

Non-Sudeten German Question

The genealogy of Czech public debate on the transfer of Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia

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Abstract:

This work seeks to bring to light the way the public debate on the Sudeten German transfer crystalized during the roughly 50 years between 1945 and 1990s within the Czech society.

Chapters try to concentrate on different societal levels and their own contribution to the transfer debate. Such as Czechoslovak intellectuals debating the transfer and, importantly enough, the socialist reform during the 60s; the Czechoslovak historical science and its impact on the debate between 50s and 60s, in the 2nd chapter. So-called “dissident ghetto” debating the transfer during the 70s and 80s, in the 3rd chapter. Or the full-blown societal debate following the end of communism seen through the lenses of the Czechoslovak TV coverage, in the 4th chapter. This work starts with the daring proposition that it was not the interest in the sad fate of the transferred Sudeten Germans itself which fuelled the debate but rather the cultural imperative of civility which was provoking a number of the Czechoslovak intellectuals to continue their attempts, often futile, to bring the transfer issue to the public light.

Denn da wir nun einmal die Resultate früherer Geschlechter sind, sind wir auch die Resultate ihrer Verirrungen, Leidenschaften und Irrtümer, ja Verbrechen; es ist nicht möglich, sich ganz von dieser Kette zu lösen.¹

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben (1874), part 3

WORK'S STRUCTURE:

0. INTRODUCTION	4
0.1. Historiographical note.....	4
0.2. Methodological note	7
0.3. Argument's structuring	8
Chapter 1: TRANSFER's DUAL NATURE	10
1.1. Conclusion	15
Chapter 2: ARCHAEOLOGY of the TRANSFER HISTORY WRITING	16
2.1. Pawing the history.....	22
2.2. Conclusion	24
Chapter 3: DISSIDENT DISCUSSION.....	26
3.1. The <i>Theses</i> of Danubius.....	26
3.2. Czechoslovak dissent	31
3.2.1. Yesterday's fear	34
3.2.2. German question in the daily reality	36
3.2.3. Civic Aristocracy.....	38
3.3. Conclusion	42
Chapter 4: DEMOCRATIC REALPOLITIK	44
4.1. The Czech new German politics	44
4.2. Czech politics of withdrawal.....	47
4.3. An unfinished discussion	49
4.4. Derailment.....	50
4.5. Conclusion	51
Chapter 5: CONCLUSION	52
BIBLIOGRAPHY	55

0. INTRODUCTION

History of the Czechoslovak debate on the transfer of Sudeten Germans from post-war Czechoslovakia is a complex issue woven of many successes and failures. Although the hitherto studies written on the topic like to ignore this complexity and try to make its job easier by the turning to simplifications and schematisations. More than anything else the current historical interpretations *un-ravel* its material to single separated threads and pronounce these monochromatic fibres – with no evil intention, though – its ultimate product. Due to its still much clouded contours, the whole discussion suffers from, its current interpreters prefer to restrict themselves to identifying the main and best visible motives only. At the cost of giving up whole areas of key connections hiding the colourful picture of the recent past.

However, this historical nivelation has not much to do with the incompetence of nowadays historians or the lack of their interest in the issue. Surprisingly enough, the topic stands on the very crossroad of the two most important Czech interests of the post-1989 era: first, the transfer itself; second, the resistance against the Czechoslovak normalizatory regime of 70s and 80s (in whose atmosphere has much of the pre-1989 debate on the transfer happened). Paradoxically enough, no solid work was yet written exclusively on the *Czech discussing of the transfer*. But the whole issue remains dispersed in various conceptual formats in a number of books and countless of articles.

How is this possible? – One could ask – How can be anything *on the very crossroad* of interest for the 30 years and at the same time not yet worked out? Does not the genuine interest contradict the genuine ignorance? The problem, I think, hides elsewhere, namely, as always in such historical conundrums, in the very least visible place of all: for all those years, we have it right in front of the eyes. Put differently, the question is not anymore: how to cumulate a new historical material, nor with which not yet existing new monograph to enrich the existing palette of historical knowledge? But rather: which perspective to assume to read oneself in in the existing data that they begin to render anything else than interpretive banalities.

0.1. Historiographical note

Post-1989 historiography, having had no idea what to do with the previous communist period, run to the strategy which the modern historical science – fortunately enough – tends to run to always when being in trouble: to a certain form of the antiquarianism (by this term I intend to say: to search and identify the events and subsequently putting them onto a chain of rather plain chronological lines). The positive fruit of this 30-year long work is today the accumulation of the reservoirs of historical knowledge, which – although much scattered – cover relatively large historical landscape and open a way for a possible historical synthesis.

To the best of my knowledge, the current historiography offers two conceptually different formats with which to approach the transfer debate. First is the mentioned antiquarian approach, which produces, more and sometimes also less, linear summaries of events. To this category belongs such studies as the seminal article penned by M. Kopeček & M. Kunštát which traces main moments of the discussion between 1989 and 2003, with a special focus on the academic niveau.² Similar goal is being pursued by another article, this time by M. Kunštát alone, focusing on the role of the Christian church in the Czech-German and Polish-German post-1989 reconciliatory process.³

²Kopeček, Michal and Kunštát, Miroslav. "‘Sudetoněmecká otázka‘ v české akademické debatě po roce 1989." *Soudobé dějiny* 10/3 (2003): 293-318

³Kunštát, Miroslav. "Role křesťanských církví v rekondiliačních procesech ve střední Evropě – polsko-německý a česko-německý případ." *Mezinárodní vztahy* 44/3 (2009): 5-32

The same format is adopted, e.g., by Jiří Pešek's 2004-article.⁴ From the socialist times might be named the 1978-article by Eva Hahn⁵ taking the focus on the debate between the 50s and 80s.⁶

Second format is a bold attempt to grasp the problem in its full historical scale (that is in this case, from the *Spring of Nations* until the entering to EU). An attempt that has failed, though. Its author, Václav Houžvička, fell double-victim to his writing: a) being a talented sociologist not historian, fell into insufficient historiographical background, esp. when it comes to the pre-WW1 context. This leads him, for instance, to tendentious interpretations appealing to the idea of hereditary Czech-Germanic conflict in the Czech lands; b) by over-stretching the *pre- & post-1989* discontinuity (that is to say by not considering enough the *pre- & post-1989* part of the debate as one continual piece), which in his book reduces all pre-1989 discussion to a mere preparatory step for the post-1989 political argument between ČR and BRD. This lop-sidedness is primarily caused by Houžvička's work's basic orientation which is conceived as a *Schlachtentext* (that is to say as a polemic defending its own position by attempted liquidation of the enemy's argument).

Remarkable exemplar belonging to this category is the article, originally a lecture at *Collegium Carolinum*⁷ in Munich, 1965, delivered by Oswald Kostrba-Skalický (post-1948 exile, a redactor of RFE, and an aristocrat). In his lecture he takes a very critical position towards the transfer; at the same time, he refuses the popular thesis of hereditary Czech-Germanic conflict since the time immemorial, or of the Hussites at least. And instead proposes (very cunningly, though, since he speaks after all at a Sudeten German institution) his own critiquing thoughts concerning mistakes committed by Czech and Sudeten German in the past.⁸

(Another – sort of – approach is delivered in a masterpiece from the workroom of Eva and Hans Henning Hahns: *Die Vertreibung im deutschen Erinnern*,⁹ [Transfer in the German memory] which however deals with the Czech public discussion on the transfer only on the margin, since its goal lays in the German post-war collective memory, not in the Czech-German boisterous past. Therefore, I do not classify it as one of the listed formats.)

Additionally, there is one more, the fourth format. One could perhaps call it a *plaidoyer* for an interpretative plurality, written by Pavel Kolář, which despite its indisputable intellectual juice brings nothing substantially new, though. The author, writing from the 2005 perspective, sees the whole Czech-Sudeten-German discussion completely perplexed in the historiographical quarrelling waged by the normative categories *à la* “guilt and identity“. This approach, as he says, closes the way to find new alternative “concepts and modes of explanation“, which – according to the author – would be the only thing which could transpose the whole debate onto another theoretical level, such as “structural, intentional and differentiated ways.“¹⁰

Kolář's Solomonic solution, that is true, cannot harm anybody but at the same time it does not have to help anyone. His approach openly oversteps the problem by pushing it onto another conceptual level which in consequence, very sophisticatedly, misses it. Since the Czech-Sudeten-

⁴Pešek, Jiří. "Vertreibung und Transfer 1938-1949 im Spiegel der tschechischen Geschichtswissenschaft seit 1989." in *Transfer, vyhnání, odsun v kontextu české literatury, SAME* (Brno: Host, 2004), 29-42

⁵During the Cold War writing under the pseudonym Eva Schmidt-Hartmann.

⁶Schmidt-Hartmann, Eva. "Menchen oder Nationen? Die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus tschechischer Sicht." in *Die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus dem Osten: Ursachen, Ereignisse, Folgen*; Wolfgang Benz, Hrsg. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1985), 179 - 198

⁷A research institute found 1956 and based in München, focussing mainly on the history and culture of the Czech lands.

⁸Kostrba-Skalický, Oswald. "Tschechische Stellungnahmen zum Transfer-Problem und zur Transfer-Tatsache." *Bohemia - Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der böhmischen Länder*, 8/1 (1967[1965]): 302-314

⁹Hahnová, Eva and Hahn, Hans Henning. *Die Vertreibung im deutschen Erinnern: Legenden, Mythos, Geschichte*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010. 839 s.

¹⁰Pavel Kolář, "Vertreibung zwischen nationaler Meistererzählung und Deutungspluralität : Der tschechische Vertreibungsdiskurs im Licht geschichtswissenschaftlicher Streitschriften" *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 53/10 (2005): 939

German transfer debate after all *is* the story of normative categories – respectively “cultural” categories (see p. 52) –, such as the guilt, identity, war, justice, injustice, etc. Seen from this point of view, Kolář’s solution pleading for other conceptual levels does not resolve anything.

[There are three other relevant historical works, I am aware of, which are here left out of my consideration.]¹¹

Concerning the Czech writing on the transfer *in general*, the very beginning of it lays somewhere in the late-40s.¹² From the start, it split into various parties, inland and also exile ones.

Positively enough, after 1945, and then again after 1989, a great deal of historical research of the international character has been conducted on the transfers of ethnic Germans from Eastern and Central Europe. This makes the further work easier.¹³

In the Czech academic context after 1989, a lot of energy was invested into studying the transfer itself (its implementation, crimes committed, searching for the final number of victims, etc.). Thirty years later, one has at his disposal a relatively thorough academic scholarship of strong factual character, which gives one the opportunity to reconstruct what actually happened 75 years ago.¹⁴

A certain attention was also paid to the remaining, not-transferred Sudeten German minority and the other adjacent topics.¹⁵ The primacy among publications hold the polemical literature – my so-called *Schlachtentexte* – whose value fluctuates between the worthless trash and scaremongering up to brilliant works, essential for the following debate.

When it comes to the scholarly gaps and insufficiencies, it can be summed up as: irredeemably divided into two, pre-1989 and post-1989 parts. Whereas the earlier, communist-era one, is historically worked out much less.

The most significant feature of the whole pre-1989 academic scene is the fact that the key work about it – if one does not count V. Houžvička’s monograph – remains an anthology *Češi, Němci, odsun*,¹⁶ [Czechs, Germans, transfer] made of raw, un-interpreted, un-contextualized texts (samizdat articles, declarations, polemical reactions, and *emotional exclamations*) of various format and quality, all written in the 70s and 80s.

Usually, the problem is not the scarcity of existing literature (in Czech, German, or English) but that not all of the available works stand the test of reliability. There are not comprehensive works reflecting the general societal attitudes of the Czechs towards the Sudeten Germans, towards

¹¹These works are • Abrams, Bradley F. "Morality, Wisdom and Revision: The Czech Opposition of the 1970s and the Expulsion of the Sudeten Germans." *East European Politics and Societies* 9/2 (1995): 234-255 • Alexander, Manfred. "Die tschechische Diskussion über die Vertreibung der Deutschen und deren Folgen" *Bohemia - Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der böhmischen Länder*, 34/2 (1993): 390-409 • Mlynárik, Ján. "Čeští a slovenští disidenti a německá otázka v letech 1969 – 1989" *Střední Evropa* 14/82 (1998): 118-126

¹²Provided one does not want to delve deeper and search the transfer's roots earlier, which is possible.

¹³For the basic overview of the academic literature for the Czech context see the bibliography in • Václav Houžvička, *Czechs and Germans 1848-2004: the Sudeten question and the transformation of Central Europe* (Prague: Karolinum Press, 2015), 481-526. For the selected bibliography of works in general, written between 1990 and 2003, see either: • Die Zwangsaussiedlung der Deutschen und ihre Widerspiegelung in den gegenwärtigen tschechisch-deutschen Beziehungen. Auswahlbibliographie zu Zeitschriftenaufsätzen und Beiträgen in Sammelbänden aus den Jahren 1990-2003. Bearb. Věra Břeňová. Or other reference to different bibliographical handbooks in: • Tomáš Staněk, "Stručné zamyšlení nad výzkumy poválečných 'německých problematik' v českých zemích" in *Německy mluvící obyvatelstvo v Československu po roce 1945*, Adrian von Arburg *et al.* (Brno: Matices moravská [...], 2010), 16 (footnote No. 2)

¹⁴For the general overview see: Staněk, "Stručné zamyšlení ...", *op. cit.*, 15 - 24

¹⁵For the general overview see: Adrian von Arburg, "Jak dál ve výzkumu poválečného postavení německy hovořícího obyvatelstva v českých zemích? Několik úvah k diskuzi" in *Německy mluvící obyvatelstvo v Československu po roce 1945*, Adrian von Arburg *et al.* (Brno: Matices moravská [...], 2010), 25 - 53

¹⁶Černý, Bohumil, ed., *et al.* *Češi, Němci, odsun: diskuse nezávislých historiků*. Praha: Academia, 1990. 368 s.

the Western or Eastern Germans, or the Austrians; and this especially in the changing perspective brought about by the 60s.¹⁷ There are not comprehensive studies built on the data taken from the archives of the powerhouse ministries, with the help of which one could discern the state's official stance from the politically unavoidable *real socialist* rhetoric.¹⁸ There is not a serious work on the medial picture (be it print, broadcast, or TV) of the expellees during Cold-War Czechoslovakia.

On the contrary, the current literature has no scarcity of referring to the Czech anti-Sudeten German expressions, in both pre- & post-1989 period. All these work like to take for granted the assumptions of the Czech anti-Sudeto-Germanism (which is correct, and visible everywhere, but only up to a point, for the issue is much deeper and more problematic than these works generally like to dig). Said clearly, the thesis of Czech anti-Sudeto-Germanism has not been properly tested. (See pp. 44-45)

In contrast, the post-1989 era is – not surprisingly – much better covered. Largely thanks to the mentioned *Schlachtentexte* which, although bellicosely, have shed already a lot of light on various areas. Single success is however usually not a reason for durable optimism, and also the post-1989 scene suffers from various flows. Among many, not only the pre-1989 but also the post-1989 medial scene has not yet been satisfactorily worked out. Although, there exist already a number of very useful studies on the topic.¹⁹ Similar thing could be said over other adjacent fields.

What concerns the hitherto successes relevant to my work, it was especially the last decade which saw several breakthroughs in the debate; not only in the field of the research on the transfer itself but, importantly enough, also in the debate on the Czechoslovak Socialism, especially then on the era of so-called Normalization. And it is exactly these works which allow for weaving the unravelled threads back to the complex matter of the Sudeten German issue and try to read it as one unit, at last.

0.2. Methodological note

On my methods: I have been using *everything* which I laid my hand on and it stood the test of bearability for my relatively robust argumentational structure. Beginning with the data taken from classical works on the field; through the TV material cut from *Televizní noviny*²⁰ [Television News] from the 80s and 90s; to Albert Einstein's paraphrase of the Schopenhauerian pessimistic voluntarism. My experience tells me that clearly *not* "everything goes" although much is possible.

