of the twenties of the 20th century the wood-products industry was the leading industry in terms of the number of factories as well

1 This study is a part of VEGA grant No. 1/2225/05 "Identita vybraných profesijných skupín v stredoslovenských mestách" and a prepared monograph entitled *Banská Bystrica – mesto obchodníkov, remeselníkov a živnostníkov.*

2 The first manufactories were established at the end of the 18th century (production of textile and copper dishes). A textile manufactory was established around 1725. Workshops focused on dyeing of textiles were mechanized in the 19th century. Metallurgic manufactory in the town quarters "Kráľová" and "Kostiviarska" produced weapons. Melchior Smrtník started to produce millstones in the 17th century. A sugar manufactory was established in 1830, but it had only a short existence. It was closed in 1840.

3 In the second half of the 19th century manufactories were replaced by modern factories. The first factory ever established in the town of Banská Bystrica was a wood-industry factory which produced goods by 1919. The first factory producing ceramics and cement was established in 1905. The textile factory of the Furdik family was established in 1906.

as employees. The second most important industry was construction; the food industry, the textile industry, the chemical industry, metalworking or leatherworking were also of great importance. Banská Bystrica became a real commercial centre. There were more than 110 shops with various goods. A 1932 publication focused on the town stated: *"...the town has many shops and you can buy everything you want. There is a network of small businesses. Most small shops and businesses are located in the town. There are many nice coffeehouses, hotels, and restaurants in the town"* (Almanach a adresár mesta Banskej Bystrice, 1932).

In 1932, the Business Community[4] of the town consisted of more than 1,408 tradesmen of various types and registered around 400 apprentices. According to demographic statistics of 1930[5] that was one-tenth of all the inhabitants (the town had 11,321 inhabitants). As for the original ethnic composition of the town, there were 9,600 Czechs and Slovaks, 470 Germans, 435 Hungarians, 600 Jews and 235 others (Krupa, 1998, p. 65).

There were 55 trades and 31 shops of various types in the town of Banská Bystrica.

When we talk about the multiplicity of commercial enterprises, we can say that the most frequent businesses were inns and restaurants (35), canteens or dining halls (3) and hotels (5). Other numerous groups were tailors (38), shoemakers (49), hansom cab drivers (16) and bakers (10). There were also 19 lawyers, 17 doctors and 5 dentists.

In 1932, there were 31 types of shops in the town of Banská Bystrica. Inhabitants witnessed a growing number of groceries, some of which were considered luxurious because they were affected by a luxury tax (e.g., shops which sold jewelry, sweets, chocolates, perfumes, etc.). According to the statistics, there were 39 "luxury" shops in the town in 1920 (e.g., there were 12 watchmakers and jewelers).

The social status of tradesmen and shopkeepers was very different. For example, the revenue from business activities (we are talking about grocery shops) was from about 5,000 to 2,700,000 crowns per year. The lumber trade was one of the most profitable. Constructors and butchers were also very successful. Craftsmen such as bakers, watchmakers, jewelers, tailors and shoemakers had lower social status and lower incomes.

4 The main aim of the Business Community was to support humanitarian, economic and educational interests of its members. (Almanach a adresár mesta Banskej Bystrice, 1932, p. 18). Membership in the Business Community was obligatory. (Almanach a adresár mesta Banskej Bystrice, 1932, p. 18)

5 As for confessions, 6,611 identified themselves as Catholic, 2, 444 as Protestants, 76 as Calvinists and 1,146 as Jewish.

If we want to emphasize the original ethnic composition of the shopkeepers we have to say that the Jews had a significant position; they controlled about 63% of all the shops in the town. But at the end of the 19th century former tradesmen and craftsmen[6] were replaced by industrial production. That was the main reason why only few trades and crafts survived. But those trades and crafts were not controlled by Jews.

From the economic point of view, the most successful were shopkeepers and tradesmen; craftsmen were less successful (Darulová, 2005, p. 119).

Middle-class shopkeepers and craftsmen were considered public representatives of the town because they were in everyday contact with visitors, foreigners or customers. They represented the town and its features. Names of individual shopkeepers, signs on shops or workshops are closely connected with the town and its history. Family businesses often advertised in local newspapers.

2. Changes of the town in terms of the structure of businesses, crafts and trades between 1918 and 1945/48 in comparison to the period after 1989

The non-violent revolution of November 1989 that saw the overthrow of the Communist government symbolizes, in some ways, the return of our society to the period before 1948, the period of the First Republic. We witnessed the change from "state employee" to tradesmen. To sum it up, we can say that the middle class survived its "liquidation" and all businesses were brought to an end after 1948, but suddenly they were resurrected in the 1990s (Marek, 2006, p. 8).

Today, only few shops are named after their previous, original owners (for example, the "U Klimov" grocery, the "U Mihálikov" bakery or the "U Kemov" shopping center). Only a few family businesses are still "named" after their original owners, for example, the building of the Hotel Rak – meaning "Crayfish," named after its original owner Juraj Krebs (in Slovak Rak). But today this name is closely connected with a building other than the original one, the building of the "Červený rak" restaurant.[7]

6 Dissolution of the guilds was a crucial historical moment. In 1884, the Law on the Adaptation of Craft as a Trade was adopted. The position of tradesmen in Czechoslovakia was defined by the so-called Law on Trades in 1924.

7 The original building of the Hotel "Rak" is located on the town square. It is the seat of T-Mobile today.

Direct family members of former private owners of family businesses could demand return of their property (firms, shops buildings etc.) after 1989, but only a few of them decided to do so and, later, only a small group of them decided to continue and revitalize the family business. Most rightful owners decided to sell or rent their property.

According to our survey we can divide the rightful owners into three basic categories:

– rightful owners who decided to sell their property;
– rightful owners who decided to renovate and rent their property;
– rightful owners who decided to start renovations and revitalization of the family businesses.

After 1989, only a few rightful owners decided to use the original shop names (e.g., the "U Klimov" grocery[8], the "U Mihálikov" bakery or the "U Havelkov" stationery store).

Many owners decided to rent their property for other purposes. For example, the family of former butchers rented their properties to the owners of a gambling room; another butchers' family rented their house to the owners of the Positivo café, and ...*"the G... family wanted to revitalize the family tradition and open a grocery but they could not compete with the general merchandising retail chains"* (G. P.).

There are also other reasons why owners decided not to revitalize family businesses, for example...*"we did not revitalize our original family business because our grandchildren are the rightful owners and they are either not skilled enough to continue or they lost their emotional connections with the former family business"* (G. P.).

We witnessed a growing number of restaurants (rating 2 and 3 stars), a decline of boutiques and an increase in the number of small shops full of Chinese goods (textile, shoes, clothing etc.) after 1989. They can also be seen on the town square and in the nearby streets. There is also an increase in the number of jewelry stores run by businessmen of Italian or former Yugoslavian origin.

Shops of today that are located in the centre have already lost their specific atmosphere. There were also significant changes in the number and types of shops. Today we are witnessing a certain homogenization of shops in Slovak towns and cities; we can see an increase in the number of shops similar to French-type restaurants (Copaline), fast-food restaurants (McDonald's) or

8 The rightful owners decided that the new owner of the bakery may use original name.

Picture No. 1: ORIGINAL BUILDING OF THE "U MIHÁLIKOV" BAKERY (BEFORE 1928)

Picture No. 2: "U MIHALIKOV" BAKERY (PRESENT DAY)

pizzerias; there are many shoe shops (Baťa) or sport shops (Kenvelo, Adidas, O'Neill, etc.). In 2006, the situation in the town dramatically changed after a new shopping mall (the Europe Shopping Center) was opened to the public. It caused many small shops in the town center to close, particularly boutiques and sports shops, which were replaced by new restaurants.

Basic commercial functions of the town were relocated from the center to uptown, where a new network of hypermarkets was built after 1989 – Tesco Stores, Baumax, Nay, showrooms or warehouses.

3. Reflections, mental maps and preferences

Throughout the centuries, a number of residential quarters, industrial and commercial districts, fortifications, places of entertainment and dominants were built in the town of Banská Bystrica. They had certain specific functions. Today many of them have lost their original functions or have just disappeared. So the history of the town can be seen only in archives, books or short historical remarks and that is the main reason why it is very hard to define the whole historical image of the town.

There were periods in the history of the town when all the industrial and market sections became an inseparable part of mental maps of the inhabitants. It was the period connected with mining and metalworking. Because this period ended two hundred years ago, there are no sites in the town which could recall our memories. These sites either disappeared or were renovated by new owners (mainly mills, sawmills etc.). Companies built in the 19th century had only local importance (the textile and wood industries). Many of them were closed, except the Slovenka Textile Factory. Only the names of individual areas recall their original industrial functions. Few of them are still used and well-known, for example:

– The "Na Troskách" area was closely connected with a silversmith and debris produced there. Today the term "Na Troskách" is closely connected with the newly established Europa Shopping Center;

– The "Hušták" area, located beyond the town gates, was a suburb full of workshops; many of those buildings were destroyed during the period of Socialism;

– The "Uhlisko" area is also closely connected with the mining history of the town. This quarter was full of wood piles used in the process of copper production.

Picture No. 3:
ORIGINAL BUILDING
OF STATIONERY
"U HAVELKOV" (1928)

Picture No. 4:
THE "U HAVELKOV"
STATIONERY STORE
(PRESENT DAY)

If we consider that mental maps are created by personal memories on the one hand and institutional bases on the other (schools, museums, memorials etc.), then traditional industrial and market areas of the town will be a part of the mental maps of former tradesmen and shopkeepers, or perhaps inhabitants who were born in the inter-war period. The survey proved that only old people know something about the prewar and Socialist industrial and commercial areas of the town. The younger generation is closely connected with Zvolenská Street, which is full of hypermarkets and showrooms. Our mining history is almost forgotten and the younger generation knows nothing about quarters such as Na Troskách or Medený Hámor. These quarters are not connected with mining anymore.

Conclusions

Considering the comparative study of tradesmen, shopkeepers and craftsmen (comparing years 1918 to 1945/8 and after 1989) we claim that:

– most rightful owners decided to sell or rent their property; only a small group decided to revitalize former family businesses (e.g., the "U Mihálikov" bakery or the "U Havelkov" stationery store);

– many renters do not continue in the family traditions and do not revitalize family businesses, we also witness frequent change of renters because of their insolvency;

– there is a change in the system of presentation of the owners; whereas, at the beginning of the 20th century, they tried to advertise their names and shops were named after their owners, today owners try to hide their identity and focus on the goods or services they sell;

– small tradesmen or craftsmen are primarily focused on selling goods during fairs or celebrations; they produce small presents made of wax, wood, clay or they sell gingerbread cookies;

– our historical experience with political persecutions and the existence of an irrational ideological attitude of hostility directed against the middle class (together with its isolation for more than fifty years) caused traditional crafts and businesses to decrease and current owners not to revitalize the small- and medium-size family businesses of their ancestors.

Considering the change of central parts of the town and inhabitants' (or visitors') preferences, it is necessary to claim that:

– there is an enormous effort to preserve or revitalize the historical atmosphere of the town; some shopkeepers, in particular, try to support this general tendency (e.g., preservation of the original name of one of the oldest restaurants in the town – Červený rak – meaning "red crayfish," the original name of an old grocery store U Klimov – the name of the shopkeeper, historical portals of buildings, etc.);

– on the other hand, the more changes we witness the more similarities with to other Slovak (or European) towns and cities we can find; the town is more open and diversified – e.g., various restaurants in the centre (18 restaurants on one square): the most interesting being Positivo – Cuban style, Olivo – Italian cuisine, Barbakan – a luxurious restaurant for foreigners (Barbakan – a historical building with a music garden), a French crêperie, a Staroplzenska restaurant – foreign cuisine, a Slovak restaurant (1 star rating) etc.

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ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING THE AWARENESS OF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CREATING AN IMAGE OF A TOWN[1]

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Abstract
Societies as well as individuals are members of some group or groups, observe similarities and differences, perceive time continuity and/or identify with the environment. What is more important, they can be emotionally linked to a cultural, ethnic, religious or other tradition or group.

In contrast to rural existence, life in a town is socially and culturally much more differentiated; people participate in activities of various interest groups, clubs, religious or national organizations, cultural, sport or alternatively-oriented associations which, with their sub-cultural manifestations, participate more or less in activities of the town.

Keywords: ***identity, mental memory, development of the town***

The cultural potential of a society involves not only various material and spiritual values but also, in a broader sense, its objective (phenomenal) and socio-cultural surroundings. The way of life (festal and everyday life) of the inhabitants is influenced and formed by their surroundings. At the same time, these surroundings are reshaped and influenced by people with their various social activities, requirements, and interests. People expect the following from their surroundings:

– identification with the place where they live;
– fulfillment of the need to belong somewhere, to feel affection for the place where they live, its traditions, history and culture;

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- security in the material, social and emotional sense;
- human surroundings and quality of life;
- possibility of communicating socially and of gaining some knowledge.

Nowadays, we prefer new possibilities of interpersonal communication. They are connected with the disappearance of borders and the overcoming of distances that help us to gain new emotional experiences and knowledge. We are overloaded with information and influenced by homogenization – not only with technical homogenization but also with spiritual homogenization. Surroundings, culture, fashion, entertainment, food, etc., are also homogenized (Petrusek, 2007). Such globalizing surroundings, complexity of cultural trends and aspects force scientists (especially social and cultural anthropologists, philosophers, sociologists, ethnologists, historians and psychologists) to think about the sense of the existence of national, regional, local, urban and rural cultures; about the importance of preserving and developing the cultural heritage, identity and humanization of the surroundings and society.

According Petrusek, abandon of tradition, one's own history, culture, and identity is not a step which "society can afford without any risk... Each generation has some problems with its tradition; each generation ignores or even despises some aspects of tradition" (Petrusek, 2007, p. 316-317).

Experience and knowledge, coming from history, warn us that loss of identity always means a fast or slow end of a community, which is usually followed by gradual dissolution into foreign cultural surroundings. A community without identity and its own history (more precisely, a society which is unable to express its identity through cultural expression), trying to enter into European integration processes, is sentenced to the above-mentioned dissolution (Hajko, 2005).

Societies as well as individuals are members of some group or groups, observe similarities and differences, perceive time continuity and/or identify with the environment. What is more important, they can be emotionally linked to a cultural, ethnic, religious or other tradition or group.

The identity of an individual is created and developed in a cultural and social-historical context and area. Memory of history and symbols connected with identity provide awareness of the line joining us with our ancestors and awareness of our development in time (Bačová, 1996).

In contrast to rural existence, life in a town is socially and culturally much more differentiated: people participate in activities of various interest groups,

clubs, religious or national organizations, cultural, sport or alternatively-oriented associations which, with their sub-cultural manifestations, participate more or less in activities of the town.

In this paper, I concentrate on activities of two interest groups – *"Friends of the Pustý hrad Association"* and *"Sport Fans of the Pustý hrad Association"* (Pustý hrad means Deserted Castle or Desolate Castle) and how their activities help to create awareness of the historical background and image of the town of Zvolen. I will show activities of these two groups for the town and its inhabitants. These activities focus on creating and propagating the historical feeling of "Old Zvolen," alias the "Deserted Castle." At the same time, I will try to find the answer to the question of whether the inhabitants of the town are aware of the historical background of Pustý hrad and, if so, how they perceive this historical background. I will try to analyze which visions, strategies and activities toward stronger regional and historical identity will be planned and organized in the future by the town for its inhabitants.

In this paper I use information from interviews with respondents, observations, questionnaires, the regional press, photo documentation, strategic plans of town development and the results of a public questionnaire made by the Zvolen Town Hall focused on the development of tourism in the town.

The town of Zvolen is situated in Central Slovakia and was a royal town in history. This year, we are celebrating the 765th anniversary of its foundation. The first reliable document of the independent royal town of Zvolen is the royal charter of King Belo IV of December 28, 1243, reinstating Zvolen's town privileges. The town has approximately 45,000 inhabitants. The town has always had a very favorable location and represents an important national and international railway junction.

Pustý hrad alias Old Zvolen Castle

Old Zvolen Castle (Vetero Zolium), called, since the 19th century, the Deserted Castle[2], is situated above the town on the confluence of the Hron and Slatina Rivers. In the 12th century, Old Zvolen Castle was the seat of the royal "komitat," that is, a territory extending over the whole area of today's Central Slo-

2 The ruins of the Deserted Castle belong to the Slovak cultural heritage thanks to their historical and architectonical importance.

vakia. Although the castle is located very high above sea level, its foundation before the 13th century is indubitable (according to the latest research) (Zvolen, 1993).

The location of the town and royal "komitat" was not chosen by accident, but it was a question of a reasonable choice. The advantageous strategic-geographic location and the continuity of an ancient Slav settlement played an important role in the choice of Zvolen as an economic, administrative and military center in the later colonization process (Hanuliak, 1998).

Pustý hrad (the Deserted Castle) creates the typical panorama of the town. Between 1241 and 1255 a large fortification – refugium was built. Since then, the castle's area of 7.6 hectares[3] has remained the same; all the buildings were constructed within this fortification. The ruins show that there were actually two castles (the Upper and Lower Castle) which were only 1 kilometer apart and were not built at the same time. In the first half of the 15th century, the importance of Pustý hrad faded away a little after the construction of the new Gothic castle right in the town. The towers, palaces and bastions of the castle served only as living quarters for the numerous troops of Ján Jiskra of Brandýs. At the time of the conquest of the castle by Ján Huňady the castle buildings were destroyed by fire (1452) and since then Pustý hrad has been in ruins. It has been slowly disappearing from the mental memory of the inhabitants.

The first systematic excavation work in Pustý hrad was realized between 1886 and 1889. Since 1992, the archaeological research has been renewed.[4]. The present archeological research is also closely connected with the presentation of the revealed architecture.

Characteristics of the group

The "Friends of the Pustý hrad Association" (the Association) was established in 1998. The main goal of the Association is the preservation and systematic publicity of their historical cultural heritage – the castle called Pustý hrad.

Activities of the Association are focused on the following:

– cooperation and support by organizing archeological works;
– protection of the area of the castle against vandalism;

3 The Deserted Castle is one of the largest castles in Europe; e.g., the Castle of Spis has only 4.95 hectares.

4 Preservation of the castle of Pustý hrad is systematically financed within the framework of the budget of the town of Zvolen.

– publicity of the castle in different ways (more or less traditional);
– cooperation with the town of Zvolen and other organizations on the realization of events connected with the castle;
– presentation of the results of the archeological research for their preservation and for public interest

The group and the urban community

One of the main goals of the Association is better publicity for the castle and organization of traditional and alternative events which should support historical awareness (not only of the inhabitants of Zvolen) and increase interest in this town. The interest of the people is an important factor in their participation, although their interest is mostly only latent. The Association prepared two multimedia CDs[5] about the history of the castle. The CDs were distributed to elementary schools, where they serve as a teaching aid for regional history.

The Association also organizes many events for the public – regular lectures on Pustý hrad (its history, archeological research and discoveries); literary and art competitions connected with the castle; a regular climb on the castle hill in September, etc.

The urban community and Pustý hrad

Group climbs to historical, symbolical or memorial places play an identification, cultural-social, educational and memorial importance in Slovak history, e.g., a climb with Štúr and his followers on Devín hill (in 1836), on Kriváň hill (in 1846); a climb within the framework of an international youth meeting on Rysy hill;[6] ascent to the monument of M. R. Štefánik in Bradlo, and a climb on Sitno hill are well-known.

In the first weekend of September, a regular climb on the hill of Pustý hrad takes place in the town of Zvolen. It is a socio-cultural and hiking event connected with the end of the archeological season on the castle. It is organized by the town of Zvolen in cooperation with the Association and other socio-cultural and sport organizations. The year 2007 saw the 15th annual climb to the castle. Mostly inhabitants of Zvolen but also people from all over Slovakia who

5 The first CD (2000) is focused on the history and research of Pustý hrad. The second CD (2002) is an extended edition in English and German with more information about the town and its surroundings.

6 In the period of socialism, a climb on Rysy Hill was organized in 1913as a memorial to V. I. Lenin.

are interested in history and hiking participate in the climb. The above-mentioned event is enriched by a performance of historical sword-play, musical groups or theater.

A Ride through History on bicycles is organized by the "Sport Fans of the Pustý hrad Association." The 6th annual ride started in different places representing the countries of the Visegrad Four (the Castle of Spiš in Slovakia, Slavkov near Brno in the Czech Republic, Wisla in Poland, and the Visegrad Castle in Hungary) and finished in the town of Zvolen and at the castle. Billboards in the town contained the message: *"Greetings from and to Pustý hrad through Poland, Moravia, Hungary and Slovakia are sent by the team of cyclists who represent the town of Zvolen and Pustý hrad."*

Responses of participants in the climb prove that people feel the need to identify with the place where they live and feel affection for this place and its history.

"I am an old Zvolen inhabitant and Pustý hrad is a significant piece of history of our town" (male, 1930).

"It is awareness of our history. I live in Zvolen and therefore I feel proud of Pustý hrad and also of Zvolen Castle" (female, 1961).

"I visit the castle not only during the organized climb. I prefer to be here when there are not so many people. Once we heard a lecture by Dr. Hanuliak. It lasted maybe two hours and I got so much information. I find the castle a cultural attraction today" (male, 1975).

"I was at the castle as a pupil. There was only a grassy hill and nothing more. Now, it is totally different. I like to walk here with my family and have a barbecue with the children" (female, 1970).

In the mental memory of the inhabitants of Zvolen, the Deserted Castle is connected with various events and activities that publicize it. There are also ecumenical masses besides the above-mentioned sport, hiking and cultural events. There are also informal club evenings, meetings of friends and colleagues with a guitar. Sport competitions and history contests are organized for children (called "International Children's Day on Pustý hrad"; the sport competition is called the "Key to Zvolen's Fortress").

Town strategy and cultural-historical awareness of the inhabitants

Regardless of the aim of the visit to the castle (historical, sport, hiking, cultural, social, etc), it is important that Pustý hrad is an integral part of the mental memory of inhabitants of the town of Zvolen, as is shown in a questionnaire realized by the Town Hall in 2005. The questionnaire helped to prepare marketing strategies for the development of tourism in the town.

One of the questions in the questionnaire: What is most interesting for tourists in the town and in its surroundings? The order of places was following:

1.	Zvolen Castle
2.	Pustý hrad (the Deserted Castle)
3.	Spas of Sliač and Kováčová
4.	Square of the Slovak National Uprising
5.	The Môťová dam
6.	nature in the surroundings
7.	Kráľová – ski center
8.	Wood and Forest Museum
9.	J. G. Tajovský Theater
10.	Evangelical Church and Catholic Church
11.	Borová hora Arboretum

One question in the questionnaire was open and many respondents wrote many interesting tips for tourists, but mostly they think that what is most interesting for tourists are historical sites. The Gothic Zvolen Castle, part of the national cultural heritage, is in first place along with the Slovak National Gallery, and the castle of Pustý hrad is in second place.

Another question in the questionnaire requested tips and comments for better development of tourism in our region. The respondents suggested better publicity for town and cultural sites. The inhabitants expressed greater interest in more cultural events connected with the history of the town.

One of results of the questionnaire is that the inhabitants of Zvolen consider their town as quite attractive for tourists. They consider the historical sites, theater, music and folkloric events as the most attractive. At the same time, the inhabitants expressed only average satisfaction with the level and choice of cultural activities in the town. It is necessary to use the cultural-historical potential of the town more efficiently, to emphasize better publicity for the historical sites and cultural events, and to support the interest of the inhabitants in their historical and cultural heritage (Koštialová, 2006).

The above-mentioned fact is included in the program of economic and social development of the town of Zvolen, which determines the goals and development priorities for the town. Support for activities aimed at education of the inhabitants concerning the town/region and its cultural-historical and natural heritage is one of the priorities. The document also defines strong and weak aspects of the town. On one hand, the fact that the town of Zvolen is a place with a rich history and cultural heritage is a strength. On the other hand, a weakness is that the inhabitants lack a feeling of civic responsibility, which is connected with low participation in the activities and administration of the town. According to results of the document, strategy for the preservation of the cultural heritage and a system of educating people to be proud of the town and region are also missing (PHSR, Enclosure 2 – Analysis).

Visions of further development of the town, incorporated in complex long-term suggestions, should tend to develop an awareness of the historical background and help build a feeling of identity with the town. The "Old Zvolen" Project offers several ideas connected with publicity of the history of the town and Pustý hrad: foundation of an archeological open-air museum, lighting of the area, construction of a cable railway, building of an observation tower, etc., which can emphasize the historical and cultural importance of the town's heritage. The castle of Pustý hrad, or rather Old Zvolen Castle,[7] exists in the mental memory of the majority of the inhabitants of Zvolen, thanks to the above-mentioned activities and events and contributes to creating an emotional membership, identity and affection toward the place where they live.

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7 Many inhabitants of the town and also members of the Association prefer the name Old Zvolen Castle because the castle is not "deserted" or "desolate" any more.

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VITICULTURAL TRADITIONS AND LOCAL MEMORY

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Abstract:
This paper discusses the process of construction of representation of an urban space as a socially determined phenomenon under the conditions of the post-communist transformation of Slovakia. The subject matter of the analysis is the occurrence of facts from the viticultural past – a common feature of two neighboring towns – in their current public discourse. On the basis of data gather through archival-document study and ethnological field research, the paper analyzes collective motivations in the process of construction of collective memory and their linkages to concrete conditions of revitalization of private entrepreneurship after 1989.

Keywords: ***post-communist transformation, local memory, viticulture***

One modality of ethnological reflection of the urban social world is to conceptualize the thesis that the city is a phenomenon created by its inhabitants. They create its vision and hand it down to future generations. Dynamic social, generational and individual representations of the city anchor its inhabitants in time. These representations influence their relations of the past, present and prospects of the city to its material and spiritual dimensions.

In this paper I strive to describe forms and meanings of facts from the past in the urban setting in Slovakia undergoing post-communist transformation. I wish to show the principles of representation of the past in everyday life and to reveal the social background of these representations. I base my discussion on the concept of social memory, especially on Halbwachs' ideas about the social nature of remembering and meanings of concrete contents of shared

ideas about a group's past (Halbwachs, 1994). I also strive to capture the logic of these processes and their dynamics (Kiliánová & Krekovičová, 2008).

The paper is based on research I carried out in 1997–2006 in the two neighboring towns of Modra and Pezinok.[1] They are located about 30 km. from Bratislava in the foothills of the Lesser Carpathian Mountains. The district town of Pezinok (population 22,000) and its neighboring town Modra (population 8,000) are, at present, part of the dynamically developing, densely populated region of greater Bratislava, with good infrastructure and roads and, in the case of Pezinok, also train connection to Bratislava. From the north, the towns are surrounded by vineyards spreading over the Lesser Carpathian slopes covered with deciduous forests and, on the southern and eastern side, they face lowlands. In the economic structure of the towns, industry and agriculture play only a small role nowadays; most people commute to work to nearby Bratislava or work in local, well-developed services or in local smaller manufacturing facilities. Pezinok is the administrative and business center, but also the center of social life and recreational activities, thanks to two resorts founded at the turn of the 20th century in nearby forests.

I draw examples from viticulture which, since the Middle Ages, has been part of the economic culture of both towns. The towns gradually developed from small farming settlements and gained royal privileges. Besides Slovaks, several waves of German colonists also settled in the towns. In the 17th century, thanks to the thriving wine trade, Modra and Pezinok gained privileges of a free royal town. This way they gained the highest level of independence in the hierarchy of feudal towns in Hungary. Typical for local viticulture was winegrowing on the hill slopes on the outskirts of the towns. This required seasonal work of all family members as well as of hired laborers from the town or neighboring villages. Wine grapes were harvested in the autumn and they were transported in wagons to the winepress. Wine, as a product for sale, was stored in wine cellars underneath houses in a town with fortified walls. Favorable climate for wine growing and several centuries of continuous winemaking have influenced the whole area on the southeastern slopes of the Lesser Carpathians – the core of the Lesser-Carpathian wine country. In both of the towns

[1] I gathered empirical data through observation and interviews, local press and study of archive materials. My research focused on social and economic dimensions of viticulture in the studied towns in the 20th century. The study was part of the project *Local and Regional Development in the Context of European Integration* (grant VEGA no. 2/5104/25), led by O. Danglová in the Institute of Ethnology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava in 2005–2007.

studied, viticulture has brought about the formation of a class of winemakers differentiated by property. At the beginning of the 20th century, wine producers who grew grapes on their own land and sold their wine were an important part of the urban middle class (Popelková, 1999). Through promotion of their economic interests and groups values they still influenced local everyday life as late as WWII.

Even today, viticulture remains the main feature of both towns, although the conditions of the existence of its social foundations have changed several times in the past half century. My starting point is the assumption that, for both Modra and Pezinok, the economic and cultural aspects of viticulture are a continuously relevant factor of local social relations, which I study through issues related to viticulture. Under the conditions of post-communist transformation, I wish to show which pieces of information about the past of the towns are interlinked with the ideas of their current inhabitants about their town, by which channels the information is distributed and what determines the process of its explanation. Within this framework of the urban social memory, I wish to reveal which pieces of information about the past are collectively shared and what collective representations they are linked to. From these aspects of memory processes, I try to uncover if and how social actors, in relation to political, economic, ideological and other processes, via consciously selecting or glossing over certain facts about the past, construct their idea of the past reflecting their group interests. I agree with Viera Bačová (1996: 19) that the motive behind purposeful explanation of past events and functioning of (historical) memory is to explain, understand, justify or criticize the current state of affairs.

Urban Viticulture and State Socialism

Viticulture that used to be a profitable business was reflected in Modra and Pezinok in the culture and unique modalities of social life, even despite the fact that this fragmented and under-financed field already technologically stagnated and encountered problems with sales in the 19th century. However, the crucial turning point came after 1948. All agricultural land was gradually confiscated and winegrowing was taken over by agricultural cooperatives. Viticulture became a branch of large-scale, centrally planned state-socialist agriculture. Wine production and trade were nationalized. The original owners of vineyards either became employees of cooperatives or left for other occupations. They started to commute to work to other locations and steered their children's interests outside of agriculture. After the communist coup and ensuing land confiscation, the oldest generation of formerly proud winemakers had to witness a rapid decline of viticulture, neglect of the vineyards due to the lack of labor force at cooperatives, and devastation of the landscape. In the period after 1960, when the state started to subsidize agricultural production, winegrowing underwent a considerable transformation. In a sense, we can speak about long-awaited and much-needed modernization. Smaller plots of land were consolidated and rebuilding of old dense vineyards (until then cultivated by hand) facilitated the utilization of machinery. In several places, vineyards planted on fall lines of hills were liquidated, which was a crucial and irreversible change. They were replaced by terraces, and stone walls, built for centuries during land cultivation, were knocked down. Small local cooperatives started to merge into large units farming on several thousands hectares of land. Winemaking and storing moved to modern production facilities. Wine was produced on a large scale and it was distributed to the socialist commercial network. It lost its quality and unique character created by a particular place of origin and maker.

Qualitative changes strongly impacted the life and nature of the towns. New generations of inhabitants, who still bore the label of "winemakers," grew up in a different environment from their fathers or grandfathers.

Viticulture and Post-communist Transformation

In Modra and Pezinok, socio-economic and cultural aspects of viticulture are to these days more or less pronounced, although its base was virtually dismantled in the 1950s. Events of the year 1989 and the return to a market economy have, after many decades of state socialism, renewed conditions for free private enterprise and land ownership. At present, grapevines are grown on about 800 hectares of land. After the land restitutions in 1992, owners and heirs renewed their legal right to land ownership. After 1992, it was possible to take land out of cooperatives, gain the right of its disposal, rent it out or sell it. Production and storage facilities that were either nationalized or built during communism were only slowly transferred into private hands in the privatization process. Transformation was complicated and, for a long time, land and facilities remained in the hands of cooperatives.

Mechanisms of socialist economy, before 1989 permeating the whole process from grape growing to wine sales, have mostly impacted those who used their restituted land right after 1992 for business purposes. The reason was

that socialist cooperatives had dissolved the original boundaries of the vineyards and adjusted them to mechanical cultivation. Some vineyards were left uncultivated or new ones were built, or some former vineyards were used for completely different purposes. Many of those who got their land back in restitution did not have any machinery or production technologies; they lacked appropriate production and storage facilities. Although some lived in inherited houses with wine cellars, it was difficult to get seed capital and labor – due to the fact, that over the course of past decades, descendants of old winemakers had started to work in other areas. Therefore, in addition to unclear legislative and land ownership issues, post-communist transformation was also complicated by a number of local and individual factors.

These barriers and their consequences led, at the beginning of the 1990s, to the neglect of vineyards and considerable decline of winegrowing and winemaking. However, stabilization came around 1995, which is evidenced not only by the production of quality wines awarded at international competitions, but also by the building of new vineyards. At present, in each town there are about a dozen of successful smaller companies that started their business from scratch. There are also a number of companies established by transformation from former state businesses that specialize in either wine-grape growing or winemaking. Also, a number of companies grow grapes or produce cheaper wine from their own or purchased grapes. In addition to locally grown grapes, winemakers also buy grapes in other parts of Slovakia where some companies rent whole vineyards. They also import wine juice from abroad. As a relic from communism, small cooperatives still survive on vineyards rented from their original owners. By employing experts, the cooperatives strive to enhance the quality of their wines and to compete with new companies on the market. Additionally, small growers, owners of gardens and enthusiastic individuals also engage in winemaking.

The ideal of dynamically developing private companies is to make an attractive collection of quality wines in the most efficient way. That means producing grapes and making wine in their own facilities and selling it under their own trademark in their own wine cellar and restaurant. In Modra and Pezinok, only a few winemakers have reached this level of business efficiency. The main factor determining the level of business development in this sphere is fifty years of discontinuity of land ownership and users' relations caused by state socialism. This handicap has also been compounded by conditions during the transformation after 1989, such as unclear legislation, disinterest of the state in this sector, and confrontation with better developed markets after Slovakia's accession into the EU in 2004. To this day, generational, technological and ownership discontinuity of the sector lie behind the fact that, even for the most successful wine producers with the best products, it is not easy to find their niche under the liberal conditions of the unified European market.

Viticulture, the Urban Space and Memory

The term viticulture (vinohradníctvo) in a narrower sense means the production of wine grapes, grape growing, while the term winemaking (vinárstvo) denotes the actual production of wine, winegrowing. This is also how Slovak legislation understands and distinguishes the terms. In everyday language, vinohradníctvo (viticulture) occurs as a more general term. In the local context, the term winemaker/vintner (vinár) conveys the fact that a person produces wine and sells it under his/her own trademark. It is not important for their business whether they grow their own wine grapes or not. However, when I spoke with practitioners from the field, the criterion of the ownership of vineyards for winemaking was presented as important. Vineyard ownership indicates the stability and good prospects of the business. This reflects the continuity of local tradition, interconnecting grape growing and winemaking. It also points to rising aspirations of winemakers to produce quality in order to compete on the market: to produce their own, unique wines from their own grapes or from grapes of a certain concrete origin.

After the onset of post-communist transformation, winemaking has reemerged as a continuation of a hundred-year-long local tradition – in the local discourse, strategies and practices of entrepreneurs, local governments and politicians, as well as in the public space of the towns and their social life. It is present as a real economic and social fact and people can come across signs of its presence on a daily basis; they are visible not only for those who come to these places to buy wine but even for uninformed random visitors.

The wine business also influences the social world of the towns and local activities through revitalization of elements of traditions related to winemaking and through various references to the past. Grape growers and winemakers, by stressing and combining information about the past, strive to foster their own economic emancipation; similarly, local governments and other institutions follow their own goals in this way.

What is Present and What is Remembered

Viticulture in Modra and Pezinok is alive; it is reflected in the face of the towns. Besides wine cellars and wine boutiques, one can see billboards, advertisements and signs of supply stores with various viticultural tools, devices, vessels. Vintners mark their wine cellars and restaurants with their own trademarks and names. Signposts point to locations of wine cellars or winemaking facilities. Large companies advertise on billboards located along roads.

Viticulture is the subject of business and individual activities as well as leisure-time gardening. Wine grapes are grown in vineyards on the outskirts of towns as well as in gardens located next to individual houses. Wine grapes are used for wine production for individual consumption, for sales to other winemakers, but also for direct consumption as table fruits. In the streets or stores, in discussions and fragments of conversations one can hear opinions about how to take care of grapevines, worries about spring frosts, summer hail or high humidity that could cause grapevine diseases. In a gardening supply store even complete strangers inform each other about the newest chemical grapevine sprays, the quality of machinery, and the like. During the time of autumn harvests the traffic is slowed down by trucks loaded with grapes. People in the streets or on public buses speak about the best dates for grape picking. It is customary to invite distant relatives, colleagues from work or friends to come to the family vineyard or garden to help with grape harvesting.

Until today, in both towns there are a number of names of local places that are Slovakized old German names. They are still in use to identify individual vineyards in the town land registry. Until the 1950s, these names, nowadays considered to be something like a local peculiarity, were known to and used by all the inhabitants of the town.

Terms related to wine production appear in the names of restaurants and hotels (e.g. *The Wine Press Restaurant* or *Vintner's House Hotel* in Pezinok) located in the historical center in old townhouses or wine cellars underneath them. Festivals and cultural events also take on names related to winemaking (e.g., in Pezinok *The Pezinok Bunch of Grapes* – an international ballroom-dance competition, *The Brass Band in the Wine Press* – a competition of brass bands). Municipal governments of both towns establish special committees for grape growing and winemaking. Local governments issue propositions about guarding ripening grapes in vineyards – at the end of summer and in autumn everybody except owners is banned from entering them; they organize collection and composting of discarded vines stored near wine cellars, and the like.

Both towns, their vintners' guilds and wine entrepreneurs are members of the Lesser Carpathians Wine Route Association – a marketing product of rural tourism active in the region since the 1990s. Besides other year-round activities, it organizes very successful Days of Open Cellars linked with tasting of young wine in winemakers' private wine cellars. A favorable visitors' response led in 2007 to the organization of the first spring Day of Open Cellars on St. Urban's Day. In both towns, autumn vintage festivals are regularly organized as well as various wine tasting and exhibits organized by winemakers' guilds. Especially at vintage festivals, visitors can see various performances and enactments of customs related to grape harvesting and winemaking. They can also see old, no longer used, technical equipment, tools and vessels.

Indirectly, the winemaking theme enters the lives of the inhabitants via various museum activities (the regional museum in Pezinok has a whole department focusing on Lesser Carpathian viticulture). Both towns publish monthlies also popularizing, among other things, historical facts about local winemaking in the past. Traditions are also disseminated through folklore shows, traditional cuisine, ornamental decorations on traditional pottery produced in Modra, and the like.

Mayors' speeches, New Year's addresses, celebrations of towns' memorial days always mention also the glorious past of winemaking in the area. Almost every address of municipal dignitaries refers to the centuries- or thousands-of-years-long traditions of winemaking in the town and to wine as a typical beverage for the region. Company logos feature symbols of wine and grapes or their various stylized depictions." However, their promotional materials usually use simple pictures of wine bottles with the company's name, prize-winning wines, photographs of production facilities or company's cellars. They also often use photographs of work in the vineyards. Promotional texts often refer back to the winemaking past of the family as motivation for present-day business activities. The fact that winemakers in Modra and Pezinok in the mid-1990s also revitalized their guilds is a specific reference to the past. As professional associations, the guilds existed in the towns from the end of the 19th century until the beginning of communist collectivization. They were influential both within their professional groups and towards the town and state. They represented their own interests, educated the public, purchased fertilizers and sprays against grapevine diseases, organized wine sales and helped resolve

cultivation and sales problems. The present-day guilds – *Spolok Vincúr Modra* (The Vintners' Gild) and *Združenie pezinských vinohradníkov a vinárov* (Association of Winegrowers and Winemakers) revived the traditional institutional form. Their activities are mostly in the organization of social, promotional and marketing events, with no actual impact on the individual business intentions of their members. The existence of guilds and their organizational or at least their symbolic presence at social events in towns shows their inner coherence and common interests to the outer world.

Typical for the construction of the past in the process of emancipation of the wine business after 1989 is the fact that mediators of the past avoid certain facts and linkages. Nowadays, references to the communist past occur in public speeches only very rarely, although they were quite frequent in the years right after the fall of communism. At that time, in their speeches people articulated enthusiasm for redressing past injustices, welcomed land restitutions and radically rejected the existence of cooperatives in the name of the return to the pre-communist order. Today, these things are no longer mentioned; successes, scientific findings and technological innovations made during communism are ignored. Equally forgotten are stories, popular just a few years ago, about non-transparent restitutions of former state wine production facilities. Forgetting appears to be a pragmatic strategy, especially when it concerns events closely relating to the present actors and their companies. However, what is also not publicly mentioned in Modra and Pezinok are, for instance, facts about the Holocaust of the local Jews. Older people who still remember the interwar period remember the portrayal of Jews as hated traders who bought wine from smaller makers cheaply and sold it for huge profits. Equally forgotten are the post-war fates of the local Germans, whose confiscated land, machinery and facilities were the fundamental basis of agricultural cooperatives after the communist coup. It is not desirable to mention these stains from the past. They have no place in the construction of the self-image of the prospective group of wine entrepreneurs, just as they do not fit into the self-representation of the above-mentioned towns.

How the Towns Formulate their Outlooks

Although viticulture is the common feature of the neighboring towns of Modra and Pezinok, the parameters of their development dynamics as well as their hierarchical standing in the region are different. In the transformation period,

differences in their current economic and social traits create original contexts for representation of the towns, presentation of their past and present, ideas about their outlooks or the degree of references to their glorious past.

Strategies that the forming group of current wine entrepreneurs follows in the process of their social acceptance and in achieving success in the market more or less correspond with the strategies of local governments and the local political elite. These try to build the kind of identity of their towns that would stir up a broad public response. In so doing, they also more or less accentuate the winemaking agenda. Mechanisms of this relationship are complicated and their dynamics and some of their elements at the level of memory processes can be captured by interpretation of empirical field data in the historical perspective.

The course of post-communist transformation and hence the starting position of wine entrepreneurs has been strongly influenced by the pre-communist past. At that time, the towns also differed in, e.g., the degree of dependence of their economies on viticulture. In Pezinok, at the turn of the 20th century, the economic structure was already more diverse with a larger share of industry. In Modra until the 1950s, more than a half of the population worked in agriculture (Slavík, 2007: 478) and the tie to inherited land was much stronger. In Modra there was a strong group of winemakers whose elite enjoyed a high social status and thanks to its economic power had an important political standing. The change of the regime in 1948 struck this group particularly hard. According to archive records, at the end of the 1950s more than half of the winemakers were still reluctant to give up their land. Living on the verge poverty, subject to repressions from the state and communist power they held on to their vineyards as their private property. Those who handed their land over to the cooperative and decided to work for the cooperative were subject to humiliation. They had to watch former landless peasants and bad vintners unprofessionally manage the vineyards. In Modra, the strength of the ties to the inherited land worsened the impact of the fifty-year-long discontinuity and made the start of the renewed wine business after 1989 more difficult. Before World War II, winemakers from Pezinok had already tried to resolve problems with wine sales together and had established a cooperative (1936). Its objective was to concentrate wine in common storage facilities and to take care of its marketing. Wine sales were flexibly managed depending on the needs of the market, and the cooperative paid its members instantly. Some vintners from Modra also became its members. However, their guild – just like the municipal government – initially did not trust the cooperative. It was suspected of preferring the wine from Pezinok

to that from Modra. The *Slovak Vintners' Cooperative* (*Slovenské vinohradnícke družstvo*) acquired storage space from the town and built its own storage facilities in both towns. The activity of the cooperative as an institution established to promote the common interests of its members ended after the communist coup. Collectivization of land and nationalization of production and sales after 1948 caught the vintners from Pezinok in a different situation from that of the proud vintners from Modra. Until the last moment, the vintners from Modra relied only on themselves.[2]

At first, viticulture as a characteristic feature of the town caused problems with nationalization; however from the 1960s to the 1980s, it was paradoxically accentuated by socialist propaganda when stressing the regime's successes. Behind the creation of the stereotype of Modra as the "viticultural pearl of the Lesser Carpathians" was the argument of its glorious past. This was also backed up by the extent of the vineyards. These together with the land belonging to auxiliary municipal cooperatives ranked Modra as the largest viticultural town in communist Czechoslovakia (Dubovský, 1983: 16).

When comparing the current hierarchy of regional towns, Modra ranks below Pezinok (Slavík, 2006: 491). During the latest reforms of the territorial administration in the 1990s, Modra was not awarded the position of district center, and from the ethnological point of view its calm atmosphere contrasts with busy Pezinok, which attracts more visitors. The municipal government of Modra more or less succeeds in negotiating consensus and supporting mutually economically advantageous partnerships of various subjects, overcoming opinion differences, activating business and stimulating outside investments. In public discourse emphasis is laid on cultural, artistic, religious, educational and handicraft traditions, the history of the town and its close linkages with the national history. Frequent are references to the past importance of the town that are meant to fill its inhabitants with pride – a town connected with the 19th century national movement, a town famous for its pottery, a famous wine town. Descendants of older vintner families still live in the town, keeping alive the consciousness of the importance of their social groups. Also, the town is the home of a number of winemaking experts and promoters of wine tourism, rural

[2] Research on communist collectivization reveals a strong resistance of Modra winemakers to land confiscation and collective farming. It indicates the depth of alienation from the land caused by a purposeful reorientation of the next generations to other activities and occupations – due to the feelings of injustice and resentment over the way in which the cooperatives managed wine production (Popelková, 2003).

tourism, conservationists, scientists and pedagogues from the field of viticulture with ties to local schools and research institutions. The group of wine entrepreneurs, however, does not hold a sufficiently strong position, nor does it have a common, more offensive marketing strategy. Thus far, it has not succeeded more markedly in pursuing their interests by more closely involving the town and other entrepreneurs. References to the glorious past and the pathos present in allusions to winemaking traditions sound like appellative argumentation. They are used as a virtual condition and aid towards fulfillment of promises of potential development.

Pezinok, on the contrary, has many advantages following from the fact that it has continually been a regional center, as well as from its economic structure, more coherent interest groups, more proactive behavior of municipal representatives in regional politics and their better support of business and tourism. The town does not declare its interest in creating "a calm environment" for the life of the town. On the contrary, the town is doing everything to attract people to its businesses, offices, schools, sporting places, festivals, exhibits, restaurants. Winemaking traditions serve to promote more tourism. Several local wine entrepreneurs have established cooperation with the town. They put their efforts into promotional activities even though these did not bring them instant profits. However, they made them known in the town and its vicinity. The entrepreneurs have gained experience with marketing and business contacts at home and abroad. They openly proclaim their interest in achieving success in their business. The town respects them as creators of new jobs and as successful entrepreneurs, and winemakers, in return, with their success and products are good advertisements for the town. It seems that they do not consider their traditions sacred. They utilize them, together with some others, as practical marketing tools (Popelková, 2006).

Differences between these two towns can be also read in the language and content of the texts by which the towns describe their profiles and formulate their visions for the future. An analysis of the strategic plans of both towns shows that Pezinok defines itself as a modern district town with varied industry, excellent wine production, a developed business network, and many historical monuments.[3] They project the image of the town as a lively business center

[3] Mesto Pezinok. (2007, February). Program hospodárskeho a sociálneho rozvoja mesta Pezinok. Profil mesta Pezinok [Brožúra], p. 4. (The Town of Pezinok. Program of Economic and Social Development of the Town of Pezinok. [Brochure]. Available on the Internet: http://www.pezinok.sk/index.php?yggid=359

interested in improving its technical and transport infrastructure while also improving and protecting its natural environment. The town supports entrepreneurship and within its framework mainly viticulture and light industry. They also want to build on tourism, continue in organizing international events (music, dance and theater festivals, sporting events, and the like), reconstruct historical monuments and open them to the public, and build a network of good tourist services. The town declares that it wants to utilize the proximity of the capital of Bratislava to offer short-term rural tourism stays combining natural beauties with winemaking and handicraft traditions and the local cuisine.

Modra proclaims that on its road towards the future it must respect the values of both the present and the past, as the neglect of its history and disturbance of its environment would lead to undermining of the very foundations of its development.[4] For the sake of development and change, it wants to activate people and utilize their potential, since the municipal government is unable to do so by itself. It wants to map and improve its unique features, so that visitors would understand their hidden values. It also wants to protect the natural environment that creates a unique backdrop of the town and is a precondition of its further development. The town wants to be a viticultural center and tourist hub providing employment opportunities in traditional agricultural branches and public services. It wants to create suitable conditions for the life of its inhabitants with quality housing and opportunities to spend leisure time in a healthy natural environment. According to the strategic vision, the town of Modra will be the leader among Slovak towns in the protection of its natural, historical and cultural heritage.

A Note in Conclusion

In the micro-environment of the towns studied, elements of viticultural traditions and information about the past of winemaking have, in the process of post-communist transformation, become part of the current dynamic social activity. The analysis of their occurrence (at the level of contents) and functions (at the level of processes) in the local memory indicates that their key factor

[4] Mesto Modra, Pauliniová, Z. (2006). Piliere Modry. In *Strategický plán rozvoja mesta Modra. Program hospodárskeho a sociálneho rozvoja na roky 2007–2013*. Modra: Projektový tím pre strategické plánovanie. (The Town of Modra. Pillars of Modra In: *Strategic Plan o f Development of the Town of Modra. Program of Economic and Social Development for the Years 2007-2013*. Modra: The Project Team for Strategic Planning.) Available on the Internet: http://www.modra.sk/strategia.html

is the persistence of viticulture in both towns. The principles of selectiveness of memory are especially revealed in concrete forms and consequences of the periods of discontinuity. In the study of post-communist transformation, in these towns such a factor is mainly the qualitative change in the ownership and disposition rights to land after 1848 and 1989. In this light, representations related to the present and future of the towns show close linkages to the economic and social profile of the urban micro-space as a whole, but also to collective interests of wine entrepreneurs who are part of its structure. Those facts from the past that survive thanks to the natural needs of the differentiated group of winemakers (skills and knowledge, festivals and promotional activities related to the wine trade and the like) have neither a negative nor a positive charge – they are normal parts of the urban life. Some facts (the Jewish Holocaust, deportations of German inhabitants after 1945, the course of formation of socialist cooperatives, post-communist restitutions) have no place in the current memory of the towns as they are charged with feelings of responsibility and undesirable confrontational meanings. They interfere not only with the self-presentation of wine entrepreneurs, but also with the construction of the image of the towns and dissemination of their outlooks by local politicians. The last group of facts from the past – documenting the glorious past of free royal towns and their winemaking traditions – is an especially suitable tool for local politicians who select and combine them as needed; in presentation of their town they can argue its historical importance. By drawing a positive picture of the past they try to motivate people to be more active or divert attention from problems of the present.

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preneurship as well as manifestations of viniculture in the everyday life and social relations of the inhabitants of the above-mentioned towns. Further, she is interested in the process of the constitution of national identity in Slovakia at the time of modernization at the beginning of the 20th century. Her interests also include the history of ethnology in Slovakia. She occasionally teaches in the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of Comenius University in Bratislava (subject: urban ethnology). Since 2001, she has also been giving lectures at the Department of Slovak Studies of the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. Between 1997 and 2004, she worked as a scientific coordinator at the SAS Institute of Ethnology in Bratislava. Since 2004, she has been the Deputy Head of the Institute.

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INDUSTRIAL NOSTALGIA: THE CASE OF POLDI KLADNO

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Abstract
In the last few years, industrial architecture has started to attract more attention than probably ever before. In order to pursue the issue of growing aesthetic interest in the industrial landscape I analyze contemporary visual and related discoursive representations of industrial architecture and industrial landscape in the Czech Republic. Discussing the case of a vast industrial brownfield adjacent to the town center of Kladno, a former industrial city in Central Bohemia, I try to show how the industrial architecture is in fact aestheticized. By questioning what lies behind such aestheticization I want to show how industrial landscape and the past it embodies have been negotiated within the urban space. I perceive the visual as well as discoursive representations of industrial architecture as predominantly melancholic and nostalgic. My argument is, however, that nostalgia does not have to present a weakness since it originates in the image we hold of our past and it embodies our fears about our future. It can thus serve as a position from which we could critically question our present-day existence and our potential futures. Our aesthetic perception has been changing. The discussion of the reasons why it has been happening and what lies behind such changes is needed since it relates to the wider discussion about our relationship with the past and thus also about the image we have of ourselves.

Keywords: ***industrial landscape, post-socialist landscape, nostalgia, industrial aesthetics, Poldi Kladno***

Poldi Kladno is a big industrial site in Kladno, a town in Central Bohemia. Within the Czech cultural context it is a well-known factory, not only because of the economic importance it played in the course of the 20th century, but mainly

because of its presence in many works of art ranging from socialist realist paintings and writings to the writings of Bohumil Hrabal. Even after its decline in the 1990s it still attracts attention – because of the political background of its break-down, because of its presence in the form of a ruinous brownfield just in the center of the city, and last but not least because of the aesthetic appeal industrial ruins have for many people nowadays.

When I visited Poldi in spring 2008 – it has been my last visit so far – I met there a group of about 10 photographers from the 120 km. distant town of Lanškroun (fig.1). The ruins, usually inhabited by birds and visited from time to time by people walking their dogs, by Gypsies trying to mine out rare metals in order to sell them or by individual explorers like me, were suddenly full of activity. Here and there people arranging their tripods could be seen through holes in the walls or in distance. When I realized where they were from, I, indeed, asked them what made them travel so far. They agreed that they wanted "to document the state of it all because in few years it won't be there." It was "the ravages of time" that brought them there and I could not help myself, I heard a kind of nostalgia in what they were saying.

I think I understand them. It is time at work that makes ruinous spaces so appealing (to them). Something has been vanishing, something irreplaceable, and the only thing they can do is to take a picture of it. If they do not, something will vanish without a trace. Such an urge to document the process of a loss and disappearance goes inevitably hand in hand with melancholy and nostalgia. However, the nostalgia I am referring to is a special kind of nostalgia, an aimless one. Surprisingly maybe, it does not aim at getting back to some particular golden time, at bringing back the past. It is a similar kind of nostalgia Svetlana Boym speaks about when she says that nostalgic can be homesick and sick of home at once (Boym 2001, 50). It stems from the physical encounter with ruinous spaces where the past and present are felt to co-exist in a kind of unmediated form, it stems from the physical encounter with the process of disappearance rather than from the wish to get back in time.

Industrial architecture has attracted more attention in the last few years than probably ever before and the general interest in it has been steadily growing. I believe the strong appeal industrial ruins – and ruins in general – have for us, people of late modernity, stems from their ability to induce nostalgia. After all, it is late modern society which is preoccupied with searching for its own roots, and it is (industrial) ruin that can be seen as a slowly but inevitably vanishing link to our immediate past. Indeed, we can think of nostalgia dismissi-

Figure 1: PHOTOGRAPHERS FROM LANŠKROUN IN POLDI. SOURCE: OFFICIAL WEB PAGE OF LANŠKROUN PHOTO SOCIETY (http://www.fotolan.cz/akce-fotoklubu/rude-kladno-nejak-vybladlo-13.4.2008/; 21 April 2008)

vely as of a symptom of weakness, an excessively emotional response of people unable to face challenges of the present, "an abdication of personal responsibility, a guilt-free homecoming, an ethical and aesthetical failure" (Boym 2001, xiv). In this paper, however, I would like to make a case for nostalgia, since I believe that understanding it can help us to understand ourselves.

In doing so, I will concentrate on three intertwined issues. I will sketch out very briefly the historical and "ideological" context of Czech industrial architecture and its representations in the 20th century. I will explore contemporary visual and accompanying discoursive representations of industrial landscape using examples from photographic books and web pages created by professional as well as lay photographers in order to shed light on and to understand contemporary interest in industrial ruins. I will argue that contemporary industrial imaginary is predominantly nostalgic. Throughout the paper I will try to comprehend the role industrial imaginary plays within our relationship to ruinous industrial landscape. And I will use the example of the industrial brownfield of Poldi Kladno in order to question how the past, industrial

heritage and urban space are being experienced and negotiated in post-social late modernity.

This paper, however, does not represent a detailed study of post-socialist or late modern industrial landscape with a sociologically precise account of actors, with a detailed analysis of their intentions and a thorough description of their strategies. Such a study still waits to be done, and not only for the Czech context. I would like the reader to recognize in this particular piece of writing an essay trying to open up ways of thinking about a recent general shift in appreciation of industrial landscape, ways of telling the story of changing industrial imaginary. Hence the generalizations, which help me to delineate a larger image, to produce a particular understanding of industrial landscape that could eventually support prospective detailed and fact-devoted analyses of industrial landscape.

I understand contemporary industrial imaginary as infused with nostalgia. My argument here is that nostalgia does not have to present a weakness since it originates in the image we hold of our past and it embodies our fears about our future. It can thus serve as a position from which we could understand and critically question our present-day existence and our potential futures. The general aim of this essay thus lies in acknowledging the potential of theorizing both nostalgia and industrial landscape. Put another way, I believe that questioning the nostalgia grounding contemporary industrial imaginary can help us to understand our post-socialist situation in our post-industrial landscape.

Industrialization in the Czech Republic and its photographic representations

In the Czech part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the process of industrialization began slowly in the first part of the 19th century and the pace of industrialization had been rising throughout the rest of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. Central Bohemia became one of the most important industrial regions in the Empire, with Prague at its center, and Kladno, the town I will concentrate on in the second part of this essay, as a vanguard of heavy industry in the region. The other important region was located in the northeast of the country with the town of Ostrava at its heart. The process of industrialization brought about two radical and linked changes – the transformation of lifestyles and the transformation of landscape (cf. Hozák 2007). These two changes lay at heart of the early photographic representations of industrial architecture and its context.

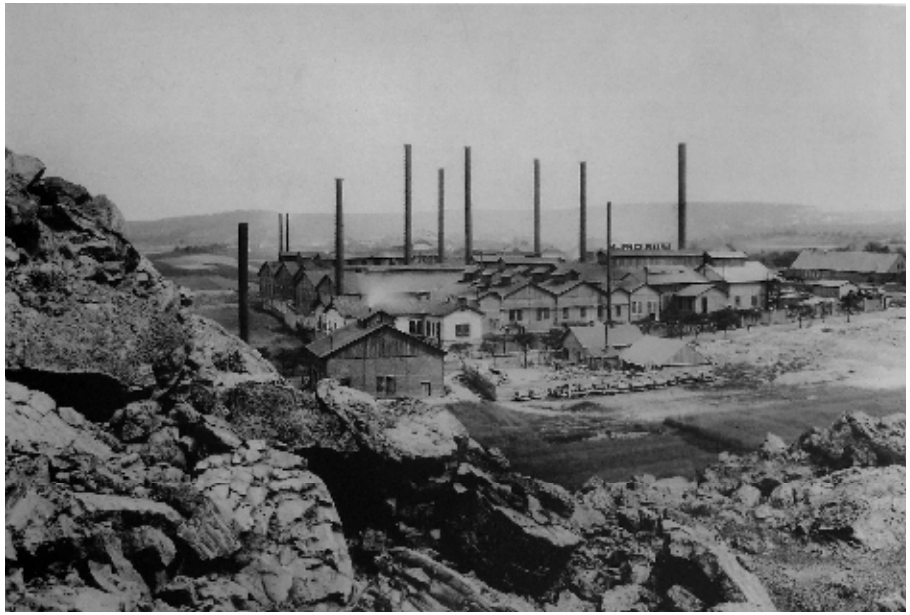

Figure 2: ANONYMOUS – POLDI IRONWORKS IN KLADNO, 1895. SOURCE: COMPOSITE AUTHORS (EDS.) *TVÁŘ PRŮMYSLOVÉ DOBY: SVĚDECTVÍ FOTOGRAFIE / A PORTRAIT OF INDUSTRIAL AGE: Captured in Photography*, Prague: Research Centre for Industrial Heritage, 2007.

The industrial boom with the promise of seemingly never-ending technological progress changed not only the material but also the mental aspects of human life. Modernity measured itself against nature through the achievements of the human mind, through works of manufacturing, engineering, through technology. Man aimed at subjugating matter, space and time by means of technology and technology seemed to promise better future for all mankind. New aesthetic experience of technology emerged, the one that is often referred to as sublime – that of awe, wonder, and amazement aroused by the confrontation with the impressiveness of man-made objects (Nye 1994, xiii). The quasi-religious experience of the technological sublime could be found in "uncritical admiration for new technical innovations, extolling human ingenuity and skill as 'a triumph of the spirit over nature'" (Hozák 2007,14). Just as the idea of progress lies in the intellectual foundations of modernity, the experience of the technological sublime lies in the heart of modern experience. In the world of modernity, which is increasingly desacralized, "the sublime represents a way

to reinvest the landscape and the works of man with transcendent significance" (Nye 1994, xiii).

Nevertheless, the feeling of the technological sublime was in the Kingdom of Bohemia at the end of the 19th century accompanied by a kind of nostalgia for the past, a sense that something "had changed dramatically mainly as a result of the advancement of industry and transportation" (Scheufler 2007,29). Consequently, some photographers tried to capture and document the existing state of towns and landscape[1] and the way they had been changing because of the industrialization of the country. Figure 2 represents the Poldi factory in Kladno shortly after it was founded in order to illustrate what kind of landscape photography and landscape change I have in mind.

Apart from the attempts to document the changes on one hand and to embrace them on the other, a third strand of photographic representation emerged in the Kingdom of Bohemia at the end of the 19th century. Photographic pictorialism "was not interested in faithful depiction of reality but tried instead through mood and atmosphere to move closer to the techniques of painting and graphics and thus introduce a new dimension into the photographs – a sense of the reality portrayed. ... The documentary component, whether true-to-life or idealizing, withdrew into the background and was replaced as the center of attention by conveying mood and feelings evoked by the machine and the role of man working with the machine" (Scheufler 2007, 33-34). Figure 3 represents an example of such mood-conveying photographic representation of technology – aestheticized iron works in Kladno.

The sublimity of new technological objects and newly created landscape together with the nostalgia stemming from the changes in the landscape went hand in hand with the aestheticization of technology and industry. I hope that within the course of this paper I will succeed in conveying the importance of the triad – sublime, nostalgia and aestheticization – for understanding not only aesthetic interest in technology at the end of the 19th century, but more importantly contemporary interest in the industrial ruins of modernity.

When, after the Second World War, communists seized power in Czechoslovakia, the image of industry and its representation changed slightly. Industry and the trope of building the country started to occupy a prominent place within communist official discourse. A brighter future should have been built

1 In 1894 the Monument Inventory Commission was set up in Prague in order to organize a photo-documentation of sites decided for redevelopment. (Scheufler 2007,30)

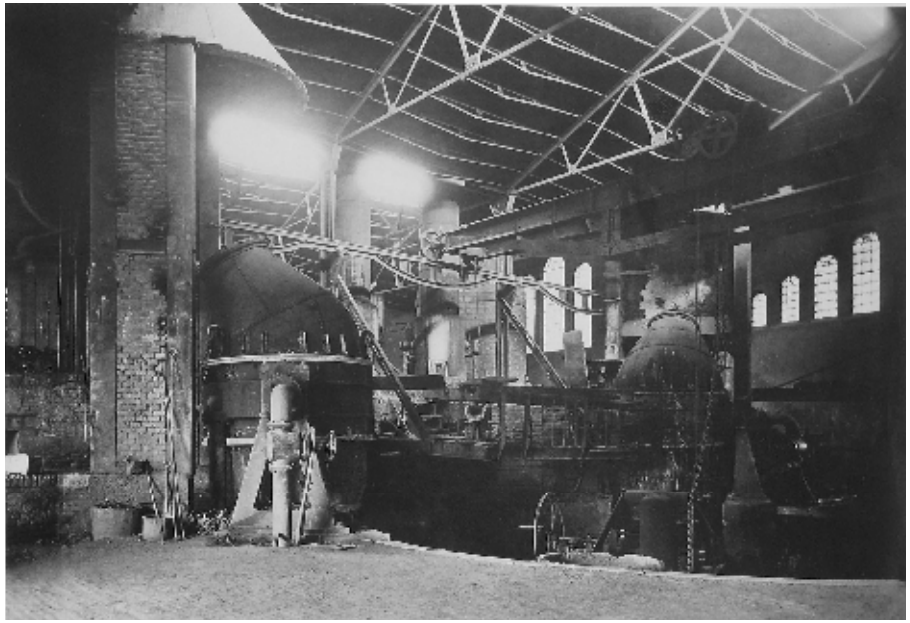

Figure 3: JINDŘICH ECKERT, JULIUS MÜLLER'N – VOJTĚCH IRONWORKS IN KLADNO, 1878. SOURCE: COMPOSITE AUTHORS (EDS.) *TVÁŘ PRŮMYSLOVÉ DOBY: SVĚDECTVÍ FOTOGRAFIE/ A PORTRAIT OF INDUSTRIAL AGE: Captured in Photography*, Prague: Research Centre for Industrial Heritage, 2007.

and technology was to play an important role not only as a means of reaching communism but with its sublime liberatory potential as another of its constitutional elements. After all, communism (or, more precisely, the state socialism of the second world) is a high watermark of modernity and its ideas about technology stem from modernist dreams about technology and its liberatory powers. Thus the discourse of socialism is infused with figures such as "miner" or "metallurgist" and the trope of "building socialism" played a prominent role within the speech of the political system from its very beginning in 1948 until its very end in 1989. Figure 4 shows how the discourse is imbued with industrial imaginary – even the simplest thing such as an advertisement for a newspaper was based on it, using it while at the same time reinforcing it.

Despite it being such a prominent feature of communist discourse, I feel there is a peculiar lack of studies about this interconnection, and even about the representation of industry throughout this period. The exhibition catalogue

Czechoslovakian Socialist Realism 1948-1958 by Petišková (2002) is one of the few works based within the Czech cultural context that try to explore the link between aesthetics, representation and different prominent tropes of the communist speech. Unfortunately, as the catalogue is based mainly on examples of artworks from the Army Artistic Centre, it underrepresents the works depicting or using industrial motives.

Contemporary interest in industrial aesthetics...

Having been so much connected to official discourse, the attractiveness and the sublime experience of technology exhausted themselves in the never-ending monologue of communist speech (cf. Fidelius, 2002). The aesthetic and moral appeal of technology and industrial motives evanesced in the last two decades of socialism and the fall of communism, which resulted in a wild economic transformation and consequently in the downfall of substantial parts of the Czech industry, brought about the overall political, economic as well as aesthetical neglect of anything industrial that was left. However, during the last few years the neglect has changed into a frenzied interest. Professional as well as lay photographers, urban explorers, artists and the general public are more and more attracted by the ruinous spaces scattered around the Czech landscape. To understand what lies behind such interest, I will briefly comment on representations of industrial landscape by contemporary photographers, since general issues related to industrial landscape are reflected in their visual and rhetorical statements and thus can be apprehend by means of them.

While pondering why old photographs depicting the industrialization process in the Czech Republic are so appealing for us, Hozák offers a few reasons. It is the appeal of the topic itself, the questions we ask ourselves when confronted with such photographs, "the emotional strength, drama, and rawness of the photographs and the wealth of information they contain," as well as "a sense of almost idyllic calm that many of the photographs from this period, especially landscape images, are often able to provoke in us" (Hozák 2007, 8). But mainly it is the process of change captured by the photographs that makes them so emotionally charged for us. "The confrontation of two evolutionary poles, which many of the photographs succeed in capturing, portraying the end of a world of relative tranquillity and unspoiled landscapes as it collided with the predacious and reckless onslaught of technological civilization, was

Figure 4: SOBOTKA – RUDÉ PRÁVO – POMOCNÍK VÝSTAVBY SOCIALISMU/ RED JUSTICE-HELPING TO BUILD SOCIALISM, 1948. RED JUSTICE USED TO BE THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA.
Source: http://www.czechdesign.cz/index.php?status=c&clanek=679&lang=1; 21 April 2008

probably never as overt and telling in form as it appeared at the end of the nineteenth and the start of the twentieth century" (ibid.).

I find Hozák's account extremely apt. However, I believe the changes that occurred in the age of late modernity – or for the second world in the age of post-socialism – are comparable to the ones that occurred at the end of the 19th century, at least regarding their aesthetically emotional appeal. It is maybe symbolic that the subsequent end of the century brought profound changes to the lives of people as well as to the landscape. The old technology of modernity and its physical manifestation in the industrial landscape has given place to a new form of post-industrial landscape in which only the old ruinous factories, forgotten monuments and despised socialist architecture evoke what we left behind. Maybe the present-day interest in industrial architecture and aesthetics originates in a similar kind of nostalgia and appeal Hozák describes for the dusk of the 19th century.

The often-expressed reason why photographers get interested in industrial architecture is a biographical one. In the motto to his photographic book "*Ostrava guys to everyone,*" the photographer Boris Renner (2007) says: "I was born in 1965 in Ostrava. Somebody is born in a village and he sees greenery and trees. I grew up surrounded by smoke-stacks and steel monsters. The sun leaked through them in the morning; in the night they turned into uncanny castles. I don't know when it happened, but suddenly it got into me: it was my Ostrava. Original as its people, but alive and distinctive. I still want to explore it, document its perpetual changes." Here, industrial sites act as sources of artistic and potentially also of individual identity.

Hand in hand with the issue of identity goes the urge to document the so-far neglected aesthetic richness of industrial sites, as is not only the case of Renner, but also of the above-mentioned Lanškroun photographers. There are, of course, also pragmatic reasons, as in the case of the book "*Vítkovice Industria,*"[2] commissioned by the steelworks as an expression of its historical importance and its interest in the future of the whole region, particularly in the industrial monuments as a potential source of regional identity. But I believe all of these reasons stem from – or as in the latter case – work with a mixture of aesthetic attractiveness of the industrial photographs and the nostalgia we feel for and from industrial ruins.

An exemplary instance of such a mixture can be detected in the photographic work and especially in the commentaries published by Michal Sýkora, a lay photographer from Kladno, at his website. As he wrote in 2006: "It was not for the first time I went to Poldi in Kladno. But maybe it was for the last time – recently the production was ended in the last rolling mill in Kladno. [...] I was in the halls; I got everywhere. Sad experience: There was absolute silence in that big factory. [...] It was sad, however it was photographically absolutely exceptional and beautiful. [...] The hall was built in the 50s [...] and it is closed now. You can guess what they will build in its place. A supermarket, indeed. As if we don't have a lot of them. I don't know why but I simply like Poldi. I feel that the world I knew is vanishing. No monuments from the 20th century will survive..." (Sýkora 2006a). Here, nostalgia, mixed with almost religious, romantic aestheticization of the ruinous space, results in an imminent, even wrathful, critique of our contemporary situation.

2 Vítkovice is part of the town of Ostrava.

Figure 5: MILAN SÝKORA – V PECÍCH UŽ JEN TMA/ONLY DARKNESS IN THE FURNACES, 2006. Source: Sýkora 2006b.

Sýkora, Renner and the Lanškroun photographers all represent to me a kind of post-modern romantic explorers, mourning about the loss that takes place in the landscape around us while at the same time desperately trying to document it, to preserve at least a trace, an image of it. As another of Sýkora's comment illustrates, they aestheticize not only the object of their interest – industrial ruins – but also their experience: "Poldi is dying away slowly but surely – so I went there again to see something and to retain it. *It was adventurous: unexpected holes in the ground, unexpected strange people [...], places where the depth or height takes one's breath away*" (Sýkora 2006b; italics mine). Contemporary explorers go out for a kind of romantic explorations; they differ from their romantic predecessors only by having digital cameras instead of drawing-books. Figure 5 shows a snapshot from one of Sýkora's explorations.

The case of Václav Jirásek and his project "Industria" emphasizes even more the potential critical aspect of contemporary industrial imaginary. In his work, Jirásek shows how the aesthetically nostalgic exploration of industrial motives (fig. 6) can be combined with a critical stance about the present-

day state of the industry and its social as well as spatial consequences. He "repeatedly stresses that his work is classical color photography, devoid of any manipulative interventions – and, in doing so, underscores the bizarre, fantastic aspects of the thoroughly artificial, thoroughly man-made environment of the factory, showing it to be an actual, and above all still extant reality, however much we may have expelled it from our consciousness, shifting it far from the angle of vision of contemporary priorities, dreams, projects" (Nedoma 2006,14). Jirásek thus depicts not only the factories on the verge of complete destruction, but he is also interested in the people still working there (fig. 7) – "workers bent by labor and now ruled by the fear of unemployment" (ibid. 16). In his *Industria*, the aesthetics of nostalgia merges with a socially critical statement about our past and our present in "a grandiose expression of the monumentality of the decay and dissolution of the impossibly gigantic dreams of the yesterday that was to have been tomorrow" (ibid.).

I believe there is a threefold reason behind lay as well as professional photographic exploration of industrial ruins. Firstly, it is an urge to document the vanishing world. Secondly, it is an effort to convey the experienced unexpected beauty of such places, a strange and organic compound of the natural and man-made merging under the auspices of relentless time. There is an aspect of romanticizing concerning contemporary photographic as well as discursive representation of industrial ruins and hand in hand with it goes a process of aestheticization of industrial space. In order to turn reality into an aesthetic object the distantciation of the viewer is needed (cf. Williams 2004,29). But thirdly, despite the distanciation, there is still, as the case of Jirásek's *Industria* shows, a critical potential regarding contemporary industrial imaginary.

All the photographic works I mentioned here are the result of about the last 10 years of artistic activity. I used the example of the photographers' statements about the industrial landscape in order to unravel the feelings and motives grounded in industrial landscape which I believe are to some extent general in our times when everybody equipped with a digital camera or even a mobile phone can become a photographer, when urban exploration became usual leisure activity, and when open-door days of derelict industrial sites attract more and more people worldwide every year. The photographers' statements bare the fact that general aesthetic perception of industrial motives has changed profoundly in the last two decades. After all, who, from the general public, would even think about going to Poldi for a romantic exploration during the second half of the 1980s?

Figure 6: VÁCLAV JIRÁSEK – UNTITLED. Source: Jirásek 2006.

... and the case of Poldi Kladno

Kladno is a town with a long and rich industrial history dating back to 1854 when the first metallurgist plant was founded close to the city center. Since then, surrounded by coalmines and deposits of iron ore, Kladno became one of the leading metallurgist areas in Bohemia. The steelworks were founded by Karl Wittgenstein in 1889 just next to the older plant and were named Poldi after his wife Leopoldina. Because of heavy pollution and the mining industry, Kladno became known as a black town. After the World War II both plants were nationalized by the communist government, merged into one large factory called SONP Poldi, and Kladno acquired another prominent label, that of a red town. Since red had always been the color attributed to the communist party and because in Kladno, as in many industrial towns at the turn of the century, there was a strong socialist and communist workers' movement, the history re-narrated by the communist historiography and propaganda after communists seized power in 1948 tended to hyperbolize the image of

Kladno as a workers' town, always devoted to the ideals of communism, as a "black-and-red" town.[3]

A good example of such re-narration of Kladno's history, using the explicit color-based imagery, can be found in a book written by the leading member of early communist party and the second communist president of socialist Czechoslovakia Antonín Zápotocký, who was a native of the region. His quasi-autobiographical novel, metaphorically called *Red Glare Above Kladno*, depicts how the idea of communism and the struggle for it gradually engulfed workers and miners in Kladno and then spread into the surrounding region. Zápotocký uses the image of the physical red light illuminating the landscape when steel is discharged from the blast furnaces and slag is spilled onto dumps as a representation of the communist idea illuminating and cultivating the workers' souls. His story starts poetically with: "They spilled slag onto the dump and red glare glowed above Kladno" to end ideologically with slightly changed: "They spilled slag onto the dump and red glare glowed above the whole country." In Zápotocký's novel the black-and-red Kladno is given its prominent place in the story of the march towards communism. The novel, set in the "black-and-red" workers' town and filled with industrial metaphors (like the one I quoted above), can serve as a good literary example of communist industrial imaginary.

After the fall of communism and the downfall of heavy industry in the 1990s, Poldi as a big factory went broke. Some small plants survived the breakdown of the industrial colossus, but the major part of its 6 km^2 area became a brownfield with small workshops or warehouses scattered here and there, but mainly filled with the ruins of old industrial buildings and technology.[4] Figure 8 shows a large part of the brownfield area. Nevertheless, what survived this breakdown was the image of the red and black industrial town once created by communist ideology, which acknowledges the long and industrial history of the town but also clogs it with the ideological ballast of the former political regime. What also survived was the space of former Poldi, a ruinous area that attracts some by its aesthetic beauty and historical authenticity and repels others for its discursive connection to communist propaganda or for its spatial and/or social

3 For a detailed history of Poldi Kladno see Kovařík, J. (1987). Proměny: z historie kladenských hutí. Kladno: Poldi SONP.

4 The area I refer to as a Poldi brownfield (or in short Poldi) represents only a part of the industrial site. It is the area where the older factory used to be, the area sometimes referred to as 'Vojtěšská huť' or 'Koněv.'

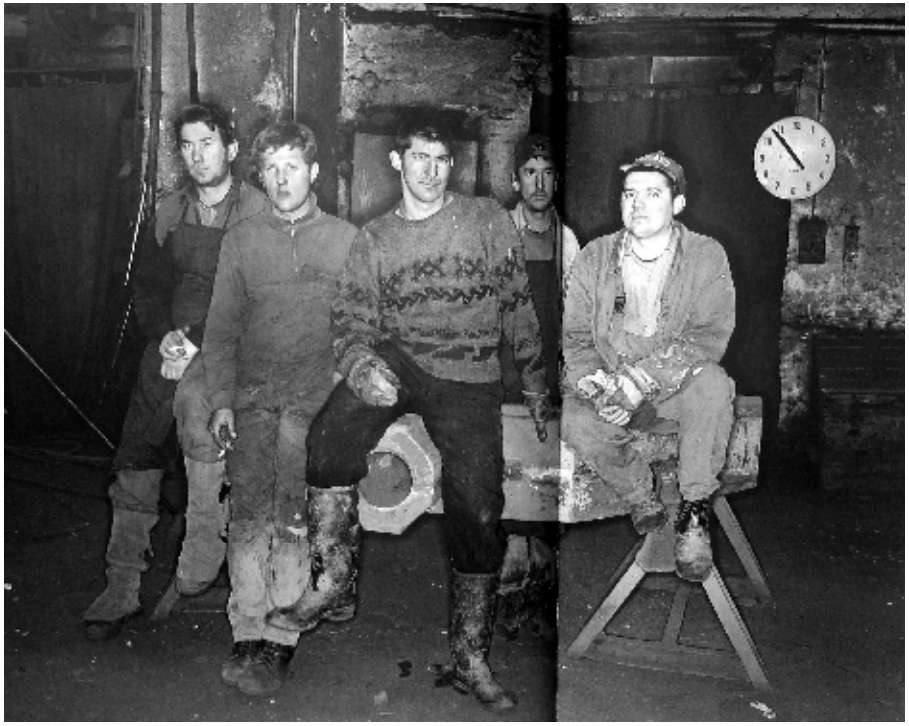

Figure 7: VÁCLAV JIRÁSEK – UNTITLED. Source: Jirásek 2006.

disorderliness. For some, the aesthetics and historical connections represent a burden to be cast away, for others something that should be protected.

Municipal politics in Kladno is controlled by a right-wing party, according to which Kladno's industrial history is not a proper, attractive one. In her article about Poldi, Schmelzová (2007) even quotes a municipal clerk according to whom Kladno does not have any proper history at all. Such a statement can sound like nonsense but there is a hidden logic in it. Kladno does not simply have the history some people wish it had. "People interested in history who come to the town understand that it is far from being only a red and black town," said the governor of the county on the occasion of the re-opening of the county's museum (CBR 2008) and the mayor of the town warmly supported him. The question which came to my mind when I listened to them was to what extent these proclamations are honest attempts to foster the process of regional identity-making and to what extent they simply try to avoid the problem of facing the uncomfortable yet still painfully, even materially, present past of the region. To what extent is the municipality trying to shift our attention from Kladno's immediate past to Kladno's bygone history? And what spatial aspects and consequences does such an approach mean for Kladno and its surroundings?

In order to shed at least some light on these issues I will, in the rest of this paper, concentrate on the spatial aspects of industrial ruins and by referring to Poldi I will try to show what has been at play in the experience and negotiation of the industrial landscape in general. Poldi here serves as a starting point from which I want to ponder the figure of industrial ruin, its spatial and phenomenological features, and the ways in which it questions our experience of the world surrounding us. In other words, in what follows, I will try to pin down ideas about space, past and future embodied in different (theoretical) approaches to industrial spaces.

Edensor nicely shows that industrial ruins are sensually richer and more stimulating than a mundane urban landscape. Full of strange noises, smells and unidentifiable objects, structures and decay, the material environment of ruins, "its deregulation, decay and the distribution of objects and less distinguishable matter, provides a realm in which sensual experience and performance is cajoled into unfamiliar enactions that coerce encounters with unfamiliar things and their affordances" (Edensor 2007,227). Concerning bodily movement, there is thus a liberatory potential in a ruin, since the "confrontation with excess matter offers opportunities to engage with the material world in a more playful, sensual fashion than is usually afforded in much smoothed-over urban space" (ibid.). I believe this is the aspect of industrial ruins that makes them so appealing and romantic and the explorations of them so "adventurous."

Industrial ruins – and Poldi Kladno is a fitting example since it lies literally in the center of the city – can thus serve as an urban counter-space. Not only are industrial ruins materially disordered and sensually richer than urban space, they are also a space out of reach of any formal political control. Although being in the center, Poldi is a space on the margin of the city, literally, since it is often occupied by marginalized people, as well as metaphorically, since it is not considered to be a physical part of the city anymore. There is no one to exercise formal power over anyone else's conduct. Going there you can meet big groups of Gypsies trying to dig out rare metal pieces from the ground in order to sell them, couples on a rendez-vous, people walking their dogs, strolling

Figure 8: THE VIEW OF THE RUINOUS PART OF POLDI. Source: Author's archive.

around the ruins, smoking weed and using drugs, spraying the walls, smashing things into pieces or simply taking photographs. From time to time you can also meet policemen patrolling and embodying the attempts of the municipality to get back control over the space. But there are so many spaces to hide from their sight and the area is so vast. In the world pre-obsessed with control and security over the public space, industrial ruins offer spaces of escape from the regulated urban landscape populated more and more by restrictions and CCTV cameras. For academics, moreover, they can serve as a kind of "third-space" (see Soja 1996), space on the margin from which it is possible to critically think over issues of public space and its regulations, public control and personal responsibility, social injustice and social memory.