This work suffers from several methodological problems. With a little exaggeration, one might say that the second chapter stands heavily on the data taken from bibliography handbooks,²¹ databases,²² and library catalogues. It were completely right to say that the vast majority of the

¹⁷There is plenty of works touching over the issue but none of it provides the reader with the solid ground. See, e.g., Eva Hahn, "Češi a jejich 'německá otázka' od roku 1945 po dnešek" (the article is a worked-out version of E. Hahn's contribution to a conference in 2000, published simply on her personal web-pages)

¹⁸Though, good amount of it can be taken from works written on different topics. A good example of it offers, to name just one: Břach, Radko. Smlouva o vzájemných vztazích mezi ČSSR a SRN z roku 1973: od prvních rozhovorů po ratifikaci smlouvy: studie. Praha: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 1994. 97 s.

¹⁹On the journalism see esp.: • Stanislav Holubec, "Zobrazování minulosti a okolního světa v českém tisku 90. let", in *Ještě nejsme za vodou: obrazy druhých a historická paměť v období postkomunistické transformace*, SAME (Praha: Scriptorium, 2015), 93-206 [esp. pp. 136-150] • Olga Šmídová, "Česko-německé vztahy v zrcadle tisku" in *Obraz Němců, Rakouska a Německa v české společnosti 19. a 20. století*, Jan Křen, ed., Eva Broklová, ed., and Stanislav Biman (Praha: Karolinum, 1998), 268-280 • Eva Stehlíková, "Aktuální obrazy Němců a Německa v české společnosti" in *Obraz Němců, Rakouska a Německa v české společnosti 19. a 20. století*, Jan Křen, ed., Eva Broklová, ed., and Stanislav Biman (Praha: Karolinum, 1998), 253-268

²⁰"TV News" was a main Czechoslovak TV news programme, broadcast in prime time between 1958 and 1990.

²¹Jilek, Heinrich. Bibliographie zur Geschichte und Landeskunde der böhmischen Länder von den Anfängen bis 1948 : Publikationen der Jahre 1850 bis 1975. Band 1. Köln: Böhlau, 1986. XXVIII, 598 s.

²²Especially useful was the internet data-base: *Bibliografie dějin českých zemí* (<https://biblio.hiu.cas.cz>)

referred works there (i.e. in the second chapter), I have never seen, let alone reading them. Concerning the chapter three, it is put together from the, not only TV material but, what is worse, from the biographical stories taken from the audio-archive *Paměť Národa* (where the stories differ significantly in quality). On the top of it, I do not often employ them according to the best standards of the oral history textbooks. Concerning the TV material,²³ I preferred the medium of TV to the press, for working with the press, esp. in the 90s, is a job more for the literary criticism than the historical science.

Despite the fact that I had to work with the German and English, and sometimes Slovak documents, the work is significantly based on the Czech data and scholarship. My knowledge of the problem from the other, Sudeten German side remains only superficial.

Concerning my time range, I started – as everybody – with the plan to bring the debate from 1978 through 1992 and 1997 up to the year 2004. Only after some time spent with the issue, I discovered how a little sense does this scope make. Nowadays historiography generally covers the topic of Czech transfer debate in the following two time frames: 1978 – 1989 and 1989 – 2004. Whereas the focal points are being seen in 1978 (as the most intensive debate within the dissent); then 1989 – 1992 (the first, and still hopeful, phase of the Czech-Sudeten German debate, ended up by the first ČR-BRD treaty); 1995 – 1997 (a new wave of intensive debate, ended by the so-called *Czech-German Declaration*); and at the end ca. 2000 – 2004 (a phase of renewed controversies, joined newly by Austria, ended by the acceptance of ČR to EU). These data do make sense but for a different goal than this work sets to itself. I am not interested in the most visible, possibly the most diplomatically significant events, but the genealogy of the public debate as such, whose crucial moments and causes I ventured to identify and interpret. I start without a firm beginning and I end with no one. I do not even know where and whom with had it all once started and the very same applies to the ending. Probably somewhere in the war time, or late-40s, or earlier, or was this only the debate's pre-history and did it start in real only later in the 60? And to the other chronological border, does it make sense to draw it further behind the first years after the regime's change? Who knows? The borders stay vague. (For the further argumentation see p. 49)

0.3. Argument's structuring

The work is divided into four argument-making chapters and a fifth conclusive one. Each chapter relates to the general *Non-Sudeten German Question* in its own historical way. The work's argument consists of two cardinal claims (*transfer's dual nature & civic aristocracy*). This in turn, alas, creates an impression that as if I were arguing for the existence of a certain – factually unjustifiable – power, a sort of “cultural logic” fuelling and driving the whole debate. I should like to say that I am not in business of defending such an interpretation, although I make a “cautious” suggestion of this kind at the very conclusion of this work. The whole argumentation is constructed in four chapters which each try to follow its own main argument; these main arguments are built on several sub-arguments, which themselves rest upon a number of supportive semi-arguments.

Chapter one opens the general historical setting. It poses the link between the public debate and the role of professional historians in it. It plunges the Czechoslovak case into the larger post-war context. The main focus of the chapter concentrates on the so-called *transfer's dual nature* (schematically visualized by the jurisprudential *aporia* of the *murdering-executioner*).

²³Whenever speaking of the TV archival material, I refer only to the Česká Televize (ČT) [or *Československá televize*], although since 1994, there was a new TV (“Nova”) which appeared on the medial scene. TV Nova – esp. before turning into the tele-tabloid media – would be relevant source of information. Although, the more serious TV journalism remained, at least during the 90s, the domain of ČT, and TV Nova was secondary.

Chapter two commits itself to the *archaeological excavations* of a very few visible Czech self-critical historiographical works produced during the late-60s. It discovers forgotten remnants, catacombs, an ossuary of historiographical works. Raw material dug up on the way covers the last chapter's pages under the footnote separator. Also, and importantly enough, the chapter discusses the effect of Victorious February on the Czechoslovak historical science. And the close connection of new socialist generation of historian, arriving only in 60s, to the "totalitarian" state structure.

Chapter three is the most complicated part of the work. It consists of two parts, first biographical dedicated to the intellectual father of current transfer debate, Ján Mlynárik (3.1.), second analytical – itself further dissolved into the four-fold structure – dedicated to the phenomenon of dissent (3.2.).

The last chapter four takes the previous issue to the new post-communist context.

At the long last stands the list of works and sources used (designated as Bibliography).²⁴

²⁴The works listed there "underlined" refer to those works cited hastily under the footnote separator towards the end of the 2nd chapter which I never read.

Chapter 1: TRANSFER's DUAL NATURE

– The way I see it – the problem with the Czech transfer debate, lasting already for more than 70 years, stems from a wrong conceptualization of the very transfer itself. The mistake, as it seems to me, lays nowhere else than in the category of logic. There is a contradiction in the Czech narrative of transfer.

More concretely, the general public, the intellectuals in general terms, and up to a point also the Czech historical science mix together two different categories, that what I call: the “security” and the “punitive” argumentation. In this sense, the transfer carries in itself, from its very beginning, an entangled dual nature. This dual nature is not generally visible to the Czech mind-set since the Czech mind is fully steeped in it and therefore almost fully blind to it. Put lapidarily, to be Czech means to be born into this blind alley of the transfer’s interpretation.

In order to dis-entangle the whole troublesome story of the transfer’s dual nature, the rest of the chapter describes the very general historical overview of the transfer – when leaving much aside –²⁵.

The new Czechoslovak government started to implement the transfer almost immediately at the end of the war, despite the fact it was not yet internationally prepared. The plan to transfer German minorities from Central Europe was an older one. First accepted by the Allies already around the year 1942.²⁶ The following years of war, though tumultuous ones, did not change it substantially.²⁷

The problem which fuelled the general confusion on the Czech side was the fact that at the beginning of the year 1945, with the war nearing to its end, the Brits and the Americans were not giving the transfer the highest possible priority. Instead, they pragmatically indicated to the Czech government their plans to proceed with the major post-war activities first, to coordinate their movements with other main allied parties, and only after that to proceed with their earlier transfer plans.

Tellingly enough, during the last discussion which occurred between W. Churchill and E. Beneš, the British Prime Minister emphatically urged the Czech President not to proceed with the transfer without further coordination with other Allies. The Czech side, which naturally saw the transfer as its main and crucial objective, was left quite unsettled by the behaviour of its two main Western partners.²⁸ In the consequence, President Beneš, and with him all the political elite, took the decision not to wait to any coordinated allowances and instead to act, in their eyes, in the best interest of the country.

The postponement of the transfer was seen to increase the chances that Czechoslovakia loses its singular opportunity to get rid of its thorny problem personalized in the form of Sudeten German national minority. That is, as it was, the minority through which – guiltily or innocently – came not

²⁵The following interpretation makes no pretence of describing the Czech path to the transfer as a result built from a sufficient historical scholarship. Much is indeed missing! My main and only goal was to summon enough of the historical material which would elucidate the chapter’s main idea, namely the so-called transfer's dual nature.

²⁶See the TV appearance of Detlef Brandes in: ČT archive: “Naostro” (April 5, 2002)

²⁷See, e.g. Churchill’s famous speech from the House of Commons, made on the 15th December 1944, dedicated to the post-war European order and the transfer of the Germans from Poland in particular: "There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble [...] A clean sweep will be made" [see e.g.: Philip Ther, "Expellee Policy in the Soviet-occupied Zone and the GDR: 1945-1953" in *Coming home to Germany?: the integration of ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe in the Federal Republic*, David Rock and Stefan Wolff, eds. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002): 58]

²⁸Adrian von Arburg and Tomáš Staněk, *Vysídlení Němců a proměny českého pohraničí 1945-1951 : dokumenty z českých archivů* [hereafter abbr. VNPČP]. Part II., Vol. 1 (Ve Středoklukách: Zdeněk Susa, 2010), 86

only the destruction of the First Czechoslovak Republic, the disruption of its traditional territorial unity, and its remnants subordinated to the Greater Germanic Reich, but also the subordination of some 7.000.000 Czechs under the extremely hostile Nazi rule, with hundreds of thousands sent to the forced labour working in favour of German war goals²⁹, tens of thousands brought onto Nazi gallows, and all the rest put before an uncertain future within the *Tausendjähriges Reich*.³⁰ It is this very setting which made the new political elite so impatient with the transfer, for it believed that such a chance would never repeat itself.³¹

In his public speeches on the way back home, set President Beneš, and with him a number of other leading politicians (both non-communist and communist) the whole transfer machinery in motion. On 12th May, in Brno, Beneš proclaimed that “we must liquidate out the German question in the republic.”³² Prokop Drtina describes the situation as “order of the day for each of us. This is the historic task of our generation. If we do not succeed in it ... the future generations will rightly frown upon us.”³³ Two days earlier, May 10, Klement Gottwald only by a lucky accident did not read a public proclamation, already prepared as his speech, encouraging the nation to “start immediately with cleansing from Germans.”³⁴

Czechoslovakia began with the so-called mass “evacuations” of Sudeten Germans over its borders approximately three weeks after the end of the war, on the verge of May and June.³⁵ Vladimír Clementis, that time a secretary of foreign ministry, summed it up in one of his later recollections: “[...] up until Potsdam, we made it illegally and we get into conflicts with military commanders of each zone.”³⁶ Between June and July was by this way – with no legal ground – expelled ca. 360.000 – 420.000 Sudeten Germans. Until the beginning of fall, the number has mounted up to ca. 700.000 – 820.000 persons.³⁷ And into this situation finally came the *Potsdam protocol* from September 2nd 1945 through which the Allies for the first time – retrospectively, though – legalized the transfer of ethnic Germans from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and also Hungary.³⁸

²⁹Historical literature on the topic usually works with the number oscillating b. 400.000 – 600.000. Any precise number stays uncertain. [See: Sztanislav Kokoška, "Nucené pracovní nasazení českého obyvatelstvá v souvislostech nacistické okupační politiky v protektorátu Čechy a Morava" in *Totálně nasazení: nucená práce českého obyvatelstva pro Třetí říši*: [katalog výstavy], Jana Havlíková *et al.* (Prag: Deutsch-Tschechischer Zukunftsfonds, 2008), 33]

³⁰The Czechoslovak WW2 casualties: in total: 340.000. From the number: 36.500 executed by the Nazis, 12.800 soldiers fell in battlefields (of it 2.200 on the Western and 10.600 on the Eastern front); 274.000 Jews (of the number 80.000 Czech, 72.000 Slovak, 42.000 from Slovak territories annexed Hungary, 80.000 Ruthenian). [See Jan Němeček, "Československo a svět ve druhé světové válce" in *XIV. Letní škola historie: nejnovější čs. dějiny v kontextu obecných dějin: vybraná témata z období od r. 1938 do poloviny padesátých let: sborník textů a přednášek*, Jana Kohnová, ed. (Praha: Porta linguarum, 2002),]

³¹An interesting, though in its nature different analysis offers the plan, finally unrealized, for eviction of the 200.000 – 300.000 Hungarians from Southern Slovakia. Which finally led only to the mutual population exchange of ca. 73.000 Hungarians and Slovaks, and later to the transfer of ca. 44.000 Hungarians (instead of the planned 250.000) from Southern Slovakia to the newly vacated Czech borderland. [viz: Antoine Marès, *Edvard Beneš od slávy k propasti : drama mezi Hitlerem a Stalinem* (Praha: Argo, 2016), 271]

³²Arburg and Staněk, VNPČP, Part II, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, 81

³³Prokop Drtina, "Musíme využití historického vítězství" in *My a Němci: Dějinný úkol strany národně socialistické při vystěhování Němců z Československa*, Prokop Drtina a Ivan Herben (Praha: Čs. strana národ. socialistická, 1945) 11

³⁴Arburg and Staněk, VNPČP, Part II, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, 79

³⁵*Ibid.* 95

³⁶The speech of V. Clementis at the meeting of the National Assembly on the 4th June 1947 [viz: Karel Kaplan, *Pravda o Československu 1945 – 1948* (Praha: Panorama, 1990), 228]

³⁷Tomáš Staněk, "Akty hromadného násilí v roce 1945 a jejich vyšetřování" in *VNPČP*, Part II, Vol. 3, Adrian von Arburg and Tomáš Staněk (Ve Středoklukách: Zdeněk Susa, 2010), 20

³⁸This document is at the same time the only existing legally binding basis of the transfer of Sudeten Germans (on the Czech side, there is no other document, neither a *Beneš Decree*, nor any other official order). Legally were the Sudeten Germans and Hungarians deprived of their Czechoslovak citizenship by the Constitutional Decree of the President № 33/1945 Sb. (September 2, 1945), therewith they became officially non-Czechoslovak subjects

Noticeably enough, the last paragraph of the XIIth point calls on Czechoslovak government to put temporarily a halt to its expulsions – which were by this time for already two months under way – until the time that the Allies manage to make sufficient preparations for the accommodation of expellees. And this is the very point where the official phase of the Czechoslovak transfer started.

In its form, the public justifications of transfer was wrapped up in robes of the punitive argumentation. By which I mean a whole number of different justifications seeking to justify the transfer as a just and a deserved thing. The punitive argumentation was often taking a form of pseudo-historical argument (such as the un-doing of the Battle of White Mountain; the eternal struggle of Czechs against Germans; fulfilment of the Czech national revolution, etc.) and pseudo-juridical argument (the guilt of the whole German nation for Nazism, etc.).

Yet, despite the rhetoric of E. Beneš (but also Drtina, Stránský, Gottwald, Ripka, Sychrava, Táborský, Peroutka, *et al.*), the decision for the transfer cannot be discarded as a mere expression of national chauvinism or even of the revenge.