The liberatory power of ruins does not lie only in their spatial and/or social disorderliness and thus in the impossibility to gain absolute control over the space, but also in the connections they hold to the past, in their sensual nature. The kind of history we know from history books cannot be read out from industrial ruins straight away. What ruins narrate, or in other words, what we can see in ruins are neither memories of particular events nor stories

of what happened there. In ruins we encounter things thrown out of their original context and we do usually not even know what purposes those things could have served. Moreover, the things we encounter are rusted, rotten, damaged and dissolved. As Edensor argues, the incomprehensibility of things and their arrangements within a ruin, the time materialized and made visible in them evoke empathy, "vague memories," and this all together opens dimensions of memory which are "neither available for inclusion in stories nor communicable." Ruins offer openings, not stories; they trigger fantasy and imagination. The past they embody is neither history nor articulate memory. Memory, and I would argue that memory is tightly connected to meanings hidden from us in our landscapes, "is not always articulate but is located in the habitual and the sensual" (Edensor 2005: 846). It is a "vague" past that is hidden in the ruins, a past without any fixed meaning, without any fixed story to be told. Ruinous Poldi does not embody the story of, let's say, industrialization; what it embodies is a "vague memory" of time passing by.

It seems to me the photographers from Lanškroun were right. Maybe it is "the ravages of time" that we mostly see in the things there, maybe it is a two-fold reference to materialization of time that makes industrial ruins so appealing. On one hand, the industrial ruin of Poldi is a silent material remnant of the industrial age, of historical time, which passed and cannot return. But on the other hand, the decay of Poldi, the process of its dissolution in and into nature reflects and embodies in a different way the passage of time itself. Or, as Rendell puts it, there is "an important temporal aspect of the ruin, whether natural or cultural, that it is not simply a sign of the past in the present, but rather marks the moment at which what is now becomes what has been" (Rendell 2006,97-8).

New materials such as concrete, steel and especially zinc-coated materials used in new industrial structures such as warehouses that are being built in the area of Poldi do not go back to nature so easily. At least in their present state, they do not embody time in such ways as the old and ruinous industrial buildings do, and thus seem to us generally unattractive. Or, as one photographer from Lanškroun told me, "they are simply uninteresting and, moreover, they are all the same."

The resolution about the need to protect the Poldi brownfield area as an industrial heritage site was, according to Schmelzová (2007), received by the municipality as well as by the National Institution for Heritage, but nothing substantial happened. On the contrary, demolition activities slowly continue to erase Poldi from the map. I think I clarified why the municipal government

Figure 9: THE PRODUCTION OF MAN SURRENDERS PROGRESSIVELY TO NATURE – A VIEW FROM POLDI RUINOUS AREA. Source: Author's archive.

perceives the ruinous brownfield area as something like a black hole adjacent to the center of the town, or maybe something like a grey zone – according to its color in the municipal plan –, which should be cleared up or at least ordered and brought under control. Indeed, it is a space of disorder, social as well as spatial. The tragedy of last summer when one of the big halls collapsed onto four "metal-miners" after they attempted to dismantle it and to redeem it provided the municipality with a new "reason" to get rid of Poldi. It is, after all, a dangerous place where citizens can come to harm.

In addition, it is a space of the closest connection to the uncomfortable past of the former regime and to its propaganda, discourse and imaginary. It is the most red-and-black space of Kladno and if Kladno is to be cleared

of its red-and-black history, it must be cleared of Poldi. Poldi is thus uncomfortable since, as Schmelzová aptly put it, "the municipality perceives it as an unwanted defect in the attentively built image of Kladno as a calm suburban area of Prague" (Schmelzová 2007,48). Poldi once served as a place the image of which was used to adjust and adapt the meaning of history according to the politically correct interpretation. "It seems that today a similar process of modifying history is at work, just oriented the other way round" (ibid. 47). Since, as the Lanškroun photographers pointed out, if there are no material traces left, there is nothing to be remembered.

Conclusion: Industrial ruins and nostalgia for the future

As Picon observed, "in traditional landscapes, the productions of man, his constructions in particular, surrendered themselves progressively to nature in the form of the ruin" (Picon 2000,76). Industrial ruin is of this kind: severe facades of buildings together with organic clusters of pipes and cables surrender to the organicity and vitality of nature (fig. 9). In successive stages, the (industrial) ruin reintegrates "the traces of human activity into the cycles of nature" (Picon 2000,77). But is there any substantial difference between the ruin Picon speaks about and the industrial ruin? I believe the way in which industrial ruins refer us to time is in fact more complex than Rendell suggests.

After all, industrial ruins are ruins of modernity and modernist dreams about technology and a better future. The whole thing is not as simple as Rendell's "moment at which what is now becomes what has been"; the message we can read out is more context-specific and thus can be more telling, more emotionally and intellectually charged for us. It is true that "in the body of the ruin the past is both present in its residues and yet no longer accessible" (Huyssen 2006,7), but, regarding industrial ruins, the past is a specific past of ours. In this sense I must agree with Huyssen when he suggests that "we are nostalgic for the ruins of modernity because they still seem to hold a promise that has vanished from our own age: the promise of an alternative future" (ibid.).

Maybe here lies the answer to why late modernity is so obsessed with its own past, why it is an age so filled with nostalgia. And that is why I believe in liberatory powers of ruins stemming from the nostalgia they stimulate. That is also why it pays to question industrial ruins and through them to question our present, our relationship to our past and thus open up the possibility of also questioning our future the foundations of which are now being laid. Industrial

ruins are the place from where an alternative could be offered, since they disturb and resist "modern attempts to cleanse, banish ambiguity and order the memory of space" (Edensor 2005, 845). Because of their disorderliness, continuous change and the impossibility to be governed, they do not fit well into prepared historical narratives. Rather, they are a place with a narrative potential, a place that encourages starting a new narrative (cf. Crang and Travlou 2001). In addition, since industrial ruins are about the never-ending process of change, they stand out against any attempts to control or fix their meaning and thus can serve as a kind of "thirdspace" opening a possibility for critique and alternatives. And, last but not least, they refer us to our modernist past when the future was seen as offering a possibility. It seems to me that industrial nostalgia is not for the past but for the vanished promises of the past, for the vanished belief in the future.[5]

I can imagine a project, for example, in which the decisions and discourse of the Kladno municipality about the space of Poldi would serve as a starting point for analysing the power that is being exercized over public space, and the discourse about public realm supporting it – the discourse about our "security," freedom and responsibility for ourselves. The future of urban public space we are seemingly inevitably heading to – a space crammed with restrictions, CCTV cameras and benches curved in such a way that homeless people would not be able to sleep on them – could thus be called in question from the point of view offered by the 'thirdspace' of the industrial ruin of Poldi.

In this paper I tried to elucidate why industrial ruins can be important not only because of their aesthetic appeal but also because of the connection to the past and the future they hold. Highly aestheticized because of their visual attractiveness and romanticized because of their ability to induce nostalgia, industrial ruins attract us. The encounter with the process of change, with the past and the vanished potential futures embodied in the disordered physicality of industrial ruin forms a kind of late modern experience which might be possible to understand as sublime. Industrial ruins can evoke in us, people of late modernity, a strong emotional response similar to the response technology evoked in people of the end of 19th century. What we experience is a sublime mixture of emotions spanning between the experience of awe and beauty: breathtaking, beautiful, awesome, sad, adventurous, exceptional, just to paraphrase Sýkora's description of his own feelings when he entered the recently

5 For more about this see also Boym 2001, xvi

closed rolling mill I quoted above. Hence the importance of the triad – sublime, nostalgia, aestheticization – I started with for understanding our industrial landscape experience.

For the reasons expressed throughout this paper I believe the nostalgia accompanying our interest in ruins could prove to be a good starting point for a critical reassessment of our attitude to the world surrounding us. Maybe the encounter with time at work mediated by industrial ruins is a kind of late modern sublime experience, and maybe some deep emotion is just what we need in our relentless post-socialist age of change.

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THE CZECH JEWISHNESS OF PROFESSOR JIŘÍ FRANĚK, OUTSTANDING PERSONALITY IN PRAGUE'S SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL LIFE

Blanka Soukupová, Zdeňka Fraňková, Věra Dvořáková

Jiří Franěk (Frischmann) (Nov. 24, 1922, Vysoké Mýto – December 30, 2007, Prague) – Charles University professor, leading Czech literary scholar, Russian studies specialist, publisher of literature and professional books, and the greatest expert on the works of Bohumil Mathesius – can be considered from various angles. In the English-German mutation of the journal Urban People, we will concentrate on his relation to the Jewish minority, with whom his fate was joined. It is in accordance with the main theoretical idea of this journal, a theme which accentuates the mutual bond between the character of a city and its inhabitants, and with the effort of postmodern anthropology to analyze the complex structure of collective and individual identity.

Jiří Franěk helped shape the cultural face of Prague as editor of leading Czech publishing houses (Svoboda [1949–1952], Odeon [1952–1954], Svět sovětů/Lidové nakladatelství [from 1957]). For a short time, he also worked for the journal Sputnik (from 1971). Besides all of that, however, he was also a distinguished university teacher: from 1959 to 1971, when he was forced to leave, and again from 1989 to 1992, he lectured at the Prague Philosophical Faculty, a position he considered to be the most prestigious. Prague Jews recognized him as a member of the Prague Jewish (religious) community, with whom he was connected for several decades: from his return from the concentration camps until his death, thus in the years of reconstruction, negotiations with the regime, the hopeful period of the Prague Spring, normalization and re-restoration after 1989. Against a background of the good and bad times of the Prague kehillah, the no-less dramatic professionally political life of Jiří Franěk also unwound: from 1945, he was a student at the Philosophical Faculty in Prague and, later, "docent" (assistant professor) (1963). In 1990, he was made professor and, meanwhile, worked his way up to the post of an exceptionally success-

ful editor, but he also had to resign himself to employment as a signalman at the Prague-Bubeneč railroad station. In order to be able to concentrate on his work, he retired in 1978 on an invalid's pension during the time of normalization and, in 1979, he received a full pension. His political convictions also went through reversals. During World War II in Theresienstadt (Terezín) he had become a devout communist, but when he was in Auschwitz he was excluded from the Czech Communist Party.[1] During the period of the so-called Slánský trials, he, like many other Jews, went through the painful process of disillusionment and inner distance from the party. Then, in the era of normalization (1970), the "hard core" of the Party, for the second time, excluded him from its ranks, although he was just as a formal member. (He admitted that he had stayed in the Party only because he did not want to harm his own family.) Probably it was mainly Franěk's successful working stay in the Federal German Republic in the second half of the 1960s, thus, paradoxically, his service as a Czech Russian studies specialist that was a thorn in their side.

However, the professor, who moved about in Jewish institutions, was mainly known to people as a lecturer and sometimes no less as an avid listener, because Jiří Franěk may have preferred discussing to being the only speaker. This passion for lectures as a unique form of education was connected with his role as an educator in Theresienstadt and Auschwitz during the war. In Theresienstadt he also met the literarily and visually creative Petr Ginz (1928–Sept. 1944, Auschwitz), the editor of the journal Vedem[2] in Auschwitz, where he was transported, according to the Theresienstadt memorial book of Dec. 15, 1943,[3]

1 This information, like the information concerning the course of Jiří Franěk's employment, his family background, the fate of his brother František, and the visit of the family to Auschwitz in 1972, comes from a half-structured interview (July 22, 2008) of Blanka Soukupová with Mgr. Zdeňka Fraňková, the wife of Jiří Franěk, in his Holešovice apartment study. Data regarding his employment were corrected according to transcribed (in a computer version) recorded recollections of Franěk from January 29, 2000. – Other information, if not otherwise mentioned, was chosen from a half-structured interview of J. Franěk with J. Dvořák, recorded on June 17, 2004.

2 Readers could make the acquaintance of Petr Ginz in recent times by means of the publication of his two diaries written between September 1941 and January 1942. Pressburger, S. (2004) *My Brother's Diary*. Prague: TRIGON. – Jiří Franěk could react to his talent circuitously: in 2006 he prepared an editorial about the contents of the war and military diary of Petr's father Oto (Otto) Ginz from 1915 to 1924, understandably looking at Ginz's relation to Šolochov, in whose family Oto Ginz lived for a while as a captive of the Russians. Franěk, J. 2006. *Ota Ginz*. Prague. Association of former prisoners of the Schwarzheide concentration camp.

3 (1995) *Terezínská pamětní kniha Židovské oběti nacistických deportací z Čech a Moravy 1941–1945. (Theresienstadt Memorial Book. Jewish victims of Nazi deportations from Bohemia and Moravia 1941–1945)*. Vol. II. Praha: Melantrich, p. 1066.

with the legendary educator, the German Zionist Fredy Hirsch (1916 Cáchy – March 1944, Auschwitz).

The Holocaust theme indisputably became the basic focus of Franěk's life. His mother Hana (Nov. 13, 1896–Jan. 26, 1943), his brother František (Sept. 18, 1921–1943), his aunt Edita (Aug. 20, 1905–Jan. 26, 1943), his cousins Petr (July 1, 1936–Jan. 26, 1943) and Jan (May 14, 1938–Jan. 26, 1943)[4] and his cousin Eva died in Auschwitz. Franěk himself apparently survived mainly because of coincidences and the abilities he learned as a scout. In 1997, in a recording of his lecture on the place of Jews in Czech literature and the relation of Czech society and the literati to them, he added, *"To survive the Holocaust meant 99% luck... But of that one percent of the lucky ones, only every tenth survived and each of those tenth had enough physical and spiritual strength."*[5] He felt that the possibility of concentrating on spiritual activity played an extraordinary role.

Jiří Franěk, however, was one of those who, after the Shoah, chose to lead an active life rather than dwell on destructive memories of terrible experiences. He explained his victory over bitter fate – which is not the same as forgetting (even if statistics of the suicide of Czech survivors who could not derive benefit from psychoanalysis before 1989 are non-existent, it can be presumed that very few were so strong) – by his scouting education and his rapid postwar anchorage in a new family that he "gained by marriage." He met his wife – which was typical for those times – during the May elections of 1946. Zdeňka, however, with unusual openness admits that the Jewishness of her husband was not important to her. With great self-criticism, she also judges her own outlook as a young girl who, during the Second World War, did not link the obvious facts together. Even if her school in Hradec Králové was closed for a short time (it was the collection place for the Jewish population for transports to Theresienstadt) and even if her teacher was disgraced in the anti-Semitic magazine Aryan Combat, she had no idea of what was happening to the Jews, nor did she ask. Jiří Franěk's daughter later remembers the rare time when, as an eleven-year-old girl, her father took her to Schwarzheide near Dresden, where he had worked after the liquidation of the family camp in Auschwitz. Later he also

4 *Theresienstadt* ..., p. 1060. – Franěk left on a transport to Theresienstadt. Cf – Pardubice, Dec. 5, 1942. Of those in this transport, 603 people did not survive the war; 45 people were liberated (two fates were not ascertained). *Terezín*..., p 1058. – Franěk's father had already died in 1931. His brother, according to witnesses, succumbed to pneumonia, probably thus got through the selection.

5 Franěk, J. (1997). Asimilace. In Veber, V. *Židé v novodobých dějinách*. Praha: Karolinum, s. 41.

took her to visit Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen, the concentration camp from which, on April 20, 1945, he was liberated. Otherwise, however, she views her father's attendance at the Jewish Community in Prague on Rosh Hashanah, as she remembers with humor, like a road *to a secret land* from which her father brought back "Věstník" (Gazette).[6] Information conveyed by her two sons about the Shoah was occasional and incomplete. Franěk's fated closeness to his father-in-law was probably also extremely important: during the Second World War, the latter was sentenced for political reasons to six years in the Buchenwald concentration camp and thus shared with his son-in-law a key life experience which could not be communicated and shared with other members of the family, even if they probably attempted to understand.

Perhaps one can, in this case, discuss a certain form of phenomenon that the Bratislava ethnologist Peter Salner called a manifestation of endogamy of common experience: when Jewish survivors sought out Jewish partners, was it a question of Judaism or of finding a partner with the same life experience?[7] Here, probably, the father-in-law replaced a Jewish confidant. In the memories of Franěk's wife and daughter, the time in concentration camps of the husband and father was reduced to comments about Auschwitz weather, the constantly present stench and smoke from the high-power incinerators that swallowed up the bodies of murdered people, and comments about the ever-present Auschwitz mud. Even if these phenomena (wind, smoke, mud) were absolutely key, in the oral-history interview recorded in 2004 by my diploma-student Tomáš Dvořák, other aspects of Auschwitz also appear: initiations, a picture of the children's block. Franěk apparently, at least sub-consciously, tried to protect his wife and children (daughter and son) from the cruel reality. In no case, however, was it a question of concealment, which was described in scientific literature as one of the post-Holocaust Jewish strategies. All of her life, his daughter pointedly proclaimed her Jewishness; she joined the Jewish Liberal Union after its founding (2000), and, after the introduction of special membership in the Orthodox-administered Jewish Community of Prague (2003) she also accepted this status as a non-halachic Jew.[8] Franěk himself, then, in view of the possi-

6 This was a minority monthly. Interview with Mrs. Věra Dvořáková, July 22, 2008, in her father's study in Prague – Holešovice.

7 Salner, P. *Židia na Slovensku medzi tradíciou a asimiláciou (Jews in Slovakia between tradition and assimilation)*. Bratislava: ZING PRINT 2000, pp. 49-50.

8 In 1977, his son emigrated to Canada and probably thereby totally severed the line of handing down of memory.

bilities of the times, tried to discuss the Shoah publicly. He also ascribed great weight to symbolic places of memory. He and his daughter visited Theresienstadt in the mid-1960s and, as his daughter remembers it, he got very angry when their guide led the visitors only to the Small Fortress. After a September 6, 2002, visit to two stops on the death march from the Schwarzheide concentration camp, which he and his co-prisoner Richard Svoboda went on as members of a delegation of the Association of Former Prisoners of the Schwarzheide Concentration Camp, he wrote, "*...every public reminder of the tragedy of the past has its importance*." During a stop in Česká Lípa, the former prisoners discussed the erection of a new monument to the victims of the march.[9]

Jiří Franěk the fighter was victorious over his own fate. However, he never got the Auschwitz experience out of his system. His wife remembers the family visit to Auschwitz in 1972 which resulted in her husband's collapse. The night before the visit, which Franěk characterized as a real Auschwitz night, had already marked him: his whole body itched him after an alleged insect attack. The next day, he went round the camp. He could allegedly open the barracks doors; during "reprises" of the last part of the journey from the camp to "work," when the prisoners did not know whether they were going to the gas chambers, he allegedly thought only about himself. And, to his wife's surprise, he finally set the table and ate all his food with zest. This situation, however, is quite logical to anthropologists. Peter Salner, working on a project called *The fates of those who survived the Holocaust* (1995–1996), described it as follows: "*Physically people were with us in the study, but spiritually they were in an entirely other world.*"[10] It was also logical that, at the end, the former prisoner had to suppress his hunger "of that time," another distinct phenomenon of all the memories of the Shoah survivors.

Jiří Franěk experienced his Judaism as one of the elements of his identity. It seems, however, that it was even more meaningful than he himself admitted; he had told his future wife he was a Jew at their first meeting. He was proud of his family roots, of his famous ancestor Viktor Vohryzek; he went through the harsh concentration "school." He was not a religious Jew; he did not identify with Jewish society, with the Jewish nation, or with the religion. He kept his postwar membership in the kehillah allegedly only out of respect for his bond with the Jewish community that was threatened with anti-Semitism. The family

9 Franěk, J., Svoboda, R. (2002). Památce obětí pochodu smrti (Memories of victims of the death march). *Roš chodeš*, 11, p. 16.

10 Salner, P. (1997). *Prežili holokaust (They survived the Holocaust)*. Bratislava: VEDA, p. 131.

he grew up in celebrated only the "main" Jewish holidays and then, after his father's death, only Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, and Christmas. Jiří Franěk kept a considerable distance from Orthodoxy, for which faith is that abyss from which everything else originates. He repeatedly blamed it because it discouraged Czech Jews from joining the Community. He consequently also rejected the new Czech spelling rule, the writing of "Jew" with a capital letter**.** For him, Jewishness in the diaspora was not national Jewishness. In Franěk's mind, the nation was formed by Moses in ancient times[11] and later lost this status as a nation.[12] Although he was brought up in Czech-Jewish tradition that rejected Zionism as hidden Germanness, after the Shoah he regarded the state of Israel and Zionism as a necessary reality, the only recourse for those Jews who could not get used to their host nation, particularly German-speaking Jews after the Second World War.[13] But for him, home was the Czech lands.

Franěk's concept of Jewishness was very modern; it was fundamentally rooted in the thought of the Czech-Jewish movement. At the end of the 19th century, the Czech-Jewish writer Vojtěch Rakous had already come out against identification of Jewishness with Orthodoxy. According to the Czech-Jewish weekly Rozvoj (Development), the basis of Jewishness was a realistic view of the world and a specific ethic, not rituals. Viktor Vohryzek then leaned toward the opinion that visible religious otherness is an easy target of modern anti-Semitism. In contrast to his descendant, however, he considered the religious question or, more precisely, reform, extraordinarily important.[14] Rejection of Orthodoxy did not mean rejection of faith. For the ideology of the Czech-Jewish movement, the fight to implant Jewishness in the Czech soil was significant. Not even Vohryzek, understandably without the experience of the Shoah, considered Zionism as non-functional: he recognized it as a solution for Russian and Romanian Jews. But he considered that the source of national Jewishness

11 Franěk, J. (2006). Osudová pospolitost – mé vyznání (A fated community – my confession). *Listy*, XXXVI, 5, p. 6, pp. 1-2 and p. 4.

12 Ibid. p. 3.

13 *"Even if I think that, in view of today's situation, nobody (not only a Jew, but no decent person) has the right to turn his back on Israel and thereby, whether or not he means it, on Zionism, I suppose that just as nobody can actually take someone's Czechness (Germanness, Americanness, etc.) at the end of that person's life, so right after the war I understood that people who were not Czech enough had no place to go after the war and, for Jews of the German world, the only place left for them was Palestine,"Jiří Franěk wrote me in a letter dated Prague, February 6, 2003.*

14 Soukupová, B. (2004). Czech Jews: disillusion as an impulse for profiling the self-confidence of Czech Judaism. Soukupová, B., Salner, P. *Modernizace, identita, stereotyp, konflikt. Společnost po hilsneriádě*. Bratislava: ZING PRINT, pp. 56-57.

was in anti-Semitism, which should fade away;[15] this was the optimistic idea of the Czech-Jewish movement. Just like him, Jiří Franěk also considered Zionism a certain form of assimilation in an effort to resemble "other" nations.[16]

Jiří and his brother, however, were brought up as Czechs and Czechoslovaks. They respected T. G. Masaryk, the first Czechoslovak president; both exercised in Sokol; they were boy scouts; his brother acted in theater. Just like representatives of the Czech-Jewish movement, Jiří Franěk also needed to emphasize his contact with rural Czechness in his youth (in his heart, though, this was a romantic construct of the Czech national movement with whose help Jews allegedly assimilated into the Czech nation) However, it is most likely that the inner Czech Jewishness of the family became fatal. That is to say, the Frischmanns also underestimated the danger of Hitler's fascism and, on the other hand, overestimated the possibilities of the "Masaryk" First Republic. Although Franěk's brother had an opportunity to emigrate to France, the family naively decided that he must graduate from high school first. Jiří also gave priority to his future graduation from the Jewish Reform Academic High School of Brno over a relatively safe escape.[17] But Franěk wrote a provocative appraisal of the phenomenon of Theresienstadt culture, which, after the Second World War, had become a controlled sort of myth. The controversial thesis of a basic work about Theresienstadt by sociologist and historian Hans Günther Adler, who saw the primary value of its culture in the support of Nazi propaganda about Theresienstadt, was officially rejected by Czechoslovak Jews.[18] Franěk's interpretation of Theresienstadt culture was only slightly respectful of the legend. That is to say, in his view, the basic fact was that Theresienstadt was a transitional stop on the way to physical liquidation. He also considered toleration of the culture on the part of German Nazism was a means of pacification of people condemned to death. It is also typical that, in his memoirs, he wrote about his mother's death in Auschwitz as if it were an execution. (But he erroneously gave the year as 1942).

Another of Franěk's Holocaust themes was musings about resistance and survival. Similarly to Primo Levi, Jiří Franěk, who considered dignified survival

15 Ibid, p. 66.

16 Fateful..., p. 4.

17 This information comes from Franěk's memories of January 28, 2000. Also from this same source comes his evaluation of his mother's death.

18 Soukupová, B. (2007). Židé na Moravě v padesátých letech 20. století (do zahájení destalinizace roku 1956)(Jews in Moravia in the 1950s [to the start of de-Stalinization in 1956]). In Pálka, P. *Židé a Morava*. XIII. Kroměříž: Muzeum Kroměřížska, p. 263.

a type of resistance, also supposed that each prisoner survived at the expense of someone else. His position as a teacher was certainly also a better starting point for survival than the position of a slave doing manual labor. It was, perhaps, exactly for that reason that Jiří Franěk placed great emphasis on public communication about the fate of survivors and on scientific processing of the problem of active resistance in the concentration camps.[19]

Also quite unique was Franěk's editorial interest in Karel Poláček and Jiří Orten, with whom, thanks to his cousin Oto Reiner, who photographed his friend Orten, he could even shake hands.[20] This reference of Franěk's, which is another manifestation of his Jewishness, should be evaluated by a literary historian. In our brief musings we have concentrated only on the role Judaism played in the life of one brave, militant man who was born in the turbulent 20th century as a Jew.

19 Manuscript in computer version, undated.

20 In 1991, Jiří Franěk published *Citového průvodce po Kutné Hoře ve verších a fotografiích. (An emotional guide through Kutná Hora in verse and photographs)*. Verses written by Orten (Jiří Jakubec), photographs provided by Oto Reiner (J. Hron).

"WE SIMPLY LAUGHED AT THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS"

Professor Jiří FRANĚK (formerly Frischman) Born in 1920 in Vysoké Mýto, died on Dec. 30, 2007, in Prague, Czechoslovakia

June 27–30, 2004 recorded and transcribed (in Czech) by Jan Dvořák
August 2008, translated into English and commented by František Franěk and Jacob Franek

Where do you come from? Tell us about your family.

I come from Vysoké Mýto, which was then a little town of 15,000 souls in Eastern Bohemia, in the Pardubice[1] region. My father's given name was Frischmann. The whole family used the double "n"; however, one "n" fell off my name, probably the rabbi's mistake, in the registry record. I changed my name when I started Slavic studies[2] and learned that the Germanic names had been forcefully assigned by the Emperor Joseph II. A clerk assigned a Jew a name according to his [the Jew's] financial situation. Therefore, my ancestor was neither too poor, nor too rich. If he had been rich, he would have been named Goldschmidt.

My father's side of the family considered themselves Czech. For instance, my father knew Laufr, who was Jewish and the first sports commentator of Czechoslovak Radio. My father had a large collection of books and his favorite author was Bezruč[3]. All this indicates that the family felt Czech to a large extent. Not entirely though, since some of the relatives were Germans, more precisely German Jews. The Czech side, however, dominated. My father died when I was ten years old.

1 the biggest city in Eastern Bohemia

2 in North America now more commonly referred to as Eastern European studies

3 Czech poet from the Ostrava region

My mother came from the Vohryzek family and there Czech sentiments were unmistakable. This had a large influence on me, though the love for Bezruč (despite him being an anti-Semite) I inherited from my father.

What did your father do for a living?
My father married into my mother's embroidery business. Where I come from was the beginning of the *Českomoravská vysočina*[4], and there, many farmwives traditionally made a living by hand-embroidering monograms onto underwear, bedding, and tablecloths. My mother got the "živnost"[5] (that is how they used to refer to business) as a wedding gift from her father, and it had an enormous impact on our family. Thanks to it, the whole family and I met a large number of country people and learned their ways. When widowed, my mother assumed the leadership of the company, and when the Germans came, she passed it onto one of her employees, although it was later confiscated.

What did you speak at home?
At home we spoke only Czech. My mother did not know any German. We children started learning German at school in grade four, so I did know some German. My mother had some German customers, but not from Germany, from America. When she needed to communicate with them, I had to help, as she was not capable of conversing with them in German, for instance over the phone. When there was a need to write a business letter, one of our aunts who was perfectly fluent in German had to correct it, as well as our German homework.

Where did you go to school?
In Mýto[6], I went to a Czech elementary school and then to a Czech Reálné Gymnázium.[7] The closest German school in the area was in Lanškroun.[8] I attended the Gymnázium until septima.[9] Then the Germans came and I was kicked out. Since my family was of the opinion that I had to have a graduation diploma, I was sent to the only Jewish Gymnázium in the Czech and Moravian lands, in

4 Czechomoravian Highlands
5 craft
6 a short-form reference to the city of Vysoké Mýto
7 a type of high school
8 a city nearby Vysoké Mýto
9 a pre-war Latin-based colloquial term for grade 7 of Gymnázium; today grade 12

the city of Brno. I finished oktáva[10] there; however, the Germans did not allow us to take the graduation exam.

It is a curiosity that I have three graduation diplomas though I did not take a single graduation exam. When in Brno, at the time when my graduation exam was approaching, an SS[11] came saying that he had a "befehl"[12] to cancel the exam. Then came an official of the regional school board, unfortunately I do not know his name, and he assured us that he had verified the level of knowledge in the whole class and that we would all get our graduation diplomas regardless. After the war I asked for my diploma and, with a big delay, I finally got it (one professor who witnessed it survived the war); there were five of us who received the promised diplomas. After the war, when I was applying for admission to university, before receiving my diploma, professor Kopal (let God rest him in peace, otherwise a very nice person, probably even philo-Semitic) told me that without a graduation diploma I could not be admitted. This was in 1945. The so-called "swindle courses" were taking place then; during the first summer after the war, they were attended by those students who for whatever reasons were not allowed to complete oktáva (or a lower grade). The authorities were afraid that too many of them would not fare well in the exam and so the state school board announced that we would not take the exam and that the final report card from the course would be valid as a graduation diploma. I received my diploma from Brno before I finished the "swindle course" where I also got a diploma without writing the exam. Meanwhile, a decree was issued that all who had reached at least septima before the war were to get a graduation diploma based on the average marks achieved in the graduation subjects during the whole period of study. So, just before the completion of the "swindle course," I received my third graduation diploma, this time from my home city of Mýto. So I have three graduation diplomas, yet I did not take a single exam, which should go into the Guinness Book of Records as there is likely no other such person in the world. So I have them instead of taking the graduation exam in 1941 with my classmates, with whom I am in frequent contact today.

Otherwise our family lived a moderately religious life. I mean, we took part in Yom Kippur, New Year (Rosh Hashanah), and Passover ... about two or three holidays. On top of that, we celebrated Christmas, Easter; we took part in "šmerkusta" (when you carol for decorated Easter eggs). I was a member of

10 a pre-war Latin-based colloquial term for grade 8 of Gymnázium; today grade 13
11 a colloquial term for members of SS
12 a German word for order

Photo No. 1: JOHANNA PFEIFEROVÁ AND ALFRED FRISCHMANN, JIŘÍ FRAŇEK'S PARENTS. Archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková.

Sokol[13], also of Boy Scouts that I loved enormously – it helped me survive, for all I learned there came into good use during the war.

Did you encounter any anti-Semitism in Sokol?
I reckon that is where my memories differ [from the recollections of other Jews]. I did not encounter anything like that in Vysoké Mýto. It was not there. I had no idea what it was. I have some vague recollections that only once in a while somebody told me (most often my parents) that such people existed. At the Gymnázium there was a professor who my mother told me was "anti." But I had no clue what that meant. So she explained it to me. Then a good friend of mine who I used to play soccer with (he was a wild one, but I had a soccer ball and he did not) was held back in grade five, while I had all A's and then I heard for the first time, "of course, the Jew Frischman..." In jest we used to yell, "Catholic, Catholic, sat down on a spike, Evangelic[14] spilled the bucket, Jew, the devil will come for you!"[15] But I did not see it as anti-Semitism then, and I do not see is so today either, for it was mostly anti-clerical and anti-religious.

13 Falcon – a sports and physical education organization with a pronounced nationalistic flavor
14 a member of Evangelical church
15 in Czech, this phrase rhymes

Otherwise I did not really encounter any anti-Semitism and I often ask my friends who write about it (I have one concrete example on my mind of a guy from Český Brod.[16] At home they only spoke German). If you read the book *Svědek málem stoletý*[17] (memoirs of Dr. Steinbach prepared by Fischl), he writes in essence the same as I remember. It is also found in Poláček.[18] The main character Bajza in *Bylo nás pět*[19] is in fact a little Jew from Rychnov.[20]

Bajza lives in complete integration with the Czech community. In Eastern Bohemia, the "Czech-Jewishness" was deeply rooted and deeper [than elsewhere in Czechoslovakia]. And Viktor Vohryzek[21] was also from Eastern Bohemia.

Was there then a Jewish Community in your town?
No. We belonged to the Luže[22] community. Luže was a town even smaller than Mýto, but they had a synagogue (now it is functioning again). There is also a Jewish cemetery. There were six, may be eight Jewish families in Mýto (thirty, at most, fifty people). During Hitler,[23] they had to be gathered together, so all of a sudden there were more of them. Otherwise Mýto was entirely a Czech town. After the war, actually after the fall of communism,[24] when I successfully tried to have a commemorative plaque to the Jews of the town [Vysoké Mýto] installed, we could not peg down the overall number (about seventy people, different sources put forth different numbers). When I got the names from the transportation lists, I realized how many I did not know. Those were the ones "gathered."

Was your mother a member of any association or a political party?
My mother for sure was not. My father, however, I assume that he was. He had these inclinations, but I have no evidence. In this respect my mom was not very social (otherwise it was just the opposite). I realized early on that she did not understand politics at all. After my father's death, she was very busy and had

16 a city east of Prague
17 the title means *An almost hundred-year-old witness* [to Czechoslovak history]
18 Karel Poláček, a Czech Jewish writer
19 *The Five of Us*, a famous children book by Poláček
20 Rychnov nad Kněžnou, a small town in Eastern Bohemia
21 a relative, a brother of his grandmother
22 a nearby city
23 a slang reference to the period when Hitler was in power
24 in 1989

Photo No. 2: JIŘÍ FRANĚK WITH HIS BROTHER FRANTIŠEK, CA. 1924. Archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková.

a lot of problems to deal with. She worked day and night and so did not participate in any associations or clubs. We did not have any significant social life; mom simply did not have the time. If anything, she dropped by our neighbors' place (or they to ours). My brother and I were immersed completely in Czech circles. We Jews were united only during the war. Most of my contacts with Jews were in tennis. I played it with passion. There were five to six Jews in the tennis club, but for such a small town it was a thus viewed as a "Jewish sport." However, for us it was meaningless whether any actual Jews were playing tennis; it simply did not interest us.

Did you take notice of what was going on in Germany?
I must say that we did take a great deal of notice. I remember it. Despite being eleven years old in 1933, I remember it clearly. We listened to the radio day and night and we even discussed whether it could come to Czechoslovakia. My mother could not comprehend how this was possible in central Europe. So we registered it a lot. My wife was one year younger, but she said that she had not noticed it that much. It may be that we were conditioned by the anti-Semitism taking place in Germany to take it more seriously. Both my brother and I started to be politically active early on. We participated at school in political discussions with our professors (for instance at the onset of the Ethiopian war[25]). We took political stands. Already at the Gymnázium we had a fraternity, politically leaning quite to the left, as were most intellectuals these days. Eventually, I was left out of the fraternity, as I was in danger anyway. Some of the boys later founded a clandestine group and after a betrayal, twelve or more of them were executed. Today we are all summarily accused of being communists then, but whoever knows the circumstances understands that we could not be anything else.

Who was your role model then?
Without a doubt, it was Masaryk.[26] In the whole wider family of ours, Masaryk was a saint (and in my wife's family similarly so). I have several small statues of him that survived the war. I also have my brother's portrait painted just before we went to the concentration camp. It was painted by a young Jewish woman when we were gathered as Jews. Her name was Hanka Picková; she also died in the camp.

Did you encounter Zionism at that time?
Of course we knew about Zionism. I, under the influence of Viktor Vohryzek, grew up in a total rejection of Zionism. When I studied his writings after the war (and later the writings of Jindřich Kohn[27]), I realized that there could be Czech Jews who understood and accepted Zionism. Before the war it was quite naively perceived as "either Zionism or assimilation." In my family, Zionism was completely rejected and it was viewed as a matter of nationalism – Zionism was professed by German Jews who were ashamed to be Germans but did not know how to be Czechs and that was why they turned to Zionism. Ruth Elias might agree. However, for instance, my good friend Avi Fischer was a Czech in his heart, yet after the war he went to Israel.

Did you consider emigrating?
Yes, we did. Mom had some health problems, but wanted us, the children, to emigrate. My brother was to be the first; it had even been prepared. In Prague we had an uncle who was a medical doctor and quite wealthy. It is alleged that

25 Mussolini's Invasion of Ethiopia in 1935
26 the founding father of Czechoslovakia and its first president
27 Jindřich Kohn, 7/3/1874–12/3/1935, a Jewish lawyer, a leading personality of the Czech Jewish democratic and humanist movement

in Vysočany[28] he financed a clandestine organization. So this uncle arranged and paid for passage to Switzerland for my brother, where he was to be taken illegally across the border to France. There he was to enlist in the army. The family "committee" decided (so shortsighted and so symptomatic of the times) that he first had to complete high school. Yet Paris fell two weeks before his graduation exam, so though he passed the exam in 1940, the whole plan fell apart. My brother, unfortunately, then died in Auschwitz.[29]

Later in Brno, I befriended Jindřich Wertheimer and together we planned an escape. Nevertheless, our plan was never realized. As young boys we did not really know how to go about it and we were also worried about our parents. And, when somebody escaped, the whole family was punished. Also, France completely surrendered at that time, and so any escape was quite elaborate through Slovakia, Hungary, to Greece and possibly farther. You could count the successful attempts on the fingers of one hand.

I would like to add a comment. Though my brother was rather more socially adept than I and had better marks at school, I was a bit more courageous in some ways. With one of our American customers, I was the only one to communicate in German. His name was Mueller, so he probably was of German descent. He took to a liking in me and so he mailed me an affidavit.[30] It was still possible to emigrate at that time with an affidavit, and my mother would have agreed with my leaving then, but the affidavit never arrived. Unfortunately, this is not the only case. The same happened to the writer Pavel Eisner, whose affidavit a different Pavel Eisner used to leave – he even met him after the war. I am sure that Mr. Mueller sent the affidavit. As in the Eisner's case, some clerk took it and sold it for good money. There were not too many Frischmans, so the name was probably falsified. Similarly the birth date must have been falsified, and some other information. Simply, most likely somebody else managed to escape on my affidavit.

How was it in your family with kashrut[31]**?**
Well, we did not know too much about it. We knew it existed. There was this view that it was just a bunch of obsolete notions; for instance pigs were not to

28 a district in Prague
29 Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest of Nazi Germany's concentration camps, located in Poland approximately 50 kilometers west of Kraków and 286 kilometers south from Warsaw
30 an affidavit that the person would be taken care of after the arrival to the USA
31 Jewish dietary laws

be eaten for they often suffered purples[32] and so were decreed "unclean," a kosher wine was to be dispensed by rabbis to prove it was not watered down, and all of that no longer had any validity. Of course, this thinking was based on Victor Vohryzek's ideas. He knew how to explain it all. A man does not get closer to or farther from God by eating a pig. We even kept pigs and had pig slaughtering. One of our tenants was a butcher, so I had my fill of sausages in my youth. They were so good; I never had one like that ever again.

How did you perceive Munich[33] **and the beginning of the protectorate**[34]**?**
For us the most deplorable was the behavior of the people. However, many behaved impeccably. For instance, one of my friends, a son of a collaborator,[35] kept pointedly acknowledging me. We were walking around the Town Square and I kept sending him away (as a Jew I was forbidden to be in contact with him). But he opposed me and argued with me not to worry because in case of problems, his father would straighten things out.

All of a sudden we were very lonely and could only contact Jews. Even so, some non-Jews kept associating with us. For instance, the painter Hana Picková had a boyfriend Dr. Cejp, who later became a professor at the university in Olomouc.[36] He was not afraid and he kept associating with us. How he managed it, I have no idea. Beside other things, he acquainted us with communism and Marxism. He committed suicide after the war, supposedly for being persecuted by the communist regime. Regardless of the families we came from, this particular Jewish group was politically quite to the left of center, even the richer people. Our mother did not understand it: "Why would workers need communists when they have Social democrats? And we, the small business people, must of course vote for živnostníci![37]"

And then the well-known measures – yellow star, ban on using sidewalks, ban on attending movie theatres, etc. – we the younger ones, unlike our parents, took it with good humor: "What does Hitler think he can gain by it?" I was really pissed when I had to hand over my bicycle, as I passionately loved

32 a pig disease
33 1938 Munich agreement signed by Nazi Germany, France, Britain, and Italy permitting German annexation of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland
34 The protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, established by the Nazi Germany when they took over the remnants of Czechoslovakia, lasted 1939-1945
35 collaborator with the Nazi invaders
36 second largest city in Moravia
37 a small-business political party

to ride it. Nevertheless, as far as food was concerned, we had it quite good, for every so often somebody secretly gave us something to eat. Often they wanted something in return, for instance, a cup of goose fat. But not always.

We were still in good humor when my mother's relative, Ing.[38] Vohryzek, rented a passenger railway car which the Czech Railways, with good grace, incorporated in the train. In it we traveled to the gathering camp in Pardubice. We believed that the Germans had already lost the war and if Hitler thought he could get us by "gathering us," we would have none of it (we knew that they were going to gather us in one city, but we did not comprehend what it really meant).

We lost our humor the moment we entered the gathering "subcamp" in Pardubice. That was where the first slapping and beating took place. The SS with guns and dogs patrolled it. We slept crammed on one mattress, several men, women, and children. With our clothes on, for there was no place to undress. That is where we lost our humor overnight. It was after Russia (then the Soviet Union) joined the war, in 1941.

All the time in Czech society and in western radio broadcasts it was being proclaimed that the end of the war was near. Yet it took many years before the offensive started. Of the Jews of Mýto, only an uncle of my mother and I survived; nobody else.

What did you do with the belongings you were supposed to hand over?
This will be a long story. It depended. We had a house, but we were not rich by any standards. We had to hand over something, but whatever was possible to hide, we hid. As I mentioned before, we had it good for a while with food, but partly because we paid for it. Sometimes with clothes, other times with duvets or something. Mother was sick and worried all the time about having everything arranged before she died. At one point she told us what was hidden where, and what was sold to whom. She stressed that she did not owe anything to anybody. Often there were some shady deals, false debt notes and etc., so mother made sure we knew she had no debts. Some of our belongings we sold. This caused some problems after the war. After the war I got just a few of these things back. And our house was stolen from me by three consecutive regimes.

38 In Europe, Ing. is a title used by people who finish engineering studies

What did it look like when you got to the gathering camp?
The best way to describe it is shock. We left Mýto on December 1, 1942, for Pardubice. The gathering camp was located in a school, where our transport was crammed (about one thousand people) into the classrooms and the gym. We spent four days there before our transport to Theresienstadt[39]. The moment we entered, the SS showed us what they were about. Our family was in the gym. We were allotted a space good enough for a single mattress. I am not sure whether they shot somebody dead (I might be influenced by one of Lustig's[40] films), in any case there was shooting into the air. For food we only had what we brought with us. The worst was water. There was a faucet, but not enough for a thousand or so people.

Were you registered there?
I do not recall any registration there; everything was arranged by my uncle for all of us. But we had transport numbers. Most likely, we had no documents. I know that I lost my identity card there.

When did you arrive at Theresienstadt?
On December 5, 1942 we arrived by train (squeezed in passenger cars) at the railway station Bohušovice. From there we had to walk to Theresienstadt on foot. It was quite horrible because we all had as much on us and in the suitcases as possible. Most of it was confiscated anyway in "šlojska".[41] Essential for us was food and warm clothes. My brother and I managed to sneak sleeping bags through the "šlojska" that we had brought from home. The sleeping bag came in very handy later. I am quite a target for insects (I had big problems with them in all camps) and the sleeping bag provided at least some protection at night. First I was accommodated in the Hamburg barracks, then I got into "Kinderheim"[42] as a "Betreuer" (attendant and teacher) and it was kept quite clean. There was a little more room. Bedbugs, fleas, and other bugs were not so numerous there as elsewhere.

39 Theresienstadt (Terezín in Czech), the most famous Jewish ghetto in Czechoslovakia during the war

40 Arnošt Lustig, a Czech Jewish writer

41 a colloquial term originated in Theresienstadt for a check point where all possessions were usually confiscated, the word derives most likely from a slang word for stealing

42 a German term meaning a home for children

And what about your mother and brother?
It is a sad story. My brother was very intelligent, skillful, gifted, and physically able. In Theresienstadt he even acted in a theatre (I still keep a poster). He worked in supplies, so he was protected to some degree from transports [to the extermination camps]. He wanted to save our mother [from being transported], but he did not succeed. So he joined her voluntarily in a transport to Auschwitz a month after we arrived at Theresienstadt. Our mother went to the gas chamber right away and my brother died half a year later.

I did not go in that transport because a well-known actress Vlasta (Váva) Schönová (after the war, Nana Shan; she just recently died in Israel) shot a dose of milk into my buttocks and I got very sick. It was quite an adventurous undertaking in the men's room. There were several ways to get sick. Milk or petrol shots into the muscles gave one a high fever so they were removed from the transport. It was crazy. People were sent to their death, but in order to preserve some order it was said that they were transported to forced-labor camps. Thus, they had to be healthy. The shot was arranged by my brother and Váva did it. She worked in the hospital in the Vrchlabí army barracks. That is where I later had my "surgery." Doctor Reiss laughed that he removed from my ass half a kilo of cottage cheese. I survived, but I still have a scar today. Every such attempt was to be reported, but he [Dr. Reiss] did not [report it].

What work did you do in Theresienstadt?
Thanks to a professor I knew from the Brno Gymnázium, I met a classmate from a significant Zionist family. This Zionist lady assigned me to "Jugendfürsorge" (the Department of Youth Care) in a "Kinderheim" in the Hamburg barracks. There I used to tell the children modern fairy tales which I remembered and played Boy-Scout games with them. After a month, Oto Klein (also a Zionist, yet after the war he became a communist) took me as a "Betreuer" to the prestigious "Kinderheim" L417.

In this building, a friend and I built a little dwelling in the attic. It was interesting, when for instance we were stealing the heraklit[43] from the warehouse and getting caught meant death. But once the dwelling was built, nobody asked where we got the heraklit from. And they left us alone. When we gathered enough courage, we added a cook Kurt Frankfurter and stole more material and completed the dwelling. During the building, I utilized all my Boy-Scout skills.

43 building material

I built myself a hammock with my sleeping bag. Since we incorporated a cook and later a clerk, we had some food. Of course, we were staying there illegally. If I had stayed in Theresienstadt, I would have survived the war nicely.

What was the attitude to stealing and "organizing" in Theresienstadt?
All in all, it was not viewed as something horrible. All our emotions were so blunted just to survive to that point. Somehow we all accepted it. If today somebody stole your last shirt, you would go nuts. There was always a way to get something somehow. In Theresienstadt, people were allowed to receive parcels [from outside friends or relatives], so there was something for people to exchange. I always claim that Theresienstadt was a shadow of a normal life (somehow flattened, a distorted projection). It was much worse in Auschwitz.

One had in Theresienstadt some sense of home in the barracks. Though the space was sparse, one could still leave his stuff there and not always have it stolen. After work, there was some time to relax; one could rest or even go for a walk with girls. He who was lucky even had his family intact.

Some beating of course took place, but we gradually got used to it. One of the positive aspects was our fervent belief that the end of the war was near. Except for the pessimist, we all had hopes. The optimists claimed it would be over by the Christmas (it was to end by every Christmas during the war). The biggest optimists put it in six weeks at best.

Did you have any information about what was going on outside of Theresienstadt?
Even about Stalingrad, the command hung up bulletins, which we read with gusto. Then they stopped. Sometimes we had an opportunity to listen to the radio in the "komandatura"[44] or someone from a transport that had just arrived smuggled in a newspaper. So some information we did have. I was already a member of the Communist party. The information from outside was filtered to prevent unnecessary pessimism, or to prevent "bonkes" or "latrína" (false information, rumors). The most frequent rumor was that "the Russians are already in Náchod!"[45] – like in the First World War.

It was a big advantage of being a [Communist] party member in Theresienstadt. We had some briefings by real experts. We were told the real situation on

44 the office of the command
45 a northern city in Eastern Bohemia

the fronts. Quite precise, when I could compare it with the reality after the war. It meant a lot to us. We were able to keep our composure.

Can you tell more about the political life in Theresienstadt?
There [in Theresienstadt] the National Front[46] started to work. It was later very important in Auschwitz. There were a few organized groups comprised of Czech Jews, Zionists, Jewish communists, German Jews, and even Danes. Individual communist groups were involved in political activities. We also used to have "training," where we were told a lot of what would be considered nonsense today, but we were also lectured by the cream of the crop of Jewish humanist scholars (for instance, by the university professor Cvikr or Poláček). They often went to the "Heim"[47] to lecture the kids, and to indoctrinate us in the party's way of thinking.

When I was leaving for Auschwitz, the leader of my [Communist] cell gave me the name of a person I should contact there. He said that secret lists would be going with us there, but if I was not on the list or for any other reason, I should contact Alena Vogelová. She was important.

Did you encounter some cultural life in Theresienstadt?
I did not take any active part in it, just a passive approach. But I was informed. My brother, though he spent a short period of time there, acted in a theatre doing poetry by Walker[48] with Váva Schönová. I mostly took part in lectures, and this trait stayed with me until now.

I keep saying that cultural life in Theresienstadt had one negative aspect. It hid real life in Theresienstadt. It was just a shadow of normal life. People were dying there en masse, hunger was omnipresent, and the danger of being transported hung over us all the time. Many people did not even know that there was any cultural life.

However, not all of the culture that took place there has been brought to light. For example, musicians (accordion players, singers) performed in individual rooms on their own after work, sometimes for money, or at least for a piece of bread. This was not documented; nobody writes about it.

46 a term used often in these times for a coalition of heterogeneous groups for a common goal against the Germans

47 barracks

48 Jiří Wolker, a Czech poet

On the other hand, some believe there was nothing else going on but operas, concerts, theatre, cabarets, lectures and so on. It is so amazing that it attracts all the attention and it misses the fact that the music in Theresienstadt was the music of death.

I personally was totally absorbed by my work as a "Betreuer." I started in "Heim" number 6 as a helper of an excellent "Betreuer" Jirka König (later a medical doctor, then a docent[49] of Charles University[50]). We taught the children although we had no textbooks, and at the same time we had to instill some discipline in them. After one of us in the "Heim" failed while I came across fine when some problems with discipline arose there, I was sent to number 10 to straighten it out.

So that you understand me, the word "Heim" has two meanings: the school that we attended, and that was called school, it was "Kinderheim" L417; and in this "Kinderheim" were individual classes, also labeled as individual "Heims." Thus the "Heims" were numbered 1 to 10. This is often confused.

It was a hard task, the guys in number 10 completely refused to obey. I realized that I simply could not give in. I ended up leaving them standing in the corridor instead of letting them go for lunch. They grasped that they could not behave like that. I had no other recourse than to deny them food. I got the boys under control and functioned for a short period of time as the youngest "Betreuer" of the whole "Heim."

Later, as the youngest, I had to join in the war production when the Germans instituted it. We manufactured some heaters for the Russian front. I kept living in the school with all the others; I was still on the staff so to speak, but I had to go work every day.

How did you work with the guys to keep them under control?
I figured out early on that youth is inquisitive. I had quite a wide range of knowledge and so I talked to them about geography, history, and so on. Of course, it was forbidden. Especially later in Auschwitz, somebody always had to be on the lookout for the SS. When I delivered the material to the kids in an interesting way, I found that they really listened. It was the basis of my work. Otherwise I tried to work with my hands. I could neither paint nor sing, but that was taken care of by others. With the youngest I played Boy-Scout games

49 something like Associate Professor, but more prestigious

50 the most prestigious Czech university

("kim seton"[51], paper folding, or I taught them the art of tying knots). They were quite grateful for having some opportunity to do something. All the kids venerated the collective morality. They were a collective, they helped each other and they tried hard.

Do you recall any sport in Theresienstadt?
Some sport life was happening there, but I did not participate. In actuality, soccer was the only game played. Not with eleven players, but smaller, I think with seven players. I was never chosen. In Theresienstadt, it was sometimes possible to get something to eat. In Auschwitz, there was not a single day without feeling hungry. In L417 in Theresienstadt, the guys [the soccer players] got seconds [servings] from the cooks during the games. Even the supply department had its own team. They were not only always well fed, but they could even go outside (I knew from my brother). Also the "Zimmerälteste"[52] from the individual barracks had their own teams.

Did you experience the census?
Yes I did. For that, they herded us to the Bohušovice hollow[53]. It is well known from the literature. It was horrible; it was equaled only by Auschwitz.

Did you have any inkling of the camps in the east?
None. Possibly the "Lagerälteste"[54] (Eckstein or Edelstein) knew or suspected something. It is still being discussed today. It was also our defense mechanism; we did not want to know. My brother went east soon after our arrival, of his own will, to accompany our mother. I went after a year, also voluntarily. Well, not exactly, because I worked in a protected manufacturing facility for the front, I was exempt [from being transported]. Any time a clerk wanted to save a relative or a friend, he tried to put somebody else's name on the list. That is how my name got there. I told myself that though I did not have to go, my mother and brother were there; that maybe I should go while I still had some strength left. I left on the December 1943 transport.

51 probably references to Kipling's book Kim and to the author Ernest Thompson Seton, both very popular among Scouts
52 the room commanders
53 a shallow valley near the town of Bohušovice
54 the camp elder, or camp leader

How was the transport to Auschwitz?
This time we traveled in cattle-boxes, totally cramped and with a single bucket. A lot has been written about it. When we came to the "šlojska" in Auschwitz, we had gone through the showers where our rags were disinfected, we were shaved and had prisoner's numbers tattooed. Men, women, all the same.

We arrived at ramp B2 and that was awful. They herded us out of the car. All luggage on one pile. Before they took our clothes and shoes, they rushed us into a barracks. Of course, we had not had anything to eat since Theresienstadt. I had good "kanadas"[55] on my feet; I had them since my Boy-Scout days. Suddenly, a boy accosted me. I even remember his name, Harry Kraus. He was a "Läufer" (running gofer for a block kapo[56]). He told me that they would confiscate my boots anyway and if I gave them to him, he would make sure that I would get some reasonable shoes rather than wooden clogs. I gave him my boots, as I believed him. He really got me a pair of solid dress shoes. Thanks to my trust, I was a thousand times better off than the rest.

It also played a role when I went for inspection to Fred Hirsch when asking for a job as a "Betreuer" because the way you were dressed indicated how capable you were. I had black pants, a dark jacket (they made a cross on it with a waterproof color), and the shoes. That is why I was also a bit more mobile around the camp.

When the next transport arrived, Harry and I did something similar again. We took a milk can and walked around the "šlojska." Told everybody to give us their stuff, that we would return it to them later. The majority did not believe us, and so they lost it. About twenty percent believed us, after all. Some gave us their watch or gold and we returned it to them after. In the thick of this action the feared SS "Bulldog" (his real name was Bundtock) came and inquired at what we were doing. Our answer was that we brought milk to the newly arrived prisoners. We were scared stiff that he would want us to open the can, but luckily, he only screamed at us and then ordered us to bugger off. Harry, as a "Läufer," had the ability to hide the stuff somewhere. Whoever later found us, we returned the stuff, but we were also left with a lot which nobody claimed. And it was an important "currency."

In the car to Auschwitz, I traveled with Ariel Edelstein, a son of the Theresienstadt "Lagerältester"[57] (his father was shot dead right at the ramp; however,

55 Canadian army-style leather boots
56 a leader of the block
57 camp leader

first they shot dead his wife and another son so he could watch). In Theresienstadt I had Ariel in my "Heim" and we liked each other. On the train he told me about the Auschwitz "Kinderblock"[58] and that he knew Fred Hirsch and that he would put in a good word for me.

After my arrival [at Auschwitz], I found the aforementioned Alena Vogelová. She inquired what I had been doing previously. When she found out that I had been a "Betreuer," she promised to try to get me a similar job, otherwise I would have no chance of surviving. It did not happen for some time, but when I finally got to Fred Hirsch, he told me that he had heard of me and to come tomorrow. The next day he really gave me a job in the "Kinderblock." Until now, I do not know who put in a good word for me. In all probability, he or she saved my life; otherwise I would have not survived. So I became an Auschwitz "Betreuer."

How was it organized?
We slept in barracks like everybody else and after "Appell,"[59] instead of going to work ("Arbeitszeit"), we went to a special barracks to take care of the children. The children lived separately and were collected only during the day (not like in Theresienstadt, where the children and the "Betreuers" lived in the "Heims" together). Small children slept with their mothers. When they were bigger, they slept according to their gender. I am a bit fuzzy whether we were allowed to eat with the children or if they just once a while gave us something to eat on the side, but I recall not being too hungry then. I had an aunt who distributed the soup, "Eintopf"[60]. She got me a mess tin or half of the thick soup from the bottom every so often. She and my cousin Eva were the only relatives I encountered in the camp. She [Eva] was quite a close relative. When her father died, as a child, she lived with us.

After little Eva went to the gas chamber, my aunt directed all her care at me. Paradoxically, she avoided going to the gas chamber because she was ill. She did not believe that Eva was dead. She did not want to believe it. It was said that they went to "work in Heidebreck," but such a city probably did not even exist. Many people in their self-preservation refused to believe despite the visible flames and foul odors. One tried to blind oneself.

58 a block where children were living
59 roll call
60 normally, a traditional German stew consisting of a great number of different ingredients

How was it possible to work [with children] in Auschwitz at all?
There was a barracks with berths separated at the distance of the pillars. Anyone who has visited Auschwitz knows what I am taking about. Fred Hirsch somehow managed to get some chairs so the children sat in a semicircle around the "Betreuer." That was our only space.

Because the block for children was at the end of Czech family camp B2b, there was a little space a width of maybe half a block. Today, there is nice grass, but back then there was nothing but mud. We could only go there when the weather was good. Due to its size and shape (it was such a narrow noodle) we more pretended to play than actually played games there. I do not know if it is my time-lag memory distortion, but I think it was always windy there, raining, or overcast.

We could not really do too much with the children. In Theresienstadt there was at least a library; here the SS left us only about five books for the whole camp. So the only thing we had was our memory. We tried to have some kind of instruction. We talked, played some Boy-Scout games. We strove to give it some form of an actual school. There was a recess after an hour. Of course, none of us had a watch. At most, may be Fred Hirsch or his deputies Roubíček and Hugo Lengsfeld [had one] (he later changed his name to Pavel or Petr Lenek, a real teacher, English; he survived and after the war he was a director of some theatre agency; got into trouble in the Slánský[61] trial, but he survived this as well). To keep the children engaged, we gave lectures in Czech, history, geography, and math. At least that is what I was doing. Without a pencil, paper, or chalkboard. I used to be good in math. So despite everything I was able to do something with them.

To illustrate how we tried all kind of things, I prepared a collection of Czech poetry. The paper came from the wrappings of parcels somebody received every once a while. We were able to cut A5 sheets from these wrappings. Despite the ban, there were knives; they were for slicing bread. I recall I made covers from cardboard and even managed to get a string to tie it all together. It was not a big problem to put the poems together. I knew by heart big parts of "Máj"[62], knew Neruda[63], Bezruč, and a whole bunch of other poems. What I did not know, I got from others. I bugged everyone to dictate some poems to me. At

61 the most famous communist monster-process in Czechoslovakia with a top ranking communist official Slánský in the early 1950's
62 a famous poem by Karel Hynek Mácha
63 Jan Neruda, a Czech writer

the end, I had about twenty to thirty poems that were then used as a teaching tool. The biggest problem was to write it all up, for we had no pencils. However, as I mentioned before, you could get anything from the order-loving Germans. I managed to get a quill pen. I tried in vain to concoct some ink from clay, ash and water. At the end I managed to get hold of a pencil and a fountain pen, so something was written in pencil, something by fountain pen. Of course, getting it caused a great deal of delay. But the result was a classical literary textbook: Svatopluk Čech[64], Vrchlický[65], Sova,[66] etc.

Once a lady-painter Gottliebová drew something the SS liked very much, and so we were allowed to decorate the whole "Kinderblock" with drawings. We had a Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs there. Whoever knew how, tried to play theatre with the children; even several groups together. The SS often came to watch. Their attitude was that it did not matter in the end so why not to allow it; after all it helped keep order. It was described for instance by Jirka Fraenkl, who also survived. After the war, we published his book. In it he even presented the plays they gave. We helped ourselves any which way we could. Whoever could sing, sang. Whoever could draw, drew. When we managed to get hold of a few pencils, the drawing took place. But most of the time it depended on the "Betreuer," what he could tell and how he could focus the children's attention. We considered it important to instill in the children a feeling that they were preparing for life. They did not know and could not accept death, but they had some inkling. They saw transports arriving but not leaving; the smoke and flames of the crematoria. Sometimes they even joked about it: "Don't boast, you'll fly out of the chimney anyway!" The only weapon against it [death] was this "normal" life we were trying to lead.

The children were very attentive. There were no problems with the discipline as in Theresienstadt. The closer to death, the more serious the children were. Through all my time, I never had any discipline problems. And as I can recall, nobody else did either. In my department, I had about ten to twenty children, and not a single one survived, for they were too young. The children block was also undergoing the selections[67] and only a few passed. These were real exceptions that you could count only on the fingers of one hand. It only

64 Svatopluk Čech, a Czech writer
65 Jaroslav Vrchlický, a Czech poet
66 Antonín Sova, a Czech poet
67 selection of who would live and who would go to gas chamber

happened if they were tall enough and managed to stand in front of Mengele[68] and state calmly that their age was older than their real age. I can recall a boy named Alster; he was exceptionally able and smart. He often contributed to teaching, especially in geography. Of course, it did not interest the Germans. If so, just to kill him.

When did you leave the kinderblock?

Before the selection, or because of it. Yet before we leave the topic of Auschwitz, I would like to discuss something, as I have some problems with it. Until this day there has been some kind of competition between the survivors of Auschwitz I (Auschwitz, camp A) and the survivors of Auschwitz II (Birkenau, lager B), where we were. It concerns mostly the resistance. In A1 there was an organized resistance. But even serious authors do not take too seriously the resistance in B2.

I have to start with the fact that I got rich all of a sudden. My boys, including Ariel Edelstein, found on the camp road a bag full of Reich marks[69]. Nobody can figure now how it got there. The boys said that they did not know what to do with it, so I should do something reasonable with it. I was then more courageous than I would be today (there were watch towers all over, with guards with machine guns, so one had to be really careful).

I went to the wire fence (next to us was the quarantine camp B2a, where you went when you went to work) and was trying to find somebody who would sell something for the marks. I colluded with a Polish guy and we made the exchange through the wires of the fence. I gave him the marks and he pushed through some bread and cigarettes. There was no more to get. He also gave me a map, but I will leave that for later. With my boys, we ate our fill. The cigarettes were my trumps, the currency used in the camp to obtain food and any other help. I had 200 cigarettes left when I was leaving for a forced-labor camp. They had to be hidden, there were constant "Filzungen" (searches). I hid them in my straw mattress.

Now from a different angle. As I said, I was a member of the [Communist] party. Alena Vogelová sent me to Hugo Lengsfeld, who became kind of my party father. He often tried to help me (for instance, he gave me two cigarettes

68 Josef Mengele was a German SS officer in the Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. He gained notoriety for being one of the SS physicians who supervised the selection of arriving transports of prisoners, determining who was to be killed and who was to become a forced laborer.
69 a German currency then

that could be exchanged for a piece of bread). The so-called National Front was established there, you must know it from history classes. Here it was uniting communists, Czech Jews, German Jews, and the Zionists. They all united in preparation for resistance. I claim that these preparations started before March 8, 1944, hence before the "gassed out" transport from B2b (so-called family camp), still during the "normal stay." Others claim that this National (or People's) Front formed only after the first March transport to the gas chambers, after the attempt to mutiny, or after the attempt to persuade Fred Hirsch to lead another mutiny after the first unsuccessful attempt. When it did not work, it was concluded that the preparations must be more thorough.

It is probably unclear who was right today. The fact is that in this period, Lengsfeld told me to contact Avi Fischer with anything important. Avi Fischer was a man that would be worth more interest (he was a classical Czech Jew who lost his beliefs; after the war he left for Israel, but has kept coming back ever since it [visiting Czechoslovakia] was made possible). He became my leader and we were a trio. Me as a Czech Jew and a communist, Avi Fischer as a Zionist, and Sonnenberg, a German "Vorarbeiter"[70]. They wanted to prosecute him [Sonnenberg] after the war. Of course, I gave him a positive reference. All three of us survived. In the trio we did not do too much. Firstly and foremost we tried to get our hands on matches or anything that could set ablaze the straw mattresses. Secondly we needed to learn how to get water. The plan was simple: to set ablaze the mattresses and in the ensuing chaos to try for the watchtowers. Some would succeed and they would incapacitate the machine guns, then we would climb over the wires and try to join the partisans. From today's vantage-point, it is all laughable.

For instance, I should not have had any contact with leading persons [of the clandestine resistance] like Hugo Lengsfeld, Růžena Lauscherová, or Egon Fried. But I knew them, was quite close to them, and so got all my information from them. Their take on it was that only one percent might survive, but that it was still better than going to slaughter like sheep. It was all so naive. Lengsfeld told me that we had one or two revolvers, but I took it with a big grain of salt. I am grateful to Karel Rosen (Roden), who recently published a book where he described it. He claims that it was he who brought in the arms because he was allowed to move outside the camp with the "Rollwagen"[71] (he fetched bandages etc.). I did not know him from the camp and so it was such an unexpected validation of my recollections. Lengsfeld told me then more important things, not to be known by anybody else. For instance, that it was clear that after a half a year or so in the family camp we all would go to the gas chambers. We wanted the whole camp to mutiny, including Auschwitz 1. We were to start it. But the resistance leaders from A1 let us know that it would be pointless. That for us they would not risk the ninety-percent mortality of all prisoners. The mutiny would end up in a massacre and nobody would survive. They had news that the end of the war was near and that the chances of surviving to the end of the war were better in the camp than by organizing any resistance. This is a point of contention among us to this day. I had an article published in the magazine *Osvětim*[72] only after a big fight; for a long time they refused to put it in print. An Austrian writer and an expert, Langbaum, wrote about it in his book *Wie die Schafen* (*Like the Sheep*) and he wrote off the resistance we were preparing in B2b in one sentence as totally insignificant.

Now we can return to the map. We were to reach the partisans using a map to be provided by Lengsfeld. The map from Lengsfeld was given to Avi Fischer to draw some copies (I learned that just before his death). Allegedly it was a map obtained from the SS command (some SS then were also helping; it was no longer just like "a single man"[73]). But it is possible that it was the map I exchanged with the Pole through the wires. Of course I had no use for it, so I gave it to Lengsfeld. I have been wondering to this day whether it was that map.

The whole story has a tragicomic ending. The Polish guy later called me to the wire fence again and asked me to return all the stuff he had given me, because the marks were counterfeit. I answered that it was not possible as the bread had been eaten a long time ago and the cigarettes had all been smoked. Even if I cut myself into little pieces, I could not return it. He threatened to get me killed, that he could arrange it as he had contacts in our camp. I told him that the only thing I could return was the map. His response was that I could keep it, as it was as false as the marks I gave him. In the end, some reliable SS from the command swore that indeed we were going for forced labor in Germany and not to the gas chambers, so the whole mutiny was called off. We knew that, even with the gas chambers, there would be more survivors than the

70 foreman
71 roll car

72 the Czech name for Auschwitz
73 a reference to a slogan proclaiming all SS to act as a single man

one percent we estimated going against the machine guns. Indeed, we went to a forced labor camp.

How was it possible to transmit information between Auschwitz 1 and Birkenau, when the camps had separate supplying?
That's true, but there were individuals moving between both camps. For instance, the aforementioned Rosen (Roden), even had a horse and a wagon. He ferried garbage from the medical ward (one hesitates to use the term hospital). In addition, Ota Kraus (he disappeared as an old man, simply vanished) and Erik Kulka, who had a maintenance workshop. These people could move between the camps (either alone or under the escort of the SS) and had opportunities to carry over some information. But how many? I could not tell you. But I reckon there were more of them. From our camp it could be at best our "Lagerälteste." After all it might have even been the SS. In particular, the Waffen-SS,[74] like for instance this Romanian who helped Lederer to escape. I remember one who attended the "Appell." He kept enticing some guy named Mautner, who was tall and looked good, to escape. But it looked like a trap.

The coming of the end of the war took horribly long for us. The Germans fought to the very last day. Thankfully, towards the end they were replenishing the SS not only with hardcore Reich Nazi believers, but also through conscription of the so-called Volksdeutsche from all over the Europe (ethnic Germans living for generations in other countries). So among the SS were even some innocent conscripts not of their own will. There were very few, but they were not hardcore Nazis and on occasion were willing to help. I encountered such especially later in Schwarzheide[75].

When you mentioned the escapes, what was the attitude of the fellow prisoners? Every escape was sure to bring in repressive measures.
In simple terms, the attitude was overwhelmingly positive, as we all were sure to perish. Everybody was wishing for them to succeed, for there were many escapes and they all ended badly. There was always repercussion and torture. Yet, despite it, we always felt for the ones brought back. It was the same in all the other camps.

When they apprehended somebody, an emergency "Appell" was put in place or some similar measure. When somebody escaped from B2b, they might

74 Waffen-SS was a group of combat units composed of volunteer troops
75 a labor camp in a town north of Dresden in the direction of Berlin

select every tenth person to go to the gas chamber. We were told that, over there, they were leading the ones "who thought they might escape from here." We told ourselves, "What a pity, guys, that you did not succeed." I remember that a lot of Russian POW's tried to escape. I recall that especially from Schwarzheide. They knew if they were not beaten or starved to death by the Germans, after their return they would be destroyed by Stalin. So they tried to get to the partisans. There were lots of them; uncountably many who escaped and were caught and killed.

How were the selections executed?
Ours was the only transport that did not undergo selection right at the ramp on its arrival. We all walked to camp B2b. That was probably the reason behind the speculation that it would be some kind of a "show-off family camp." When our half was being readied for forced labor, then a selection took place. It was horrible; I still remember a lot of images. For example, a Czech teacher Lederer. He was told not to mention during the selection that he was a teacher. He replied that he had been a Czech teacher all his life and that he would die as a Czech teacher.

Mengele asked, "Beruf?"[76], the teacher answered "Lehrer,"[77] and Mengele sent him "by the chimney." Let me explain the term "by the chimney." The selections took place in the "Kinderblock," as it was easy to vacate. We were coming from one side and the ones who were sent behind Mengele were saved. The ones who were sent to the end of the "Kinderblock" with the chimney later went really "through the chimney." One could already guess from the composition of the groups, which one was to go to the gas chamber and which one had a chance to go for forced labor (in case it was supposed to go for the forced labor at all; we could not know). After that, our group was washed and "Lysolised" (they disinfected our privates and armpits, we had no hair; they simply slapped us with a rag soaked in Lysol). It was in June 1944, just before the invasion.[78]

During the selection we were allowed to keep just a belt. In the belt I hid my fountain pen, and under my tongue a golden ring I obtained somehow. I still had some bread and the 200 cigarettes. I had a white blazer jacket (I kept it for quite a while). One line went for the Lysol disinfecting and the other went back.

76 trade or occupation
77 teacher
78 the 1944 Allied invasion in Normandy

Between the two lines stood an SS. I look like a hero now, and today, I cannot even imagine that I was brave enough to do it; I skipped between the two lines and managed to smuggle through all that stuff. I say if I had to do something like that during a time of peace, when one values his life somehow more, I could not do it. The cigarettes helped a lot during the transport.

After the selection we walked towards the gas chambers. In my row was one of the organizers of the clandestine movement, Egon Fries (later on to become an editor of *Rudé právo*[79]). We were not allowed to speak, but we somehow learned to speak through clenched teeth, one did not need to open one's mouth to speak. We were saying that the SS guy lied to us and were discussing whether we could do anything at that point. Then we noticed that the front of the column was turning around the chimneys towards the ramp. We fell silent with relief as we realized that we were indeed going to a forced labor camp rather than to the gas chamber. I have to admit one horrible aspect. We did not think at all what would be happening to all those old men, women, and children; they would most likely go to the gas chambers. We did not think that way. We were just thinking of whether we were going to the forced labor camp or to the gas chambers.

How did it go during the transport?

On the ramp they herded us to the cattle-boxes; we got one bucket of drinking water and one for the other use. We were assigned two SS to guard us: old men, clearly conscripted Volksdeutsche. They close the door but left it ajar and sat there with their feet dangling out. I told Sonnenberg about the two hundred cigarettes I had. All heard it and insisted that he should, as a German speaking "Vorarbeiter" (and thus knowing how to handle the SS), give them [the SS] one hundred, and he did. They in return allowed us to keep the door open more widely and to go out to empty our bucket and bring in water, which helped us a lot (they even once brought the water themselves). It was another reason I vouched for Sonnenberg after the war.

We might have been the only car that went through the trip to Schwarzheide without a problem. For some it was hell. We arrived on July 5, 1944, and the SS were all of a sudden like different people. They did not know how to treat us. Soon, news spread that the invasion had taken place. We all reckoned a few days before we would be liberated. But it took almost a year.

79 the newspaper of the communist party and the official newspaper of the regime

What was your first impression of the new place after you came from Auschwitz?

A big relief. As it turned out later, it was quite false. We saw that we were in a factory, that there were people around us, so probably we were brought here for forced labor. We simply thought we were saved. As it turned out, life would be much more complicated. The SS quickly regained their composure and were the same as before. And we had to face a new danger, the aerial bombing raids. The raids were really bad. However, the initial impression was really one of great relief, feeling that I had survived it. Especially the first few days when the SS did not beat us. It took them about three days to recover and to realize that the invasion would not go so fast.

What did Schwarzheide look like?

It was a small rather unknown camp north of Dresden in the direction of Berlin in the region of the former Sorbia (originally Schwarze Pumpe). We were about a thousand young men and about four hundred survived. Towards the end of the war, five hundred or so prisoners were added, but already they were not Jewish. Some Jews were among them, but just a few from France and the Netherlands, so during the liberation the camp was not purely Jewish any longer.

In Schwarzheide, there was a large gasoline plant. Until this very day, the chemical company BSAF is located there. During the war the company was called IG Farben and it produced Cyklon B.[80] In the plant, brown coal[81] was used to produce synthetic gasoline. There was a highway to the plant and around it several camps: "Ostlager" (for the Eastern front), next to it our camp, and an SS camp. Somewhere near there must have been a camp for Western prisoners, since they used cars. The American prisoners, I must admit, treated us quite with contempt. They laughed at us, but sometimes they threw us some cigarettes. They were probably getting them from the Red Cross.

Compared to Auschwitz, the camps here were lightly guarded. There was the usual double barbed wire but without electricity and towers with machine guns. The guards had a bomb shelter for only a single person, only for the one who was on duty, to make sure we were not using the bombing raid to escape (so-called "Einmannbunker"). We got new green-and-white striped prison outfits and it was virtually impossible to escape in them. When we got to know the

80 Cyclone B, the gas used for killing in the gas chambers
81 very low quality coal

Germans around (the civilians we came in contact with), we knew they would report us immediately. There was nowhere to escape.

What work did you do there?
Our task was to repair damages after air raids. We ferried away the wreckage and debris, defused bombs, built shelters. When the allies hit a plant, we had to put out the flames in a very primitive way. For instance, we had to disconnect flaming cars full of oil, to prevent them from igniting the rest. There I met the only brave SS during the whole war. He ran among the cars and with his gun prodded us to separate them. Though SS, surprisingly, he was there among the flaming wreckage with us. On the other hand I met several SS who, pardon my language, shat their pants during an air raid. In general, during air raids they were rather cowardly. Well, that was our work.

There I met for the first time German workers. Some of them tried to help; they slipped us a piece of bread or a letter or such. Some paid for it when they were apprehended. Often, though, they just baited us. It happened to me directly in the town of Schwarzheide where we were removing wreckage and bomb craters. We found some prepared sandwiches. When the SS found us there, they beat almost to death everyone they found with a piece of bread in hand. It may be that somebody prepared it with good intentions, but somebody had to report it. I do not know.

Since there were no children, I worked normally with all the other prisoners. We were divided into various "Arbeitskomands"[82] and assigned concrete tasks. In every "Komand"[83] it was different. There were what we called "cooking komands" where they "cooked"[84] and then so-called "universities." I always tried not to get into a "cooking komand." I'll explain. We were constantly hungry. Most of the guys used any opportunity to talk, to talk about food. How to cook this, someone what ate that was good and when, and so on. For me, it was torture, and that's why I always tried to get to a "university." When an explosion demolished something, we were there to pick up the unbroken bricks. We stood in a bucket-brigade-like line within hearing distance. As we were passing the bricks along, we chatted and lectured about all kind of things. I lectured on the history of Czech literature. I recall some Czech Jew named Stránský (he did not survive) and he lectured in a very captivating way about the history of

82 work groups
83 group
84 talked about food all the time

music. He could even prelude a bit. Quietly, but still. As I say, it was easier to forget the hunger in a "Komand" where the "university" took place rather than in the "Komand" where "cooking" was the topic.

How did the Germans treat you?
There already were SS who openly indicated they were fed up with it [the war]. Especially among the conscripted Volksdeutsche. I personally witnessed some. One such was guarding us in an open space during a wreckage cleanup from an air raid he told us we could hide, that he would guard us (in a different meaning of the word than he was supposed to). Of course, when a higher rank SS or foreman walked by, he drove us very hard. He beat us when he had to, but was careful not to knock out any teeth.

I had several other interesting encounters when I was lightly injured and had to stay in the camp for a week or so. Instead of work, I had to go to the SS camp. Once an SS asked me to split wood and then, when I went to return the ax and knocked on his door, he was asleep and did not answer. I entered and he exploded, screaming at me that I had no right to enter without knocking. I defended myself that I had knocked. So I was claiming that he was lying? Well, I got beaten up twice. Once for not knocking on the door and once for accusing him of lying.

The most feared SS called "Rákoska"[85] had a bicycle. Apart from other trades, I was a certified mechanic from Mýto (when I was banned from studying in Brno, I went into apprenticeship there). "Rákoska" brought his bike because it was not working right. I had to disassemble the bike to find the problem. When he saw it, he exclaimed I could never put it back together and that he would shoot me dead. I was able to fix it and so he ordered me to give it a try. I was afraid I would get shot for riding a bike belonging to an SS. He said he would not shoot me. So I had to ride around the yard about four times. He was very happy. Not only he did not shoot me; he gave me four mess tins of food and escorted me to our camp to prevent other SS from killing me for stealing. In the camp I was with Karel Fischer (we had a commune together), so I split it with him and we both stuffed our bellies.

The most interesting event took place one day when I was sweeping and saw a coffeecake on a windowsill. I immediately fancied the cake. In the window an SS guy showed up and he beckoned me to taste it. I did not trust him;

85 a Czech word meaning "whip"

he would either beat me or shoot me. But he insisted that nothing would happen to me. He even invited me inside! When inside, I pretended to sweep. He confided in me saying that he was a conscripted Yugoslavian, a Volksdeutsche, and that he had a son of my age. He asked me what I needed. I urgently needed a needle and thread, because it was the worst when during an air raid something got torn; we could not mend anything. We were forbidden to have stuff like needles under punishment of death by shooting. He gave me about three needles wrapped in a thread.

Such humorous and positive events, though, cannot overshadow the horror of life in the camp. For instance, "Rákoska" what a person, I do not know how many people he killed with his own hands. But when he saw the bike fixed by me and he tried it and it worked, he became like a small child. He forgot that I was a Jewish swine ("Judeschwein") and he richly rewarded me. Apparently he was taken prisoner when the Russians showed up.

You mentioned a commune with somebody. Did any clandestine organization, party, or resistance form in Schwarzheide?

I am not aware whether resistance preparations continued there, I did not encounter any. Then the end of war was really approaching. The [Communist] party was quite active there. However, I was expelled from the party. It happened during an inspection. The SS learned that, despite all effort, I had managed to smuggle in some gold. As I already mentioned, I brought from Birkenau a fountain pen, some cigarettes, an a gold ring under my tongue. When they went around with a collection box, I gave them the ring and the pen. The kitchen commander gave me a large pot of potatoes. I split it with my friend Karel (he now lives in Germany). The party decided that I violated the party moral, that I was involved in business with the SS; I should have thrown it away rather than give it to the SS. So I was expelled from the party during the war. I do not accept it, and am sure that my decision then was correct. Hugo Lengsfeld-Lenek, who after the war apologized to me, expelled me. This was the end of my contact with party life in the camp. I think that the organization, the National Front, was kept up, but no resistance was in preparation. There was no time.

How did you withstand the air raids?