The nowadays interpretation of the that-time argument is a bit complicated. For something got lost in times. The existential threat, posed by the very presence of the Sudeten German minority in the land, has by now almost evaporated from our nowadays historical imagination. Nevertheless, the spirit of fright is almost tangible in the historical documents of the time. And it was these very feelings which played a crucial role in the post-war atmosphere. The problem, as I outline it, is that the 3.000.000 of the Czechoslovak Germans did not cease to be a “security threat” for the Czech national community despite the fact of the unconditional capitulation of Nazi Germany. The Czech society in general, and definitely the Czech political representation, had in 1945 within the living memory the initial successes of the recent Nazi politics from the late-30s. The politics which stood exactly on the skilfully performed exploitation of the rights and of the national feelings of German speaking minorities scattered throughout Central and Eastern Europe (be it those of Czechoslovakia or Poland; Memelland in Lithuania; Hungary; Yugoslavia; Greece or elsewhere).

Quite pregnantly was the whole issue encapsulated by Jaroslav Valenta³⁹ in one of the many post-1989 television debates dedicated to the issue:

Then-generation of politicians who were taking decisions, but also those ordinary people, those grey people from the street, it was a generation which had to put on the military uniform and go fighting twice within the scope of its life, to defend their lands against the war which was unleashed, first, by Austria-Hungary with Germany's help and for the second time by Germany alone. And it was a war in which was occurring the genocide of nations, whole nations. On Jewish and Roma people [...] such an experience is not being risked for the second time.⁴⁰

And here comes the complication: as already seen above, the documents of the time do not contain purely “security” argument as its main rational for the transfer. Post-war argumentation in favour of the transfer is full of many different reasons (“we could not be sure that murders are not walking among us”,⁴¹ “Germans came as colonists“, etc.). And it is only among these various arguments where the security argumentation is also to be found, as one among many. Strictly pragmatic

residing on the Czechoslovak soil and as such, with the reference to the old Austrian legal norm “Abschiebung” [odsunování, whence the Czech “odsun“], they were transferred behind the borders, under the supervision of the Czechoslovak army.

³⁹Jaroslav Valenta (1930 - 2004) a historian and Polonist, a frequent figure of the post-1989 public debates on the recent history. (See also the footnote № 91)

⁴⁰ČT archive: “Přesčas Karla Hvíždaly” (July 3, 2002)

⁴¹Prokop Drtina, “Musíme využití historického vítězství” in *My a Němci: Dějinný úkol strany národně socialistické při vystěhování Němců z Československa*, Prokop Drtina a Ivan Herben (Praha: Čs. strana národ. socialistická, 1945) 15

argumentation is to be found rather in places, such as the British *Foreign Office*⁴² analysing the whole situation from behind *the Channel* and not over the Czech-German hills of Sudetenland.

The security argument does not appear in larger proportion on the Czech side from two reasons: one, out of a certain obviousness coming from the six years spent in Protectorate (said with Bauman: we do not name things which are so close that completely natural to us)⁴³. Two, because the transfer really was widely understood as a sort of just retribution for the German behaviour and guilt for the war and the time preceding. And this confusion of terms among wide societal strata would stay, over the generational change, untouched through the 40 years of communist era, just to reappear as one of the crucial points of the post-1989 debate when the topic became the object for the public debating for the first time.

This point is rather tricky, but what I try to claim is that to be Czech after WW2 means to be victim of this puzzling entanglement. The meaning of this claim tries to encapsulate the following metaphor of a “murdering-executioner”. The metaphor goes like this: *let us imagine that once there was an executioner following his deadly craft day by day, year by year in full compliance with the law. Once, he got into an argument – a grave issue, a matter of life and death – with a number of unknown people. After the quarrel, the executioner, being completely devastated, left home unable to pay any attention to the outside world for the next three days. Right after his exit, the quarrelling people are detained, jailed, prosecuted for a crime committed once upon a time elsewhere, and sentence to death by beheading. The public execution is, accidentally, scheduled on the third day after the quarrel took place, at the main square. In the meanwhile, the executioner, unable to put up with the last quarrel makes up his mind and decide to kill his quarrelsome adversaries. But he has no idea about the whole legal process which has been staged when he was completely immersed in his anger. Now, still in the grip of rage, he grabs his executioner’s sword, and being still dressed in his formal robe, he rushes into the city where he, at the square, meets the procession bringing all three convicts. In a sudden rush of blood to the head, he draws the weapon – all eyes upon him – and murders them. But nobody noticed, for everybody was watching an execution.*

There is a problem with the very conceptualization of the transfer on the Czech side. The Czech audience is not really able to discriminate between these two. First, due to the fact that already for more than 70 years, Czechs keep listening again and again the new variations of the same entangled argument. Second, the Czech culture, in respect to its Sudeten German neighbours, was in the last 150 years subjected to a fevered nationalistic quarrel, and *vice versa*; much of the post-war argumentation was thus readily borrowed from the past resentment.

Speaking clearly, the incommensurable aporia of the transfer’s dual nature is this: if one justifies the transfer on the basis of the security argument, then one cannot invoke the question of Sudeten German guilt – with the obvious exceptions of Sudeten German criminals –, and the transferees are therefore generally innocent; and as a result this innocence calls for a remedy for the pain caused. If one, on the other hand, goes for the punitive argument and pronounces the Sudeten Germans generally guilty, one bumps into a dead end because one has to prove the guilt of all those millions according to the respective Czechoslovak legal code; which is – with all the exceptions of criminals – clearly impossible. And this logical inconsistency was bound to cause further troubles in the time to come (as it did).

In sum: the Czech stance on the transfer, since its very beginning, wants to keep both answers at the same time, it takes the argument of urgency defending the transfer on the basis of the

⁴²On the role of the British *Foreign Office* in the genesis of plans for the transfer of ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe, see, e.g.,: Lemberg, Hans. “Etnické čistky – řešení národnostních problémů.” *Listy* 23/ 2 (1993): 95-102.

⁴³Zygmunt Bauman, *Thinking Sociologically* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 15

national security⁴⁴ and entangles it with the question of guilt committed by the Sudeten German criminals. Either/Or. *Tertium non datur*. Later, I should like to prove this claim by a sufficient amount of historical examples.

There is a sort of third conceptualization of the transfer. Which is in reality only a variation to the dichotomy just described. This third approach becomes increasingly more popular with time due to the – only natural – waning of the historical memory. This is the narrative of the transfer as a revenge. Which really wants to say: one crime, committed by Nazis, avenged by another crime, perpetrated by Czechs in turn. This explanation is a dominant rationalization of the transfer from the very beginning by the Sudeten German side. However one would also find it on the Czech side from the very start, though confined to a tiny Czech minority.⁴⁵ This third, initially marginal, conceptualization came to the Czech public visibility during the late 60s (e.g. with Jan Procházka or, a few years later, Ján Mlynárik *et al.*). But it was only after 1989 when its star rose into prominence (due to the influence of President Havel and several other former dissidents [see the footnote № 181]). Today, it is probably the prevailing view among the general public.

To put it simply, this third interpretation is the punitive argument turned upside down. It is the accusation which swapped the object of its blame, from the Sudeten German to the Czechs themselves; as such it is a self-accusation. This self-accusatory approach does not look away from the crimes committed by Sudeten Germans, on the contrary, it openly recognizes and condemns them. But in contrast to the former punitive argument, it adds to it a condemnation for the transfer's – alleged or real – “revengefulness”.

The problem with this interpretation is the same as with the previous punitive one, namely it does not employ the security argument but leaves it away. This line of argumentation is rather to be found among the none-historians, although there are some notable exceptions.

As we see later, in the 4th chapter (4.4. Derailment), during the first full-swing public debate on the transfer in Czechoslovakia, after 1989, during the early 90s, the debate on the security-punitive entanglement will fall prey to a differently conceptualized debate. Differently conceptualized or rather distorted debate which finally derailed from discussing the entanglement and landed instead onto another kind of topic. Namely the issue of – as I call it – *crimes & crimes* (i.e. the crimes of Sudeten German criminals & the crimes of Czech criminals). That is the criminal activities, such as those of K. Henlein, K. H. Frank, J. Pfitzner, and their like, on the one hand, & the infamous behaviour of the Czech side towards the Sudeten German civilian population, on the other. This derailed debate, very much fuelled by the Czech and German national body politics, finally took too much of energy out of the debate on the security-punitive entanglement. And the issue remained as a result locked in a stalemate.

The fruitlessness of this derailment, considered later in a bigger detail, lays in the fact that it had anything to do with the debate on the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the transfer as such. For it stood so to speak on a different level. Since, first, even if one did re-consider Henlein, Frank, and

⁴⁴If one looks at the Czechoslovak historiographical production on the Sudeten Germans in general, one sees that the security argumentation plays especially strong role in the production of the 50s (see, e.g., books by Václav Král, the footnote № 83) but one finds it in every successive decade ever since up until now.

⁴⁵Point in case would be General Lev Prchala [Eva Hahnová, *Od Palackého k Benešovi: německé texty o Čechách, Němcích a českých zemích* (Praha: Academia, 2014), 543] or the group of Czechoslovak intellectuals post-1948 exiles gathered around the journal *Skutečnost*, such as Peter Demetz, Hanuš Hájek et al. [interview with Eva Hahn "Sudeten Dialogues Martin D. Brown and Dr. Eva Hahn : Left-wing understanding..." *Central European Review: the fortnightly journal of Central and East European politics, society and culture*, [electronic journal] 3/167 (May 2001)]

Pfützner as national heroes fighting for the liberation of Sudeten Germans (at least in their earlier stages), one could not do away with the security threat endangering the Czech national existence. And second, the issue concerning the debate on the Czech crimes is even more illogical, for none of the engaged politics, neither the Czech nor the (Sudeten) German one, has ever – not even during the transfer itself – defended crimes against Sudeten German population as legitimate.

1.1. Conclusion

In the first chapter, I attempted to draw two basic conceptual categories which, as I believe, allow us to understand the whole puzzlement of the Czech debate on the transfer. I implicitly claim that when one casts a look onto the whole Czech debate, one sees an unintelligible confusion of different actors claiming different things. It seems that all of the arguments are taking two broad categorical resemblances: first I call the “security argument” (that are those opinions which defend the transfer on behalf of the fact that Sudeten German minority – no matter whether innocent or guilty of Nazism – posed a vital threat to the existence of the Czech national community). The second one is being called the “punitive argument” (those attempts to conceptualize the transfer as a deserved outcome of Sudeten German guilt, such as for Henlein’s *Sudetendeutsche Partei*, The Munich Agreement, Protectorate, etc.). This second, “punitive” category sometimes consists of several further claims (ranging from pseudo-historical arguments and pseudo-juridical arguments, to legitimate legal complaints levied against the Sudeten German Nazi criminals).

The whole transfer debate which managed to keep occupying Czechoslovak intellectuals for such a long time was – such is my argument – taking its main source of energy from the inherent logical contradiction involved in the transfer. One can reduce it to the following equational statement (explained above on pp. 13-14): *if security, then innocent, and therefore betterment / if punitive, then guilty, but whereof a proof.*

Further I argue that there exist a third way of conceptualizing the transfer among the Czech society. It exists from the very beginning but first came into public visibility during the late-60, just to become probably the prevalent Czech interpretation of the transfer today. It is a narrative of the transfer as an unlawful revenge by Czechs on Sudeten Germans for the previous injustice done. This conception, as I claim, is not a new, third, substantial conception on its own but actually only a variation to the previous punitive argument, which has been only turned upside down to its self-critical version directed against the Czechs themselves.

On the whole, Czechoslovak society needed time for opening the issue. And besides that also adequate socio-political conditions. As the next chapters show, the both issues would be available in the 2nd half of 60s, but only in the very limited portion.

Chapter 2: ARCHAEOLOGY of the TRANSFER HISTORY WRITING

If somebody with no prior knowledge of the matter looked at the main agents of the famous dissident debate on the transfer in the late-70s and early 80s, he would be surprised by two things. First, the debate was led mainly by dissident-historians belonging to the circles of Charter 77 (so-called “Independent historians”). Second, they all belonged to a single one intellectual generation, on average born around 1929. Its members, with some exceptions, all grew up as the believers in socialism, they went through the best available educational institutions at that time, and in the 60s they all sided with the reformists, and after the 1968-invasion, part of them joined the Charter when giving up their socialist conviction and another part on the contrary joined the Charter because they felt as the real socialists).⁴⁶ The first point is being considered in detail in the following chapter three, the remaining part of this very chapter focus on the second one.

Dissident discussion on the transfer of the 70/80s had different accents (no matter whether one names them *odborný & politicko-morální* [professional & political-ethical] with Milan Otáhal⁴⁷ or *flagelantský & akademický* [flagellant & academic] with Milan Hübl⁴⁸), the common issue to all is the attempt to provide a meaningful historical interpretation of the transfer in the times when Czechoslovak historical science was still largely ignorant about much of the happening related to WW2.

Two problems are particularly significant for the whole transfer discussion between the 60s and 80s: 1) first problem is this: the works of historians have a character of *the tip of the iceberg* (which really wants to say that historical works grow from the mass of the previously gathered material written on all possible range of related topics as much as icebergs grow from the previously accumulated basis of ice).

To write a historical study on the transfer then, as much as today, presupposes access to the broader range of historical knowledge assembled from different historical areas. Such as the matter of the Nazi state and its plans with the Protectorate etc.; issue of the Czech behaviour during the war, i.e. the resistance and collaboration; problem of discussing transfers in post-war Europe on the international niveau (in uneven cases of Poland, Hungary, and others); or last not least the matter of Czech-German relations in the perspective not only of the last century but also, for instance, during the medieval times.

2) And the second problem is this: the Czechoslovak historiography of 60s still felt the losses it suffered relatively recently. In a very quick sequel, Czechoslovakia lost seven of its top leading historians capable of setting the tone to for whole academic debate, as much as of educating

⁴⁶From among the professional historians: Milan Hübl (1927 – 1989), Jan Křen (*1930), Václav Kural (1928 – 2011), Ján Mlynárik (1933 – 2012), Milan Otáhal (1928 – 2017) Miloš Hájek (1921 – 2016), Luboš Kohout (1925 – 2012), Vilém Prečan (*1933), Toman Brod (*1929), Jaroslav Opat (1924 – 2015) Václav Vrabec (*1931), Bedřich Loewenstein (1929 – 2017) or Ivan Pfaff (1925 – 2014). From non-historians: Petr Pithart (* 1941), Petr Příhoda (1939 – 2014), Ladislav Hejránek (*1927). The last two named, Příhoda and Hejránek, came from the non-socialist background.

⁴⁷Milan Otáhal, “Úvod“, in *Češi, Němci, odsun: diskuse nezávislých historiků*, Bohumil Černý, ed., et al. (Praha: Academia, 1990), 171

⁴⁸Milan Hübl, "Glosy k Danubiovým tezím o vysídlení Němců" in *Češi, Slováci a jejich sousedé: úvahy, studie a polemiky z let 1979-1989*, Milan Hübl and Eliška Skřenková, ed. (Praha: Naše vojsko, 1990), 124-125

the new generation of historians.⁴⁹ As the eight one, on the top of the eight, could be seen Josef Pekař, who died prior to the war 1937 and belonged to the very best of European historians in the 1st half of 20th c.

Similar damage was made by the liquidation of *Deutsche Karl-Ferdinands-Universität* in 1945, by the transfer of its German historians (or by such happenings as executing Joseph Pfitzner). Given the fact that the German intellectuals traditionally played a role of precious provocateurs for the Czech intellectual thinking.