The factory was raided daily; production was virtually halted. In the building where the brown coal was distilled, there were these tall smokestacks. The

moment they started to belch smoke, the Allies noticed and the raid started shortly thereafter. First a fighter plane showed up, outlined the area [of the factory] with a smoke barrier, and then the bombers came. The "divers,"[86] though, were not too precise, so every once in a while some of the nearby camps were hit.

During one of the largest raids, the Russian POW camp was hit. I got hit – both legs, when we were removing the wreckage. An SS then pointed a rifle at me: "Get up immediately or I'll shoot you." I have no idea how I managed, but, with my last remnants of strength, I got up and ran the two hundred meters to the camp. At the time, I had the feeling that I was running "home." There [at the camp] I collapsed and was not able to move my legs at all; they had to carry me to the sick bay. Until this day, no doctor was able to explain it to me how it was possible. I had shrapnel in both my knees, yet I managed to run the distance. A doctor named Sachs (he also survived; after the war changed his name to Sever) carried me on his back to the bunker, where I underwent surgery without any anesthetic. In the bunker, Kurt Frankfurter was next to me. He was the cook with whom we had developed rapport in Theresienstadt. He lost his arm in the raid. In Sachsenhausen,[87] where we were shipped later on, a short time after the liberation, I got him some cigarettes and he soon died of his injury, knowing, however, that the war had ended.

Could you protect yourself in any way during the raids?

We had several primitive bunkers that could protect us at best from flying shrapnel. Just holes in the ground covered by boards and dirt. Sometimes we were not even allowed to hide there and were ordered to stay in the barracks. Through them [the barracks], shrapnel cut like a knife through warm butter. Many of us perished there this way. Although we were happy that the raids were happening at all – as they signaled the end of the war – we were bitter that they [the Allied bombers] did not aim better. For example, one carpet raid[88] went completely astray. One half went into the woods, the other into the grasslands. The raid was perfect, however, one crater next to another. But there were many unexploded bombs; of course, we were forced to search for them. We had to

86 diving bombers

87 Sachsenhausen was a concentration camp in Germany, operating between 1936 and 1945. From 1936 to 1945 it was run by the National Socialist (Nazi) regime in Germany as a camp for mainly political prisoners; from 1945 to spring of 1950 it was run by the Stalinist Soviet occupying forces as "Special Camp No. 7" for mainly political prisoners.

88 the phrase "carpet bombing" refers to the use of large numbers of unguided gravity bombs, often with a high proportion of incendiary bombs, to attempt a complete destruction of a target.

pull them out and the SS explosive experts took them somewhere for defusing. If that raid had managed to hit the plant, there would be nothing left at all.

What kind of regime was there?
As I said, there were a thousand of us and about half did not survive the labor, raids, and the malnutrition. Then they [the Germans] added more prisoners. The food was after all a tinge better than in Auschwitz, yet the work was much more demanding: removing wreckage, filling holes and craters, and so on. In the morning we got a coffee substitute. As laborers, at around 10 o'clock in the morning we got an additional "snack": a very tiny slice of bread with artificial honey or "Schmierwurst," an artificial sausage. At noon, usually it was the "Eintopf." Sometimes, the work was not too hard and was quite easy to withstand, but, at other times, it was very demanding and dangerous.

Until when did you stay there [Schwarzheide]?
We remained there until the end of the war. It was then that the so-called "death march"[89] to Sachsenhausen took place, since Schwarzheide was an "Ausslager" (outer camp) of Sachsenhausen. I did not have to walk as I was so badly wounded. Instead, the whole sick bay was loaded into two buses and we were driven to Sachsenhausen, where we had to wait and survive for another two weeks. Just before the liberation of the camp [Sachsenhausen], another "death march" had left. I of course presumed that I would go, but Zdeněk Eliáš talked me out of it. He was a Communist, after February '48,[90] he emigrated and became a high-ranking official at Radio Free Europe. Interestingly, we were together in the same Communist cell in Theresienstadt, but later on he did not believe me, he could not recall. He even forgot that he had written two rather successful dramas with Jirka Stein, *Dým domova*[91] and *Skleněná hora*.[92] He [Eliáš] told me: "Are you nuts, you moron, it [the march] will be painful and they will shoot you in the end anyway because you will not be able to bear it. Come on, we will stay here, will have a good night sleep – and then they will shoot us." I conceded, and, well, we both survived.

When we were driven by bus from Schwarzheide [to Sachsenhausen], our Dutch driver (an enormously courageous chap) took us through Berlin

89 the death marches refer to the forcible movement on foot of thousands of prisoners, mostly Jews, from German concentration camps near the war front to camps inside Germany.
90 refers to February1948 Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia
91 *The smoke of home*
92 *A glass mountain*

under aerial bombing. There was unbelievable chaos; some were running in one direction, and others in the opposite direction, civilians and solders alike. All in the midst of wreckage and bombing. The solders were retreating, but refused to capitulate so as to save two or three extra days of Hitler's life. All of a sudden, a Wehrmacht[93] officer halted us and wanted to confiscate the bus for the retreating army. He bellowed at the top of his lungs, "Alles raus!"[94] but our driver calmly responded, "But all aboard here are Jews." The officer clearly could not imagine embarking on a bus that previously ferried "mangy, scruffy Jews." Thus, with relatively few problems, we got through Berlin, and those [the retreating] solders probably remained there.

When we arrived at Sachsenhausen, they forced us to stand on a little patch of ground. It was just next to a gas chamber, as we later learned. We stood there not knowing why. Finally, an SS came and exclaimed, "Los, los! Da ist kein Gas mehr!"[95] The whole sick bay was to be gassed, but they ran out of gas! What luck! We were very likely the first batch from the "Ausslagers" that was not gassed. They let us freely disperse throughout the camp. That was yet another moment when I was indeed very close to death.

For about the next three days, we had nothing to eat and nowhere to sleep. The camp was overcrowded and the prisoners treated each other like dogs. They would not let me lie down anywhere under a roof. I crept into the Czech barracks and begged for at least some potato peels. They threw me out. People like me feeding on potato peels brought in typhus, and I should not even dare to show up again, I was told. It was horrible, but everybody saw it from his own perspective then. At the end, we managed to squeeze in somewhere.

After a few days, I was awakened by the bell from the "Appellplatz"[96] early in the morning. So I hobbled along to find out what was happening. I wore a woman's nightgown – in the camp we were issued whatever. At the gate stood two Russians. I could not believe my eyes; I just stood there and stared at them. Then I tried to speak to them in Russian (I learned some in the camp from a Ukrainian inmate). One of them bestowed upon me a watch, some chocolate, American cigarettes, and an overcoat. I wore it [the coat] long after the liberation. I decided to pass the cigarettes on to the cook Kurt Frankfurter. And he,

93 the regular German army
94 Everybody out
95 Get lost, go, we have no more gas
96 the grounds where roll call was taking place

quite happy because they were "Ameriky,"[97] smoked two of them and passed away.

For you, was this the moment of liberation?

Yes. These solders, as I found out later, were a Russian reconnaissance unit. They concluded that there were no SS and so they just left. They even closed the gate after leaving. A day later, Sachsenhausen was liberated by the Polish army. But for me, the moment of liberation was when I, dressed in a woman's nightgown, met the Russian patrol which bestowed me with so many gifts.

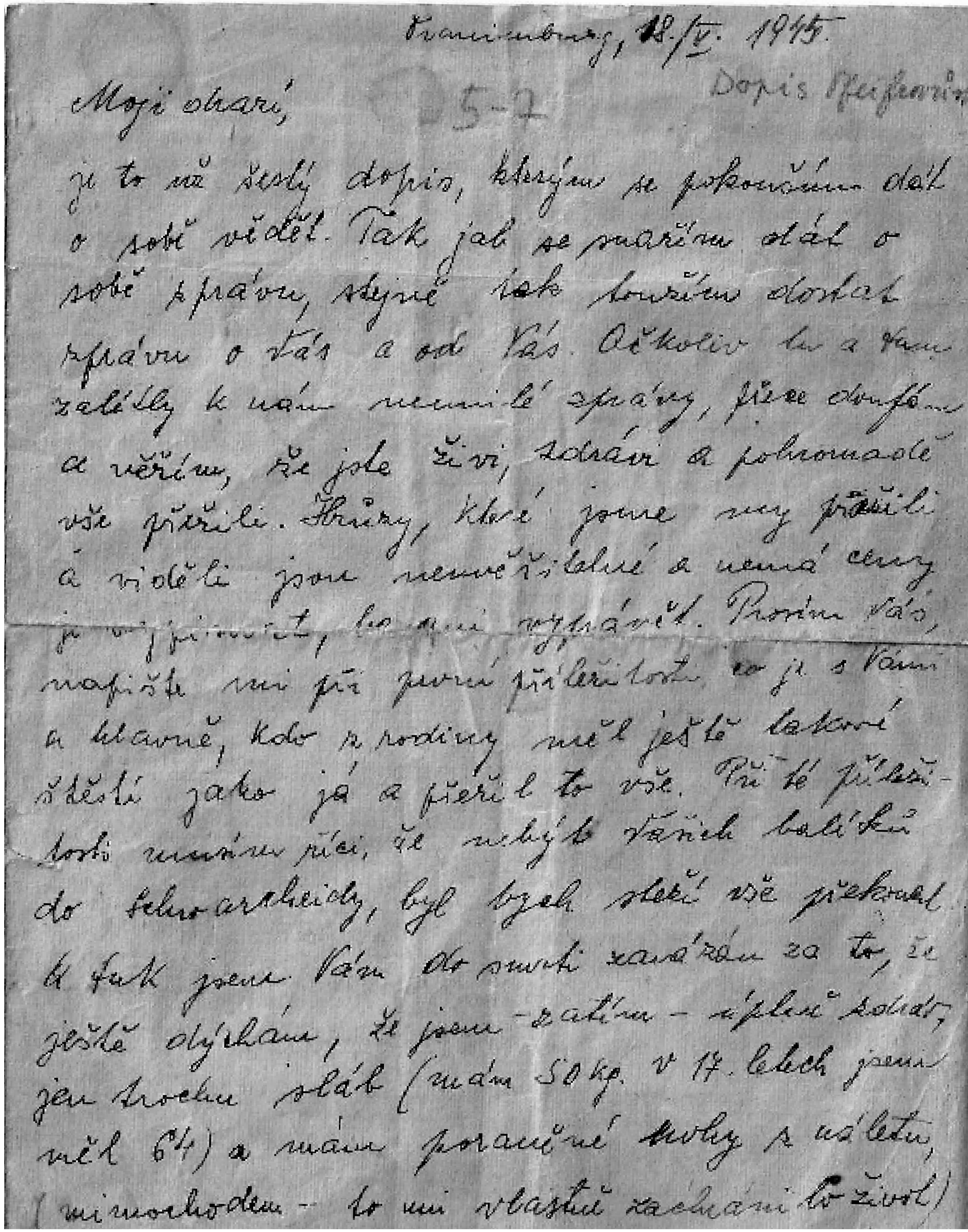
How did the liberation proceed?

Around the camp were the SS barracks. You cannot imagine what was stored there. A whole city could live off of it. There were tin cans, preserves, suitcases, an unbelievable amount of food, and all kinds of other things. In Sachsenhausen, the last few days before the SS left, there was overwhelming hunger. When we could finally go into the SS camps, quite a few people died from simply overeating. One should not eat a full tin of sausages, let alone of lard [when near starvation]. Then people were suffered in real agony.

I was lucky to realize that I should not eat it. The first few days I only ate potatoes, and later, rabbit. The SS kept Angora rabbits. I knew how to tend animals as I took care of them at home before the war, when my mother was sick, so I knew how to kill a rabbit and how to skin it, but I did not know how to cook it. So my friends always sent me to fetch the rabbits and the Dutch guys then roasted them. Admirably, the Dutch got organized rather quickly; they took care of the camp kitchen and so on.

I recall that nearby stood a little house. We ran out of spices, so I was sent to beg for some, for I knew some German. Well, I prepared a rabbit and then entered the house. When the Germans who lived there saw me, they started to scream in panic that they had not ever killed anybody and that they were not Fascists. I was surprised by their panic. Even though throughout the whole war I kept imagining that if I survived I would kill the first German I would see, I was not thinking of killing these people at all. Then I realized that I was standing there holding in my hand a bloody ax I used to slaughter the rabbit. Well, we talked it over, I put the ax aside and got the spices. It was kind of a funny moment at the end of the war.

97 American-made cigarettes



Oranienburg, 18./V. 1945.

Dopis Pfeiferovým

5-2

Moji drazí,

je to už šestý dopis, kterým se pokouším dát o sobě vědět. Tak jak se snažím dát o sobě zprávu, stejně tak toužím dostat zprávu o Vás a od Vás. Ačkoliv [illegible] zalétly k nám nemilé zprávy, přece doufám a věřím, že jste živi, zdrávi a pohromadě vše přežili. Hrůzy, které jsme my prožili a viděli jsou neuvěřitelné a nemá ceny je [illegible], ba ani vyprávět. Prosím Vás, napište mi při první příležitosti, co je s Vámi a hlavně, kdo z rodiny měl ještě takové štěstí jako já a přežil to vše. Při té příležitosti musím říci, že nebýt Vašich balíčků do Schwarzheidy, byl bych stěží vše překonal a tak jsem Vám do smrti zavázán za to, že ještě dýchám, že jsem - zatím - úplně zdráv, jen trochu sláb (mám 50 kg. v 17. letech jsem měl 64) a mám poraněné nohy z náletu, (mimochodem - to mi vlastně zachránilo život)

Photo No. 3: LETTER OF JIŘÍ FRANĚK TO RELATIVES FROM THE CONCENTRATION CAMP SHORTLY AFTER LIBERATION. Archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková.

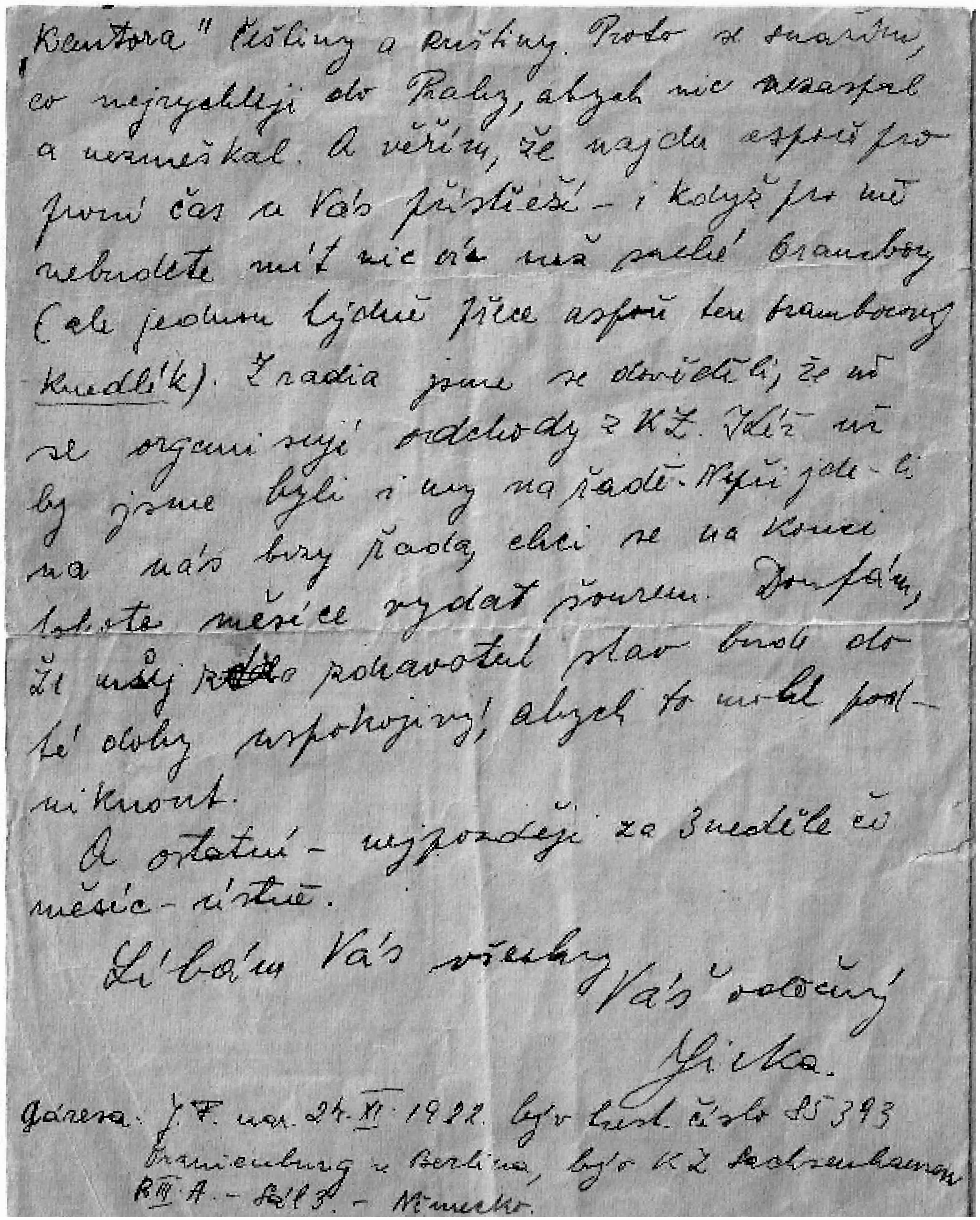
které se však velmi rychle hojí. Jsem Vám tedy na věky zavázán a vděčný – a snad nezůstane u těch věčně opakovaných slovech, snad budu moci ještě se Vám opravdu odvděčit a když ne Vám, tak aspoň Vašemu potomkovi, o kterém jste psali, jak jsem se ještě v Birkenau dověděl. Ale více o tomto novém občánkovi nevím. Ani je-li to kluk či děvče, ani jméno, ani kdy se narodil. Tak to mi brzo prozraďte, mám-li bratránka, či sestřeničku.

Jsem-li u toho nešťastného, strašného Birkenau. O smrti Frantově a Evině jsem se dověděl přesné zprávy, ba dokonce s Evou jsem byl do poslední chvíle pohromadě. O mamce mám jen kusé, ale, žel Bohu, tragické zprávy, stejně tak o tetě Micce a o Chocenských. Jak rád bych se dověděl, že aspoň něco z toho byl omyl!

A teď trochu o přítomnosti. Žijeme v nemocnici bývalého KZ Sachsenhausen.

Máme se zde, jako snad nikdy v těchto dobách. Žrádla, co hrdlo ráčí, ale vaří nám zde Němci a dle toho to vypadá. Mastí tolik, že máme zkažené žaludky, ale z mouky nedovedou nic jiného ukuchtit než – polévku. Ani rohlíků noky nedokážou. Z nudlí a makaronů nám dělají __kaši__! – zelí nám vaří v kotlech bez octa a cukru – a je to pak vše – ale ti jí to – mí kuchaři z toho dělají šlichty, jak je to učili jejich slavní vládcové po deset let – Eintopf, eintopf.

Jinak zde toho máme a času, že nevíme, co s ním. – A ~~tak~~ více toužíme všichni po jednom. Domů!! – do Čech. Kousek knedlíku, nebo dokonce bílé bábovky a nějaká rozumná práce – to je naším cílem. – Já osobně jsem trochu nervosní, ale jinak nadmíru pohromadě na ty tři strašlivé roky. A plány do budoucna mi neopustily. Rád bych, co nejrychleji domů a na podzim, bude-li to jen trochu možné na universitu. Na


"Kantora" čočky a krupky. Proto se snažím,
co nejrychleji do Prahy, abych nic nezaspal
a nezmeškal. A věřím, že najdu aspoň pro
první čas u Vás přístřeší – i když pro mě
nebudete mít nic než naše staré brambory
(ale jednou bych přece aspoň ten bramborový
knedlík). Z radia jsme se dověděli, že už
se organisují odchody z KZ. Kéž už
bychom byli i my na řadě. Nyní jde-li
na nás brzy řada, chci se na konci
tohoto měsíce vydat domů. Doufám,
že Váš zdravotní stav bude do
té doby uspokojivý, abych to mohl pod-
niknout.
A ostatní – nejpozději za 3 neděle či
měsíc – ústně.
Líbám Vás všechny
Váš vděčný
Jirka.
Adresa: J. F. nar. 24. XI. 1922. býv. trest. číslo 85393
Oranienburg u Berlína, býv. KZ Sachsenhausen
R III A. – Blok 3. – Německo.

How did the solders treat you?

When I look back at my time after the liberation of Sachsenhausen, I am surprised how uncritical we were of the Russians. We had no idea what they were really about. I did have several events with them. For example, from the SS warehouse we found a few radio sets which let us listen to news from home, but a Ukrainian solder wanted to confiscate them. Luckily, the camp commander, a major, a female, a medical doctor, and by a coincidence, a Jew, prevented it. She insisted that it was not proper to take anything away from prisoners. There was really a lot of stuff, but we prisoners were allowed to take home only very little. Some of the stuff was of course sold on the black market.

After all, the so-called German economic miracle after the war had partly been built on the enormous amount of stolen stuff hidden in such SS barracks scattered all over the Germany. They were gigantic army warehouses. If all of them were as full as the one in Sachsenhausen, it was enough for Germans to live off until the time the Americans started to feed them. They were helped both by the stolen gold in Switzerland and by the Marshall Plan.[98]

A second interesting moment came when the Russians started to take the census. It was very interesting. They asked us for documents, but, of course, we had none. That piece of paper from them [the Russians] was in fact our first piece of documentation in many years. New documents were issued to me only after I got to Prague. Among other questions, they inquired about our nationality. When one said "Czech," they wrote down "Czech." For example, one could say that he was Tonda Nováček from Prostějov, Czech. They would give him a look, and if he had slightly curly hair and a hooked nose they put down "Jevrej"[99] without any recourse. On the one hand they simply considered Jews a nationality, and on the other hand for many Jews, myself included, who proclaimed themselves Czech, they put down "Czech." We had no inkling at that time how anti-Semitic they [the Russians] would turn out to be.

I started to learn Russian immediately. I had somehow already started in Theresienstadt. My teacher there was some Eng. Kondratěnko. Of course, as a Ukrainian, he was teaching me Ukrainian and not Russian. I only found out [that it was Ukranian] later at the university when I started to study Russian properly. After some time, buses arrived for us. One of them was driven

98 The Marshall Plan was the primary plan of the United States for rebuilding and creating a stronger foundation for the allied countries of Europe, and repelling communism after World War II. The initiative was named after Secretary of State George Marshall.

99 "Jewish" in Russian

by a well-known pre-war Czech car racer, Turek. I got all the way to Prague with him. In Prague I was supposed to go into quarantine, but I avoided it. I went on to live with my uncle who, as a so-call "Arischversippt" (married to a non-Jewish Aryan), was saved from going to the camp.

If we can return to Sachsenhausen for a moment, I would be interested in whether you noticed any differences between the behavior of the Polish army that liberated you and the Russian army that later administered the camp. When did the actual army change take place?
I am really unable to answer; I frankly do not know. In simple terms, first Sachsenhausen was occupied by the Polish; maybe it was a regiment or so. Then they left and some time after the Russians came. I think that the Sachsenhausen Institute could give you some answers. They have a similar institute there to ours in Theresienstadt.

When did you leave the place [Sachsenhausen]?
We stayed there from April to June and then the buses came. I got to Prague on June 21, 1945. I can remember that much, but for any additional details, I would have to do some searching. Czech buses came to pick up the Czech prisoners. The whole convoy took several trips. I was not in the first load; we could not all fit. Some decided to go home on their own; some of them managed to get there, but many perished. It was not safe. There were still a lot of solders wandering around. I have always been of the opinion that it was unnecessary – one could wait for a bit longer.

You mention radio sets that you had. Did you catch the Prague radio broadcasting for help?[100] What did you think about it?
Yes, we caught it. It did not arouse any particular sympathy in us, for we had been calling for help all the time. We knew that there was some fighting and that the Russians were close and the Americans even closer. It did not occur to us that they [the Americans] would be stopped near Plzeň.[101] We were glad that there was fighting; it meant that the war would be soon over. I remember discussing it with Zdeněk Eliáš. We did not think too much about the bombing in Prague; it lasted for just four days. We were used to it; we were under bombing

100 during the Prague uprising against the Nazis in May 1945, just at the end of the war

101 a city in Western Bohemia, about 40 km from the western border, and about 50 km west of Prague, where the American army stopped advancing

all the time. When I got to Prague, my uncle told me all about it and it was for the first time I realized how afraid they were during that time. We condemned it [the bombing] by saying, "Look at those German swines, they shoot people in Prague even on the last day of war."

When still in Sachsenhausen, we experienced the heated Battle of Berlin. At most a single grenade hit us, if any. The Russians and the Polish were quite careful about it. The Dutch, organized as always, spread a huge white sheet with a red cross across the whole "Appellplatz." Where and how they managed to get it [the sheet], is a mystery to me. But they managed to pull it off.

How was your return to Prague?
When we arrived, Mr. Turek or some other driver sent us for a medical exam. We stopped at Opletalova Street where we were told to stay in quarantine so as to check whether we had any infectious diseases. I underwent an examination and I was issued a slip of paper indicating that I was a so-called "returnee." I still keep it. Because we were not guarded, I decided to slip out [of the quarantine] and to go to my uncle's [place].

I had a small suitcase, small enough that I could carry it even with my badly injured legs. I knew my way around Prague, so I took a streetcar and went to see my uncle. He could not believe his eyes; he had information that nobody from his family had survived. They had just had a small baby, so they were afraid I might infect him. I had to leave all my clothes on the balcony and went directly to the bathtub. Only after that did they feed me, but at that point I was not very hungry. Otherwise they treated me nicely. I stayed with them until I met my future wife.

What was your health condition when you returned?
My "behind," that I had operated on in Theresienstadt, was almost healed. During a particular air raid in Schwarzheide, my wound there reopened. On my right leg, close to my foot, I had a large boil, and both my knees were shredded by shrapnel. So I had four open wounds on my legs. I walked ver poorly, but otherwise I was physically quite okay. I was checked privately by Dr. Jerié, a family friend. I can recall it as if it were yesterday. He said that I had survived the horror remarkably well. I felt great. I was in Prague and quite euphoric.

Later on in Mýto, when a friend returned to me my bicycle, which I had hidden with him, I met Mr. Nekvinda. He remarked that we must have had it really good in the camps because I was so chubby. It made me mad that he

thought so, but I was not able to explain it to him. We were extremely undernourished in the camps. Though after liberation I really restrained myself from eating too much, I was gaining weight. In fact too quickly, as it was mostly liquid. I was all swollen and puffed, which is quite dangerous for the heart.

Let us go back to Prague. Your first steps were to your uncle's?
Yes. They welcomed me nicely. They were quite happy; they already knew that nobody else from our family had returned. But they were very afraid of infectious diseases as my cousin Ivan was just two years old. I stayed with them, but after a month or so I started to look into what had happened with my apartment and house in Mýto. Soon after I left them. I also started to look into the possibility of university studies and how to get admitted.

You mentioned documents. What kind and where did you obtain them?
I buried them in Mýto under a chimney. That was one of the first things I did. I hid my grandfather's watch (I already passed it on to my son), my birth certificate, my mother's birth certificate and "domovský list."[102] It was a real advantage to have all those documents; the bureaucracy was really horribly slow at the time.

Did you get any help; for example, were any meals arranged for you?
I would not know, as I said I was living with my uncle. However, the others had some places to go for meals. I did not really need any help. I had my uncle and more importantly my "Aryan" aunt (his wife), who had sent parcels to me in the camps. She probably helped save my life. In Schwarzheide she sent me socks I had asked for. They were thigh high, more like stockings, so I could stay warm. I wore them during the air raid when I was wounded and the doctor told me that they had clogged my wounds like tampons, preventing me from bleeding to death.

I stayed at my uncle's until I moved to a student dormitory. They [my uncle and aunt] did not try to push me out; it was more me trying to stand up on my own legs. I did not stay for too long in the dorm, as my future wife had a bachelor apartment that her father, a prisoner in Buchenwald,[103] had been given. My uncle was not too happy about it; he thought I was not mature enough to get

102 a certificate to which town or village one belonged by birth

103 Buchenwald was one of the largest concentration camps on German soil, primarily for forced labor

married. I was twenty-four years old at the time. It was just before the elections in 1946. My son was born in December 1947, right after the wedding.

Ninety percent of survival was a matter of luck and chance. When you were shoved in the gas chamber, you could be the smartest and the bravest in the whole world, but it would not help you. It seems to me that it also depended heavily on whether you preferred "cooking" or the "university."[104] It was also significant that as a "Betreuer" I had to work with my head all the time. There were very few "Betreuers," but about eighty percent survived; not just by being able to avoid heavy labor, but also by working mentally quite intensively.

Did any of your other relatives survive?
I have a few really nasty recollections from my return, but the positive ones outweigh the negative. I am in a constant debate with my friends, who paint our return as tragedy. I experienced as well that many people did not return my stuff to me. Sometimes these are humorous stories, in other cases more tragic. I think it was the studying at the university, and the leftist circles I moved around in, that made me view my return rather positively.

A lot of our stuff was hidden and I got back quite a lot. The clothes were too big for me, most of them from my dad. Our neighbor in Mýto was a local postman, quite a poor guy. We hid a whole box of shoes with him. After the war he came to me and returned them with apologies for using one pair until they fell apart, for he could not afford his own.

I feel compelled to mention again the fiction of the culture in Theresienstadt. It really is dangerous if one paints the camp quite positively and pays too much attention to the cultural life. Yes, there was cultural life in Theresienstadt, but we must not forget that it was all built "on a pile of manure." It was already rather bad there. On the other hand, the people who returned, especially the Jews, expected a warm welcome and it was not like that, so they then viewed their return quite negatively. I should not generalize my personal experience, but my discussions with Jews from Eastern Bohemia (who were generally very Czech-oriented) led me to believe that the majority of them perceived their return positively. For Prague and in particular for Brno, it would probably not hold true.

Of the entire family, my mother's uncle and I were the only ones who returned from the camp. His was a strange case; he was an engineer by educa-

104 a reference to "cooking" and "university" "komands" discussed above

tion, but he had a little farm where he tended to his farming. We did not have extensive contact, but we had a very friendly relationship. I still meet with his niece Hanka. I knew that the family perished. I had learned in Auschwitz how my brother had died; he died of pneumonia soon after he passed the selection. There was no doubt about my mother. As for my little cousin Eva and my aunt, I already told you. After the war, my great-uncle Pavel, who had lived his whole life abroad returned and could not comprehend that my aunt, and especially my cousin Eva, were dead. He constantly insisted that I tell him what happened. He kept on asking, "But why would they kill them without a reason...?" And I had to keep explaining it him. I was not in a state of shock upon my return; I was rather blunted.

How did your return to Mýto proceed?
From Prague I already tried to find out if I would get my house back. We had a one-story house where during the protectorate we were left in the smallest apartment. There was this large wing at the far end of the house where we used to play as kids. During the war, a German woman, Mrs. Drimmel, confiscated the house. We didn't have any issues with her and she let us live in the smallest apartment, which was quite generous of her at the time. We had much bigger problems with another tenant, Mrs. Nekvinda, a wife of a soldier and a woman who felt quite German during the war. Supposedly, our mother treated her badly. So she kept reporting on us to the Gestapo[105] and so on.

After the war, the house was taken away from Mrs. Drimmel and was returned to me. She tried to prove that she was in fact Austrian. It was discovered that she had put a lean on the house. The tax office wanted thirty thousand crowns from me, which, for a student with a family, was an unimaginable amount. I could not explain it to them. The saddest part is, when I later talked to my friends, I found that many returnees facing a similar situation had their debt forgiven. In my case it was not forgiven and thus the royalties from our [my wife's and my] first Russian translation were completely consumed by it [the debt]. We even had most of our belongings confiscated by court order. They almost confiscated my typewriter as well. That kind of garbage. But overall, my return to Mýto was quite positive. I found my friends. Quite simply, I was back home.

105 A secret police in Nazi Germany

What did you consider then as most important?
This is a rather hard question. I was a student and studied with a passion, though not always respecting all the rules. On top of it I had a family; my son was born in 1947. So I must say that it was the family where I focused my main attention, and have been doing so ever since. The period after the war was rather euphoric. I studied with verve, participated in the Boy Scouts again, went to the movies, theaters, etc. There was no time to think about the war, I had my whole life ahead of me. The family life was quite an adventure. In a small one-room apartment we had a small boy who did not even have proper diapers.

My wife's father was imprisoned in Buchenwald, together with Filla,[106] Peroutka,[107] and Čapek.[108] He was arrested during "Action Albrecht"[109] on September 1, 1939. He was a member of the French Legions,[110] an intellectual, a town mayor. When we met, we understood each other well. Every time we met we reminisced on (mostly humorous) stories from the camps. We simply laughed at the camps.

I'd like to make a remark. I kind of classify the people who survived into three types. The ones who never returned, I mean mentally; they still live there, they still talk about it to the exclusion of almost anything else. The second type who do not want to hear anything about it, nothing to learn about it; it is a chapter they closed for good, which I think will come hurt them later. I consider myself the happy medium, the third type: we are willing to return to it any time, talk about it or discuss it, yet we still live here and now... or maybe in the future as it is getting shorter each day. Hopefully, it is an advantage.

Did ethnic or national differences among the prisoners play any role in the camp?
We had very little contact with other ethnic groups. Some German and Danish Jews came later to Theresienstadt, but we all lived in separated commu-

106 A Czech painter
107 A Czech journalist
108 A Czech writer
109 On the commencing day of WWII, the Nazis put in place an action code-named "Albrecht," meant to arrest the cultural and political Czechoslovak elite. About two thousand people were arrested and sent mostly to Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps.
110 During WWI many Czechs defected from the Austrian army and joined the Allies, forming Czech army units there. French legions thus consisted of many Czech deserters in France. The legions were instrumental in securing the independence of the Czechoslovak Republic that was formed at the end of WWI in 1918.

nities. There was a palpable hatred for German Jews, for we assumed it was their innate nastiness that made them somehow German. In particular, we did not like the Sudeten[111] Jews. We did not understand that whoever was born in Sudeten or Germany could not be different or speak differently. But it was all kind of abstract, as we had very little contact. In Auschwitz, we were completely isolated. With the Pole, I spoke through the wires. The camp officials were mostly German criminals, non-Jews. "Lagerälteste" Berkmann was kind of decent. I myself came in touch with other nationalities probably only in Sachsenhausen. The Dutch who drove us there and then organized our life there were not Jewish either.

Did you meet any Orthodox Jews? If so, what was your impression?
My first impression was of course rather negative. I already had that attitude from home. But as I got to know them better, my opinion of both the religious and the Zionists changed dramatically. Take for instance Avi Fischer, in Theresienstadt he was already morphing into a Zionist. On top of it, the Zionists helped me there a lot. There are among them both decent and indecent people. The notion of mine that the Czech Jews were the only legitimate ones, and that the Orthodox Jews and the Zionists were bad, underwent a radical change there. Fred Hirsch himself was a Zionist, probably rather liberal since he accepted me. About the other "Betreuers" I have no idea what kind of persuasion they were. We never got to it; such things were secondary in Auschwitz.

How did you get admitted to university when you did not have the high-school graduation diploma?
I do not know where to start. I always considered myself a mathematician. Descriptive geometry and geometry were my favorite subjects. I used them to boost my average, as I was not very good in languages. It is ironic that I became a professor of literature. But after all I loved reading books and I even tried writing poetry.

In the Brno Gymnázium, I had professor Bock for mathematics and all the technical subjects; a multitalented intellectual, with a love of music and unfortunately one problem – he was an adamant Zionist. He forced us to study the Hebrew language even though it was not exactly mandatory. I almost flunked it. I did not do well at all. To compensate, professor Bock gave me a C [in descriptive geometry], though I was probably the best in Descriptive Geometry in the whole oktáva (and since it was a Jewish class, that did mean something!).

In Brno, I became very close to professor Eisinger who directed me towards Czech literature and poetry. His name became quite well known. Later on, in Theresienstadt, he became leader of "Heim 1." In Brno I started to perceive the Czech language as my future interest. As much as I could, I tried to address myself to Czech literature. In Auschwitz, I composed poems and created the aforementioned literary anthology.

As the war progressed, my political orientation swayed more and more to the left. I began studying Russian in Theresienstadt. It was out of question in Auschwitz, but I continued again later on in Sachsenhausen. My teacher there was a Ukrainian, Eng. Kondratěnko. In Schwarzheide, I was already dreaming about becoming a high-school professor in my hometown and lecturing on Czech literary classics, a dream which I later realized. I used to put myself to sleep with these visions. That is why my first priority after the war was to get to the university.

The moment I could send a letter home,[112] I wrote to my uncle asking him to sign me up at the university for courses in the Czech and Russian languages. He responded that it had to be done by me personally, and I was, surprisingly, able to do it. It is unbelievable, but the mail traveled fast then. I signed up for both Czech and Russian, since I thought that I could speak Russian. Initially, I requested a combination Czech and geography, but they wrote back that there was no such combination available. I did not consider signing up for mathematics, as I was under the impression that with a bad mark in descriptive geometry, I would not be accepted. Only later in Prague did I learn that it was irrelevant, but I was already running in a different direction.

The moment I arrived to Prague, I tried to enroll in a special summer semester that was instituted in order to salvage at least something from the school year. A professor of French, Kopal, who told me that without a graduation diploma I could not be admitted, conducted the enrollment selection. He directed me to the so-called "swindle course" which I took immediately in Vysoké Mýto, at the local Gymnázium. I spent a very short time there, for I had almost completed oktáva before the war and the principal Fink was aware of this.

After the course was over, we still did not take the graduation exam, as I discussed before, and then I received the three graduation diplomas. Now

111 The Jews from the region bordering Germany, the so-called Sudetenland

112 after the liberation

that I was able to show my diploma, I was admitted without delay to the winter semester at the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University.[113] I was very good in Czech, however, my Russian was not that great. There was a remedial course in Russian, but I attended it rarely. I did not have time, but the instructor let me pass, since I was talked to her about the concentration camps. In reality, I did not spend too much time on the courses at all. Instead, I immediately took part in the activities of the "Association of University Students" and spent most of my time there. I organized student summer camps and such.

Who was at the Faculty of Philosophy at that time?
I remember for example professor Havránek, but mostly professor Bohumil Mathesius. Though he was branded a Trockyist after the February putsch,[114] he was allowed to re-join the party since it was in the party's interest, as was the case for many other intellectuals. He had a great deal of influence on me. When he died, he bequeathed his entire literary estate to me. Later on, I prepared a collection of his writings, but until this very day I have not found an interested publisher.

Further, professors Kozák and Kolman. Naturally, Patočka,[115] for even then, his was a big name. I started to frequent his lectures, but I soon realized that I did not understand their content and slowly phased out my attendance. I took pedagogy with professor Stejskal. After the February putsch, I could not understand why he was forced to leave the faculty, along with many others – so I got into conflict with myself as a Communist. Another leading personality was Mukařovský. I did not frequent his classes, which backfired on me later: he did not hire me at the Institute for the Czech Language when I applied there.

How did you get in touch with the KSČ[116]?
The Communists acted quite publicly, inviting all people to their meetings, but I did not attend under the impression of my excommunication in Schwarzheide. Later the people who excommunicated me apologized. I accepted the apology, and started to frequent their meetings.

113 the most prestigious university in Czechoslovakia
114 a reference to a February 1948 Communist putsch; being branded a Trockyist was rather dangerous at those times.
115 a well-known Czech philosopher
116 an acronym for Communist Party of Czechoslovakia

I got into conflict with the party again at the university, when I could not understand why some excellent professors were forced to leave. Of course, then came the infamous political monster-trials that shook me up badly. You can call it fear, but after what I went through during the war, I had no appetite for undergoing it again. And to quit the party always meant some form of punishment; for example, I would not be allowed to finish my studies. I could not even think about it. I had a son and so I stayed in the party until 1968, when I was "scratched from the party list."[117] My wife on the other hand was expelled.

At the university, did you participate in party life?
Oh yes, it was watched with intensity: whether we wore the lAppell pin, whether we attend the meetings. It was a dictatorship, and it helped many people to see it finally for what it was. I participated as minimally as I could. When I started to work in a publishing house, the [Communist] party [organization] there had a different flavor and meaning, as it was formed from a select group of people with some reasonable goals who were not there simply to kick people around. It was a fantastic collective and we did not double-cross. So I worked in the [Communist] party there much more intensively and reached my functional apex: for a year I was the chairman of the company's party organization. This is my whole party history.

I was shaken badly by all the political monster-trials that took place across all the People's Democracies.[118] Propaganda was all we were fed ad absurdum, but all information was so filtered out that we had no way to obtain objective facts. I realized that it was not just the Czech Communist party that was dictatorial – they all were. But revolt was not possible, and so I remained in the party until they scratched me out. At the end, that is why I lost my job as a university professor.

You have a visible prisoner's number tattooed on your arm. How did people around you react to you as a "concentration camp inmate"?
It was a positive attribute. I personally moved among people who approved of it (for instance SVS, the "swindle course"). Even at the university it gave me some advantage: Professor Báraniová gave me a better mark and then discussed the camps with me because it interested her. After 1945, there were occasional

117 considered a lighter punishment than being expelled
118 a term Communist countries used at the time to refer to themselves, indicating an imperfect state before reaching the perfection of Communism.

manifestations of anti-Semitism, but not in any significant way. When I arrived home to Vysoké Mýto by train, for the first time, some guy at the railway station uttered to his companion, "They are here again!" It concerned me for sure; he had to have known me from somewhere. Even the term "Jew" was uttered. I was glad when the train started to move. I was quite feisty, but I was also still very weak. The other [anti-Semitic person I met] was a high-school professor Zima. Before the war he was known as a right-wing anti-Semite. After the war he started to teach Russian, though he was a professor of German. He was a member of the committee at City Hall in charge of returning the property left behind by the Germans. When I asked for the furniture from my parents' apartment, he said with sarcasm, "We are not like the Germans, we will guard the property of your parents for them. You will get only the necessities. You do not need a night stand!" Eventually I got the furniture, against professor Zima's wishes. There were other incidents like this.

It took a long time for me to straighten out the relationships with our longtime servant, Máry. After the war she was convinced that we cheated her of the bedding she had duly paid for. Eventually, it was revealed that her sister Růžena, who was supposed to secretly carry it from our place, stole it. Toward the end, we reconciled and she recalled the beautiful times with us before the war. We were almost like her children. When she fell sick, my wife tended to her daily in the hospital until her death. It was incorrect to use the term "servant" under the Communists as it indicated exploitation. But there were servants before the war, and some were more like family members.

The "Mister Engineer,"[119] who arrived one day with my mother's debt note in hand, used to be a real friend of Jews. But he was quite old then and did not have it all right in his head. Maybe my mother gave it to him to provide him with some documents for the Germans[120] and then he started believing that the note was real. I did not want to argue with him. He assumed that I had inherited millions. In spite of the fact that my mother told my brother and me before her transport that she did not owe anything to anybody, I decided to pay.

She also gave us the names of people she had hidden some stuff with. There was not too much; we were not rich enough. Eventually, I got most of it back. Some people didn't even know that I had survived.

119 a good-manners way to address men in pre-war Czechoslovakia was as Mister followed by a title, if they had any.

120 so he could not be accused of hiding a Jewish property, for he purchased it, which was OK.

Yes, I did encounter anti-Semitism once in a while, but definitely not in the amount that it is often portrayed as being, for example, as portrayed in *Ve městě jsou Steinové*.[121] Around me were mostly left-oriented philo-Semites. The anti-Semites: Gottwald[122] and his merry band.

You got your Mýto house back. How did this happen?
In 1945, I got it back without any major problems. After the February '48 putch, it was confiscated by the Communists. Luckily, I got it back again after 1989, in restitution. It was appraised for 1 million crowns then, but the house was in shambles and had to be fixed.[123] The repairs were estimated at two million, so I was forced to sell it. I got very little for it, since the buyer knew I had to sell. What a pity that I did not sell the house in 1945 when I was offered a million (in the old currency) by some friends. But my uncle convinced me not to do it: "Money will lose its value, but a house will always have good value." Well, about some other things at least, he may have been right.

Did you contact your home Jewish Community after you returned?
No, I did not. There was nobody left. It used to be in Luže, but only two Schwarzes returned along with Andula Poláková. It was not enough for a Community. As for Mýto, from a hundred or so people, my mother's uncle and I returned, oh, and maybe Hanka Taussigová. I cannot recall any other name. There were a few survivors among those "gathered." I reckon that at best one out of every ten survived.

How did your friends and acquaintances from before the war embrace you?
I'd say rather positively. I was quite friendly with the Klazarovys, our tenants, who had a flat just next to ours. I used to listen to the radio at their place during the war. They warmly embraced my wife when she moved in. The Boy Scouts welcomed me back rather nicely as well. I cannot recall an old friend or acquaintance that disappointed me. During a visit of my old friend, I noticed that I was walking on our carpet, and when I mentioned it, her mother insisted that she had duly paid my mother for it. Except for professor Zima, I do not remember any explicit examples of anti-Semitism.

121 *The Steins are in Town*

122 The chairman of the Communist party and the first Communist president

123 some of the repairs were actually officially mandated

What was your attitude towards Germans after the war?
Horrible. I perceived them as outcasts of humanity. I totally loathed them. I even forgot the German language, though it was the only foreign language I knew well. Later on, I had to re-learn it. Of course, it went faster the second time around. When I started getting invitations to scientific symposia in the GDR.[124] I had to refresh my German. Then I got invited as a visiting professor to the FRG,[125] initially only for three months, but I stayed for three years. I returned home in 1970. I realized there that it was much more complicated with the Germans. I even made some friends there. When I was leaving for Germany, my wife did not want me to go. She was worried that the SS was still there and that something might happen to me. In Germany, I hid that I was Jewish. Well, I did not hide it really, nobody ever asked me about it. I simply did not advertize it. I was there as a docent[126] from Charles University and I wanted to be viewed as such.

At the same time, I realized that there was more anti-Semitism in the Germans than in the Czechs, at least in my generation. But I also noticed a certain feeling of guilt [among the Germans]; as a Jew I think I was a bit more sensitive to it. About three months after I was replaced by my colleague Honzík, I went to lecture in Bochum and it came out that I was Jewish. He [Honzík] mentioned it somewhere and when I came back [from Bochum], everybody knew about it. But I did not experience any anti-Semitism towards myself before or after that incident, all I noticed was that the comments that "the Jews kind of brought it on themselves by exploiting the Germans" disappeared. The same people then asked why I had hidden my Jewish background and then simply tried to butter me up. I recall one publisher; we had become good friends before he learned about it. During the war he was a bomber pilot and deeply regretted his bombings. He was really traumatized by it.

I even made acquaintances with a former SS. Strangely, he loved Russia. He always stayed with us when he was passing through Prague. He lost his arm during the battle of Stalingrad and I used to tease him that he was going there [to Russia] looking for it. I never told him that I was Jewish. He was very reserved towards Jews. He claimed that they had brought it on themselves by their behavior. He had not reconciled with his war role either. He actively tried to atone for what he committed during the war. As a member of the Ostinstitut,[127] he actively promoted both Russia and Czechoslovakia, though he was a committed anti-Communist. I was always bemused by the thought of what he would do if he learned that I was Jewish. I do not know if he ever found out, and whether he is still alive.

124 German Democratic Republic, the Communist state formed by the Russians in Eastern Germany
125 Federal Republic of Germany, the democratic state formed in the Western Germany
126 an academic rank below full professor (so similar to associate professor, but more demanding to reach and more prestigious)

When you lived in Prague, did you have any contacts with the Jewish Community there?
I have to disappoint you. I acknowledged the Community and I always declared my Jewish religious affiliation, though I was a total nonbeliever. The religious dimension is the only category left if one wants to declare his Jewishness without a need to be viewed as a member of the Jewish nation. As I said before, you cannot change your nationality when you are eighty; and I have no innate need to change from a Czech to a Jew.

In reality, except for a few official functions, I had minimal contacts with the Community. I attended the gathering on March 8th commemorating the victims from the Czech Family Camp. Once, I even gave a speech there.

I am member of the "Terezínská iniciativa,"[128] the "Historická skupina Osvětim,"[129] and a similar group from Schwarzheide. I am not a member of the Sachsenhausen group, although I cooperated with them on several occasions. I had almost no contact with the Prague Community for a long period of time. In the last five years I have become more active because of my daughter's involvement there. In general, I am not at ease when Jewishness is too emphasized. As I also mentioned, I do not like to spell the word "jew" with a [capital] "J."

Had you seen the "Věstník ŽNO"?[130]
Yes, I read the bulletin once in a while, but not regularly. I was not a subscriber. Usually I just browsed through it in the reading room of the Faculty of Philosophy, or when somebody drew my attention to some article there, for example about Poláček and so on.

Can you recall some organizations after the war?
I do not recall any pre-war associations or clubs. After the war, we organized according to the camps. In the beginning we were really into it, we the

127 Institute of East European Studies
128 Theresienstadt Initiative
129 The Auschwitz Historic Group
130 Bulletin of the Jewish Community

"Švarzhajďáci"[131] were organized by Karlovský. He invited anybody he knew. The groups "Osvětim"[132] or "Terezínská iniciativa" were similarly founded. I cannot recall any official founding act. I was a chairman of the "Schwarzheide Association" through the whole period of "Bolševism."[133] This association never ceased to exist, though we felt certain pressure from the Communists: [they wondered] why we were not satisfied with the official "Association of Freed Political Prisoners and Survivors," or the "Union of Fighters for Freedom," containing even the former partisans and the former fighters of the Prague uprising. Today, some think that these few old men [the surviving prisoners] should be under control of the Ministry of National Defense.

You obtained an apartment in Prague with SOPVP's[134] help. How did that happen?

My father-in-law was a member; as a Legionnaire, he was imprisoned in Buchenwald. At that time the union was called "Svaz osvobozených politických vězňů a pozůstalých po obětech nacizmu."[135] He knew all the future officials of the union from the concentration camp. When he returned, he applied for a bachelor apartment in Prague and got it. His daughter lived there. I moved in with her from the dormitory, we got married in 1946, and in December 1947 our son was born.

Did you work with children after the war?

In a sense yes, the students in the Faculty of Philosophy were children to me. I hope I can claim that as a teacher I was rather popular. I never was short of students wanting to sign up for my courses and I supervised numerous senior theses. When I finished my studies, I did not have a doctorate degree, but I had a family to support. On a recommendation from Professor Mathesius, I went to work in the Svoboda publishing house as an editor. It was another dream of mine realized.

The publishing house was, however, soon disbanded, so I moved into the Odeon publishing house as a chief editor. At the time the publisher was called

131 loosely translated as "the Schwarzheide guys"

132 Auschwitz

133 Bolshevism, a colloquial derogative term for Communism, is derived from a Russian name for the Communist party of Bolsheviks.

134 it is an acronym for "Sdružení osvobozených politických vězňů a pozůstalých," in English, "The Union of Freed Political Prisoners and Survivors"

135 The Union of Freed Political Prisoners and Survivors of the Victims of Nazism

"Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby a umění,"[136] thus the acronym SNKLHU. Everything then had to have the adjective "state." When we were allowed to change the name, the editor-in-chief, Jan Řezáč, a big expert in the field, changed our name to Odeon, named after the publishing house of Jan Fromka from the First Republic[137]. It was a well-respected, and, at the same time, left-leaning publishing house then.

There [at Odeon], I was promoted to the head editor of the department of Czech literature (a Czech "kolchoz"[138], as we used to say). The Institute for Czech Literature (where I previously had been rejected by Professor Mukařovský) was preparing books for us and we published them in the "Classic Library" edition (Tyl, Neumann, Wolker, Němcová, Klicpera, Čelakovský, Arbes, Vrchlický[139] and so on).

One by one, the private publishing houses were either disbanded or denied publishing rights, and we, as a state publisher, were taking over their unfulfilled commitments. Yet, that was not good enough for the leaders at the top. According to the ÚV KSČ,[140] we were to publish only battle and heroic literature, and not somebody's "collected writings." I think it was also my achievement that we managed to publish at least all of Vrchlický's poetry, though we could not do the same with his plays and theoretical works.

Did you come across any news about Polish "pogroms"[141] or restitution[142] cases (e.g. Nettl's sisters[143])?

I cannot recall any concrete restitution case, but I know that such things were happening. We knew it all from our own experience; we explained it as a local anti-Semitism. To us leftists, it was not a big problem; we were against private ownership anyway. We hoped that everything would be nationalized.

136 State Publishing House for Fine Literature, Music, and Arts

137 First Republic is a common designation of the era 1918 to 1938, since the conception of the Czechoslovak republic in 1918 until its demise by Nazi Germany.

138 a Russian term for a cooperative farm, later often used as a derogative term indicating an inefficient bureaucratic entity, but in the early days used to indicate a fresh new style of doing business.

139 all well-known Czech writers.

140 The Central Committee of the Communist Party, the de-facto seat of all power in the country.

141 "pogrom" is a Russian word for catastrophe; it was used by the Russian Jews to describe the riots of local peasantry against their fellow Jewish villagers, usually involving house burning and beatings or killings. This term is now commonly used for violent riots against all kind of different ethnic or religious communities.

142 a case of deciding whether one should be returned the property owned previously.

143 despite their title to the property, they were in fact denied it.

Photo No. 4: WEDDING PHOTOGRAPH OF JIŘÍ FRANĚK, CLAM GALLAS PALACE, OCT. 25, 1946. Archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková.

Even though this was before the February putsch, nationalization had been discussed much before. So it had no impact on my leftist friends and me, even the Jewish ones. We always considered Poland, and I am afraid correctly so, as an anti-Semitic country.

Some Polish Jews fled the pogroms through Prague. Did you meet any?
Yes I did, and I personally talked to them. I kept thinking that if I were not a Communist, I would most likely be a Zionist. Nevertheless, my whole essence was a Czech Jew and I could not change it. I recall a discussion in the "Obecní Dům"[144] with a particular group of Polish refugees heading for Palestine. What they said clearly indicated virulent anti-Semitism in Poland. We communicated in Russian. They were not Orthodox. It was a friendly exchange of information.

144 the Municipal House, a city community center and a famous restaurant in Prague.

What kind of people were you in contact with? What kind of friends did you have?
I was active in the Association of University Students (SVS) and organized some volunteer work and camps with Jirka Vrba and other, mostly non-Jewish, friends. I was in charge of organization and then of inspections. I myself took part in a camp and in volunteer work in Nýrsko near Karlovy Vary. After the forceful repatriation of the Germans, we partook in the harvest and took care of the stock that they had left behind.

How did you meet your wife?
In 1946, during a student procession, we marched side by side and I offered her a cigarette – I picked up the habit in the camps, and it took quite a bit of effort to quit later, I am a foe of smoking – that is how we started our relationship. Soon after I moved in with her. We had been going steady for about five months before we got married.

I fit in her family very well; my wife's parents were exceptional people. My wife often grumbles that when I talk about what the marriage meant to me, all I talk about is her parents. Of course, she meant a lot to me. This relationship cemented my "Czechness"; not by design, but I simply found a Czech girl and got into a family that took me in as one of their own.

My early marriage anchored me. It wasn't long before we had two children, so I again had a family and I revered my in-laws as my own parents. That might be one of the reasons I was so free to discuss the camps; I did not dwell on them, I was not re-living the experience. I consider it my greatest personal luck.

A large proportion of Jews, especially Zionists, emigrated after the war. Did you meet any?
Yes, for example Avi Fischer. He was a great Czech who had been transformed by the war to Zionism and left for Israel. Ota Kraus, a writer and a friend of mine, also emigrated there. He wrote in Czech, so we discussed how to publish it. The actress Váva Schönová left as well. My good friend Zdeněk Eliáš emigrated to the West. Karel Fischer, with whom I had commune with in Schwarzheide, also emigrated to Israel and then to Germany.

Many of my friends emigrated. When we were finally allowed to travel abroad I had reached a stage where I accepted and understood Zionism. Our whole society was on Israel's side. I have a lot of friends who left the

ČSSR[145] and it made no dent in our friendship. What became difficult was maintaining communication, as ČSSR was officially hostile to Israel.

Early on, Hagana[146] got its training there [in Czechoslovakia]. We were really helping the newly created state of Israel. But there was a marked change in official opinions during and after the political trials in the 1950's. But it was very hard to change our friends into enemies overnight, as Stalin desired. Much later, I studied the topic of Jews in Czechoslovakia and discovered the ideas of Jindřich Kohn; this fastened my opinion that being Czech and being Jewish were not necessarily in conflict.

When and under what circumstances did you change your name?
At the university, when I started to study the Czech language. Of course I was not happy with a German name. My hatred of Germans during and after the war was enormous. During my studies, I learned about how the German names for Jews came to be. Professor Jílek gave us several lectures on the topic. It happened during the reign of Emperor Joseph II in 1775; the Jews were forced to adopt German names. I realized that my name had very little to do with my Jewish roots, so I decided to get rid of it.

Did the people around you support it?
On the balance, yes, though some considered it unnecessary. When I was in the process of deciding, I met two girls I knew from the camp and we discussed it. Their take on it was that they had it simpler – they would marry and that would change their name anyway. But it was up to me to make the change for myself. I considered accepting my grandmother's name Vohryzek, but there were quite a few well-known Vohryzeks (including an anarchist from the First Republic). The other possibility was to "translate" my mother's name (Pfeiferová) to Czech, to "Pískáček"[147] ("pfeifen" = "pískat"[148] in Czech), but I wanted to preserve the monogram JF. The girls suggested that a relatively common Czech name starting with F was "Franěk," and I agreed (it did not occur to me then, that it had, paradoxically, Germanic roots). I got married under my original name, since the process dragged on. My wife was recorded in the marriage

145 The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the official acronym of the name of Czechoslovakia in the period 1960-1989.
146 a Jewish clandestine organization fighting the British for the independence of Israel.
147 Whistler
148 to whistle

index with the name Frischmanová[149]. Later the name Fraňková was added, so everybody assumed that she was married for a second time, and she always had a lot of explaining to do.

Overall, there is a bit of hysteria about it. Everybody assumed I did it to get rid of my Jewish name and I must still explain that there was nothing Jewish about our German names. I personally detested having a German name. Until today, some of my Jewish friends do not understand it, for instance the Stránkýs. They claim they have always been Stránskýs, in contrast to me. Well, there have been some Slavic Jewish names; I spent some time studying the topic later on.

Do you think that changing one's name was kind of fashionable then?
As I said, I did not have many contacts with the Jewish Community, but many of my friends changed their names. I might recall two or three, in most cases from German to Czech (from Eckstein to Eliáš). Some started to use their nickname as their official name (Tigrid instead of Schönfeld). Often, they just changed it to a Czech spelling. It is a common practice. When somebody immigrates to the USA they often Anglicize their names, or if anybody comes to Israel, he takes on a Hebrew name (Fischl is today Dagan). When I was studying the history of literature, I realized that it was always a rather common practice – names are not etched in stone (Apollinaire, Conrad[150]).

The poet Jiří Orten used to be Ohrenstein. As an interesting aside, his two brothers changed the same name to Ornest. Zdeněk[151] was with me in L417, and Ota[152] had passed away. My father felt very Czech, so I am sure that he would never have lived with a German name after the war. He died early on so I did not spend too much time with him, but I know that his pro-Czech feelings were rather strong. Definitely more militant than mine.

Even some Czechs changed their German names (Professor Heidenreich changed it to Dolanský, Professor Oberpfalzer accepted his mother's name Jílek). I think that even some politicians did, too, but I cannot recall any concrete examples.

149 in Czech a wife's name is always affixed with a suffix "ová" indicating belonging-to.
150 both writers had assumed names
151 Eliáš
152 Kraus

Photo No. 5: JIŘÍ FRANĚK WITH HIS DAUGHTER VĚRA DURING THEIR VISIT TO THE SCHWARZHEIDE CONCENTRATION CAMP, CA. 1964. Archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková.

How did you bring up your children?
In both Czech and secular ways. We used to live in the first District of Prague. For school children there, the term "Jew" was a swearword meaning "greedy" or "curmudgeon." We avoided discussing it in front of our son for some time (he was born in 1947). He was told by his cousin one day that he [our son] was of Jewish blood, so my daughter, who was younger, took quite an issue with it. Our son was taken aback a bit, but that was all.

Did you participate in any holidays after the war?
Not at all. I did not have anybody to do so with and did not go to the Community. At home we used to have a Christmas tree and at my wife's home as well. Moreover, for the first Christmas we got our son instead of a Christmas tree. In Mýto, under the tree we would play fiddles, and our whole family would attend, including our non-Jewish friends.

Did you go to the synagogue after the war?
Not after the war, and before that very sporadically. My brother had a Bar Mitzvah. My mother could not imagine me not having one too, so I commuted to a rabbi in Pardubice to learn the Torah. I had huge problems with the reading of Hebrew text, so he eventually transcribed it for me into Latin. As punishment, I did not get long trousers, as was the custom. So I had my Bar Mitzvah, but I was not circumcised. Somehow it did not seem important then.

If you don't mind, I have a personal question. You have only five clearly visible digits tattooed on your arm, the sixth one is almost illegible. Was this a result of an attempt to get rid of it?
Oh no, the numbers were tattooed using special ink, when they ran out, they used just ordinary ink. Sometimes they even used ordinary pens. The prisoners who were doing the tattooing were just learning how to do it, how to get the ink just under the skin. If it went too deep, it festered; if not deep enough, it started to fade away fast. The guy who tattooed me probably did not do it right, so the sixth digit started to fade away even while in the camp. No, I did not do anything about it, though I knew it could be removed.

How does it feel to live with a number on your arm?
Today people do not take notice, but back then it was a kind of badge. In the summer, I always wore short-sleeved shirts. Just recently, I was in a spa and a young masseuse asked about its meaning. So I explained it to her; she did not have a clue. Today there are people who do not even know what the Holocaust was, especially the young.

After the war, some removed their tattoos, but not too many, though. Obviously, during the war, the escapees tried to get rid of them they usually tried to burn it off. Two girl friends of mine (Eva Weissová and Ruth Iltisová) escaped from the camp disguised as "Hitlerjugend."[153] They burned their tattoos off. They were afraid that they might be discovered for having bandages on the same place on the same arm.

My wife and I just explained it to our kids when they asked about the number on daddy's arm. It created animosity towards the Germans.

153 Hitler Youth, it was a paramilitary organization of the Nazi Party for young children and teenagers

How was your health after your return?
I always tried to exercise. I used to jog for many years until they found something with my heart. I was afflicted by cancer, lost a kidney to it, it came back and I had to undergo radiation therapy. I also have diabetes. Until about eighty, I managed to deal with all my health problems well. Back then, I was still riding a bicycle; nowadays I just drive a car. There were a few people who survived the Holocaust, and many of those perished soon after their return.

Did any of them suffer any permanent mental traumas?
I think so; it is very hard to ascertain. I used to discuss it a lot with Avi Fischer. He claimed that all the Jews carried trauma from history; according to him it was older than the camps, the camps just made it deeper and more pronounced.

I already mentioned that some Jews kept constantly talking about the camps (they never "left it"), while others did not want to know about it at all. I think that I am in the golden middle somewhere. I think I was spared the trauma. I somehow have a healthy attitude about this tragedy. I was helped tremendously by my wife and her family. I think that my early marriage and family helped speed up my recovery.

Did you consider February '48 as a victory?
Just partly and in "quotes." My whole family admired Masaryk and I married into a similar one. I, for instance, was in the infamous march in support of Beneš[154]. I was lucky that I was not arrested or beaten up; it was just before exams and since the demonstration was just passing through Nerudova street, I decided they could finish it without me and went home to cram for the exam just before the police showed up. Without consequence, I demonstrated in support of Beneš, whom I still deeply admire.

I had my doubts, for instance, the forced removal of some professors. There were many more such indications: during the student screening [of their political leanings], a well-known Communist came to my defense. He helped me pass. My wife also faced problems. She was asked why she was not taking part in political activities. She answered that it was because she was breast-feeding.

So I always had doubts. But I had very few doubts about the philosophical underpinning, the Marxism. As an atheist, it was easier for me to accept

154 Eduard Beneš, the president of Czechoslovakia during the February 1948 Communist putsch

materialism than some belief in God, Jewish or otherwise (I could never picture what language God and Moses used; I have my own theory about it: it was Moses' appeasement of paganism to claim that all came from God). My reservations were increasing; among friends we concluded that the leading authorities of Communist power should listen to us more.

But the biggest shock was the trials. Then, on the inside, I ceased to be a Communist, though I did not leave the party. Out of opportunism, out of fear, because of the family etc., and it was virtually impossible to do so. I perceived the trials as essentially anti-Semitic; I can recall my revulsion about the accused being introduced as "so and so, of Jewish descent."

Did anybody blame or accuse you as a Jew after '48?
Surprisingly, no. I have a feeling that the people in the publishing house were distinctly philo-Semitic. In my circles, the trials were viewed with animosity.

What did you think about emigration, the fact that you were losing good friends?
It was really hard on me; I really missed Zdeněk Eliáš who was my best friend at the end of the war. Somebody suddenly disappeared or died. I did not understand the emigration. Once in a while my Zionist friends exhorted me, but for me it was out of question. My profession, the family, and my beliefs – I did not hide that I could not consider the Jews as a nation. They have a national potential, but they become a people only in Israel, but even that is something new, they are no longer Jews and that is why they call themselves Israelis. Well, so my theory goes. It is all connected to my perceiving the Jews neither as a people nor as a religion, but as a community. A Jewish community.

If one wants to define Jewishness, one cannot make do with only the notions of nation and religion. I am an agnostic who is not of Jewish nationality, but a member of the Jewish community (Jindřich Kohn calls it a clan, Dr. Soukupová refers to it as a minority).

Since 1967, I have lectured in West Germany. In 1968, the whole family was stayed there with me. After the August invasion[155], it was more or less a technical question if we should stay there. I considered it, but we never did.

155 August 21, 1968 invasion of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw pact to stop the so-called Prague Spring and the ensuing democratization of the Communist power

Photo No. 6: JIŘÍ FRANĚK NAMED PROFESSOR AT CHARLES UNIVERSITY (JUNE 9, 1990). Archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková.

In August 1968, I helped many young people. One could say that I was kind of a "safety anchor" for Czech tourists and students in Germany. Many people met in our place; we even had a TV appearance. I managed to get some financial support for the students who just escaped after the August invasion with no financial arrangements. I worked then in the Auslandinstitut at the University of Dortmund, lectured in Bochum, Göttingen, and Tübingen. When the Soviet army entered the ČSSR, many people spontaneously left. It was rather naive; most of them had no profession or trade, nor education. We created a help center where we invited mostly the students and discussed with them why they wanted to emigrate. Those from politically persecuted families got one hundred marks from us to help them stay in Germany, but we sent many young people back home. I still believe it was quite a useful undertaking.

After my return to Czechoslovakia, I was accused of being a German spy and implicated for my speech on German TV against the occupation (Dr. Fojtíková from the Faculty of Philosophy was the driving force behind it). I was

always negative about emigration; that is why I returned (well, I did not know how the future would turn out). I had to leave the party for the second time and definitely.

The expulsion from KSČ did not bother me so much, but it hurt me that I had to leave the university. The fact that I returned[156] was not good enough for them. I was kicked out of the university and for about a year I was allowed to work as an editor for the magazine *Sputnik*. After that, I had to work for the Czechoslovak Railways as a gate signalman at the Bubeneč station. I can show you the pictures. When they were firing me[157], a lot of lies were used.

After all, I survived it all. But I lost a lot professionally. I continued my research in private and published some stuff illegally. When we were finally allowed to visit our son who had emigrated to Canada, I brought with me some texts to Škvorecký's[158] for publication. I was also in contact with Tigrid. He provided us with about thirty thousands crowns so we could publish in "samizdat[159]" at least one volume of Masaryk's writings. The Historic Institute of the Academy of Sciences lent me (of course, illegally) Athenaeum[160] and some Mr. Topinka photocopied Masaryk's articles in a bank for us. It was all rather complicated. We made about fifteen copies and completed it in 1989.

Did you participate in any way in the activities of the Czech Jewish Community after '89?

Indirectly, through my daughter. She is a teacher by profession, but had a problem with her vocal cords, so she looked for a different job. The "Foundation of Victims of the Holocaust" was looking for an administrator. My daughter entered the competition; in the hiring committee there was Tomáš Jelínek, the chairman of the Jewish Community. She instead was offered and accepted the job of manager of the office of the Jewish Community. Then a competition for the principal of Lauder's Jewish Schools took place. Since my daughter qualified in both education and experience, she won the competition. Many people

156 from Germany

157 from the university

158 Josef Škvorecký, a Czech writer residing in Canada, his wife Zdena used to run an exile publishing house in Toronto, 68 Publishers

159 samizdat, a Russian word, was the clandestine copying and distribution of government-suppressed literature in Soviet-bloc countries. Copies were made a few at a time, and those who received a copy would be expected to make more copies. This was often done by handwriting or typing.

160 České Athenaeum, bulletin for literature and literary criticism published in 1884-93 under the editorship of T. G. Masaryk

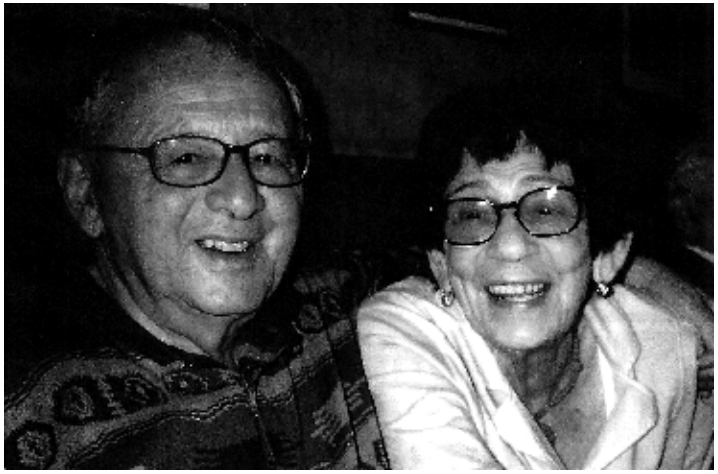


Photo No. 7: DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF JIŘÍ AND ZDEŇKA FRANĚK , 1996. Archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková.

though protested and were supported by rabbi Sidon, the director of the Jewish Museum Dr. Pavlát, and the previous chairman of the Community Jiří Daníček. It all culminated in a demonstration in front of the Jewish city hall, which I consider de-facto an anti-Semitic act. After four years of unsuccessful attempts to relieve my daughter of her post as a principal, she was finally released after a strike in the school was staged as a reaction to her firing a teacher who was found using the school's web server to download really deviant pornography! I gradually got more and more involved not only in this case, but in other day-to-day activities of the Community. As an experienced publisher I could comment for instance on the activities and financing of the Jewish Museum and its publishing house. I consider the whole case around the Lauder's Jewish Schools highly immoral and am in fact glad that the rabbi was dismissed. I think it is good for a rabbi who lies not to be a rabbi. I think it totally corrupt to dismiss a person hired after a proper contest, just because she was inconvenient to them.

What do you think about the re-establishment of the Community after '89, about its concept? Are there enough people for a viable Community?

There are about three thousand Jews, of whom about one and a half thousand live in Prague. Mostly not orthodox. I think it is awful that my daughter was denied membership in the Community just because her mother was not Jewish.

During a debate with the Israeli ambassador, the chairman of ŽO[161] Zeno Dostál proclaimed that the Jewish problem would be solved when again every town had a little shop owned by some Bondy or Eckstein. The ambassador disagreed; according to him everybody who felt Jewish was obliged to go to Israel. I think that whoever feels Jewish (religiously or nationally) should go to live in Israel. To reconstruct small Jewish communities all over the country is pointless. The communities have their meaning in cities with old Jewish tradition like Frankfurt or Prague. They should preserve the heritage and study it.

If there was anything positive about Sidon, it was that his dissident and charter[162] history attracted young people. Some converted, some just rediscovered their Jewish roots. I agree that the Community is an anachronism in its orthodoxy. But today I have some sympathy even for the Orthodox Jews.

But here and there, it really was an anachronism. Just consider the personalities of the last great rabbis... prior to 1900, no orthodoxy and neology existed. Orthodoxy started its separation only with the advent of Zionism; there was nothing like that before. Then, just as all the Christians attended church, all the Jews attended the synagogue, so what orthodoxy? In the country it was not possible to always find kosher meat, etc. Rabbis Zicher and Federer, I still remember, were preciously liberal, though personally they were orthodox and observed "kashrut." They did not ask who your grandfather or grandmother was. Simply, you wrote down Jewish, so you were Jewish, end of story. That was the practice. A rabbi must be a fair person.

What do you think about the activities of neology and reformed Jews in the Czech Republic (e.g. Bejt Simcha[163])?

Well, they are of course closer to my heart. I think that Judaism should be reformed. At some point I tried to figure out the roots of using the head cover (*kipa, yarmulke*) and found out that nobody really knew and that it was relatively recent. To dwell on fundamentalism is never good.

161 acronym for Židovská Obec, the Jewish Community

162 Charter 77 was an informal civic initiative in Czechoslovakia from 1977 to 1992, named after the document Charter 77 from January 1977. It played an important role in the fight against the Communist oppression.

163 a liberal Jewish organization

Photo No. 8: MEETING OF FORMER PRISONERS OF SCHWARZHEIDE, HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL, RESTAURANT ZLATÁ PRAHA, CA. 2000. Archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková

One more question. How did the compensations for the camps proceed?
I can tell you a lot about it. I always voiced my opposition to compensation, even though in principle I agreed with it. The compensation was the German duty, for they stole a lot and we were forced to labor there for free. So in principle it was OK. But I could not understand that the Communist countries were left out. For this the Germans had no right. I proclaimed it everywhere and anywhere. They simply waited for the Jews to die out (because in Russia and Eastern Europe there were at least a million of them); they put forth some obstacles all the time, claiming to make sure that the Communist governments would not steal it. In fact they just simply waited for half of us to die, so the costs were so much smaller.

I was thus against it. I even had no moral problem with the fact, that when everybody applied, I did likewise and accepted the compensation. In my case, the Germans stole so much from me that the compensation could never come even close to covering it (unless I stay alive for a thousand of years). Once in a while somebody asks me why I accepted it when I cast the single vote against

the compensation (the vote was 300:1). According to me, it was unconscionable that it had to wait until the fall of Communism. I was offended that I was endlessly asked for proofs of my time in the camp. The whole process of applying for the compensation was demeaning.

What do your children do?
My son studied mathematics and became a professor of Computer Science at McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada. He has both RNDr. and Ph.D. degrees. He emigrated in 1977. My daughter studied at the Faculty of Pedagogy, has a PaedDr degree and is a teacher.

What do you consider as a fundamental thesis of Czech Jewishness, or, if we can say so, Jewish Czechism?
That Jewishness is not a nationality. Vohryzek was rather religious; he viewed Jewishness in exclusively religious terms. There is this legend (most likely true) that some of the "Čeští bratři"[164] wanted to preserve their faith and names in 1650 so badly that in some Moravian villages they converted to Judaism rather than become Catholics. For instance, Korálek's and Kavan's families perceived themselves as such. Allegedly, they even have some supporting evidence. But it has not been really documented and some scholars deny it. The oppressed Czech nations and the Jewish minority are close to each other; these were Masaryk's words. Well, that is it.

How did you feel during the interview?
I am quite tired now, but if you want to ask some more, go ahead. There have been no questions that would offend me. When I read the transcript, I will recall some additional details, I am sure.

Photographs are from the personal archive of Mrs. Zdeňka Fraňková. The editors of Urban People are grateful for this loan.

164 Czech Brothers, a Protestant sect in the time of forced Catholization by the Hapsburgs

EMPIRICAL EVALUATION OF THEORIES OF PEASANTRY

Leopold Pospíšil

Like other social sciences, anthropology has theorized about peasantry and its basic concepts in many ways, most of which contradict each other. Shanin viewed them as fitting four major categories. First, the European authors have presented peasantry as an earlier cultural tradition which lags behind modern socio-economic development. For Marx, peasantry meant a class of producers formerly exploited by elite of the pre-capitalist society, which presently represents a leftover from the preceding evolutionary societal stage (1975: 3). Authors of the third category, like Chayanov, regarded peasantry as a special type of mode of production. Finally, DurkHeim and his anthropological followers like Kroeber claimed peasantry to be a structural component of civilization, in Kroeber's terms, a "part society" (1948: 284).

Of the above theories, especially the Marxist concept has to be rejected on empirical grounds. If one views exploitation as payment of the rent and of the various fees extracted from peasantry, then are not we all in a sense exploited by having to pay sometimes very onerous taxes imposed upon us by the lawyers and politicians? Furthermore, in various times and places, not all peasantry would fit the Marxist classification. In different times and places, peasants of Europe and Asia were not subject to payment of the rent or being some sort of underdogs. Indeed, sometimes they shared in the power of the State (e.g. in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Switzerland, and even in Communist China). In Austria, a country in which I have conducted long-term research, Austrian peasantry, the *Bauern*, have for a long time enjoyed the highest social status (as also Khera points out; 1972: 352). In my native Czechoslovakia the largest "agrarian party" ruled the country, in a coalition, for its democratic duration of twenty years (1918-1938). As a consequence of the supposed idea that all peasants are exploited underlings, Marxists and also the subscribers to the concept of the "peasant mode of production" hold that the peasants practice subsistence economy, that they produce only for feeding their family and

pay the required rent or taxes (see Cole and Wolf 1914: 87, 140, 152; Roseburry 1976: esp. 51). But it had been the peasant production which provided the surplus which paid for the cities and castles and which fed the industrial revolution (Potter 1967a: 380). Roseburry admits that some peasants themselves became capitalists exploiting the poorer peasants (1976, esp. 50-51). In the definition of surplus, Marxists and other authors leave out investments made by peasants on their farm and business activities, such as building farmhouses, payments to co-heirs in areas of impartible inheritance, buying equipment and machinery, providing irrigation and drainage, creating new arable land, building of roads and bridges, buying superior breeding stock, etc. Thus capital is not limited to purchasing labor only, as Wolf claims (Worsley 1984: 17).

Some theories seem to be even more detached from reality. In order to keep logical with their tenets that, in their production, the aim of the peasants is basically satisfaction of their households' needs, they claim that they use little money in their subsistence economy (Wolf 1955: 454; Shanin 1975a: 15). Some authors go as far as to view peasants living in a non-money economy. With the advent of money, they supposedly slowly transformed their peasant type of production into an enterprise of a capitalist nature (Shanim 1975a: 16). Even worse, the peasants are often depicted as being resigned to their fate and passive when faced with problems of survival choices. Poverty and struggle for survival are supposedly regarded as inevitable, and any innovation is primarily viewed as pathological in nature (Cole and Wolf 1974: 152; Ortiz 1975: 330-331). These absurd assertions have been challenged by many. Herring shows that peasants who faced great adversity as exploited sharecroppers were challenged rather than resigned to their fate, and produced more than owner-operators (1984: 136). Indeed, Ortiz categorically states that peasants not only operate in a money economy, but also that their decisions can "easily be explained in terms of the state of the market, that peasant behavior does not seem to be so different from Western producers" (1975: 331). David Greenwood agrees that every peasant feeds his family but also runs an enterprise, thus actually being a manager and entrepreneur (in Durrenberger 1980: 134). Similarly Thorner claims that peasants produce for exchange (in Ortiz 1975: 323) and Diaz demonstrates that "the peasant village is not economically self-sufficient, depending upon a wide network of personas to whom peasants sell their surplus handicrafts and produce, and from whom they purchase the goods that they themselves do not produce" (Potter et al. 1967: 165; see also Wilk 1991: 5). Indeed, even some Marxists claim that there is no special peas-

ant mode of production (Tannenbaum 1984a: 31). Foster shows that the prices peasants charge are determined by international forces and local monopolists (Potter et al. 1967a: 9). Even most of the peasants of Thailand produce beyond subsistence level, as Tannenbaum shows (1984: 938).

Data from Obernberg Valley, a village which I have subjected to long-term research, studying it since 1962 (when I stayed for a whole year), and returning every year since (spending over seven years there, when counted together), contradict all the above definitions of peasantry. They are more in line with the above-mentioned critiques of Ortiz, Diaz, and Foster. My quantitative research discloses that the peasants of Obernberg lived in a money economy and produced a surplus not only to pay the fees and taxes extracted by the past nobles and later the state, but also for investment and profit. It is not true that peasants have a static technology (see also Nettig 1981: xiii), as shown by my data on the constant technological modernization of Obernberg. Peasants accepted proven technological inventions (scythe, water power, wind power, electricity, cable hay lifts, hay slides), and a whole array of modem power tools and machinery. Indeed they accepted new crops (potatoes, tomatoes, and a variety of vegetables). They have made maximization of income their basic strategy, as Gamst concurs (1974: 34). This aptitude for market for which one does not have to be literate and have legal codes as Gamst suggests (1974:34) and profit motivation are easily discerned in my quantitative data of the year 1967, when non-farm activity provided a full 47.14 % of income for Obernberg's 50 farms. Only during political and national crises, when the market collapsed, did they return to subsistence strategy. Unlike specialized farms and especially the various kolkhozes, producers associations, and latifundia of rich individuals, the peasants showed great economic flexibility (also Wiber 1985: 437).

As Wolf aptly states, the peasants' control of land enables them to retreat into subsistence and "insulating adaptation" when need demands (Cole and Wolf 1974: 30). Because of this flexibility and unification of management and labor, the peasant family farm has a far greater capacity for survival than the commercial and state farms. Soviet collectivization, for example, with its system of kolkhozes and state farms, transformed the once surplus-producing Ukraine ("the old breadbasket of Europe") and the whole Soviet State into a food importing country. In times of crisis, peasant family production usually subsidizes the urban population (Jones 1984: 161). In present and past times of prosperity, Obernberg's diversified agriculture, with its field of grain and potatoes, disappeared and gave way to areas of grassland which provide fodder

for cattle, the merchandise for market-oriented production. Such flexibility is hardly possible on a large commercial or state-owned farm.