The deepest blow, however, was dealt to the Czechoslovak historiography by the communist revolutionary cleansing following the February takeover of 1948. This happenings, first, ousted from the university much of the remaining historiographical elite (i.e. the best pupils of the recently demised generation)⁵⁰ and, second, thousands of students (those fired as much as those never accepted).⁵¹ And if one add to this account also the post-February exiles, who decided to flee, and who represented not an insignificant part of the Czechoslovak intellectuals, one arrives at the realistic picture of the unfortunate situation of the time. On the other hand, it has to be said that several first-class historians stayed in the academic field.⁵² Or even that some of the non-Marxist historians, not purged from the academic realm, were further able to follow their craft without compromising on the academic standards.⁵³

Nonetheless, it took long 15 years than the new generation of historians managed to catch up and fill the empty spaces. As such – said with Michal Reiman – the reformist endeavour of the 60s has enjoyed “completely extraordinary portion of historians taking part on the events between 1968 and 1969”.⁵⁴

There is none other societal group than historians which would be able to pursuit the job of gathering and transforming raw data into understandable historical stories. It is true that the ground-breaking impulses provoking public debates and controversies come as much from historians as from other societal members, but the systematic processing of historical data remains the genuine domain of the historical science. This continual processing seems to be stirred according to its own rules following the particular social dynamics. Which looks to be very slow and works on time

⁴⁹Most of all two brilliant historians, and top politicians, dying in war's consequence: Kamil Krofta (1976-1945) and Josef Šusta (1874-1945). Other two historians died during the war: Gustav Friedrich (1871-1943) and František Hrubý (1887-1943). Three relatively soon after its ending: Vladimír Klecanda (1888-1946), Josef Prokeš (1895-1951), and Václav Chaloupecký (1882-1951). [See Eva Schmidt-Hartmann, "Forty years of historiography under socialism in Czechoslovakia" in *Czechoslovakia. Continuity and Change in Patterns of Thought*, Bohemia, Vol. 29, No. 2 (1988): 305]

⁵⁰Such as Jaroslav Werstadt (1888-1970), Zdeněk Kalista (1900-1982), Jan Slavík (1885-1978), František Kutnar (1903-1983) Vladimír Kýbal (1880-1958), Josef Borovička (1885-1971), Jan Hanuš Opočenský (1895-1961), Karel Kazbunda (1888-1982), Karel Stloukal (1887-1957). Others like Otakar Odložník and a number of others preferred to emigrate. [Eva Schmidt-Hartmann, "Forty Years of Historiography under Socialism in Czechoslovakia. Continuity and Change in Patterns of Thought" *Bohemia - Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kultur der böhmischen Länder*, 29/2 (1988): 305]

⁵¹According to Josef Hanzal, the author of monograph on the Czechoslovak historiography, it is impossible to state a proper number of those afflicted by the revolutionary communist cleansing. He offers the following explanation: “The whole process of the ‘February cleansing’ at universities is hard to trace. Since only few valuable documents has survived. Action committees were ‘organizing’ it very chaotically and had their own vested interest on not survivability of the materials about their activities.” [Josef Hanzal, *Cesty české historiografie 1945 – 1989* (Praha: Karolinum, 1999), 79]

⁵²Besides internationally famous Zdeněk Nejedlý (1978-1962), one should count Václav Husa (1906-1965), Jaroslav Charvát (1904-1988), Jan Pacht (1906-1977), František Graus, Josef Macek. [See: Schmidt-Hartmann, "Forty years of historiography...", *op. cit.*, 306]

⁵³The example given by Eva Hahn: František M. Bartoš [Schmidt-Hartmann, "Forty years of historiography...", *op. cit.*, 305]

⁵⁴See Michal Reiman, *Rusko jako téma a realita doma a v exilu: vzpomínky na léta 1968-1989* (Praha: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 2008), 21

scales of whole social cohorts (generations). And its results seem to be very uncertain and non-enforceable. West Germans, for instance, needed long 34 years to start openly talking about the *fate* of 6.000.000 Jews murdered during the *Endlösung*;⁵⁵ Seen from the other side of the victims, the Israeli society needed its own time to stage the notorious Eichmann trial in 1961, to open the same topic in its midst (not to speak of the older problems stemming the state's origin and the Arab–Israeli War of 1948). In both cases the discussion did not spring out of nothing but was heavily furthered by the serious amount of work conducted prior to its outbreak. Not surprisingly, not an insignificant role in it belonged to the historians.

The contrasting position to the West German or Israeli case can be seen in the case of East Germany, where under the Soviet auspices a much more successful de-nazification policy took place after WW2 (which led to the complete social elite change compromised by the Nazi past). However the *genre* of the open public debate remained to the East Germans virtually unknown until the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Among the cases named, Czechoslovakia of the 60s, with all of her flaws, constitutes an interesting historical example. The Czech historiography did not give up attempts to reflect on its own recent past. (Which would be anyway very difficult given the fact that the Czech lands lost through the transfer roughly 1/3 of its pre-war population, which was being evicted from 1/3 of its traditional territory.⁵⁶) That what makes the Czechoslovak case interesting is the situation in which its historians were compelled to operate from between *a rock and a hard place*, between the sensitive Sudeten German issue and, more importantly, the current politics of the day.

The social elite, together with a major part of the Czech society, which once, in the first 1946-post-war elections, invested their hopes into the socialist project, made 15 years later – after the shock unleashed by Khrushchev's 1956-secret speech – an attempt to return to the once envisaged model of Czechoslovak communism.⁵⁷ Their endeavour, crowned thornily by the September invasion, finally led to the ousting of the reformist communists on the society's margin. This meant for the Czechoslovak historiography another – and this time even more thorough – purge within its rows. The act that berried at once much of all of that [academic elite] what had been growing for the last 20 years (see the footnote № 107).

The key element of the dynamics of debate on the transfer (as much as of the whole reformist striving) between 1948 and 1968 were slow transformation impulses coming out of the state-controlled institutions; that is from the very inside. Czechoslovak state power during the late-40s/early-50s (with a great help from the pre-Communist Third republic) managed to set out of the game all democratic institutions mediating between the state and the citizen. On the top of it, the Czechoslovak communist politicians, although they tried, failed to resist country's Sovietization and soon thus became only a *shifter* of the Kremlin politics. By reaching the shape where the unlimited state had a crucial say in almost everything, Czechoslovakia became closest to the model of totalitarian state. With the elimination of the democratic mechanisms which came from *in-side* (since the socialism in the Czech lands was an autochthonous political tradition, not an import, quite in contrast to Slovakia, Poland, or Hungary) the whole system became non-reformable from *out-*

⁵⁵Provided one takes for the beginning of the full-blown German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* discussion the year 1979 when the BBC series "Holocaust" was launched on the TV and was watched by millions [Alf Lüdtke, "'Coming to Terms with the Past' : Illusions of Remembering, Ways of Forgetting Nazism in West Germany" *The Journal of Modern History* 65/3 (1993): 543]. One can legitimately seek the beginning of the public debate earlier, though.

⁵⁶Alfred Bohmann, *Das Sudetendeutschum in Zahlen* (München, 1959), 29

⁵⁷Alena Wagnerová, "Dopisy jako výpověď generace" in *Zůstat plamenem neohnutým: Dopisy Karla Hiršala přátelům totálně nasazeným v říši 1942 – 1944*, Karel Hiršl, Alena Wagnerová, ed., Tomáš Trusina, ed. (Benešov: Eman, 2018), 18

side. As a logical result, the whole socialist reform of the 60s, had to fetch all its reformist power from inside its own, inland, communist cadres. When many of them became compromised during the Stalinist period in the 50s.

One of the extraordinarily phenomena of the Czechoslovak reform is its *spatial concentration*, which is there clearly visible between 1956 and 1968. What do I mean by this is that the civil society became so trussed up after the assertion of the communist monopoly of power that almost all of the reform oriented figures came from a very few places (institutions). And from here came the – today hardly imaginable – role which could be played by the 2nd or 4th gathering of the Czechoslovak writers in 1956 and 1967. A whole number of important reformists came from social-scientific fields (and among them quite a number of historians) of *Vysoká škola politická*⁵⁸ [lit. high political school] (found 1953). Other important historians came from *Ústav dějin KSČ*⁵⁹ [Department of history at KSČ] (found 1950), whose institutional journal *Příspěvky k dějinám KSČ* [Contributions to history of KSČ] belonged among the most liberal periodicals in the whole Eastern bloc at the time.⁶⁰ At the *Historický ústav ČSAV* [historical department ČSAV] (also found 1953) were active e.g. Vilém Prečan and others. Michal Reiman (*1930), a Czech-German-Russian historian, himself very active at the time of 60s, remembers the May 1968 the following way:

Many historians (Jan Křen, Václav Kural, Karel Kaplan, Karel Jech, Jiří Doležal, Ferdinand Beer, Miloš Hájek, Milan Hübl, Vladimír Kuš, Jan Moravec, František Janáček, and others) dedicated their energy to political advising or work within various committees. A number of historians concentrated on the public opposition against the conservative tendencies and the Stalinist notion of “leading role” of KSČ. It occurred that time that a gathering of historians of the contemporary history was held ... at the faculty of arts, at Charles University ... my name was immediately suggested for a membership in the group in charge of preparing the resolution. There were Toman Brod, Vilém Prečan, ... Milan Otáhal a Karel Pichlík⁶¹

A number of these names would reappear within Charter 77 at the end of the 70s. And it will be again the same ones who would lead the transfer debate there. However, in the 2nd half of the 60s, Czechoslovakia grapples with a problem, in its eyes, more urgent than the transfer or anything else, namely its own *revolution betrayed*, especially then the criminal juridical processes of the 50s.

During the most part of 60s, the reform was advancing rather very tardily. Ten years after Khrushchev's shocking revelation on Stalin's crimes, the investigations of the Czechoslovak political processes from the 50s did not bring any clear results. President Novotný having had his own share of responsibility in the political processes, and the half of the incumbent Central Committee with him, was effectively blocking all investigations.

The spring 1968 moved the things forward. At about the middle of March Milan Hübl appeared on the TV and urged the president to step down.⁶² On the March 22nd, the president did so. The very beginning of the Prague Spring opened the public speeches of Jan Procházka, talking about the themes of the Czechoslovak democratic socialism as it had been once imagined after the war. In the July of the same year, the debate on the processes, as much as on the reform itself, was in full swing. With the approval of the newly appointed interior ministers Josef Pavel (himself a political prisoner in the 50s), the first TV document on the processes appeared on TV (it was

⁵⁸Miroslav Kadlec, Ota Šik, Miloš Hájek, Jan Křen, Jiří Sládek, Karel Kouba, Miroslav Klír, Milan Hübl, Jaroslav Opat, Karel Jech a řada dalších především z historických a ekonomických kateder školy. (see Reiman, Rusko jako téma..., *op. cit.*, 6)

⁵⁹In the *committee of national liberation movement* were people like Jan Křen, Václav Kural, Karel Bartošek, František Janáček, and many others. In the committee of history of Socialism then people such as Karel Kaplan, Josef Hodic, Viliam Hanzel *et al.* (Reiman, Rusko jako téma..., *op. cit.*, 17-18)

⁶⁰Zdeněk Vašíček, "Historik, který odmítl sedět : příběh Jana Tesaře" *Soudobé dějiny*, Roč. 7, č. 3 (2000), 321

⁶¹Reiman, Rusko jako téma..., *op. cit.*, 87

⁶²*Ibid.*, 44

Svědectví pro výstrahu [Testimony as warning] made by Otta Bednářová).⁶³ (That what I try to show by this quick romp through the history of the Czechoslovak reform are the names: these names belonging to the crucial players advocating the reform are remarkably same names which would soon occupied themselves with the Sudeten German question itself. And not only in the Charter during the 70/80s but sometimes already in the late-60s. This however remained largely unnoticed on the whole, because of the importance of the reform. [See the 2.2. Conclusion])

Also the first contacts started to be made between the Czech, German, and Sudeten German historians, especially in the last third of 60s. Increase on the side of the reforms was followed by the reciprocal decrease on the side of the isolation and impermeability of the Czechoslovak borders. The crucial role in the contacts-making was played by *Ústav pro mezinárodní politiku a ekonomii* [Department for international politics and economics] (ÚMPE) (found 1957), after 1966 under the leadership of Antonín Šnejdár, that time the country's leading commentator on the Czechoslovak foreign politics, with not an insignificant focus on the field of Sudeten German – with the then-rhetoric “revanchist” – organisations existing in West Germany. Towards the end of 60s, Šnejdár was able to bring to Prague people like Helmut Schmidt, Richard Nixon, Zbigniew Brzezinski or Harold Gordon Skilling among others.⁶⁴ It was also ÚMPE under his leadership which made the contacts with the *Institut für Zeitgeschichte* [Institute for contemporary history] in Munich, from whence came into Czechoslovakia first West German historians, such as 1967 Detlef Brandes [*1941].⁶⁵ And reciprocally, the Czechoslovak historians were able to leave for study purposes into West Germany and further.

On the field of historical science were organized several international conferences, such as colloquium of Czechoslovak, Austrian, and West German historians in Baden in the September 1966.⁶⁶ Or the conference on the history of Czech-German relations organized one year later in Braunschweig in November 1967. (The Czech side reciprocated the invitation for their West German host to Czechoslovakia for the next year, however this invitation never realized itself due to the invasion).⁶⁷ Or, e.g., the symposium on Czechoslovak-German relations in the First Czechoslovak Republic which took place in Munich in the late February 1968.

Connections between the Czech and German historians were also made simply from one's personal non-institutionalized initiative. So, for instance, Bedřich Loewenstein entered into correspondence with Golo Mann since 1966.⁶⁸ And cases similar to this could be easily found. When Jan Křen wrote the first historical study on the transfer in 1967,⁶⁹ no Czechoslovak intellectual paid really any appropriate attention to it – for everybody was occupied with the reform – however, in West Germany, there was his study noticed by people like Ferdinand Seibt (1927 –

⁶³Nela Fabiánová, "Otka Bednářová a její publicistická činnost v 60. letech 20. století" [master's thesis] (FSV: Institut komunikačních studií a žurnalistiky, 2017), 103 a 61

⁶⁴Petr Zidek, "Od ÚMPE k ÚMV, Proměny komunistického 'think tanku'" in *50 let českého výzkumu mezinárodních vztahů: od ÚMPE k ÚMV*, Petr Drulák, et al. (Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 2007), 123

⁶⁵See interview "Historik Detlef Brandes v interview hovoří mimo jiné o roli Fondu budoucnosti a o projevu P. Pitharta u příležitosti oslav 15. výročí ČNFB" in *Literární Noviny* from 16th January, 2014)

⁶⁶See the report by: Jiří Kořalka, "Kolokvium československých, rakouských a západoněmeckých historiků v Badenu," *Československý časopis historický* 15[65]/1 (1967): 165

⁶⁷Hans Lemberg, "Zur Einführung", in *Deutsch-tschechische Beziehungen in der Schulliteratur und im populären Geschichtsbild*, Ferdinand Seibt and Hans Lemberg, eds. (Braunschweig: Georg-Eckert-Institut für Internationale Schulbuchforschung, 1980), 7

⁶⁸Bedřich Loewenstein, "Historie má pomáhat žít: Golo Mann (1909-1994)," *Soudobé dějiny* 1/6 (1994): 808

⁶⁹Jan Křen, "Odsun Němců ve světle nových pramenů" *Dialog, měsíčník pro politiku, hospodářství a kulturu*, Ústí n/L, (1967): no. 4, pp. 1-5; no. 5. pp. 6-10; no. 6, pp. 9-13

2003) or Hans Lemberg⁷⁰ (1933 – 2009), two important historians of the Sudeten German origin, and their first contact with Křen built subsequently up to the mutual friendship.⁷¹

With an exception of this Křen's *debut* from 1967, one finds two other historical works in Czechoslovakia at the end of 60s which deal, in a way, self-critically with the transfer: the famous *Dialog o roce 1945* [Dialogue about the year 1945] published in Moravian literary journal *Host do domu* in 1968 (the dialogue was actually a dialogue of two authors, a historian Milan Hübl [1927 – 1989] and a writer Jan Procházka [1929 – 1971]).⁷² Third, generally omitted work is a 1969 reportage by Alena Wagnerová (*1936), a Czech, and soon by marriage a Czech-German writer and oral historian. A. Wagnerová, unlike her two preceding colleagues does not reveal whether the transfer was or wasn't necessary but focuses rather on a-political stories and daily reality of not an insignificant number of Sudeten Germans during the war time and its aftermath.⁷³

But. Despite Wagnerová's reticence, it would be simply mistaken to suppose that she, or Křen or Hübl, did categorically condemn the transfer as an injustice done or as a historical mistake. Křen's article is in this stance most transparent:

Forceful removal of millions people from places where they used to live for centuries surely was a deed corresponding to the cruel and vile era full of struggle for life and death. [...] Let us never repeat such a war or the subsequent ravaging. May the future generations never have to face a similar tragic necessity [of the transfer – VH].⁷⁴

Hübl's own position, though very close to Křen's (that is the *necessary tragedy*) fell prey to the editor's final cut which made the original 4-hour long dialogue only 7-page long article. Hübl himself commented on this ten years later, when he said: "What misses there is the conclusion – my answer to the question whether under the given historical circumstances, after six years spent under the occupation happening the way it did, whether there could be found another, optimal solution – in my opinion not."⁷⁵

The most critical assessment of the transfer comes from Jan Procházka, himself a non-historian, who saw it primarily as an outburst of ruthlessness and revenge. Procházka had portrayed the brutish history of the war and the transfer in his movie script for the movie *Kočár do Vídně* [Carriage to Vienna] (filmed 1966 by Karel Kachyňa). This put Procházka in the line of other Bohemian artist touching the theme (although not always with the condemnatory note).⁷⁶

⁷⁰Hans Lemberg, born in Münster in 1933, as the son of not less famous Eugen Lemberg ([1903 – 1976], a Sudeten German historian and sociologist, a specialist in the field of national studies, and a co-founder of Collegium Carolinum in 1956 – with a very problematic relationship to the National Socialism during WW2)

⁷¹Hear the interview with Jan Křen made by *Český Rozhlas*, the series called "Rozmluvy," from 15th November 2008

⁷²[Vladimír Blažek, Milan Hübl, and Jan Procházka], "Dialog o roce 1945 (Diskuse historika Milana Hübla, spisovatele Jana Procházky a redaktora časopisu Host do domu Vladimíra Blažka)" *Host do domu: měsíčník pro literaturu, umění a kritiku*, 15/5 (1968): 22-29. Strictly speaking it was M. Hübl himself who dedicated to the transfer two sub-chapters of his dissertation of 1958, where he concluded the same way as he did here, in Dialogue ten years later. [See: Hübl, "Glosy k Danubiovým tezím...", *op. cit.*, 24]

⁷³● Alena Wagnerová, "Každý strom šumí jinak. Jeder Baum raucht anders, 1. část " *Plamen* 11/3 (1969): 22-26 & ● Alena Wagnerová, "Každý strom šumí jinak. Jeder Baum raucht anders, dokončení " *Plamen* 11/4 (1969): 22-26

⁷⁴Jan Křen, "Odsun Němců ve světle nových pramenů" in *Češi, Němci, odsun: diskuse nezávislých historiků*, Bohumil Černý, ed., et al. (Praha: Academia, 1990),

⁷⁵Hübl, "Glosy k Danubiovým tezím...", *op. cit.*, 24

⁷⁶Consider for instance.: ● *Dům na zeleném svahu* by Anna Sedlmayerová (1947), ● J. Škvorecký's *Zbabělci* (written 1948, published 1958), ● B. Říha's *Země dokořán* (1950), ● J. Durych's *Boží duha* (written 1955; published seven years after his death, in 1969), ● V. Řezáč's *Nástup* (1951), ● K. Ptáčník's *Město na hranici* (1958), ● V. Körner's *Adelheid* (1967) etc. [for further examples, see e.g. Václav Petrbok, "Obraz a vzpomínka : Několik poznámek k odsunu / transferu / vyhnání sudetských Němců v české a německojazyčné beletrii", in: *Uzel na kapesníku*, Martina Políaková, Jakub Raška a Václav Smyčka, eds. (Praha: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy, 2014): 130-152]

And it is into this very setting where the September invasion raided into and changed, once more, the stream of slowly unpacking Czech history.

One who sees only three historical articles (out of which only one has the character of professional historical work) as an outcome of the 25 years long work of Czechoslovak historiography sees rather a very poor account indeed. Be it as it may, the most important thing, to which this chapter tried to point out, is however not these three articles questioning the transfer but their background lying – as an iceberg – behind them. The thing is that one cannot have a serious public debate about country's history without historians involved. And one cannot have historians involved without a prior historical research had been conducted on the respective matters. Yet the transfer itself was a very complex issue consisting of many different matters having to do with many national and inter-national questions. To be able to judge over the transfer issue, one had to have at his disposal works on, e.g., Nazi plans and policies for the Protectorate; on the Czech and Sudeten anti-Nazi resistance movement, on the Sudeten Germans pre-war politics and goals, and so forth. To put it in one sentence: no discussion without the sufficient accumulation of historical knowledge.

2.1. Pawing the history

According to Heinrich Jilek's bibliographical work written on the histories of the Bohemian lands,⁷⁷ the Czechoslovak academia of 60s produced nearly 50 historical works on the topic of resistance to Nazism (book & articles) in comparison to only ca. 5 written during 50s, and 15 (not always of the strictly academic nature) during the post-war 40s.⁷⁸ The history of the Second Czechoslovak Republic (September 1938 - March 1939) together with the Protectorate (1939 - 1945) meets the similar proportion: around 60 works in 60s, against 10 in 50s, and another 10 in the 2nd half of 40s.⁷⁹ Slightly different situation displays the subject of the First Czechoslovak Republic, on which there had already existed the preceding scholarship from the inter-war period. Nevertheless the proportion of ca. 65 works of 60s, contra 40 written during 50s fits with the previous pattern.⁸⁰ The only topic which breaks the pattern is the Czech historical trauma of the Munich Agreement, where the socialist literature of 50s almost catches up with the production of the 60s: around 15 against 20, respectively.⁸¹

Before the arrival of the new generation of young historians to the scene, the works dealing with the Sudeten Germans residing in West Germany were to be written by such people as A. Šnejdársek (with the style closer to journalism than historical science).⁸² There was naturally a whole category of historical works having much more to do with showing the author's support for or the

⁷⁷Strictly speaking not only the Czechoslovak academia, for the Jilek's works included also titles belonging to the Czechoslovak exile movement.

⁷⁸Heinrich Jilek, *Bibliographie zur Geschichte und Landeskunde der böhmischen Länder von den Anfängen bis 1948: Publikationen der Jahre 1850 bis 1975. Band 1*, (Köln: Böhlau, 1986), 522 - 526 [see the rubrik: "(d) Die Widerstandsbewegung (1938 - 1945)"]. Although Jilek's bibliography is not flawless (esp. when it comes to articles) it serves the purpose more than enough to display the general trend.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 514 - 522 [see: "(c) 1938 - 1945. Die Zweite Tschechoslowakei und das Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren. Zweiter Weltkrieg"]

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 492 - 508 [see: "(a) Die Erste Tschechoslowakei (1918 - 1938)"]

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 509 - 514 [see: "(b) Das Münchner Abkommen (1938)"]

⁸²For Šnejdársek's case, consider esp.: "The Participation of the Sudeten-German Nazis in the Munich Tragedy" (1959, pp. 241-265) • *Revanšismus - projev západoněmeckého imperialismu: příloha Přehledu světového tisku* (1961. 34 p.) • "'Démoni z Prahy' aneb revanšistická beletrie sudetských přesídlenců v NSR" (1961, pp. 34-40) • A. Šnejdársek, *Revanšisté proti Československu* (1963, 259) • *Německá otázka 1945-1963: dokumenty a materiály* (V. Hajdů, A. Šnejdársek, and L. Liska, 1964, pp. 715 p.) • "The beginning of the Sudeten German organisations in Western Germany after 1945" (1964, pp. 235-252)

consent with the current political order of the day than with the serious historical work. To this political approach would generally subscribe works authored by such figure as Václav Král⁸³ [1926 – 1983], *at al.*). There were also the literature stemming from Czechoslovak émigré historians, such as Bořivoj Čelovský,⁸⁴ tainted by a strong anti-Sudenten German resentment (with few exceptions, widely shared among the circles of Czechoslovak post-1948 exiles)

All in all, the area of academic production on the topic is quite an intricate one. For it generally contains both, the current anti-Sudenten German resentments and personal biases of the individual historians on the one hand, and some contribution to the research on the other. On the top of it, all of that had to be wrapped up into the politically acceptable jargon of the time (i.e. the usage of the proper vocabulary, such as *bourgeois*, *revanchism*, etc.; several *political offerings* scattered throughout the text; an acceptable preface written by a *reliable* name, etc.)

To this scene slowly drifted a new generation of historians and started to add their works onto the shelves. It does not really surprise that also their works carry the mark of the political environment permeating virtually all social life. There was hardly such a thing as an apolitical work within the historical science during this period.⁸⁵ One has to go rather after the distinction between the bad and good quality than an independent scholarship.

A promising project was conceived in a circle of young historians, J. Křen,⁸⁶ V. Kural (1928 - 2011),⁸⁷ Jan Tesař, Toman Brod, and others who in 1961 decided to write a three-volume long thorough work, “Odboj a revoluce” [Resistance and revolution] on the history of Czechoslovak anti-fascist resistance in WW2.⁸⁸ Four years later was accomplished only its preliminary, introductory volume and the whole endeavour was finally effectively terminated by the new post-1968 political direction. A number of articles dedicated to the Sudeten German issue were authored by Bohumil Černý (1922 – 2007), a historian of German contemporary period, writing together in the tandem with Jaroslav Cesar (1927 - 2014).⁸⁹ In the 60s, less visible was a Czech-German-Jewish historian

⁸³The works of Václav Král closest to the topic of transfer seem to be the following ones: • *Die Vergangenheit warnt: Dokumente über die Germanisierungs- und Austilgungspolitik der Naziokkupanten in der Tschechoslowakei.* (Král, ed., 1960, 174 s); one year later the work was published its Czech translation [under the different name: *Chtěli nás vyhubit*] together with the English, French, and also Spanish version. • *Politické strany a Mnichov: dokumenty,* (Král, ed., 1961, 229 p.) • “Předmluva“, in *Němci proti Hitlerovi: některá svědectví o protifašistickém hnutí Němců v letech 1933-1945* (René Ditmar, ed. 1961) • “Odsun Němců ze slovanských zemí a dnešní revanšisté.” (1962, pp. 6-8) • *Die Deutschen in der Tschechoslowakei 1933-1947: Dokumentensammlung.* (Král, ed., 1964, 663 p.) • “Revanšistické dějepisectví o československé historii“ (1973 pp. 1-13)

⁸⁴ • “Vysídlení ze Sudet a z ČSR“ (1955) • *Das Münchener Abkommen 1938* (1958. 518 p.) • “The Transferred Sudeten-Germans and Their Political Activity“ (1957, p. 127-149) • “Jakschovo zúčtování“ (1958, s. 11-14)

⁸⁵Actually there was but one had to go for topics with no or a low political charge. A telling example offers F. Kutnar (1903-1983), who after 1948 ceased to publish just to re-appeared again in early 60s on the field of history of the potato: Kutnar, František. *Malé dějiny brambor. Havlíčkův Brod: Východočes. Nakl., 1963. 153, [2] s.*

⁸⁶For J. Křen's work – beside his article of 1967 –, consider: • Jan Křen: “Revanšisté s protinacistickou minulostí. (K vývoji německé emigrace za druhé světové války)” (1961, pp. 42-59) • “Německá otázka a odsun” (1965) • *V emigraci: západní zahraniční odboj 1939-1940* (1969, 612 p.)

⁸⁷Before 1989, V. Kural's works focused mainly at the question of the Czechoslovak WW2 resistance movement.

⁸⁸Zdeněk Vašíček, “Historik, který odmítl sedět : příběh Jana Tesaře” *Soudobé dějiny*, 7/3 (2000): 320

⁸⁹The tandem Černý and Cesar: • *Od sudetoněmeckého separatismu k plánům odvety: iredentistický puč německých nacionalistů v ČSR v letech 1918-19* (1960, 231 p.) • “German Irredentist Putsch in the Czech Lands after the First World War,” (1961, pp. 195-238) • “Iredentistické hnutí německých buržoazních nacionalistů z ČSR v letech 1918-1929” (1961, pp. 789-806) • *Politika německých buržoazních stran v Československu v letech 1918-1939* (1962, Vol. 1: 516 p.; Vol. 2: 584 p.) • “Německá iredenta a henleinovci v ČSR v letech 1930-1938” (1962, pp. 1-17) • “The Nazi Fifth Column in Czechoslovakia,” (1962, pp. 191-255) • “Reinhard Pozorny: Wir suchten die Freiheit“ (1963, pp. 193-199) • “The Policy of German Activist Parties in Czechoslovakia in 1918-1938,” (1963, pp. 239-281) • “Die nazistische Bewegung der Deutschen in der Tschechoslowakei” (1968, pp. 183-225). For the work written by Černý alone, see, e.g.: the chapter of his book published in 1965 after the study period spent in West Germany: • “Všichni sudetští Němci nejsou stejní”, in *Mezi Labem a Rýnem*, TÝŽ (Praha: Lidová demokracie, 1965), 50-55

Bedřich Loewenstein (1929 – 2017) and his work.⁹⁰ A different case again would represent early works of the historian of Czech-Polish relations Jaroslav Valenta⁹¹ (1930 - 2004), or another historians of contemporary period Robert Kvaček⁹² (*1932). From the picture of the academic literature cannot be excluded works of those historians studying earlier historical stages than contemporary history. Be it the works of historians of the 19th c., without whom no later discussion would be impossible, here would belong such academicians as Jiří Kořalka⁹³ (1931 - 2015), Otto Urban (1938 - 1996), *et. al.* And undoubtedly also medievalists, such as František Graus⁹⁴ (1921 - 1989) and others.

2.2. Conclusion

To conclude: the chapter follows the argument started in the preceding chapter one, that the discussion on the transfer was a logical outcome given by the transfer's dubious character.

The chapter sets itself against the popular notion that the transfer and Sudeten German issue was not in pre-1968 Czechoslovakia dealt with. I tried to show that for opening of a public discussion one necessarily needs substantial preparations to have been done in advance. This work, concerning the historical research, was being done since the early-60s (these works can be described as everything but *Sudeten-German-friendly*, however that is rather a secondary issue), the importance lays in the academic duality of the works, since this allows the gradual cumulative progress. This strategy found its expression in the three self-critical historical works dealing with the transfer – *tip of the iceberg* – which were all written during the late-60s. The chapter implicitly argues that had the invasion not come, the discussion would have expanded public; similarly to those cases seen in West Germany, France, or Israel.

The chapter analysis shows on a small scale that what would become one of the key features of the following era of Normalisation – shown by the next chapter –, namely that: the intellectuals engaged with the Sudeten German question and those committed to the reform of the Czechoslovak

⁹⁰Bedřich Loewenstein was writing on different issues in 60s, he entered the discussion on the transfer only in 1978.

The following bibliographical notes are all book reviews or, with one exceptions, announcements: • Review of *Das sudetendeutsche Freikorps* by Martin Broszat, (1962, 1 p.) • Review of *Grundfragen der neueren deutschen Geschichte. Zum Problem der historischen Urteilsbildung* by Theodor Schieder (1961, 1 p.) • Review of *Der deutsche Revanchismus nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg und die bürgerliche Geschichtsschreibung* by Leo Stern (1960, 1 p.) • Review of *Zur Phänomenologie des Faschismus* by Ernst Nolte, (1963, 1 p.) • Review of *'Zum Verhältnis von Politischer Wissenschaft und Geschichtswissenschaft in Deutschland* by Hans Mommsen (1963, 2 p.) • "Staré i novější cesty sudetoněmecké historiografie" (1963, pp. 244-248) • Review of *Wohin treibt die Bundesrepublik? Tatsachen-Gefahren-Chancen* by Karl Jaspers (1966, 2 p.)

⁹¹Jaroslav Valenta: • "Hranice na Odře a Nise ve světle postupimských dohod" (1961, pp. 269-273) • "Boj polské vědy proti západoněmeckému revanšismu" (1961 pp. 224-227) • "Tak zvaný Sudetenland a počátky iredentistické politiky německé buržoazie ve Slezsku a na Ostravsku" (1964, pp. 11 – 34) • *Wywrotowa polityka mniejszości niemieckiej w Czechosłowacji w latach 1918-1939* (J. Valenta and O. Káňa, 1961, 55 p.)