A widespread theoretical ethnographic tradition comes from European ethnologists. There the peasants are viewed as representatives of an outdated tradition, or simply as survivors because of supposed inertia typical of peasant societies (Sharin 1975b: 148; also Foster 1967a: 9; Diaz 1967: 50). The traditionalist and conformist theory originated from the supposed peasants' fear of the outside world. As Ortiz shows, this "traditionalism" of peasants stems from past experience when holding to the old method of production avoided risks with untested new urban ideas and minimized losses and starvation (1975: 334). From my own experience, I can claim that holding to the old ways is sometimes reinforced by failures of urban "scientific advisors." Was it so clever that in the USA and, for example, in Czechoslovakia, the abandonment of traditional crop rotation and reliance on artificial chemical fertilizers ruined the balanced ecology, rendered the groundwater undrinkable, and choked the fish streams and lakes with algae? Moreover, the new urban reliance on fertilizers and modem cultivation techniques produce cash outlays and involve long-term costs that a farmer can hardly afford. In the village of Vojnice (Czechoslovakia), where I farmed for five years (1942-1946), wasting the available manure and straw, in a new Soviet-styled kolkhoz, resulted in a mountain of a 40-year accumulation of manure surrounded by a smelly lake of liquid animal excreta and another mountain of rotting straw, and failed to produce the promised increase in production and income (see also Ortiz 1975: 334). While working on my research among the Hopi Indians of Arizona, I heard a very relevant story. An expert from Washington came to teach the Indians how to grow corn. With his tractor he plowed a field in the nearby arroyo (dried-out river bed) and planted corn, while his Hopi neighbors used their old digging sticks and dispensed with the plowing. Soon the Hopi Indian field was green from growing corn, while that of the "urban expert" was bare. By plowing, the famous agronomist had destroyed the soil capillarity and rendered his field barren. No wonder that, after few of such experiments, the peasants view new inventions with caution and very slowly accept only those that have demonstrably proved to be successful. Similar critique is expressed by Minz (1973) and Netting (1981: 228).

Peasantry develops only in a civilization. A civilization does not have to have writing and written literature, as the Inca civilization demonstrates. A civilization is defined by the existence of a city, which other forms of societies do not possess. A city, in turn, is a community which, irrespective of its size, is

economically not self-sufficient, but depends for food on the *Hinterland*, an area dotted with villages. In exchange, it provides defense, services of social, commercial, religious, political and educational nature, and products of craftsmen or industry. Thus peasants of the villages are structurally bound to the city and necessarily participate in the monetary and market economy. Consequently, the claim that the peasants are isolated, not profit-oriented and practice subsistence economy is obviously incorrect (also see Foster 1967: 5; Redfield 1953: 40; Kroeber 1948: 284, Diaz 1967: 51). The city functions not only as a political partner, an outlet for the peasants' produce, and the source of material goods, inventions, and services, but also as the source of peasants' dependence and sometimes subjugation and political domination. As a consequence, a proper study of peasantry requires of necessity discussion of the history, economy, laws, and associational structure of the associated province and the state as they relate to the village life (also claimed by Wolf 1956: 1066).

The contact between the city and its *Hinterland* has been culturally expressed by some authors as a duality of the Great and Little Tradition. The great tradition of the city is supposed to contain the educational elite which, by its advanced knowledge, dominates the political and economic life of the rural population. Accordingly, the city is portrayed as to provide the important innovations, architects who built the monumental structures, and the painters, sculptors and literary people who produce the advanced academic achievements and art. The countryside, we are told, contains only a simplified version of the elaborate city's "Great Tradition" (Redfield in Foster 1967: 6). In the religious sphere, Gamst goes to the extreme in claming that the city provides priests and nuns, and that the backward countryside peasants function only as spectators, possessing only superstitions as their own religious product. Indeed Gamst generalizes that peasants are illiterate and their illiteracy reaffirms more absolutely the contrasts between city dwellers and peasants (1974: 14). Because of this illiteracy and traditionalism, the peasants are supposed to need an agent to mediate between them and the city to interpret "The Great Tradition's cultural achievements and inventions" (Potter et al. 1967b: 9).

All these simply fantastic generalizations are readily contracted by cultural achievements of peasantry in Europe and Asia, and, of course, by my findings in Obernberg (Tirol, Austria). The Obernberg peasants, although having some of their own legends and superstitions, participate fully in the Roman Catholic Church activity. Peasant illiteracy, if applied to Europe, is simply nonsense. Obernberg produced several well-educated priests and even a university

professor and a doctor of veterinary medicine. Many of the Obernberg farmers graduated not only from European high school, but also from college or university. To explain the folly of the above-mentioned theories, one has to realize that not only did the authors mentioned study only the Latin American (mostly Mexican) situation, but they also appear to be ignorant of the peasantry of the rest of the world. In Europe and Obernberg, the rural people have their own subculture in their own right, with their own dialect and written literature, songs, poetry, original architecture, style of furniture, food recipes, and folk costumes. None of these are some sort of derivations from their neighboring city culture. The small valley of Obernberg, up to 1967 partially isolated by a precipitous and dangerous road to the outer world, prides itself on its own dialect, local legends, an Olympic gold medalist in skiing, two highly literate and knowledgeable "*Heimatforscher*" (Andreas Saxer and Herman Hilber, students of the local folklore and history).

Peasantry had been viewed by many anthropologists as a category characterized by several attributes. The most widespread one requires that the peasants be farmers to qualify as members of this category (Wolf 1966; Handlin 1981: 466; Ortiz et al. 1967: 6; Shanin 1975a: 15). True enough, most peasants are engaged in farming, but the villages also contain craftsmen who share their life with other farming village co-residents. One has to view peasantry not as a category but as a subculture which includes the farming and non-farming population. In Obernberg, for example, the district of Eben housed laborers with little land to farm and, in the district of Aue, specialized craftsmen such as cobblers, tailors, basket makers, carpenters, masons, and weavers conducted their business. Besides, the claim that peasants, unlike modern farmers, do not cultivate cash crops is contradicted by the history of Obernberg and also most of Central Europe, where cash crops have been produced by peasants since the Middle Ages. Again, peasantry is a subculture or sub-society tied structurally to the city, and not a category.

Equally false is the claim that peasants have simple technology, resisting change coming from outside. The truth is that they accepted new technology as soon as it was proven to be successful and efficient. Thus Obernberg displayed modem machinery, electrification and architecture. However, they are still reluctant to use extensively insecticide and herbicides that poison the water and exterminate useful birds and animals. Pests (mice, moles, harmful insects, squirrels, and rabbits) are still mostly controlled by predatory insects (wasps, hornets, lady bugs, praying mantises, etc.), singing birds, hawks, owls, ferrets

and foxes. The old plow, which brings up the low layers of fertile soil filled with nutrients from cow manure, is still in full use rather than the modem cultivator which just churns up the top soil, leaving the unused nutrients of the lower level unused and wasted.

Peasantry theorizing has not left out the personality of the rural population. Unfortunately the concept of the personality of peasants and the various theories are not clearly stated, and the terms used remained not well defined (see also Ortiz 1975: 327). Furthermore, the authors' theories disclose a strange naiveté mainly due to studying an individual's statement and attitudes rather than comparing their interpretations with hard economic realities. The result is that Netting's and my empirical findings can hardly be compared with the typical peasant personality of anthropological literature (Pospisil 1995: 14; Netting 1981: 227). The peasant characteristics that are claimed may not even be shared by all the individuals studied (Diaz 1975: 327) and the ideal described is usually viewed as an equivalent to reality (Ortiz 1975: 333). So, for example, the claim that equality is the overriding value of the peasants is not brought out by empirical reality. My Obernberg findings, and also those of Ortiz, show that to assert that peasants supposedly form a uniform, homogeneous society is simply an illusion. My Obernberg people range from conservatives to progressives, which was clearly demonstrated by their decision-making concerning their use of machines, selection of crops, and the acceptance or rejection of new cultivation techniques, especially those involving the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. These findings show the impossibility of putting a categorical label of "progressive" or "conservative" on all the Obernberg farmers.

Another dubious generalization states that peasants have an implicit, covert "image of limited good" (Foster 1967: 296). They are supposed to believe that desired things in life exist in limited quantity that cannot be increased. Therefore this limited good should be more equally distributed and not hoarded by a few individuals. From this, therefore, stems their hostility toward wealth. Having been a European farmer for five years, and having studied Obernberg peasants since 1962 (a total of seven years of research), my interpretation of this hostility views it as simple envy. In this respect, there is no difference between the urban and rural populations in Europe. In comparison, the culture of the United States is conspicuous for a relative lack of envy. So it may be that Americans who study peasants abroad, while relatively ignorant of their urban compatriots, view this envy as a special mark of peasantry. An anecdote expresses the problem of envy difference between American and European cultures quite well. In Europe, Franz prays to God, complaining that his neighbor has a nice pig. God appears and asks Franz, "Do you wish a pig like your neighbor's?" "No, God," replies Franz, "I wish my neighbor's pig were dead." In a similar situation in the United States, Frank, a counterpart of Franzi, certainly has a different wish: "No, God, I would like to have ten pigs like his." The joke reveals the pure envy of a European peasant rather than any feeling of a "limited good." There is another controversy over the conception of a peasant personality. While in his study of the Tepoztlan community of Mexico, Redfield claims that the peasants displayed idyllic behavior, Oscar Lewis, who restudied the same community, found the people there to be suspicious, individualistic, envious, and uncooperative (Redfield 1930; Lewis 1960). My research in Obernberg and in the Czech village of Vojnice, where I farmed for five years, suggests that both of the authors were, in a sense, right. In Europe as in Mexico, and unlike in the USA, peasants as well as urbanites have a double standard of behavior. They classify people with whom they interact into two categories: the proximate, including relatives, friends and underlings, and the distant category of acquaintances, strangers, superiors and enemies. Members of the two categories are addressed by different pronouns (e.g. *du* and *Sie* in German, *tu* and *vous* in French, *tu* and *usted* in Spanish, etc.). Radically different patterns of behavior are applied to these. Members of the distant category are suspect; one is reserved and uncooperative toward them, possibly even hostile. With "proximate" people, one tends to be helpful, trusting, open and unreserved in one's behavior. These patterns are not particular to peasantry, but are applied in European and Mexican societies to all their members. During my first two years of stay in Obernberg, the people were suspicious and mistrusting of me, but afterwards I was reclassified as "proximate" and many of them opened their lives to me, disclosed their financial status (debits and credits in their bank accounts). Would an American so openly show me his/her debts, credits and other financial documents?

This dichotomy in Europe does not mean that there would not be hostilities between two particular families in Obernberg. Indeed, while in the Obernberg districts of Aussertal, Innertal, and Leite, the interfamily grievances were inherited and perpetuated, in the districts of Gereit and Eben the animosities were open, violent, but short-lived.

In the seventies, the work of Chayanov became popular with the theoreticians of the West. The heart of the Chayanov's theory is the on-farm equilibrium, the point where additional effort and production cease. It is determined by

the balance between the family needs of the Russian farmer and the supposed drudgery of labor expended to meet these needs. The needs and the drudgery of expended work are subtle and hard to determine. They form two curves and, at their intersection, the labor of the Russian peasant studied is supposed to cease. Since additional factors determine this utility (needs of the family) and drudgery of expended work, it is difficult to be exactly identified; Sahlins used the easily identifiable ratio of consumers and number of the productive workers of the family and correlated this with the household production. Thus, to Sahlins, the intensity of a given household's production varies inversely with the relative working capacity of the domestic unit. In other words, Sahlins assumes that all peasants of the world tend to work only to supply the needs of their families and are not motivated by profit (Sahlins in Tennenbaum 1984: 927). Aside from the fact that Chayanov also worked with other factors and not only with the two simple ones used by Sahlins, Sahlins and followers of Chayanov failed to understand the data Chayanov worked with. His source of facts came from the Soviet Union of the twenties, from the apartitional communes whose peasants, dominated by the Communist administration, were assigned and reassigned amounts of lands with regard to the changing size of their families. These communes were, of course, an artificial construct of the Communist revolutionaries and thus had little to do with actual peasantry. Since, in my Obernberg and in most other peasant communities, one's landholdings cannot be enlarged or diminished at will, Chayanov's findings, while very good for understanding the early Soviet agrarian era, are irrelevant to the rest of the world's peasantry.

As in other social studies, theories of peasantry have not escaped the influence of Marxism. It became assumed, without any empirical evidence, of course, that originally peasant villages had held and used all their land communally (Handlin 1981: 659). The Marxist-influenced authors saw a survival of the supposed old-time Communism in the contemporary Alpine institution of *Almen*, an association holding pasture land in a community. According to them, *Almen* represent communes where every farm of the valley is entitled to pasture its cattle (Cole and Wolf 1974: 99). Unfortunately, *Almen* are not communes, but are private corporations in which the farmers have secured rights to pasture individual heads of cattle, either through long-time use (*logaeva consuetude*, *usu capio*) or through purchase with subsequent incorporation. As a consequence, in Obernberg only 60 residents and four non-residents have pasture rights, while two Obernberg farms have no rights, and 13 farmers

acquired pasture rights in *Almen* of the neighboring community of Gries. There is little relation between the size of a farm and its number of head of cattle entitled to use the pasture in Obernberg's ten *Almen*. In conclusion, *Almen* are certainly not communes, but corporations whose legal rights and duties form a fictive legal personality separate from those of its members. They are not economically wasteful and irrational as Friedl claims (1974: 52-55). My quantitative analysis, which Friedl lacks, shows just the opposite. Neither the putative ancient collectivism of Marxism nor the forced collectivization of the Soviet Union of the twentieth century shows any supposed human appeal. Indeed the Soviet Union under Stalin's rule had to "liquidate" (under Khrushchev's direction) three million peasants in the Ukraine alone.

Another Marxian dogma of an evolutionary stage of an "egalitarian society" has proven to be a myth, not only among the peasants but also in studied tribal societies (Netting 1981: 228-229; Wilk 1991: 5; Lewis 1981: 61; Pospisil 1963 and 1995). The population of Obernberg ranged from very poor peasants to rather well-to-do elite, the former concentrated in the district of Eben, and the latter in the Ausserthal district.

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CALL FOR PAPERS FOR ISSUE NO. 2/2009 OF URBAN PEOPLE

Issue No. 2/2009 of Urban People will deal with problems of myths about cities and myths in cities. We understand "myth" as a great narrative capable of molding the mentality of a society. In our journal, we will focus on mechanisms of the rise of myths and their bearers and on the importance of myths in individual periods of the modern and postmodern city. We wish to analyze the formation of myths as a way of building and fortifying the identity of a city. Central Europe is the focal point of our attention.

Authors are welcome to submit their articles in English. The deadline for submission of your draft article is December 31, 2008; the deadline for your final article is February 10, 2009.

Jaroslav Miller: UZAVŘENÁ SPOLEČNOST A JEJÍ NEPŘÁTELÉ. MĚSTO STŘEDOVÝCHODNÍ EVROPY (1500–1700),

Lidové Noviny: Praha 2006, 463 pp. In English **The Closed Society and its Enemies. Towns of Central Eastern Europe (1500–1700)** announced for March 2008 by Ashgate.

In the works of authors who have succumbed to the fascination of urban history, we frequently find various metaphors that present urban society and the town itself as an environment that concentrates basic social processes as a display case of social hierarchy and change. European towns and urban culture are unhesitatingly regarded as the criterion of identification and foundation stone of European cultural identity. Even so, in some European historiographies, urban history remains on the edge of the mainstream of scholarship and is sometimes reduced to the theme of individual towns. This applies to Spanish, Portuguese, Latvian, Russian, Slovak and, alas, Czech historiography, and it can be supported with reference to the very small number of overviews, the absence of syntheses, and also the lists of participants at the conference of the European Association for Urban History (EAUH) from its first conference in 1992 in Amsterdam to its eighth conference in 2006 in Stockholm. It is also the reason why all the synthesizing works on the development of European towns published so far by West European or American authors have essentially lacked properly founded chapters on the development of towns in East Central Europe. This is the case with the books produced by Christopher R. Friedrichs, Alex Cowan, Jan de Vries, Paul Bairoch, Paul Hohenbergh and Lynn Hollen Lees. When Peter Clark was editing a book on small towns in early modern Europe, he asked the Hungarian historian Vera Bacskai to put together the chapter on East Central Europe. The problem is always the same. The historiographies of the countries of East Central Europe include a number of works that have contexts and implications beyond the national perspective but are inaccessible because of language (e.g., the synthesis on the earlier development of Polish towns by Henryk Samsonowicz and Marie Bogucka, the analysis of the demographic development of modern Polish towns by Marie Nietyksza, or the older Slovak work of Anton Špiesz). There do, in fact, exist numerous studies with a narrower focus in accessible languages (e.g., articles by Gabor Sokoly, Györgyi Granasztoi, many by Maria Bogucka or, among the younger authors, Markian Prokopovich), but, unfortunately, these accessible works have, for various reasons, remained outside the field of vision of the authors of the syntheses and, of course, they are too specialized to fill in the gaps in our knowledge by themselves. Despite all the research possibilities available today, the younger generation has not been interested enough in urban themes to embark on synthetic and comparative work in this area. In this context, the constant and systematic interest shown by Jaroslav Miller is exceptional and gratifying.

It would be extremely unfair and misleading to claim that the field was

untouched by scholarship before Jaroslav Miller entered it. On the contrary, among historians of East Central Europe (as they have defined it), there has always been great interest but interest of uneven intensity. In the Czech case, historians have tended to be attracted by the "life stories" of towns: their beginnings, the founding of towns and their early phases of growth or, later, the stage of rapid industrialization. The period of crisis, regression, conflicts and problems was, for a long time, left on one side, although even this period found its historiographers. Historical demography has also been providing us with extensive information about the towns of individual countries, or groups of towns. What has been lacking, however, is the systematic archival research and comparative analysis that would set the towns and urban society of East Central Europe in the context of European urban development. We did not have a work that would analyze and define Central European types of town, characterize the dynamics of their development, compare them and outline their place and specific features as contrasted with other European regions. In this context, Jaroslav Miller's book is the book for which urban historiography has been waiting for years. It has attracted a corresponding amount of interest not only from reviewers (Bůžek in ČČH 105, 3/2007, pp. 751–753[Český časopis historický – Czech Historical Review]; Ďurčanský for ĎaS, 08/2007, http://www.dejiny.nln.cz/archiv/2007/082007-45.html [Dějiny a současnost – History and Present]) but also among students (it appears quite often in lists of literature studied).

Readers will be engaged both by the formulation of the problem in the book and the offer of a comparative approach. The notion of towns as conservative closed societies contrasts with the generally accepted image of towns as associated with modernity. The expert on early modern towns, Peter Clark, has characterized towns, their populations the bearers of innovation since the Middle Ages, as the identifying mark of European society.[1] Some European areas have, at different times, been more open to new developments and changes and acted as a model for others. Gradually a particular area would lose influence and the innovative energy would move elsewhere. Thus the Mediterranean towns, which were the model from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, were replaced in this sense in the early modern period by the towns of the Netherlands and England and, later in the twentieth century, the model became Scandinavian. Is this characterization invalid according to J. Miller, or does it apply only to Western Europe? Was there such a major difference between Western and Central Europe? Or is it only a question of emphasis, the choice of angle of view? Are introversion and conservatism, as described by Jaroslav Miller, the general mark of the European towns of the early modern period? Can a socially conservative and closed urban society at the same time show itself to be technologically innovative? Jaroslav Miller has posed the whole question

[1] P. CLARK: European Cities: Culture and Innovation in a Regional Perspective, in Marjaan NIEMI & Ville VUOLANTO (eds.), *Reclaiming the City. Innovation, Culture, Experience*. Studia Fennica Historica, Helsinki 2003, pp. 121–134.

in a very provocative way and one that definitely entices the reader. For Miller, towns are, above all, living organisms. It is their inhabitants, structures, societies and communities that create them. Miller offers his analysis and comparison as the story of towns and their particular inhabitants, while demographic and social historical study is the foundation of the work. Conceived in this way, the book is addressed to the reading public with an interest in social history. The systematic way in which Miller sets his analysis in the Central European context and the example of the use of the comparative approach make the book particularly useful for students.

How does Jaroslav Miller present the historical comparative approach in his book? What does he compare and how? The historical comparative method has its followers in Czech historiography, but it is not one of the most widely employed methods and has not previously been employed in relation to urban themes in the early modern period. To help us with orientation here, let us take the clear guide to the use of the historical comparative method (approach) as formulated by Miroslav Hroch, who developed this methodology in Czech historiography and trained several generations of historians in its application.[2]

The theory of comparison demands that, first and foremost, we should distinguish between ordinary comparison, which is the prerequisite for any assessment of phenomena and processes or for the assessment of a personality, and the comparative method as a comprehensive procedure involving the targeted use of a whole range of techniques and methods. Jaroslav Miller, who studied comparative history at the Central European University in Budapest, identifies with this concept of comparison as an elaborated comprehensive method.

Hroch defined four basic steps or requirements that the researcher must fulfill when deciding on the use of comparison in any particular case. If we look at how Jaroslav Miller fulfills them in his book, we shall learn more about his methodology.

The first step is the proper and precise definition of the object of comparison; here it is necessary to chose comparable objects, i.e., objects that, without regard to the level of abstraction, belong to the same category. With Jaroslav Miller, the objects of comparison are towns as part of the corresponding regional network of towns, or certain groups, a type of town. For East Central Europe, he draws attention to the considerable regional differences in the density of settlement and occurrence of towns. The status of towns and their inhabitants typically differs depending on whom they legally belong to. Given the variety of types of town settlement, J. Miller has created a set of selected towns in which royal towns are strikingly predominant, for these represent a closed group that occurs throughout the region and so the examples are genuinely comparable. It can be assumed that their institutional life operated in a similar way and that, in view of their importance in their time, there is

[2] He has most recently formulated his idea in the introduction to M. HROCH: *Comparative Studies in Modern European History. Nation, Nationalism, Social Change*, Ashgate: Aldershot (UK) /Burlington (VT–USA) 2007, pp. xiii– xiv.

enough accessible evidence about their development. The author has to define and characterize the region on which he concentrates. Miller decided to fill a gap in our knowledge of urban development in the lands of the Bohemian Crown, the Polish-Lithuanian Union and the Royal Hungarian Lands. These are neighboring countries that were in many respects close and similar, but also showed differences. Despite the differences, they can be defined as a region, as East Central Europe. This category is commonly used today, and sometimes covers an even wider territory.

Right at the beginning, the historian must also decide whether he or she will apply the comparative method to the development of a phenomenon, a specific process over time, or will use it to analyze the structure of phenomena. This is a very difficult decision when the researcher is interested in both. To which view should he or she give precedence? Might it not be possible to combine the two approaches? Jaroslav Miller's decision was for the structure of phenomena, which also involves the development.

In the next phase, the researcher must clearly formulate the goal of the comparison, because as a method it can produce different kinds of results. One can look for similarities or differences, interpret causal relations, or use the results as a basis for an overall typology. At the same time the comparison can be conceived symmetrically or asymmetrically, i.e., when the comparison is between several objects only one of which is considered to be central. Although Miller knew that he would not have an identical set of sources for all the towns studied and, in many cases, would be dependent on the secondary literature, he decided for a wide-angle approach and a basically symmetrical comparison.

The third prerequisite for this method is clarification of the relationship of comparison to the time access. The historian must decide and make clear whether his or her interest is in a synchronic or diachronic analysis. Tracing development over time is of course the procedure most proper to historians, and so one of the forms of comparison focuses on comparison of the transformation of phenomena or processes in time, i.e., establishing what about them changes before and what after. Synchronic analysis makes possible a comparison of historical processes or particular social phenomena as they appear in more than one country in the same period of time. Through comparison we can discover whether these processes were independent of each other or whether certain links and connections can be uncovered here. In Miroslav Hroch's view, the most interesting thing about this procedure is that it enables us to ascertain whether the objects compared have gone through the same stage of development, and thus, by extension, enables us to explore these analogical situations (or analogical stages of development) even when they occurred at different times from the point of view of absolute chronology. Jaroslav Miller decided for a synchronic analysis of urban society in selected countries in what is known as the early modern period, which he defined for his purposes as 1500–1700, with necessary overlaps into the earlier and later periods. In this case, we do anticipate dramatic lack of uniformity within the region, but the comparison with Mediterranean or North-Western Europe would be interesting.

The fourth essential step in formulating the tasks of comparative study and concrete methods is to define the criteria of comparison, which must be the same for all the objects chosen. The choice of these criteria is crucial. They must be relevant, they must provide an effective picture of the phenomenon studied, and they must make it possible to compare the objects investigated in accordance with these criteria. It is recommended that the more objects an author is studying, the fewer criteria of comparison he or she should use. Picking these criteria is also a very difficult decision. In the case of the comparison of the town networks in three countries, what is too many, what is appropriate and what is too few?

The first criterion of comparison in Miller's study is the regional town network. Miller offers a situation report on the urban map of East Central Europe. He draws attention to the situation and changes in each individual country and shows differences in the intensity and in the type of urbanization; for some people these may seem obvious, but they will be revealing in European comparative perspective, above all on the West-East axis. The second criterion is the problem of migration to the towns. Connected with this are the status of the town population and the attraction of a specific group of towns. These factors necessarily show up via immigration. Carrying on from this issue, Miller raises the question of the identity of the town and town community and its relationship to "others." We can consider these factors to be another two criteria of comparison. A town community can preserve its identity by closing up, guarding its borders and controlling immigration. These tendencies may be expressed in the policy towards integration of migrants and in attempts to defend town autonomy in relation to the state. The "others" were most often Jews, who themselves wanted to preserve their identity and spontaneously separated themselves off, but were at the same time segregated by the majority society which, however, also needed them and exploited their commercial skills and financial services. Miller presents another type of "other" in the form of the nobility, who settled at court for reasons of prestige and politics, and in the major towns for economic reasons, and who, in some cases, developed or even built their own towns. We expect to find tension between the townspeople and nobility, but mutual cultural influence is also evident. The life of the urban community was governed by fixed rules, regulations, legal norms. Conflicts that occurred between the community and council tell us a great deal about the way the town councils functioned and the way the town operated. For this period, conflicts can typically be expected over the church in the context of reformation and re-catholicization and over the centralizing policies of the state. The final two criteria are first the estates monarchy in Central Eastern Europe, the struggle between the estates and the state in the Rzecz pospołita, the Royal Hungarian Lands and the Bohemian Lands as a political issue on the one hand, and the town economy on the other. The analysis of these themes involves a broadening of the comparative

focus to include not only royal towns but the private tributary towns, whose economic growth based on exploitation of traditional economic instruments (economic liberties and rights) strongly characterizes the type of urban network in all three compared countries. The account of the legal framework and fundamental features of town economies and hinterlands on the basis of these criteria represents the starting point for a concluding summary. Jaroslav Miller agrees with Ch. Friedrichs and A. Cowan that, in the early modern period, towns appeared outwardly much the same as they had in the late medieval period. Neither with respect to the running of the town or the social structure within which internal communication took place were there dramatic changes underway. The family or individual who moved from one urban environment to another, his parents or, a couple of generations further on, his children or grandchildren would have been living in an environment that essentially functioned in the same way. Considering England at the end of the 17th century and beginning of the 18th century, Peter Borsay saw a change in the life style of the urban population, in the discovery of leisure, but above all in the transformation of the functions of the town and the development of towns with a specialized function.[3] From Jaroslav Miller's analysis it follows that the society of the not particularly populous towns of East Central Europe was not just very close to its agricultural hinterland, but fairly impervious to change. Naturally, aspects of urban life take different forms viewed through the eyes of old inhabitants, immigrants who can and wish to immigrate, and those who wish, at all costs, to preserve their difference. They are seen one way by a town council and another by a nobleman or other feudal or ecclesiastical authority. Jaroslav Miller refers to differences in the average figures for density of population and the size of the towns of Western Europe, especially France (p. 33). We should not forget that the picture was far from homogenous, for small towns were very numerous and close in their relationship to the countryside. The average figures have been distorted by the great ports, provincial centers and capital cities. It is no accident that Peter Clark and Bernard Lepetit devoted a collaborative project to the small towns of Europe.[4] In France there is an association for the history of small towns and a whole range of studies on the theme.[5] The continuing importance of the small towns, the traditional character of their populations and their close relationship to the countryside was pointed out as early as the 19th century by Eugen Weber, and later by Fernand Braudel.[6] Despite this, the pre-industrial period is considered important for the urbanization of European society.[7]

In conclusion it must be said that the theme of the book is a fascinating one, and that Jaroslav Miller has put together and organized marvelous material which can be used for future research and the enlargement of the comparative perspective to include other European regions. Miller's comment on and responses to international discussion on the problems concerned are very interesting and readable. His bibliography and catalogue of sources is admirable, and will be appreciated by any researchers wanting to pick up his themes. In this book, Miller also shows that the unit of comparison need not necessarily be the state, but can be a social phenomenon, and that quantification can be combined with the qualitative analysis needed to draw attention to the actors in the processes explored and in some cases to compensate for a lack of official records providing for statistics. Of course, from the point of view of the historiography of events, this approach is misleading and comparative analyses involve inadmissible simplification and schematization. This tension between the comparative and narrative is classical, long familiar and useful. By means of his definition of the six levels of comparison, Jaroslav Miller, on the one hand, follows basic criteria that he exploits for the regional typology of the town network and, on the other, gives readers an insight into the town environment, its mechanisms, and urban stories. By characterizing the urban societies of East Central Europe as conservative and closed, he inspires us to carry on looking for the relationships between an innovative approach to social problems and urban environments.

Luďa Klusáková

Peter Salner: MOZAIKA ŽIDOVSKEJ BRATISLAVY (Mosaic of Jewish Bratislava).

Bratislava: Albert Marenčin Vydavateľstvo PT, 2007, 199 pp., photographs, ISBN 978-80-89218-37-0.

"The city is the world," wrote Marc Augé, a French urban ethnology classic.8 In his new monograph, however, Peter Salner, a Bratislava ethnologist, presents the capital of Slovakia in its past appearance: during the First Republic and the Second Republic and at the time of the Slovak State. His main interest, nevertheless, does not capture the city as a whole, but, primarily, so-called Jewish Bratislava.

During the first leafing through this charming book with its numerous historic photographs from the time of the Hungarian monarchy, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Czechoslovak Republic and partly also the Second World War, the reader is already seized by nostalgia: that is, we often look at a Bratislava that

3 P. BORSAY: *History of Leisure: The British Experience Since 1500*, Palgrave 2006, pp. 1–35 and especially his earlier work on the renaissance of English towns.

4 B. LEPETIT: In search of the small town in early nineteenth-century France in P. CLARK: *Small towns in early modern Europe*, Cambridge 1995;

5 E.g. J.-P. POUSSOU (ed.): *Les petites villes du sud-ouest de l´antiquité a nos jours*, Mamers 2006.

6 E. WEBER: *La Fin des Terroir. La modernisation de la France rurale 1870–1914*, Paris 1983 (first in Stanford 1976); F. BRAUDEL: L'Identité de la France I. Histoire et environement, Paris 1986.

7 E. MAUR in Pavla HORSKÁ – Eduard MAUR – Jiří MUSIL: Zrod velkoměsta. Urbanizace českých zemí a Evropa [The Birth of the Metropolis. The urbanisation of the Czech Lands and Europe], Paseka: Praha/Litomyšl 2002, pp. 80–120.

8 Augé, M. (1994). *Pour une anthropologie des mondes contemporains,* Paris, Aubier.

disappeared (frequently, too, because of the insensitive urban renewal of the city space). And even these places that resisted the pressure of the most varied of times are different and somehow less authentic, beautiful and intimate. Perhaps one should look for the cause of this effect in the disappearance not only of the buildings, but also in the prewar lifestyle of Bratislava, which the author thoroughly characterizes as a multi-ethnic and multicultural, trilingual (Hungarian-German-Slovak) city with a cultivated capacity for tolerance. The newly accented trilinguality, however, is bound to the character of the time, not to the genius loci of the city. The Czechs were expelled during the Second Republic; the majority of the Bratislava Jews were murdered during the Shoah or they left in one of the waves of emigration from Bratislava after the Second World War. That time also saw the displacement or forced expulsion of local Germans and Hungarians.

The Bratislava world – or, perhaps, Bratislava worlds would be better – thus developed. The book shows the history of the city itself in Jaroslav Franek's literarily conceived foreword: the retrieval of the radiating past of the city until the present. His ambition was also, however, to sketch the development of Jewish Bratislava from the end of the 18th to the beginning of the 20th century (with intermittent time overlaps). Even if this preliminary text cancels out occasional factographic errors (e.g., Franek writes about the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1782 [p. 10]; it is possible to controvert the minority policies of Joseph II), above all, one can positively appreciate his attempt at a comparison of the Slovak and European development of the relation of governments to the Jews. Franek rightly connected the acme of Jewish Bratislava to the end of the 18th century (pp. 13-14) and rightly pointed out the year 1848 – from the viewpoint of the relation of the majority to the minority – as a key year. By comparing Bratislava with Prague at the end of the 19th century, we ascertain that Bratislava (with more than 10 % of the Jewish population [p. 20]) probably had over 5 % more Jews than Prague. Perhaps thanks to the proximity to Vienna, the Jewish national movement (Zionism) came here at about the same time as to Prague at the end of the century before last.

Peter Salner mainly organized his pictures of the Bratislava worlds on the basis of oral-history interviews (video recordings, 1994-1997) with witnesses of the Shoah from Bratislava (50 testimonies). Supplementary sources were archival material, press of the period, and published memoirs.

In the first chapter, Salner depicted the dramatic beginning of the First Republic and the relation of the Bratislava Jews, traditionally pro-monarchy oriented, to it: from mistrust (Salner justifiably adds "mutual") and abhorrence, from the first pogroms to identification with Masaryk's Czechoslovakia, which meant – with the exception of a pogrom in 1936 – an era of peace and the development of the community (e.g., in 1930, 14,882 Jews lived in Bratislava, i.e., 11 % of the population of the city [p. 43]; the following year 30 Jewish guilds worked here [p. 43]; the Jewish People's Kitchen offered its services. The Jews had a religious, political, nationally and linguistically structured community

speaking five main languages (p. 47). Alongside a majority of Orthodox Jews in Bratislava, there were also Neolog Jews and a minority of atheists. Besides Orthodox Jews and Zionists, there were assimilated Hungarians, Germans and Slovaks.

The second chapter of Jewish Bratislava approaches Jewish institutions and life in the city in the interwar period from the viewpoint of witnesses. Thus pictures of three Bratislava synagogues, Bratislava streets and squares, apartment houses, Jewish quarters, distinctive shops and enterprises, walks, schools, etc., parade before us. We feverishly read about memories of mainly good neighborly relations, Bratislava shops and markets, playgrounds and teasing, but also of household facilities of the time and, finally, also of the inhabitants of the city: Jews and non-Jews. No less colorful is a recollection of the functioning of Jewish families: their economics and relation to religiosity; the way they spent their free time, including sport activities (soccer, swimming). At the end of this period reminiscences of the first anti-Semitic excess connected with projection of the film Golem (1936) also shine through. Anti-Semitism penetrated into everyday life. As in the Czech lands, in Bratislava the situation also markedly worsened during the Second Republic.

Salner devoted the third, socially most interesting, chapter to the so-called Bratislava Holocaust and subjectively experienced anti-Jewish measures and regulations. I fully agree with him that it is impossible to accept totally the famous Herberg triad of protagonists of the Shoah (perpetrators – victims – onlookers) (pp. 121-122) which, in addition, I feel ought to be in reverse order in that Slovak "solidarity" (like that of the Poles, the Czechs, etc.) with the Jews was often activated by their money and not by a human wish to help. Salner, however, offers the still-existing advocates of the Slovak State, in reality a satellite of Hitler's Germany, not only subjective experiences of humiliation, but also unambiguous testimonial documents concerning Slovak Aryanization and collaboration.

I also consider methodically correct the fact that Salner begins his own interpretation of the Holocaust at the end of 1938 and beginning of 1939, i.e., still in the era of the Second Republic. In Jewish memories, the Bratislava Holocaust takes the form of open physical violence in the streets and the expulsion and humiliation of the Jews. Its perpetrators were not only original German inhabitants, but also members of the feared Hlinka Guard. Bratislava was "beautified" with anti-Semitic posters and anti-Semitic caricatures, bans on entering for the Jewish population – symbols of the new era of the city. Witnesses remember forced migration of their families, Aryanization of Jewish enterprises, a ban on going to the majority of the schools and list of prohibitions contained in the so-called Jewish Code (November 9, 1941): for not wearing the Jewish star, deportation, etc. Some of the Jews chose a life in illegality, in hiding. In mid-1944 Bratislava was bombed. On April 4, 1945, it was liberated by the Red Army. Confused memories of poor clothing, undisciplined and evidently anti-Semitic Soviet soldiers seemed to usher in a continuation of the fates of the Jews after the Second World War. This book, however, ends with

a technical description of the road of Jews returning home (but only fewer than one-fifth of the prewar 15,000 Bratislava Jews returned).

Salner's book can be read in one sitting. Despite its undoubtedly enriching our knowledge of Jewish Bratislava, I would have a few suggestions. In view of the fact that photographs of the time create one half of the picture of Jewish Bratislava, the author could have paid more attention to their sequencing in the text and their captions (along with new names of squares and streets, we should also consistently find the old names and dates, etc.). Too much intense quotation of memories can also present a certain problem. The reader might welcome more general comments. And finally: I would welcome the application of the method of model analysis to the memories.

Blanka Soukupová

Žo Langerová: VTEDY V BRATISLAVE: MÔJ ŽIVOT S OSKAROM L. (At that Time in Bratislava: My life with Oskar L.)

Bratislava. Albert Marenčin Vydavateľstvo PT, SNM – Muzeum židovskej kultúry, 2007, 223 pp., photographs. ISBN 978-80-89218-50-9.

A memoir of extraordinarily high literary quality by Žo Langerová (1912 Budapest–1990 Uppsala, Sweden), born to a well-off assimilated Hungarian Jewish family and married in 1932 to Communist intellectual Oskar Langer (1907–1966 Bratislava), can be read for many reasons and in many ways. Thus, in Žo's fate are reflected all of the hopes, disappointments and paradoxes of the stormy 20th century experienced in traditionally nationalistically and politically exposed Central Europe. Žo Langerová was emancipated, educated, talented in sports and, above all, an immensely politically naïve girl from a middle-class Budapest family. She became an enthusiastic pupil and, later, also the wife of a young Slovak clerk inclined toward the left. Along with him, she experienced the atmosphere of multiethnic, trilingual Bratislava in the mid-1930s. She was not very conscious of her Jewishness, and she took the numerus clausus (restricted number) in interwar Hungary to be just some sort of data. Her Jewish identity came out only after World War II from negative experiences: the Shoah, political trials with anti-Semitic sub-texts although, in 1938, she had already become a Jewish refugee and had had to start a new home and new work in the United States of America. There she changed as a mother, as the assistant to the manager of a bookstore, and as the main bread-winner in her family. However, before that, she worked as a door-to-door sales representative and a waitress, while her linguistically untalented husband turned to political activity among the Slovak Communists. In 1946, on an invitation from the Communist Party of Slovakia, the family returned home and Oskar made a career as a member of the Central Committee of the Party. Žo worked in a branch of an export firm, where, for the first time, after the February Revolution, she encountered the absurdity of Socialist planning and the all-mighty "personnel officer." During that period, Oskar was arrested (1951). From a relatively privileged business representative of the Ligna commercial society, Žo and her two daughters became unwanted persons practically overnight. They were evacuated to a worse apartment and Žo had to step in as a production worker. Only later was she employed as an editor and clerk. In November 1952, after the news that her husband had been convicted, she was let go at work. Destalinization, during which her husband was rehabilitated (he was freed in May 1960 and rehabilitated in 1962) brought relatively better times to the family. Even before Oskar's return, the family, at that time already extensive, bought a beautiful apartment and later Žo obtained a practically unobtainable automobile. Oskar and other comrades, including those who had his imprisonment on their consciences, began to work on political change.

As I have already said, Žo Langerová's honest confession and perceptive observations regarding the political situation, interlarded humor and self-irony can be read in may ways. A historian mainly appreciates their painful attempts at rehabilitation of her husband, repeated meetings with Party officials, attempts at intercession with an influential left-oriented cousin –- the French actress Simone Signoret – as well as portrayals of conditions in Communist prison and the mechanism of interrogations and confessions. A political scientist will read the book as a very precise analysis of the mechanisms of power in a totalitarian system. For a psychologist, paramount will be Žo Langerová's psyche as a lonely woman who vacillates between unconditional loyalty to an unjustly imprisoned husband and the longing for happiness at the side of a sensitive man who would devote himself to his family and not to Party work. Very absorbing will be the description of her childhood with an authoritative mother and a loving, but passive father. Similarly interesting, of course, will be Oskar's psyche. A convinced Communist never admits that the foundation of the totalitarian system capsized; he feels that the Party only made certain errors. Using the example of her older daughter, Žo also analyzed relatively precisely the brainwashing of children's minds by the new regime. Also very stimulating is her portrayal of the way of thinking of the working class, which she calls small-town mentality (p. 86).