⁹²Robert Kvaček: • "K historii Henleinovy Sudetoněmecké strany" (1957, pp. 193-200, 241-248) • "Vlastivěda ve službách sudetoněmeckých revanšistů" (R. Kvaček and Karel Novotný, 1960, pp. 21-28)

⁹³Jiří Kořalka: from the 60s often focused on the 20th c.: • "Jak se stal německý lid v Československu kořistí fašismu. (K otázce rozšíření fašistického hnutí v pohraničních oblastech Československa v letech 1933 - 1935)" (1955, pp. 52-81) • *Protičeskoslovenský revanšismus v historiografii* (J. Kořalka and A. Šejdárek, 1961, 157 p.) • Review of *Der Verrat des Herrn Wenzel* by Jaksch Fuchs (1962, 1 p.) • „Dva nové přehledy sudetoněmeckých dějin“ (1960, pp. 556-563) • "En marge du problème des rapports tchéco-allemands et du rôle historique des Allemands des Sudètes: (Réflexions sur le livre d'Emil Franzel 'Sudetendeutsche Geschichte')“ (1962, pp. 257-268) • "Vznik Československé republiky roku 1918 v oficiální politice Německé říše" (1968, pp. 819-848) • Review of *Dokumente zur Sudetendeutschen Frage 1916-1967. Überarbeitete und ergänzte Neuauflage der "Dokumente zur Sudetendeutschen Frage 1918-1959* [Hrsg. Ernst Nittner], (1969, pp. 265-266)

⁹⁴František Graus: • "Herrschaft und Treue. Betrachtungen zur Lehre von der germanischen Kontinuität," (1966, pp 5-44) • "Böhmen zwischen Bayern und Sachsen: zur böhmischen Kirchengeschichte des 10. Jahrhunderts," (1969, pp. 5-42) • "Die Handelsbeziehungen Böhmens zu Detschlad und Österreich im 14. und zu Beginn des 15. Jahrhunderts. Eine Skizze," (1960, pp. 77-110) • "Über die sogenannte germanische Treue," (1959, pp. 71-121)

Socialism were one and the same people. Put differently: since the transfer was such a dubious matter in itself, the debate about it was just a natural reaction of any society appealing to the Popperian ideas of the open society or simply to the cultural values of the West [and possibly also East, South and North]. As the next chapter argues, the transfer discussion was rather the matter of civility and the civic virtue.

Chapter 3: DISSIDENT DISCUSSION

3.1. The *Theses of Danubius*

In the morning hours of the 11th December 1976 a short interesting talk took place between three men in the middle of Prague. The place chosen for the meeting was *Kavárna Slavia*, a celebrated meeting point of Prague intellectuals since the late 19th century. Those three were Václav Havel (1936 - 2011), a playwright and one of the visible faces of the wilted Prague Spring ten years before; Ján Mlynárik (1933 - 2012), a Prager-Slovak and a former university history teacher who after his break-up with the socialist ideas landed in the café's basement where he worked as a stoker; and, Dominik Tatarka (1913 - 1989), another Slovak and probably the very best country's writer of the 20th century.

There exist more versions remembering the meeting which differ in various minor details but the solid core of the story is this:⁹⁵ Václav Havel had called to Ján Mlynárik day before and asked for a short talk on the following day. The topic he did not want to talk *publicly* over the - anyway taped - telephone was a *petition text* addressed to the Czechoslovakian communist government which he recently put together with Pavel Kohout, and a handful of others, and which was intended to be presented as a sort of *surprise* for the new upcoming year '77.

As the authors did not want the state police intercept the text of petition prematurely, only a very little group were entrusted with the task of collecting the signatures. Preferably those of the well-known and influential Czechoslovakian intellectuals and dissenters. The distributors simply decided to go door-to-door around the houses of potential signatories. To present them with the whole idea behind the text which were briefly given them to read, and then again taken back. And thereupon they were left to decide on the spot whether to sign it or not.

On that morning, Mlynárik quickly romped through the text. Expressed his critical remark to Havel about the general meekness of the text, compared to the letter he himself sent to President Husák three years ago.⁹⁶ But he agreed to give to the document his support. So, he wrote, on a separate piece of an A5-paper – as that was the method – a short sentence: “Souhlasím s prohlášením Charty 77 z 1.1.1977,” [I agree with the declaration of Charter 77 from January 1, 1977] followed by his occupation, address, and the signature.

Approximately at about this point in time, appeared the third one in the café. He was expected by neither of the two but since he had just missed the train going back to Slovakia, he decided to pay visit to his friend Ján. And since Tatarka happened to be a notable writer, and also not in the best terms with the current regime, he was immediately presented with the text. In this point, Mlynárik excused himself for a moment, and left to the basement to shovel the coal into the local stoves. When he came back, Tatarka was already in the middle of printing his supporting sentence under the document. He however could not finish this process, for his pen betrayed him and refused to perform the task. Mlynárik promptly trusted his own pen in his hands, and Slovaks – later in the Czechoslovak dissent rather under-represented – thus made the very first two steps of Charta 77.⁹⁷

⁹⁵There are numerous esp. newspaper articles, or memories recollecting the moment. The sufficient account is to be found, first, in one of Mlynárik's personal letters to Havel (December 11, 1989) and, second, in Havel's letter to Vilém Prečan (June 1983); for both see: Ján Mlynárik, *Causa Danubius* (Praha: Danubius, 2000), 628-629 and 609-611 respectively.

⁹⁶For the letter addressed to the president and the Revolutionary Trade Union of the National Theater for the suffered insult by its director, see Ján Mlynárik, "Dopisy Jána Mlynárika" *Listy* IV/4 (1974): 46-48

⁹⁷Strictly speaking, the historical truth of Slovak primacy could have been possibly taken by another signatory, since on the same day were collecting other signatures by other collectors (such as Pavel Kohout, Zdeněk Mlynář and a

It was a mere coincidence that Havel decided to meet first with Mlynárik and not with anybody else. Mlynárik certainly belonged among the group of anti-regime oriented dissenters, but he did not held any special role among them.

In a way, Mlynárik was the complete opposite of Havel. Born into a poor family of a rural blacksmith in southern Slovakia, he grown up as a true believer in socialist ideas. He only began to drift from this standpoint towards the more critical position during the 2nd half of the 50s, when already in Prague studying history. Relatively early, during the 60s, he became rather an open critic of the old regime, which costed him his teaching post (*docent*) at the university after the invasion of 1968. He was purged out form the party – with hundred-thousands of others –, and left only to do a manual unskilled work (such as the one in the café or, among other, working as a stagehand in the Czech National Theatre, just over the street of the café). Ján Mlynárik got never really used to the public spotlight. And when he finally got chance to communicate his ideas on the Sudeten German issue openly, in the democratic media after 1989, he was never leaving a fully relaxed impression, and looked sometimes heavy or even clumsy (at least he wasn't boring). Mlynárik pursued his own idea of historian's craft envisioned as a moral duty to inform the nation of its neglected memory. And where was Havel agreeable to the compromise, be it in Charter 77, later in his presidential tenure, or in the very Sudeten German issue, Mlynárik was stubbornly holding the line which he believed in, together with his dissident friends if possible, alone if necessary.

What brought Havel and Mlynárik together was the common fate shared by those whom the Husák's normalizatory regime frowned upon. Regime in the meanwhile thoroughly purified its cadres, more than 450.000, i.e. 28% of communist pre-1968 party members left or were expelled by the year 1970.⁹⁸ With the Normalization came back the only recently abolished censorship. The old authority of the state police were re-established. On the social level was initiated the process of replacement of those involved in the reforms during the 60s (intellectuals, journalists, artists, scholars, and also ordinary workers). The Charter 77 should be seen as a delayed reaction to these purges.

A crucial role in the continuation of the dissident intellectual debates, the Sudeten German issue included, had the Czechoslovak exile movement. For all its differentiated complexity, the exile re-established its former importance for the Czechoslovak inland dissident movement after 1968-period, after taking a new breath with a massive intellectual emigration pouring out of the country. The special role was performed by several publishing houses. Which stood for sort of communicative conjunctions facilitating all inland debates. In general, they gathered different data from all around, home and other exile members, printed their papers, and smuggled them back to the country, where they were then heavily read. The two most important of those houses were a Parisian quarterly *Svědectví* [Testimony], mostly associated with Pavel Tigrid, and the Rome's bi-monthly *Listy* [Sheets], of whose major figure was Jiří Pelikán, a former director of the Czechoslovak TV.

In general, Charter 77 opened the space for discussions embracing a whole panoply of different social subject matters. It started to issue the *Documents of Charter 77* (on penitential system, on consumption, on Czech law, on rock music, etc.) which occupied its main attention from

handful of others). Let us hope that others were late to wake up. The above story happened most likely between eight and nine morning.

⁹⁸From the pre-invasion figure of 1.671.637 members, some 150.000 left on their own b. the September 1968 and December 1969; 67.147 were expelled. And to other 259.670 members were their membership simply terminated. [See, Jiří Maňák, *Čistky v Komunistické straně Československa v letech 1969-1970* (Praha: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 1997), 117]

1977 – 1989, with the final result of 598 documents.⁹⁹ It also printed its own small samizdat paper, *Informace o Chartě 77*¹⁰⁰ [Informations about Charter 77], by which were circulated technical information about current situation.

Besides countless of small topics re-appeared on the Czechoslovak dissident scene also larger debates. Be it for instance the well-known discussion started by Milan Kundera's 1983-essay on *The tragedy of Central Europe*¹⁰¹ which incited a lively discussion not only among Czechoslovak, but also among other Central European and later also Western European intellectuals. Or the discussion aroused by Petr Pithart's 1979 essay on the national identity, *Pokus o vlast*,¹⁰² [Attempt for homeland] which alluded to only classical Czech issue addressing the question of the meaning behind the Czech history. Or slightly before these, the debate on the Sudeten German issue itself. Provoked by Mlynárik's 1978 essay – or rather only its torso – called *Tézy o vysídlení československých Němců*. [Theses about eviction of Czechoslovak Germans]¹⁰³

Mlynárik's own engagement with the transfer bordered with the possession. It became the central theme of his professional, and to the large extent also personal life, in the early 60s.¹⁰⁴ The era in which Mlynárik initially attempted the study of the transfer, the late-50s, early-60s, was still meticulously sensitive to an exposure of its archival documents. Especially such places like central archives, which were most likely to harbour the desired material on the topic and were directly subordinated to the ministry of interior, which made them accessible only with an authorized consent.¹⁰⁵ In reality, however, the matter was not black-and-white, the access depended on a number of factors, such as the level of topic's sensitivity and the centrality of a certain archive, also the reliability of a historian, often personal liaisons, and last not least, the period of the Czechoslovak history (the early 50s were not the late 60s and the early 70s not the late 80s).¹⁰⁶

The whole process of historical unpacking of the transfer came to the precipitous end with the repressive measures taken against disobedient members of society during the first phase of the Normalization. Some 145 historians were fired from their posts after 1969 which meant virtually another decimation of the Czechoslovak historical science.¹⁰⁷

Those disconcerting historians fallen from the party's grace who were still willing to continue their craft, had to find ways how to reconcile their new situation with their everyday needs, i.e. the continuation of research hand in hand with a second unskilled job (such as Křen, Kural, Hübl, et al.). Those of them who finally accepted a state's surprising offer of emigration¹⁰⁸ (e.g.

⁹⁹Charta 77, Císařovská, Blanka, ed., and Prečan, Vilém, ed. Charta 77 : Dokumenty 1977-1989. Praha: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 2007. 3 Vol.

¹⁰⁰Usually the monthly and sometimes even more frequent. See the journal's complete online archive:

<http://scriptum.cz/cs/periodika/informace-o-charte-77>

¹⁰¹Written already after his emigration when in France as "Un Occident kidnappé, ou La tragédie de l'Europe centrale" and published soon in the The New York Review of Books in the English translation stated above.

¹⁰²Petr Pithart, "Pokus o vlast : Bolzano, Rádl, Patočka a my v roce 1979" *Svědectví* XVI/59 (1979): 445-464.

¹⁰³Danubius, "Tézy o vysídlení československých Němců" *Svědectví* XV/57 (1979): 105-122

[\[http://scriptum.cz/soubory/scriptum/svedectvi/svedectvi_1978_57.pdf\]](http://scriptum.cz/soubory/scriptum/svedectvi/svedectvi_1978_57.pdf)

¹⁰⁴In 1963, he bought an old ruined cottage house in northern Bohemia (Jizerské hory / Isergebirge), left behind by expelled Sudeten German, where he spent some of his summers and got acquainted with the local residents [Ján Mlynárik, *Causa Danubius* (Praha: Danubius, 2000), 266].

¹⁰⁵The different story would be local archives, which later in the 80s, were not subjected to the same level of surveillance, and from where finally emerged the first detailed history of the transfer's execution by Tomáš Staněk.

¹⁰⁶Jaroslav Kučera, "Česká historiografie a odsun Němců" *Soudobé dějiny* 1/2-3 (1994):365-366

¹⁰⁷See the contemporary booklet by: [Vilém Prečan, et al.], *Acta persecutionis: a document from Czechoslovakia = ein Dokument aus der Tschechoslowakei* : presented to the XIVth Internationale congress of historical sciences, San Francisco August 1975. San Francisco: [s.n.], 1975. 36 s. For the more up-to-date interpretation, see: Jacques Rupnik, "Coming to Terms with the Communist Past: The Czech Case from a Comparative Perspective" *Tr@nsit* Online October 14, 2002

¹⁰⁸For "Akce Asanace", see 3/4.2.

Prečan, Tesař, Loewenstein, et al.) had to deal with the same problems abroad, in the democratic atmosphere, though.

Coming back to Mlynárik's *Theses*. Mlynárik – hiding under the pseudonym *Danubius* – originally wrote his 29-page long article as a reacting to an older article, by Petr Příhoda,¹⁰⁹ also dealing with the transfer, published also in *Svědectví*.¹¹⁰ The *Theses* then made it – nobody seems to know how – into the *I^{er} arrondissement*, to the *Svědectví* publishing house in Paris. Tigrid cut one-third of the text off – and failed to inform the readers about it –. The cut, much damaged but still understandable, version of the *Theses* reached back to Czechoslovakia and caused a rather *passionate* exchange among its dissident intellectuals.

First intensive phase of the dispute finally covered a good number of pages in the existing samizdat journals and produced two politically divergent anthologies (bluntly speaking, a *non-communist* and a *communist* one)¹¹¹. But the real division lines leading through the dissident community followed a different logic than the political. After the first excitement subsided, the exchange continued throughout the 80s. Some of the contribution came up with extremely interesting ideas and elaborate stances, which shed only further light on the different aspect of the *Czech* understanding of the transfer.

At the end of the first excitement, the shortened *Theses* were generally refused. Though not downrightly but rather in a more differentiated way. Put very simply, one group, consisting of professional historians (R. Luža, M. Hübl, J. Křen, V. Kural *et al.*) trampled the *Theses* underfoot as a piece of *moralizing history* unable to reach standards of historical science.¹¹² Second group refused most of all only the historical conclusions drawn by Mlynárik but attempted to continue in its general direction by writing their own studies (mainly the authors writing under the collective pen name *Bohemus*: T. Brod, M. Otáhal, P. Pithart, P. Příhoda)¹¹³. And the last cluster of

¹⁰⁹Petr Příhoda (1939 - 2014), himself half-German from his mother side; one of the crucial figures of the debate.

¹¹⁰Příhoda's article ("Příběh s nedobrym koncem" might have been itself inspired by one of Mlynárik's earlier contributions to *Svědectví*. It was a 3-page long provocative letter giving the answer to an earlier survey question issued by *Svědectví* to a number of Czechoslovak intellectuals, asking their opinion about the current Czechoslovak question. Mlynárik's letter was describing difficulties of Slovaks living in the Czech part of the Federation, where after the transfer (which was the Czechs, not the Slovaks endeavor) everyone then on had to live in the constant fear from a German retaliation, which itself only pushes the Czechs – and with them alas also the Slovaks – to seek the help on the other side: from the Russians. The letter carried also Mlynárik's penname *Danubius*, which was actually given to Mlynárik by Tigrid himself, or one of Tigrid's colleagues. [On the letter, see: *Danubius*, "Milá redakcia," *Svědectví* XIV/54 (1977): 325-327]

¹¹¹Both printed as the samizdat. The liberal one – now lost – under the auspices of Charter 77, under the name *K odsunu Němců z Československa*, in 1980, 378 pages long. The communist one, also in 1980: *K dějinám česko-německých vztahů: Sborník*, 258 pages long. To make it more complicated, in the year 1990 a third – synthetic one – anthology was published, and this is the work edited by Bohumil Černý (see the note № 16), but that is only 368-page long.

¹¹²Cf. four following examples: • Radomír Luža, one of the leading figures of the exile: "[...] it is hard to keep quiet about something what is here in the USA called 'bullshit,' i.e. a bull's dirt." See: Radomír Luža, "[Letter to Pavel Tigrid]" *Svědectví* XV/58 (1979): 384 • Milan Hübl: "Such an approach leads to obscurity of problems than to rational thinking. Ambiguity of thoughts then leads to thoughtless acts. It is a tendency which appeared already in the time of Prague Spring – whose delayed offshoot is *Danubius*." See: Milan Hübl, "Glosses on *Danubius' Theses* on the Expulsion of Germans" *Svědectví* XV/58 (1979): 388 • Jan Křen: "To lead a scientifically qualified discussion about a text of such a dubious standard and motivation [...] which has been produced by *Danubius* seems to be hardly possible." See: Jan Křen, "[N.N.]" in: *K dějinám česko-německých vztahů: Sborník* (Praha: [Samizdat], 1980), 35 • Václav Kural: "Provocatively harmful [...] shallow pamphlet of the *Danubius' sort*." See: Václav Kural, "[N.N.]" in: *K dějinám česko-německých vztahů: Sborník* (Praha: [Samizdat], 1980), 33

¹¹³*Bohemus* "Stanovisko k odsunu Němců z Československa" in *Češi, Němci, odsun: diskuse nezávislých historiků*, Bohumil Černý, ed. *et al.* (Praha: Academia, 1990), 179-202

intellectuals refused it on their own way (L. Hejdánek,¹¹⁴ E. Kohák,¹¹⁵ J. Loewenstein,¹¹⁶ Zdeněk Mlynář,¹¹⁷ *et al.*

Strictly speaking, the *Theses*, in its original longer version, were not a piece of *moralizing history* as such. It was Ján Mlynárik's who was often acting as a moralizing historian, but the text itself – rushed out in two short days – had no intention to fit into the category of historical science.¹¹⁸ The *Theses* are a *provocation* by nature, and a *historical-political pamphlet* by genre. Put simply: Mlynárik's pamphlet was a piece of nearly ingenious provocation drawing conclusions which were nearly all historically wrong or inaccurate.

As such the *Theses* could not have been written in any other genre, the least of all in that of historical science.¹¹⁹ The *Theses*' success hinged mainly on three things: the impression left by Mlynárik's unrestrained eloquence; shocking comparisons exceeding the limits of bearable; and the simple coherence of its counter-narrative pushing everything into its utmost negative limits. Plus – the most important of all – that it was Tigrid and his *Svědectví* who printed the *Theses*.

If cut off of its *secondary* arguments, the original version of the *Theses*¹²⁰ display the following structure: The 29-page long text is divided into eight sub-divisions, each dedicated to a different segment pertaining to the transfer. The argumentation hinges on one historical assumption that there is a causative nexus between the post-war transfer and the misery Czechoslovakia found itself in ever since (like in 1948, the 50s, 1968, up until the current 70s).

It made only a little sense to delve deeper into *Theses*' argumentation, or to the arguments of those who answered to it, for importance of the whole issue lays elsewhere. The *Theses* can be evaluated as a breakthrough on the way to the public discussion on the transfer subject.

Within five years since 1977, Mlynárik's own life changed beyond recognition. Charter 77, whose first steps he helped to take, managed to open the door to the much suppressed civil society – which was the only platform on which Mlynárik's project could possibly succeed –, unfortunately for the dissidents, through this very door broke the secret police from the other side and cut deeply into the Chartists' lives. On the very next day after the Charta's impressive self-introduction on 6th January, they found themselves, to the large degree, in the police interrogation rooms. Charter 77 soon lost one of its first spokesperson, and the country's best thinkers, Professor Jan Patočka. Several others, V. Havel, V. Benda, J. Dienstbier *et al.*, found themselves soon in prison cells (with the sentences ranging from a few months to four years).

Mlynárik once managed to give a copy of his *Theses* to Havel, when the latter paid him a friendly visit with a group of other Chartists. Havel's reaction was – in Mlynárik's recollections,

¹¹⁴Ladislav Hejdánek, "Dopis Příteli (3. řada - 1979, dopis č.4/44)" in *Češi, Němci, odsun: diskuse nezávislých historiků*, Bohumil Černý, ed. *et al.* (Praha: Academia, 1990), 144-151

¹¹⁵Erazim Kohák, "Dopis anonymnímu příteli," *Svědectví* XV/59 (1979): 591-598

¹¹⁶Bedřich Loewenstein, "Příspěvek do diskuse" in *Češi, Němci, odsun: diskuse nezávislých historiků*, Bohumil Černý, ed. *et al.* (Praha: Academia, 1990), 355-360

¹¹⁷Zdeněk Mlynář, "Dopis Zdeňka Mlynáře redakci Svědectví" in *Češi, Němci, odsun: diskuse nezávislých historiků*, Bohumil Černý, ed. *et al.* (Praha: Academia, 1990), 167-178

¹¹⁸The text has – just to name a very few examples –, no footnotes, and only a very few and also very vague referencing to sources; there is a bundle of exclamation marks and guiding questions transposing the whole tone of the text into the sphere of agitated emotionality, etc. The *Theses* and other case gives a sufficient basis for a convincing claim that Mlynárik did not want to write the *Theses* as a piece of academic history.

¹¹⁹As a matter of fact, Mlynárik did try to transform his *Theses* into a purely historical work later on when already in Bundesrepublik (b. 1983 and 1986). The result was one of the most un-balanced works he has ever produced. He finally left it unfinished in the middle of writing, for, among other things, a shortage of historical sources [See: Ján Mlynárik, "Vyhnanie Nemcov z Československa : 1. diel Príprava (1938 - 1942)" in *Causa Danubius, TÝŽ* (Praha: Danubius, 2000), 57 - 229]

¹²⁰Mlynárik, Ján. "Tézy o vysídlení československých Němcov." In: *Causa Danubius, TÝŽ* (Praha: Danubius, 2000), 25 - 56

generally very positive. Later, Havel offered to Mlynárik a newly created post of the Charta's *librarian*, which Mlynárik politely refused with an excuse that he was fully occupied with the studying of his Sudeten Germans.

The substantial change came with the state's new strategy of *sanitizing* the society of its contentious members, generally known as *Akce Asanace* [Action Sanitation], officially approved by Minister of interior J. Obzina on the 27th December 1977.¹²¹ In the course of the next two years, more than 200 Chartists left Czechoslovakia.¹²² Some of them willingly, some of them less, and some only by force.

Despite his initial refusal, Mlynárik finally agreed to go.¹²³ However in the process of smuggling his personal historical library over the borders – since the one-way ticket did not apply to his library –, his books were accidentally intercepted by the Czechoslovak border control and subsequently traced back to the author. With his children already safely reposed in West Germany, Ján Mlynárik ended up in the provisional detention, where he finally spent 13 months. In the whole interrogatory process came to the light the whole *causa Danubius*. Among all possible accusations levied against Mlynárik in the process, he was among other threatened by the *high treason* (for the alleged advocating of the alteration of the Czechoslovak post-war borders by his *Theses*).¹²⁴ Mlynárik was finally transported to the Czechoslovak borders with Austria and left to leave. Mlynárik's Czechoslovak citizenship was terminated, and his new interim identity card issued by the West Germans stated: *staatenlos* [stateless]. As a matter of historical irony, Mlynárik finally drew much closer to the subject of his studying than he could ever think of.

3.2. Czechoslovak dissent

If we analyse the transfer discussion in 70s and 80s, we principally deal with the same problem as we saw earlier in the 60s. However, the discussion in the normalizatory times, surprisingly, helps us to understand the whole situation one step further. The Normalization brought a certain black-and-whiteness into the social atmosphere, this then helps to decipher otherwise too colourful a historical picture.

In the previous chapter, we saw the pattern that before the arrival of Normalization the critical transfer discussion was primarily a subject picked up by the Czech intellectuals, not the general public. At the same time, I tried to show that the public debate was not a small and rather marginal issue – as it is still being generally believed by historians today – but a massive issue in the awakening stage. As a matter of historical development, due to the 1968-invasion, this awakening did not see its fruition but came to nothing. “Northing” with a small but important exception: some of those organized within the Czechoslovak dissent.

Second matter which is being largely under-evaluated by the current historical writing is the unparalleled importance of the dissent for the transfer debate. There is nothing more crucial for the whole history of the debate – before the 70s or after 1989 – than the internal dissident discussion on the transfer. This importance does not lay in the great energy invested into it by the dissidents on the whole, for the transfer issue was just one among other important matters of the dissent. The real importance lays in the fact that it were exactly these very dissidents who, in turn, became a new post-1989 political elite which was shaping, first, the new Czech post-communists politics towards

¹²¹See: [Petr Blažek] “Kalendárium,” in *Charta story: příběh Charty 77 = the story of Charter 77*, Zuzana Brikcius, ed. (V Praze: Národní galerie, 2017), 19

¹²²Ibid, 17

¹²³For the broader context and also Ján Mlynárik's reasons having to do with his family, see, e.g., the Slovak 2014-documentary film “Lyrik” (Lyrik was a nickname given to Mlynárik by the State police); or: Ján Mlynárik, *Causa Danubius* (Praha: Danubius, 2000), 337-529

¹²⁴Ján Mlynárik, *Causa Danubius* (Praha: Danubius, 2000),

Germany and, second, the whole public arena. This new outer and inner politics were largely a sheer product of dissident debates of the late-70s and 80s, in both, the positive and negative sense.

Thus it was the dissident intellectuals and nobody else who inherited the whole *massiveness* of the awakening transfer debate from the 60s and carried it then after the invasion through the Normalization to the post-communist era.

Having said that, now we might turn to the main idea of this very chapter and shift the perspective. Because if it is true that the Czechoslovak dissent played such a crucial role in the transfer debate, then we have to start asking another kind of questions, namely: the questions on the character, the size and strength, of the Czechoslovak dissident movement. Said differently, the crucial idea is this: *the bigger the dissent, the stronger its impact within the society*, and vice versa. (as I show later in the next chapter, the *successes & failures* of the post-communist Czech politics concerning the Sudeten German issue were closely related to the ability of new, post-1989 dissident-politicians to present, or rather to sell their ideas to the general public; that public which emerged from the pre-1989 era completely unprepared).

There are currently two main explanatory theses which darken the understanding of the relation between dissent and general public. First is the old good *totalitarian thesis*, second the nowadays rather popular *consumer socialism thesis*. As a third one, I suggest my own solution to the problem, which I call a thesis of *yesterday's fear*.

On the first *Totalitarian thesis*. Said in one sentence, *totalitarian thesis* wants to explain the relatively little popular resistance against the normalizatory regime by pointing out to its repressive nature. The normal people – so claims the thesis – were unable to oppose Husák's regime, for it was too violent, oppressive, etc.

The problem with this thesis in respect of the Sudeten German issue is this: in Czechoslovakia, nobody ever incarcerated anyone for discussion the transfer or opening the debate about the Sudeten Germans expellees. Mlynárik is actually dramatizing it when he recalls the charges of the high treason which his captors threatened to charge him with (which would eventually open a grim prospect to his potential execution) (see p. 31). In reality, Husák's Czechoslovakia had no need to formulate any harsh policy against the transfer-challengers (those such like Mlynárik) because the transfer narrative was never seriously challenged by anybody (not in terms of individual intellectuals but of any substantial number from general public). Even among dissidents themselves, there were only a very few of those taking the position of the transfer's full refusal. After all, Mlynárik was with his *Theses* generally refused.

What happened was that the new regime kept attacking everything and everybody what challenged its claim to power. And in the process of it things got sometimes unexpectedly entangled. In Mlynárik's case, it was the threatening with the high treason. One of the saddest stories of the time was the fate of Jan Procházka.¹²⁵ StB [secret police] made against him – not for the reasons having to do with the transfer whatsoever – a recorded material taken from the tapped conversations between him and Václav Černý and then launched it publicly on the TV as a documentary piece called *Svědectví od Seiny* [Testimony from Seine] (heavily doctored by StB which presented J. Procházka as a vulgar hypocrite). J. Procházka suffered this approach smearing his good name very badly, both psychically and psychically, the illness he suffered from soon aggravated and on the 20th February 1971, he died. Milan Hübl, to take the case of another one, was

¹²⁵Petr Cajthaml, "Public relations pro Státní bezpečnost: Bezpečnostní propaganda v letech 1968 – 1971" *Sborník Archivu bezpečnostních složek*, 6 (2008): 235-236

sentence as "an ideological oppositional leader" to 6.5 years in prison in the summer of 1972.¹²⁶ J. Křen, V. Kural, were fired – with other ca. 143 professional historians – from their university teaching posts. They decided to pursue their academic research, side by side to the unskilled job, in their leisure time.¹²⁷

The similar story goes with Jan Tesař, who, being radical, got into prison – three times – and had almost died there because of the infection of appendix, during one of his prison stay. After that he decided to emigrate in 1980. Time to time, people were not so fortunate and did die. But although some today like to take these fatal cases as a bulletproof argument of the regime's deadly – "totalitarian" – nature, these accusations are vastly exaggerated.

Surprisingly enough, in comparison to other socialist states of the Eastern Block, the Czechoslovak regime of 70s and 80s was almost scrupulously sensitive to follow its legal procedures and not to break its own socialist justice.¹²⁸ There was a number of cases of dissidents being fired from jobs and taking the case to the court where they achieved a judgement in their favour.¹²⁹ (It does not mean however that the regime did not find another way how to achieve its goals in a different way, where a one judge helped, the other was willing to collaborate with the state's intentions.)

Yet, the bad things were happening: whereas Jan Tesař, and earlier before him Luděk Pachman,¹³⁰ and later on also Václav Havel, had nearly died in their prison cells, others like Pavel Wonka or Jan Patočka died in the consequences of the regime's behaviour. Though, none of these cases, or the similar ones, can be attributed to the regime's will to liquidate its political opponents physically. The politically motivated juridical murders began in Stalinist period and ended up in it. The Normalization had not much to do with the neo-Stalinist period – although it is generally being referred to as such, wrongly – but with the neo-conservative one.