In the pages of Urban People, however, we mention the book for two main reasons: it captures very well the atmosphere of Bratislava from 1946 until August 1968, when Žo, along with her daughters, one of whom was a successful singer, decided to emigrate after the Soviet invasion. Postwar Bratislava is, in Langerová's memory, connected with apartment shortages, insufficient food, furniture, endless lines and a wave of dangerous nationalization. In view of the fact that Žo herself did not know enough Slovak at that time, she completely felt like a foreigner. After February 1948, a privileged layer came into being in the city. The Communist Party prepared Action B, the regime's eviction from Bratislava of members of the opposition (1952-1953). The displacement of Žo and her daughters to a Hungarian village, however, preceded her being let go from her job, the necessity of buying on the black market

(only working people received food tickets), and, finally, the fear that reigned over Bratislava. In Tvrdošovce, the monetary reform (1953) also caught her. Another Langerová picture of Bratislava caught the city in the mid-1950s, when she returned to the Bratislava suburbs. Bratislava offered the possibility of employment (translations, typing and, later, work as a clerk and editor). Žo also painted well her new environment of continual housing shortages, as many inhabitants of the city gladly exchanged their small apartments for spacious and heated coffee houses. (The favorite retreat of Žo and her younger daughter was the Savoy.) First and foremost, however, was the lessening of fear in society. The hopeful period around the Prague Spring, which, however, Žo, as a consequence of her experiences in life, perceived with skepticism, ended with the Soviet invasion.

After 1989, literature devoted to political trials of the Communist era began to accumulate. Works by K. Kaplan and P. Paleček, O. Liška, and M. Pučil, memoirs of H. Kovályová, A. G. London, J. Slánská and others were published. Still, however, Langerová's memoirs are unique, and their way to Slovak readers was indirect, as the epilog shows: Žo Langerová, a great fighter against a hostile fate created by the regime, became capable of making a very precise analysis of totalitarianism in postwar Czechoslovakia.

Blanka Soukupová

Jolana Darulová: MESTO PRIESTOR ETNOLOGICKÝCH VÝSKUMOV. NA PRÍKLADE BANSKEJ BYSTRICE (A City, Space for Ethnological Research. On the Example of Banská Bystrica).

Banská Bystrica: Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, 2002, 159 pages, photographs, maps, ISBN 80-8055-725-X.

Cities constitute worlds in relation to other cities, but, at the same time, each city is a multitude of worlds. Jolana Darulová, assistant professor at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (Slovakia) decided, in her long-awaited synthesis, to present the most transparent worlds of a city that is regarded as the most beautiful urban center in Slovakia. Banská Bystrica (founded in 1255) was a medieval mining center that was transformed (17th–19th centuries) into a trade and craft center. Then, in the first half of the 20th century, it belonged mainly to businessmen, craftsmen and white-collar workers.

In 1930, Banská Bystrica had 11,347 inhabitants; in 1950, 13,045 (p. 42). In 1991, the number of inhabitants increased to 85,007 (p. 43). Until the Second World War, the city was multiethnic, multiconfessional (Catholic-Protestant-Jewish) and multicultural (bilingual and trilingual): alongside Slovaks, who became the majority in the interwar period (in 1919, they represented 77% of the more than 10,000 inhabitants), lived Jews – Neologs (from the second half of the 19th century), Germans, Hungarians (in the 19th century, Banská Bystrica was pro-Hungary oriented), Bulgarian vegetable growers (from 1890), Czechs – representatives of the pro-Czechoslovak intelligentsia (from 1919) – and Roma. The uniqueness of the city, however, also came from its position between two distinctive Slovak ethnographic regions.

Darulová, an author of many microprobes, decided this time to present Banská Bystrica as a whole organism. She bases her data on oral-history interviews, personal observations, excerpts from the local press, memoirs, biographies, diaries, archives, and collections of local folklore. In view of the quality of the sources and with regard to the methodic approaches of contemporary Slovak anthropology, however, she focused primarily on the middle class as a city-creating class during the period between the two world wars (understandably with time lapses).

The author's highlighting the delayed urban processes in Slovakia and, connected with them, the development of urban anthropology (ethnology) in Slovakia, must be called stimulating. Attempts at grasping the development of tradition of urban research in Slovak ethnology, like attempts at periodization of their development, are among the most interesting parts of the text. Along with Darulová, I advocate a wider comparative view of the "western" and "eastern" European city. However, comparative research of the so-called post-Socialistic cities seems to me to be very meaningful.

The presentation of the Banská Bystrica material itself is thematic, while the author connected the micro- and macro-space of the population of the city. She followed the historical development of the city and its social stratification. The author accentuated the fact that industrialization began in Banská Bystrica in the last quarter of the 19th century and markedly influenced the spatial structuring of the city. Further, she focused on the relation of the majority population to the minority (including their views), on the function language and folklore, etc.

She devotes a separate chapter to the typology of the Banská Bystrica family and, generally, to the functioning and importance of the middle-class patriarchal family in the city. The researcher studied its everydayness, festivities, child-rearing, values and morals as related to the needs of the city. As with family space, she wrote about public city space (streets, squares, places of traditional enjoyment, the corso [promenade], magic places, water sources) – in the words of the French ethnologist Gérard Althab, *communication spaces,* and traditional urban activities (markets and fairs, club membership, but also excursions and walks) or *communication events*.

Jolana Darulová's book is interesting and, in many aspects, inspirational. I would see a certain problem only in chronological imbalance (time leaps) of the work, in the lack of connection of the development of the city with the development of the entire Slovak society and in the interpretation of the city on the basis of the lifestyle of only one (even if determining) social level: the Slovak middle class. At the same time, however, it is necessary to emphasize the difficulty of writing a monograph of a city and open methodic search of a new field – urban anthropology.

Blanka Soukupová

Nina Pavelčíková: ROMOVÉ V ČESKÝCH ZEMÍCH V LETECH 1945–1989 (Roma in the Czech Lands 1945–1989).

Prague: Úřad dokumentace a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu (Office of Documentation and Investigation of Criminals of Communism), Sešity 12, 2004, 183 pp., supplements, English and German summaries.

The issue under review represents the most compelling synthesis of the Ostrava historian Nina Pavelčíková to date. The subject of her research after 1989 became Czech (Czechslovak)-Romani coexistence covering the period from the end of the Second World War to the present. In the pages of Urban People we mention this work, especially because the Romani national minority (in Pavelčíková's concept, an ethnic group), during the period of so-called communism from the early 1950s, went through an insensitive process of a very rapid and revolutionary form of urbanization. As a result of a postwar advertising campaign looking for an unqualified labor force, the culturally distinct, linguistically – at least in the first years – different, educationally and, therefore, also socially handicapped minority came from Slovakia to Prague, Ústí nad Labem, Most, Kladno, Pilsen, Děčín, and other northern and western Czech border cities. In Moravia, they headed for Ostrava, Brno and Karviná.

The special subject of interest of Nina Pavelčíková, however, became the relation of state organs to the Roma and to the so-called Romani question. As a historian, she emphasized the idea that problems of coexistence with the majority population have historic roots. Increasing Romani unemployment, the non-functioning family, various forms of addiction (to drugs, slot-machines, etc.), parasitic ways of supporting themselves, usury, etc., are the result of complicated historic development and also of different traditions. Pavelčíková characterizes Romani otherness as a difference in origin, physiognomy, language, a lack of written culture, a different socio-cultural system, a system of family, relatives and mentality and norms of behavior.

Despite usage of some sources which are routinely considered non-standard in historiography (Romani literature, memoirs, remembrances, interviews, data from the fieldwork among Roma in Vitkovice, Ostrava and southern Moravia [1999], musical recordings, film, but surprisingly no sayings and proverbs), this is a historic work based mainly on archival research of sources of authoritative provenance (the most interesting of which are printed in the concluding supplements and expanded with eight photographs of a Romani school and model pupils, Romani workers, a Romani family in Ostrava in the 1950s, and Romani officials). Meanwhile it is very significant that only few of the sources used are of Romani provenance and these are, as a rule, stimulated by the interest of the majority: Romani officials claim to be among the builders of socialism; they justify their parasitic way of living by blaming their poverty or the relation of the majority society to Gypsies as to an inferior, isolated group. As a warning, the Romani Holocaust is recalled. The majority society is then called upon to be patient and to express good will toward allegedly timid and mistrustful co-citizens.

Pavelčíková's analysis of the postwar period is original, especially in her attempt at periodization of the official majority attitude toward the Roma, which, to a certain extent, corresponds to the historic periodization of the postwar period (1945–1948, 1948–1957, 1958–1968, 1969–1977, 1977–1989), and further, her refusal to make a superficial evaluation of the former regime and call it a regime of ill will. On the other hand, Pavelčíková actually reveals the roots in those times of the contemporary crisis of Romani society: she sees them in the broken or disturbed institution of family and neighborhood and in the deformation of traditional Romani values of solidarity, cooperation, absence of egotism and miserliness.

A key period was, according to the Ostrava historian, the late 1950s, a time of urbanization, balancing itself with the unfriendly environment of an industrial city full of unknown elements of civilization. As a result of the zeal (often well-meant) to create a model educated, hard-working and healthy socialist citizen, however, there arose tense coexistence between the majority and the minority as well as the rise of new Romani ghettos. The Sovietization of national politics led to a new discrimination law that forbade a traveling lifestyle (1958), emanating from the myth about traveling Roma in the past (page 15 – actually we have documents about Roma who had already settled in the 14th and 15th centuries). While the postwar period, when only 583 Czech and Moravian Roma returned to the Czech lands from concentration camps, oscillated between suggestions of repressive measures that were comparable to Protectorate policies (a register of persons of Gypsy origin, forced-labor camps, reeducation centers, removal of children from Romani families) and an attempt to respect Roma as a special nation with its own culture and language, the second stage was characterized by unconditional assimilation. The first era was shaped by the first migration waves of socially handicapped Slovak Roma. At the time of creation of the communist conception of a solution of the so-called Gypsy question after February 1948 when another stream of migration came, important personalities came forward to push for liquidation of the Romani handicapped. Several original pedagogical and educational institutions with remarkable consequences for Romani children and Romani parents were founded. The most popular of them became the Gypsy School of Peace in Květušin near České Budějovice and then later in Dobrá Voda, linked to the famous pedagogue Miroslav Dědič. The next period beginning in 1958, on the other hand, formed the so-called dispersal (1965–1968) or, more precisely, the forced urbanization of the Romani population. It was divided into three groups: the settled Gypsies, the most numerous semi-settled Gypsies and the most problematic (from the point of view of the majority) traveling Gypsies, at whom a law regarding permanent settlement (1958) was aimed. A positive aspect of that era was the rise in the health, social and educational level of the Roma, although the Roma never achieved the

majority's average. The period around the so-called Prague Spring activated Romani activity of its own. The Roma created for themselves the Union of Gypsies (Roma) (1968–1973) and made contact with international organizations. This promising development was interrupted during the time of normalization when there was a return to the model of the controlling, socially generous state rejecting individuality and permitting, in its beginnings, only small cultural activities (the rise of Romani bands, organizing of exhibitions of Romani crafts). The turnaround of state policies toward the Roma in 1989 was already foreshadowed in the document called Charta 77, which criticized the state concept of the so-called social and cultural integration of the Roma which also devalorized the Romani past (in fact, between 1972 and 1974, a large-scale pig farm was built in Lety on the land where there had been a concentration camp for Roma under the Protectorate). Probably the largest memorial of unreal notions of that era was the realization of the idea of a Romani prefabricated housing development in the Chánov section of the town of Most. Romani families of very different social levels were unable to find a modus vivendi and, for integrated Roma, Chánov changed into a space from which they wanted to escape. An official party document that appeared at the end of the 1980s was reflected in an increase of Romani activity plus realistic thinking about the state of the Romani community and the causes of the failure of assimilation, including criticism of state paternalism.

Pavelčíková's book is thus new proof of the fact that the generous social policy of the totalitarian state of excluding private activity despite the declaration of a scientific and complex solution of the problem does more harm than good. At this point, one can also regret that Pavelčíková did not consider a comparison of Czechoslovak state policies toward the Roma with state policies of other Soviet satellites and with state policies of advanced capitalist states. The attentive reader, familiar with the gains and state of contemporary schooling and culture must, however, come to the conclusion that everything here has already been, even if, e.g., a Romani boarding school in the 1950s would not be successful in the light of postmodern pedagogy with its accent on child nurturing in the family. At the same time it would be very interesting to follow the life stories of Romani children reared in such schools, the degree of their involvement in the majority society and the degree of their assimilation or, more precisely, the functioning or non-functioning in direct proportion of the help of the majority and social involvement to the satisfaction of the minority. Subtle anthropological research could then, on the bases of oral-historic interviews, augment the fascinating testimony of the Romani activist and author Elena Lacková and record how the state-created "great" history was reflected in the fates of ordinary people.

Throughout the book, which is a useful picture of the dark postwar period, Nina Pavelčíková promotes a thesis about the improvement in education of the Roma as an assumption of the improvement of their social success. And this intellectual cliché is an illustration of our underestimation of the importance of the quality of the majority population, the degree of their prejudices, xenophobia and racism. It is shown that the quality of coexistence is a two-sided matter, even if the greater responsibility falls on the shoulders of the advantaged (majority). Undoubtedly it would, therefore, do the text good if the postwar position of the Roma were followed in comparison with the position of other minorities and certain patterns were revealed in the coexistence of unequal neighbors.

Blanka Soukupová

ŽIDÉ V KOLÍNĚ A OKOLÍ (Jews in Kolín and its Environs). Proceedings of the Kolín Museum – Social Science Series IX. Edited by Ladislav Jouza and Jaroslav Pejša.

Kolín: Kolín Regional Museum, 2005, 228 pp.

Despite the large number of texts dedicated to the Jewish minority in the Czech lands, only relatively few monographs or other publications mapping the Jewish minority in a particular location with an important Jewish population have appeared since 1989. This slight applies to the Czechs to a large degree because some sort of parallel to the *Jews and Moravia* series of the Kroměřížsko Museum in Kroměříž is missing here.

The reviewed collection of contributions to the Regional Museum in Kolín at least partially attempts to repay this debt. Its topic of interest became the history of the Jewish minority in Kolín and its environs as a certain type of Jewish community in the Czech heartland. In chronological order and with the help of various sources and literatures (only documents of material culture remained undervalued), a qualified team of archivists and historians (critical towards older literature) blocked out the development of Jewish settlement from their celebrated beginnings in the Middle Ages (Vojtěch Vaněk), when the Kolín Jews created the second most important Jewish community in the Czech land, through the well-known exodus in 1541 (Stanislav Petr), and to its post-war demise (definite in 1979). Also, the post-war development of the Jews in Kolín (Jaroslav Pejša), as if it copied the fates of other Jewish communities: Of several hundred deported Jews, only a few dozens (the final count was 487 victims of the Shoah) returned to the city. The community encountered the problem of abandoned synagogues and cemeteries; Jewish corporations were only formally restored; Jewish monuments (in this case, a cemetery) found themselves imperiled; surviving Jews tried to honor the memory of their murdered and fallen co-religionists with the construction of a monument (unveiled in April 1950). After the February Revolution of 1948, the community gradually fell under the control of state organs. In the late 1960s there was a revival of interest in Jewish history and culture in this small town, which faded at the beginning of normalization.

Between these two turning-points, according to the authors, there was a memorable period before the Hilsneriada (the condemnation of Leopold Hilsner for the apparent Jewish ritual murder

of a Czech girl), when, as Michal Frankl repeatedly wrote, there was, in 1893, a revival of a Middle Ages superstition about ritual murder. From scientific literature it is known that the affair was one of a series of many attempts within the European and Czech framework that had economic and political-party importance. In a certain tie-up with Frankl, on the basis of scientific literature and numerous sources of the most various provenance, René Petráš then presented the development of the nearby Kutná Hora Jewish minority in the years from 1899 to 1920, the modernization of their lifestyle and connection to Czech national life, the economic contribution of the Jews to the city and the structure, history, tasks and personalities of the Jewish religious community there. At the same time he recalled that, in September 1899, it was in Kutná Hora that the trial of Leopold Hilsner took place. The years of the liberal First Republic are considered a time of the building of loyalty to the new state and democratization, and also of the financial misery of the Jewish community. Like Frankl, Petráš, too, tried to implant the regional events into a broader social context. The last analyzed period was the occupation. But the freshness of Pavel Novák's point of view lies in his concentration on the village Jews in the region of Kutná Hora. Novák researched their professional development from the end of the 19th century and its change during the Second World War. The text thus probes – but unfortunately not always with strong reference to sources – into the problem of Aryanization on the regional level and thus circulates the well-known work of the economics historians Jančík and Kubů by calling attention to other sources.

Besides certain transparent periods, however, the proceedings also focused on important Kolín natives of Jewish origin and Jews connected to Kolín. Naďa Kovaříková dealt with the brothers Heinrich and Leopold Teichner. In the 1960s Heinrich became the proprietor of the first Kolín photographic studio. Pavel Jakupec highlighted the outstanding Schönfeld family of Semily. Miroslava Jouzová wrote about Pavel Fischer, an exceptional personality in Kolín associations. He came from a family who were trailblazers of factory production in Kolín. He was the father of the famous Germanist Otakar and a secondary school teacher Josef Fischer, known as the initiator of the resistance organization called the Petiční výbor Věrni zůstaneme (We will remain faithful) during the occupation. A study of Miroslav Tyč presented Kolín as a city of relatives of Franz Kafka and a city reflected in his books. Klára Zubíková and Ladislav Jouza sketched an interesting picture of the entrepreneurial Mandelík family during the prewar period and in the first years of the Republic. She also focused on their house, designed by the architect Jan Kotěra, who also designed gravestones in the Kolín Jewish cemetery. Very compelling is the description of the fate of Kolín native Jiří Poláček, one of the typical resistance fighters of Jewish origin. Its author, Ladislav Jouza, followed in detail Poláček's family, his childhood and youth, the dramatic road to exile, his career as a flyer in the service of RAF and finally his painful return to a ruined home.

This book review is the first of two recent reminders of the Jewish minority of Kolín (besides the book of Zuzana Peterová about the Kolín rabbi Richard Feder [Prague 2004]). We unhesitatingly call this book a worthwhile regional historiography which had respect for sources of a memoir nature. It would be good if the minority history of other Czech cities were studied.

Blanka Soukupová

Rosemary Statelova, Angela Rodel, Lozanka Peycheva, Ivanka Vlaeva and Venstislav Dimov (eds.): THE HUMAN WORLD AND MUSICAL DIVERSITY. Proceedings from the Fourth Meeting of the "Music and Minorities" Study Group in Varna, Bulgaria, 2006.

Sofia: Institute of Art Studies 2008.
407 p. + 1 CD.

In the proceedings of the fourth Music and Minorities Study Group (2006 in Varna, Bulgaria) there are 50 contributions (of the nearly 70 papers presented). In addition to pictorial and graphic figures), the publication includes a CD with 53 musical examples (mastered by Gerda Lechleitner, Phonogrammarchiv Wien).

All four conference themes are represented:

1) "Hybridity as a Musical Concept" (introductory theoretical article, plus 18 case studies, among them the only two Czech papers);

2) "Minority-Minority Relations in Music and Dance" (The majority of the 14 contributions clearly show how unclear the determination of a minority is. Discussed are, e.g., two groups with a shared religion that is interpreted in different ways, groups on opposite sides of national or ideological borders, mutual relations of two or more groups that are defined some other way), etc.;

3) "Music Education of Minority Children" (the narrowest and most concrete theme, in which the authors, using 14 different examples, demonstrate how a community hands down what it considers basic for the preservation of its own identity; the absolute majority deal with children of national, ethnic or religious minorities);

4) "Race – Class – Gender" (a theme of stimulating contributions not focused on ethnically or religiously defined minorities. This shortest portion surprisingly (?) most clearly shows how music in an environment of asymmetric relations functions as *a symbolic means for agents to present new self-representation*.

The astonishing discovery reveals, in the case of some delimitations, that it is possible to arrive at certain generalizations, while, in other cases, not at all. This compels one to repeated reflection about the appropriateness of those delimitations, thus, e.g., about the formulations of conference themes. (Reyes 1999 describes a very similar situation in the case of immigrants in the USA: only after recognizing the importance of the difference between voluntary and forced immigration did the research lead to meaningful conclusions.) In the case of research on minorities, on one hand,

it is certainly true that a group of *people identified as a minority appears to create an exceptional variety of expressions, including musical expressions, out of cultural configurations often burdened with conflict. For this reason, no matter how well thought out the topics for discussion may be, they almost always turn out to be somewhat too narrow or schematic to capture the rich varied musical and socio-cultural reality* (p. 9). On the other hand, too broad a theme (as the first of them obviously is) or an otherwise inappropriate delimitation enables us to put together phenomena, situations and data which convince us of an *exceptional variety of musical* expressions, but do not allow for more general interpretation. The editors express the same thought: *It is difficult to identify any regularities in these relationships...* (p. 11).

The proceedings contain all of the contributions that were submitted. This inclusiveness (here the editors call this a "democratic approach") is one of the concomitant characteristics of the "Music and Minorities" Study Group. (Unsurprisingly – in regard to its democratic or, shall we say, socially solidary character – this group chose, among the many possible definitions of majority, the one which emphasizes an asymmetry of approach to power. "*Minorities are groups of people distinguishable from the DOMINANT group for cultural, ethnic, social, religious, or economic reasons*.") The other side of this democratic/all-inclusive coin is perhaps the obvious inequality of the articles: not only in the initial theories, methods, and terminologies, but also, e.g., in the non-unified way of quotations.

Content: *Introduction;* HYBRIDITY: Elka Tschernokoshewa: *Hybridity as a Musical Concept: Theses and Avenues of Research;* Claire Levy: *Performing Hybridity: On the Case of Karandila;* Irene Markoff: *The Case for Transgressive Musical Orientations in Contemporary Alevi Musical Expression: Purity Versus Hybridity in the Sacred/Secular Kontinuum;* Ivanka Vlaeva: *Hybridity in Turkish Recordings from the 1960s in Bulgaria;* Ventsislav Dimov: *On Some Early Sonic Evidence of Musical Hybridization: Observations on Commercial Gramophone Recordings from Bulgaria;* Gergana Panova-Tekath: *Dance as an Expression of Hybridity and Ethnocentrism;* Bozena Muszkalska: *Freilach, Jazz, and Chopin: The Klezmer Movement in Contemporary Poland;* Veronika Seidlová: *Music – Religiosity – Community: A Case Study of the Jewish Community in Prague*; Zuzana Jurková: *The Czech Rompop Scene: (Un?)surprising Continuity;* Naila Ceribašić: *Macedonian Music in Croatia: The Issues of Traditionality, Politics of Representation and Hybridity;* Alma Bejtullahu: *"Our Genuine Songs": Perceptions of Musical Change;* Aleksandra Markovic´: *"Jugonostalgija Is the People's Choice": Interethnic Influences Between Slovene and South Slavic Music;* Nino Tsitsishvili: *Authenticity and Hybridity in Three Soundscapes of Georgian Musical. Culture in the Context of Political Change;* Ayhan Erol: *Change and Continuity in Alevi Musical Identity;* Caroline Bithell: *A Song of Many Colors: Musical Hybridity in Corsica;* Lozanka Peycheva: *The Hybridization of Local Music From Bulgaria: The Role of Gypsy Clarinetists;* Judith R. Cohen: *Music in the Lives of Judeus and Ciganos in a Portuguese Village: Two Adjacent and Separate Minorities;* Gjermund Kolltveit: *The Development of Musical Style and Identity Among the Romani People of Norway;* Elena Shishkina: *The Growth of Hybrid and Conglomerate Tendencies in the Povolgie Germans: Traditional Musical Culture at the Beginning of the Third Millennium;* EDUCATION: Vesselka Toncheva: *The Bulgarian School in Vienna and Its Role in the Formation of Bulgarian National Identity;* Wolf Dietrich: *The Musical Education of Arvanites Children in Central Greece;* Petar Bagarić, Željka Petrović and Tihana Rubić: *Dervishes in Croatia;* Dorit Klebe: *Transmission of Musical Traditions of the Alevi Ceremony: Musical Education of Young People Playing Baglama in Berlin;* Hande Saglam: *Music as a Cultural, Social and Religious Transmission Element among Alevis in Vienna, Austria;* Rumiana Margaritova, Stephan Balastchev: *The Early Saz Education of a Young Alevi (Bektashi) Performer from Bulgaria;* Hilde Binford: *Values and Culture Transmitted Through Music in the Old Order Amish Community;* Gerda Lechleitner: *Education, Tradition, and Rules – The Pillars of Immigrant Societies: Bukharian Jews in Vienna*; Rosemary Statelova: *The Musical Education of Children Through Traditional Songs and Dances in Sorbian Lusatia;* Gencho Gaytandjiev: *Roma Children in Bulgarian Schools: Have the Internal Obstacles Been Surmounted?;* Smaragdi Boura: *Seeking Our Own Roots: Musical Education of Greek Diasporic Youth in Germany;* Yoshiko Okazaki: *Negotiation Between Limitations and Possibilities in Cultural Transmissions among a Migrant Community;* Akiko Takahashi: *Teaching Materials Used During Music Lessonsat a Japanese Elementary School in Vienna*; MINORITY–MINORITY: Pedro Roxo: *The Influence of South Asian Cinema and Film Music in the Hindu-Gujarati Diaspora in Mozambique and in Portugal;* Louise Wrazen: *Beyond the Polish Tatras: Performing Pride, Identity, or Difference;* Essica Marks: *Two Cultural Minorities in Israel: The Jerusalem-Sephardi Musical Tradition and the Musical Culture of the Arab Minority in Israel*; Dimitrina Kaufmann: *Klezmer Musical Ideas in the Music of the Northern and Southern Balkans;* Nikolai Kaufmann: *Jewish Ethnic Music in My Choral Compositions;* Filippo Bonini Baraldi: *The Gypsies of Ceuaș, Romania: An "Emotional Minority"?;* Speranta Radulescu and Florin Iordan: *A Minority in a Multi-Ethnic Context: The Jews of the Region of Botosani and Their Party Music;* Marin Marian-Balasa: *On the Social-Cultural Role of Music Among Minor Religions (Some Romanian Samples);* Jakša Primorac: *Suryoyo Music: Between Aramean and Assyrian Identity;* Larry Francis Hilarian: *The Significance of the Hadhrami Arab Contributionsand Influences on Melayu Music, Culture and Islamic Practices;* Eckehard Pistrick: *Emigration Songs – Interethnic and Multilingual Polyphony in Epirus;* RACE–CLASS–GENDER: Ardian Ahmedaja: *Çamçe: Dance and the Power Relationship Between Minorities and Majorities;* Susan Motherway: *Renegotiating Traveller Identity Through Folksong in Ireland;* Yoshitaka Terada: *Angry Drummers and Buraku Identity: The Ikari Taiko Group in Osaka, Japan;* Ana Hofman: *Singing Exclusion: Female Singers in the Musical Practices of Southeastern Serbia;* Timke-

het Teffera: *Taboos and Exceptions Concerning Female Musicians in East Africa with a Special Focus on Ethiopia;* Gisa Jähnichen: *Child Musicians in Class–Race–Gender Conflicts;* Adriana Helbig: *Music, Migrations, and Transnational Articulations of Racialized Class Identities in Post-Orange Revolution Ukraine*

Zuzana Jurková

CONFERENCE: *THE CITY – A CHANGEABLE (UN)CERTAINTY*

Masaryk University, Faculty of Social Studies, Brno, Czech Republic, November 30 – Decemeber 1, 2007

The Faculty of Social Sciences of Masaryk University in Brno organized a multidisciplinary conference, The City – a Changeable (Un)Certainty (Nov. 30 – Dec. 1, 2007). The goal of the conference was to open a forum for discussion on the meaning of the contemporary city and its various definitions. What is the city? How is it reflected by various disciplines? What impact does the (post-socialist, post-modernist) transformation of the city have on (in)equality, solidarity, social cohesion, inclusion/exclusion, and local/urban identities? How are the boundaries, public and private spaces, physical and social structure of the city created? These questions were in the core of the conference discussions.

The conference attracted the attention of sociologists, human geographers and environmentalists, social anthropologists and ethnologists, philosophers, architects, social psychologists, and also several representatives of municipalities and non-governmental organizations. The diverse structure of the participants created a very good basis for a fruitful interdisciplinary dialogue, but also a dialogue between academics and practitioners. It seems that it is easier to present and publish nice academic ideas and perspectives on how urban problems can be solved than to implement them into practice. For this reason, without a dialogue of both parties no progress in the cities can be made. That is an important lesson from the conference. Urban scientists should work closely with local actors at all levels of governance. It is useful for both sides, and in the end it is useful for the citizens of each city.

The program of the conference was thematically structured. It was opened by introductory words of Prof. H. Librová of the Department of Environmental Studies, followed by blocs of lectures focused on different aspects of urban development and change. The first day was dedicated mostly to the topics of urban spaces and their integration and/or differentiation as seen from the angle of different disciplines (L.Galčanová, S. Poláková, L. Sýkora, D. Luther, J. Pospíšilová – A. Steinhübel, J. Janto, J. Sládek); urban diversity (A. Bitušíková); and psychological reflections and effects of the city (T. Řiháček, M. Koťová). Sustainability of city development in its broader perspective was stressed several times. This concept is still understood more in its environmental meaning in the Central-European region. The conference brought a wider view of the sustainable city, emphasizing the importance of an urban environment that creates conditions for friendly cohabitation of diverse cultural and social groups and encourages social integration leading to better life for all urban citizens.

The second day was opened by an inspiring keynote address given by Prof. M. Marcelli on the philosophic topic of urbanophobia. Marcelli built his presentation on numerous writings of philosophers (both unbanophiles and

urbanophobes) dealing with the city, with the main focus on Rousseau. Rousseau was probably the most famous critic of the city, describing it as a place of moral decadence. Marcelli pointed out some paradoxes of this approach and talked about an open city and even about the "urban" universal fluid which is neither the city nor the countryside, but the countryside within the city and the main channel of communication processes. Marcelli´s presentation was followed by blocs of lectures given by architects and art historians (T. Vích, M. Topolčanská and M. Horáček); and human geographers, environmentalists and sociologists (J. Novák, A. Burjanek, O. Mulíček, P. Pospěch, B. Vacková and L. Šolcová). Urban space, locality and society were the key words linking most of the presentations of the Saturday program.

The City – a Changeable (Un)Certainty conference brought fresh air to the debates about the city, mainly because it made various disciplines talk to each other. It is obvious that interdisciplinary dialogue is a challenge. We often tend to see "our" disciplinary view or methodology as a better one or more appropriate, but only by listening to other disciplines can we learn, broaden our understanding of the topic and overcome our "disciplinecentrism." The conference was organized by young scientists and it was very encouraging to see many young researchers in the audience, too. The future of urban research is in good hands.

Alexandra Bitušíková

5TH MEETING OF THE "MUSIC AND MINORITIES" STUDY GROUP.

Prague, Czech Republic,
May 24 – July 1, 2008.

Organizers: Faculty of Humanities of Charles University, Prague, Ethnological Institute of the Academy of Science of the Czech Republic, Slovo 21.

The *International Council for Traditional Music* (ICTM, originally the *International Folk Music Council*) was founded in 1947 as the first major international ethnomusicological organization. In contrast to the *Society for Ethnomusicology,* which was founded eight years later and combines mainly American ethnomusicology with relatively closely-related scientific paradigms, ICTM is extremely diversified not only regarding scientific paradigms, but also in other directions. Its biennial world conferences are comprised of hundreds of participants who present in many parallel sessions (e.g., last year in Vienna there were usually six). They represent an exemplary fair of field resources rather than what the word itself refers to, i.e., discussions or exchange of knowledge of scholars in the same field.

The real bases for scientific cooperation in ICTM are the so-called Study Groups. One of the newest (and today the second most numerous) – "Music and Minorities" – held its fifth meeting in May in Prague. Sixty scholars from 23 lands actively participated.

The conference topics, which had been chosen at last year's world conference, were *Music and Dance of the Roma; Cultural Policy, Representation of Minority Music.* The first of these, which had been requested by the local organizers (the conference took place in the context of the Khamoro World Festival of Romani Music) was represented by the greatest number of participants. In this group, the strong tradition of Romani music research was clear from the beginning: among its founders were three scholars in the field (Pettan, Hemetek, and Jurková). During its ten-year existence, there has clearly been a thematic shift of papers from traditional "ethnographic" and historical research of European Romani groups, in part toward less known Romani groups (Ankica Petrović: *Music Practices of Machwaya Gypsies in America*) and in part toward new topics (Katalin Kovalcsik: *A Hungarian Romani Star Singer as "Antimusician"*) or new points of view (Adriane Helbig: *Sonic Aesthetic of Poverty Among Romani Musicians in Transcarpathia, Ukraine)*.

The two other themes of the conference are closely related and thus it was not always easy for the program committee to place them in appropriate groups. Both themes shared a broad methodological, theoretical and paradigmatic spectrum.

Besides a few "ethnographic reports," usually concerning little known minorities (Olya Kolomyets: *Little Armenia in Western Ukraine,* Piotr Dahlig: *The Czech Brothers in Poland – The Community of Zelov and its Contemporary Musical Image,* Nona Lomidze: *The Georgian Jewish Community – Their Life and Integration in Vienna*) the papers were usually concerned with the self-representation of majorities (Essica Marks: *Representation of Arab Music in Israel´s Popular Culture Arena*), and with how this representation is influenced by (majority) cultural politics (Dorit Klebe: *From* "*Gastarbeitersendung*" *to* "*Radiomultikulti*" *– Music of Minorities in Radio Pragrams under Public Law in Germany,* Gerda Lechleitner: *The Phonogrammarchiv, cultural policy, and the safeguarding of the audiovisual heritage: past and present case studies*).

As for minority problematics, the involvement of researchers' empathy or sympathy is not at all surprising (characteristically, many members of this group are also active in the newest study group – "Applied Ethnomusicology," and that application entails great involvement). Expression of these emotions that is too strong and without solid theoretical anchorage (and clarity of this anchorage) tends to weaken the scientific character of the work.

Alongside classical format, some contributions were presented as panels, which are usually recommended for world conferences. From my own experience, I know that preparation for a panel is demanding – and useful for the participants. With the growing number of participants, however, there is a growing risk of chaos, which is of little use to the audience. The Prague panelists succeeded in avoiding that risk. Each of the panels made brilliant use of some of the possibilities for this sort of presentation, from the "Southeast Asia" panel, *Listening to the Unheard: Music, Minorities and the State in Southeast Asia* (Org. Jan Mrázek), which presented three case studies in a theoretical-philosophical framework, to an open-dialogue form *National Heritage and the Norwegian*

Romanies, to the enlightening and colorful *Cultural Policies and Minority Musics in Kosovo and Sri Lanka: What Can We Learn from a Comparative Study?*

Compared to the previous meeting, the Prague conference was atypical in several ways. For the first time speakers were chosen on the basis of anonymous evaluations of the program committee. (The same process will also be followed for publication of the papers.). For the first time, a keynote speaker (Prague-born Bruno Nettl, one of the world's leading ethnomusicologists) was invited. Although he had to cancel his participation at the last minute because of ill health, he sent not only his provocative keynote speech *Minorities in the History of Ethnomusicology: A Meditation on a Half-Century of Experience,* but also a short confession in Czech.

Not only from the program of the Prague conference, but also from the composition of the whole "Music and Minorities" group (some hundred scholars from four continents) it is clear that the subject of minorities is, in ethnomusicology as in other social sciences, very topical not only because, as Nettl said, *everybody is in one or several minorities... there are only minorities*. At the same time a running paradigmatic schism was confirmed in Prague: while many participants from the East and mainly from Southeast Europe spoke about "music itself," to anthropologically orientated ethnomusicologists, such terminology (of course, along with related concepts and methods) was quite incomprehensible and/or some sort of antedeluvial echo. The question is to what degree we should accept such multiparadigmaticism and resign ourselves to the advantages of a wide view and greater possibilities of generalizations. Conferences are, at the least, opportunities to reflect on this paradigmatic fractionalism. In the best case, it is possible to take advantage of (not only) paradigmatic convergence. At the next "Music and Minorities" meeting, a round table about methodologies is planned and, on this occasion, basic concepts will undoubtedly be discussed.

Zuzana Jurková

PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEMPORARY LEGEND.

International Society for Contemporary Legend Research, 26th International Conference, Dublin, Ireland, July 7 – 9, 2008.

Contemporary legends, rumors, gossip and other ephemeral forms of folk narratives typical for postmodern society represent one of the most interesting issues of contemporary social sciences. Since the 1980s, when these fictional narratives told as true were "discovered" by U.S. folklorists, their study attracted not only specialists in folk narratives, but also cultural anthropologists, sociologists, literary historians, media researchers and scholars from other disciplines. The vanguard of the study of these narratives has always been represented by the International Society for Contemporary Legend Research (ISCLR). This scientific society, founded in 1988 in Sheffield, UK, originated from (now almost legendary) Sheffield theoretical and terminological seminars organized by British folklorist Gillian Bennett and Canadian folklorist Paul Smith. It was the ISCLR that coined the now standard term for these narratives "*contemporary legend*" (instead of *urban legend* and *urban myth* preferred by media and popular culture) and it was the ISCLR publications – the journal *Contemporary Legend* and the newsletter *FOAFTale News* – which are now regarded as standard research tools for anyone interested in contemporary oral tradition. The most important part of the ISCLR activity is its annual international conferences, held in North America and Europe. The last, 26th ISCLR conference, titled *Perspectives on Contemporary Legend,* was held in Dublin, Ireland, July 7-9, 2008, with more than twenty active participants from the fields of folkloristics, cultural anthropology, psychology, literary history and media and cultural studies. The majority of the presentations were devoted to well–documented case studies of actual legend traditions; the most interesting ones were *Contemporary Legends Are Ephemeral: What Was Really Told About the Hatchet–Lady At Red Rocks, Colorado* by Michael J. Preston (University of Colorado, USA), *The Search for Winnie the Puma. Wild Animals in Civilized Environment* by Theo Meder (Meertens Institute, The Netherlands), *Japanese Ghost Lore* by Gunella Thorgeirsdottir (University of Sheffield, UK) and *Collecting Student Lore in Göttingen: Expectations and Results* by Christine Shojaei Kawan (Enzyklopädie des Märchens, Germany). Two special sections were devoted to historical narratives; these included papers on various local guises of traditional folkloric character: Spring-heeled Jack – *Unmasking Spring-heeled Jack: A Case Study of a 19th Century Ghost Panic* by David Clarke (Sheffield Halam University, UK) and *Urban Maniac Or Resistance Fighter? Rumours And Legends About the Spring Man* by Petr Janeček (National Museum, Czech Republic), and interesting socio-cultural interpretation of Soviet post-WWII cannibalism narratives in *The Legend of the Sausage Factory: Post-War Images of Violence and Evil* by Eda Kalmre (Estonian Literary Museum, Estonia). One interesting section touched on economical exploitation of folk beliefs by mercantile corporations – e.g., the so-called *Spikeys* and *date-rape drug test strips* utilizing the false belief in drink spiking in clubs and discotheques (*Crime Legends in Different Media* by Peter Burger, Leiden University, The Netherlands) or *sleeping gas alarms* inspired by false public scare of gas attacks directed against tourist in caravans, trucks and trains (*Gassed and Robbed* by Sandy Hobbs and Seonaid Anderson, University of the West of Scotland, UK). The issue of deliberate utilization of folk beliefs was also touched on in other papers, the most interesting ones being *Contemporary Legend: A Fundamentally Political Act* by Bill Ellis (Pennsylvania State University, USA), interpreting political use of rumors in official U.S. propaganda during the Gulf and Iraq Wars, and *Man Disposes, God Discloses: Legend of the Levees* by Carl Lindahl (University of Houston, USA), interpreting African–American rumors about deliberate flooding of low-income neighborhoods of New Orleans during the hurricane Katrina disaster in order to save rich "white" neighborhoods. Mechanisms of planting false

beliefs in the media and wider cultural systems were subjects of other interesting papers – *What Else is Black, White and Read All Over: Legends That Sounds Like News* in a journalistic interpretation of Russell Frank (Pennsylvania State University, USA) and an anthropological interpretation in *Contemporary Legend and Cultural Proscriptions* by Mark Glazer (The University of Texas–Pan American, USA). In comparison with earlier conferences, there was a slight shortage of purely psychological papers, one interesting exemption being *Classifying Contemporary Legend By Their Psychological Function: A New Look* by David Main (University of West of Scotland, UK). The twenty-sixth international conference of the ISCLR showed again that investigation of contemporary legend is far from the scientific fad typical of the 1980s and 1990s, but still attracts more international scholars from various fields, most notably anthropology and media studies, and from a still-growing number of countries (represented not only by "traditional" English-speaking countries, but also Western European countries like Germany or the Netherlands and Eastern European countries like the Czech Republic and Estonia). Let us hope that the next conference held in Baddeck, Nova Scotia, Canada in 2009, will present similarly interesting issues and topics.

Petr Janeček

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