Needless to say that the political representation headed by G. Husák was naturally fully aware of the destructive potential to its own power, had they started to murder its political opponents. Tellingly enough, to let die Jan Patočka (one of the country's most learned men, a foremost disciple of illustrious Edmund Husserl, let alone after the meeting with the Dutch Foreign Minister Max van der Stoep) in the consequence of the police custody,¹³¹ was one of the huge

¹²⁶Jaroslav Cuhra, *Trestní represe odpůrců režimu v letech 1969-1972* (Praha: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 1997), 67

¹²⁷Four years later, After Hübl's earlier release from prison, he and Křen signed the Charter declaration, and together with V. Kural decided to continue their old writing on the Czech-German historical relations. 1986, Křen published in the exile-publishing house his celebrated *Konfliktní společenství. Češi a Němci 1780–1918*, with V. Kural and in collaboration with German historian D. Brandes published *Integration oder Ausgrenzung, Deutschen und Tschechen 1890–1945*. The preparation of the work of Milan Hübl never came to its fruition, although he assembled a great deal of data (taken down in his own shorthand, readable to nobody else) but he died on the 28th October 1989, right before the Velvet Revolution. The aforementioned published works became the basis for the Czech broader discussion on the transfer during the 90s. (Hear the already mentioned interview with Jan Křen on *Český Rozhlas*, "Rozmluvy," November 15, 2008)

¹²⁸• Michal Kopeček, "Disidentský legalismus. Socialistická zákonnost, lidská práva a zrod právního odporu v demokratické opozici v Československu a Polsku v 70. letech" in *Šest kapitol o disentu*, Jiří Suk, et al. (Praha: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 2017), esp. p. 30 • Zdeněk Kühn, "Ideologie aplikace práva v době reálného socialismu" in *Komunistické právo v Československu. Kapitoly z dějin bezpráví*, Michal Bobek, ed., et al. (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, Mezinárodní politologický ústav, 2009), 78-79; • Jan Mervart, "Rozdílnost pohledů na československou normalizaci," in *Podoby československé normalizace: dějiny v diskuzi*, Kamil Čínátl, ed., et al. (Praha: Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů, 2017), 45 • or hear the narration of Jan Ruml's remembering on it in archive of "Paměť Národa": the record named "Praha, 15. 08. 2013 (audio)"

¹²⁹Hear, e.g., the following narrative stories from the archive of "Paměť Národa": • František Janouch: "Praha, 27.04.2017 (audio)" • Rudolf Kučera: "Praha, 30.10.2014 (audio)" • Pavel Kohout: "Praha, 05.01.2010 (audio)" • Petr Pithart: "Praha Eye Direct, 14.06.2016 (audio)"

¹³⁰Cuhra, *Trestní represe odpůrců...*, *op. cit.*, 62

¹³¹Although J. Patočka did not suffer the hearth attack when being at interrogation, nor in the very "direct" consequences of his interrogations.

political failure in the regime's own eyes (and also one of *the* reasons Charter 77 survived throughout the hard years which were to come).

On the second *consumer socialism thesis*. This accentuates the other side of the totalitarian thesis. In the Czech historiography, it became increasingly popular during the last decade, in such works as M. Pullmann's *Konec experimentu* [End of Experiment],¹³² P. Bren's *The greengrocer and his TV*,¹³³ or, e.g., on the medial platform, to name just one, in M. Spurný's and M. Kopeček's article "Dějiny a paměť komunismu v Česku" [History and memory of communism in Czechia]¹³⁴ In reality, this self-critical approach existed since the very formation of the dissent. We would find its rudiments in the idea of the "tacit agreement" between the regime and society (which is to say that the vast majority of society should have – tacitly – traded its *liberties* for *social security* provided by the state).¹³⁵

3.2.1. Yesterday's fear¹³⁶

Both previous thesis tried to answer the question from whence such a societal passivity during the times of Normalization. To my mind, they are both erroneous: the first one because of the alleged level of unbearable state's violence exerted against the Czechoslovak society; the second because of the alleged civic ignorance disinterested in the political happening. Up to a point both answers have its portion of truth in themselves, they fail when they assume the place of major explanations, though. Yet, the thesis of *yesterday's fear* wants to propose another way of thinking about the matter.

The story is this: it took some time until the neo-conservatives asserted themselves in the parliament; until they ousted the reformist; until the Czechoslovak tanks, the revolutionary guards, and the police suppressed the popular mood against the new Husák's political direction; until the process of imprisonments and investigations of the most visible oppositional figures started in the fall 1969, etc.

The post-1968 processes started, roughly, during 1971 and ended in the final "Summer of Processes" one year later in 1972. After this, the all organized opposition laid in ruins. The other processes, though already prepared by the Secret Police, were not necessary and they were therefore dropped.¹³⁷ Very important picture is brought by Jiřina Šiklová – via recollections of Sybille Plogstedt¹³⁸ –, Šiklová summed the opposition's demise the following way:

In years 1969/70, we [the opposition – VH] have not yet known [...] whether the secret police will not resort back to the repressive methods from the 50s. Naturally we were reluctant to expose ourselves to

¹³²Pullmann, Michal. *Konec experimentu: přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu*. Praha: Scriptorium, 2011. 243 s.

¹³³Bren, Paulina. *The greengrocer and his TV: the culture of communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010. xiii, 250 s.

¹³⁴Matěj Spurný a Michal Kopeček, "Dějiny a paměť komunismu v Česku" *Lidové noviny*, 9.1.2010 (příloha Orientace)

¹³⁵The author of the Tacit agreement is Zdeněk Mlynář [viz • Jiří Hájek, *Paměti* (Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 1997), 308] but the idea became extremely popular among dissidents and we find it in a number of other dissident intellectuals, such as Milan Šimečka [• Milan Šimečka, *Obnovení pořádku* (Brno: Atlantis, 1990/1979), 162; • A. J. Liehm ["The New Social Contract and the Parallel Polity", in *Dissent in Eastern Europe*, Jane Leftwich Curry, ed. (New York, Praeger 1983): 173-181]; • Erazim Kohák [• Jan Patočka: *filosofický životopis* (Jinočany: H & H, 1993 [1989]), 18]; among many others • Timothy Garton Ash ["Czechoslovakia under Ice" in *The uses of adversity: essays of the fate of Central Europe*, SAME (Cambridge: Granta Books..., 1989): 62].

¹³⁶The term "včerejší strach" is originally taken from the book name written by Josef Škrábek, but appropriated completely to my own purposes (cf. Škrábek, Josef. *Včerejší strach: jaké to bylo mezi Čechy a Němci? : a jaké to bude....* Praha: Vyšehrad, 2002. 309 s.)

¹³⁷Cuhra, Trestní represe odpůrců..., *op. cit.*, 69

¹³⁸Sybille Plogstedt, a young German revolutionary, a member of the group of *Hnutí Revoluční Mládeže*, and that time also the girlfriend of Petr Uhl

the torture of that kind. Many knew from their own families what it meant. And then, in the year 1970, came out the sentences against you [i.e. the group of “Hnutí revoluční mládeže”, that is: Plogstedt, P. Uhl, P. Šustrová, J. Bašta *et al.* – VH] where majority got sentences lasting one or two years. And then after that everybody was active again within the opposition. Such a risk was acceptable for many. You showed us the way. The professions we used to hold before were already lost anyway.¹³⁹

J. Šiklová seems to have named the main reason for breaking up the organisation of the social opposition. The processes of 1971 and even more those of the following summer 1972 led to a number of conviction, from which – crucially enough – only 20 of them were sentenced to jail with the sentence exceeding the five year.¹⁴⁰

A clearer depiction than Šiklová's is given by Jan Tesař in his 2003-study, there we read:

I will allow myself several examples from my own experience. Such as my “arrival” to Ruzyň prison house. It happened during the night from September 25th to 26th. They were escorting me throughout the stairs which were still filthy of blood from “accommodation” of the demonstrators five weeks ago. But they were still transporting me to interrogations (together with dozens of others) over the very same stairs – I do not know how long. ... What I want to say is that the repressive apparatus of “consolidation” is, in this case, in my view absolutely clearly, guilty of !first! the bestialities in their revenges on the September manifestations of 1969, !but also, second! of utilizing its consequences, the bloody stairs, as the mechanism of psychological terror – thus it is guilty of !two different! crimes. Perhaps that some would not see the second crime. My enhanced sensitivity is probably coming from the fact that I knew about that beautiful and joyful entertainment of Gottwald's boys serving at StB in 1949, who used to buy the animal blood from slaughterhouses. It is this very knowledge which provides me with certainty that in the concrete case of Ruzyň stairs in September 1969, it was not mere heedlessness or general pollution but [...] a sophisticated aim: it was no accident that the stairs had not been cleaned.

[...]

We had panic but, as it showed itself, an unwarranted fear from gallows and camps, which in that very moment were not (physically) in action, but as the spectre they were real and lively. We are ashamed to admit that it was this fear which stripped the society out of its ability to act rationally and to defend itself.¹⁴¹

The very key to the societal breakdown and the impotence to sustain the opposition further is something I want to call *yesterday's fear*. This refers to the almost tangible anxiety based on a genuine belief that with the Soviet tanks come back also the murderous practices of the 50s.¹⁴² That is the practices which were only recently brought up, on the large scale, to the public attention by such activities as the named Otta Bednářová's documentaries from 1968 (see the footnote № 63).

The whole historical irony is that since the society run away in *yesterday's fear*, it got in consequence one of the toughest regimes in the whole Eastern bloc which it did not had to have. The fact that the Czechs were leaving their positions in such a panic, from the top to the last *grocery vendor*, before the *enemy* factually attacked – first – presented the new neo-conservative government with a completely free hand to impose whatever rule it pleased (which rendered the oppositional capacity to be ineffective) and – second – put those very few who stood up to the

¹³⁹See: Sibylle Plogstedt, *V síti dějin: zatčena v Praze po roce 1968* (Brno: Doplněk, 2002 [2001]), 95

¹⁴⁰Jaroslav Cuhra, *Trestní represe odpůrců režimu v letech 1969-1972* (Praha-Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 1997), 75

¹⁴¹Jan Tesař, “V síti Státní bezpečnosti za časů ‘konsolidace’“, in *Zamlčená diagnóza, TÝŽ* (Praha Triáda, 2003), 54-55 and 84

¹⁴²The same idea is being shared also by • Cuhra, *Trestní represe odpůrců...*, op. cit., 75 • or by the classical piece of: Milan Šimečka, *Obnovení pořádku* (Brno: Atlantis, 1990), 164

regime into the worst thinkable position (of ones who were isolated, abandoned, and therefore left to the regime's full mercy).

The point I am making is not whether the Czechoslovak reform could have survived the invasion run by one of the two world's superpowers; for such ideas belongs to the realm of romantic fantasies. Nor if the society could hold against the Czechoslovak state's own monopoly of violence; which is also absurd. Needless to add that Husák's regime indeed was ready to push things further if necessary (the Revolutionary Guards did use the lethal power during the large demonstrations in Prague and Brno in September 1969;¹⁴³ the regime did have prepared more processes against the opposition in 1972, although it did not use them, for it was already unnecessary). The point I try to make is this:

Said hyperbolically with the help of a, somewhat anecdotal, Czech folk story: it reminds one of the reaction of *Kocourkov*¹⁴⁴ dwellers who when heard upon the news that the army of the Ottoman sultan marches against the city, they got so scarred – for they all grew up on stories of the merciless Turks – that they started to flee in panic to a near forest to save their lives. However because none of them wanted their household to be damaged, more than necessary, they left the city gate, the front door of their houses, and all the window opened. Those among them who questioned the wisdom of such decision and suggested to stay in the city at least up to the moment when the army is at sight and its strength can be estimated, those were laughed out as irredeemable idealist and arrant fools. When then the sultan's army – completely decimated – arrived to the city, it had just enough power to fall through the opened gate and land in the empty beds – nonetheless, before that they had thoroughly battered and bullied those few courageous ones who stayed –. Soon after, the *Kocourkov* dwellers returned back to their newly occupied city and when they saw the poor conditions of those who did not run away, they were coming to them, fatherly looking their eyes and telling them: “didn't we tell you?” And they were proud of their pragmatism.

3.2.2. German question in the daily reality

It was in this fearful atmosphere, where were people considering to take up such issues as, say, the transfer of the Sudeten Germans. Significant mistakes then make all those who tend to overestimate the regime's sensitivity over the Sudeten German transfer. There was never an official communist policy formulated against those who wanted to discuss the transfer and its legitimacy. However the theme enjoyed not a small political charge for two reasons mainly, first, still quite a recent war and, second, the fact that the Sudeten Germans, together with other expellee organisations, attained not an insignificant political position in West Germany (as I show later).

The documents broadcast by the Czechoslovak TV in the 80s convey some of this uneasy complication. First example is taken from *Televizní noviny* from 26th May 1980 and it talks about the 31st *Sudetendeutscher Tag* [Sudeten German day], held in Stuttgart:

Stuttgart, West Germany, have yesterday heard flutes and drums accompanying *Ordners* dressed in white knee socks, young men wearing daggers, members of *Burschenschafts*, and the Hitler Youth. It was the gathering of Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft introduced with great pomp, as usually. The speech was traditionally held by [Walter] Becher, the leader of this association. And it was aimed against the treaties existing between West Germany and socialist countries; against the untouchable borders of the European states and CCCP; however for the justification of the Munich dictate. Similar Becher's speeches,

¹⁴³Oldřich Tůma, *Srpen '69 : edice dokumentů* (Praha: Maxdorf, 1996), 240 and 243

¹⁴⁴The village of Kocourkov is a traditional Czech folk trope telling the foolish stories of its silly inhabitants. There are similar motives in other national literatures, such as German *Schildbürger*, or [pre-Batman] British *Gotham* dwellers, etc. (See: Hiršal, Josef, Kolář, Jiří and Grögerová, Bohumila, ed. *Kocourkov*. Praha: Státní nakladatelství dětské knihy, 1959. 168 s.)

tainted by fascist underpinning, have I been listening [i.e. the reporter – VH] in last years repeatedly. This appearance of Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft leader brought something new, though, the discontent over the circumstances that the thing of Sudeten German allies is getting less and less attention and that it is already perhaps only the Chinese who stand on their side. In short, In Becher's mind sort of general demoralization. In contrast to this, Becher could not raise complains against the presence of some very prominent sympathizers, e.g. the mayor of Stuttgart Rommel, the son of Nazi general, or the Austrian-Hungarian heir apparent, though with no throne, Otto von Habsburg. It was indeed a selected society, thus nobody will be surprised that the Landsmannschaft patron [Franz Josef] Strauss has sent the whole company of his officials, his "Strauss-mannschaft". What surprises more however is that this association of agitative kinsmen is being financially supported by the left liberal government, more so when it has sent its official greetings to Stuttgart. When drinking beer, consummation of which is here measurable to several storage tanks, the discussions were not concerned about this issue. Like if it was an obvious thing. The friendly debates were widely held in the fascist spirit.¹⁴⁵

One finds virtually the very same format of the reportage streamed annually every year, again and again, up until the regime's end. The June 11 1984 announce another, the 35th Sudeten German gathering:

The hatred of Sudetiaks [orig. in Slovak: "Sudeťákov" – VH] against Czechoslovakia, expressed usually in a hysterical form, is being known already for several decades [...] it is exactly the current government in Bonn and its very politics which calls directly upon Sudetiaks to take an action against Czechoslovakia. The highest representatives of BRD, President [Karl] Carstens and the prime minister of Bavarian government, Franz Josef Strauss, sat together under the map of truncated Czechoslovakia [i.e. the map displaying Sudetenland – VH]. On Saturday, Federal Minister of Interior [Friedrich] Zimmermann paid a visit to Sudetiaks and tried to portray them as peacemakers. These gestures coming from the leading politicians, or the representatives of clerical parties only fuel the audacity of revanchists who quite openly and publicly ask the revision of the European post-war settlement. They do not accept international treaties but call for their alleged right of return. They do not even shy from putting blame on the people of ČSSR, the Czech nation primarily, i.e. on those people on whose murdering they used to helped, for making them the so-called exiles.¹⁴⁶

The 37th gathering informs about the visitation of Bundeskanzler Helmut Kohl:

That what is being connecting them with ČSSR is best displayed by the map of truncated republic which they keep publishing diligently. It is no more than empty hopes, though. Nothing will be changed about it, not even by the yesterday appearance of Chancellor Kohl at their gathering. No changes will be brought about by the long term support by persons of such a standing as, for instance, Otto von Habsburg. And no changes will come by the today announcement of the Federal Minister of Interior Windelen, who made a claim that the Sudeten German question stays opened. Are the Sudetiaks really making alliances with anybody who is willing to stand up against current socialist Czechoslovakia? [...] Let us not underestimate their endeavours, we cannot underestimate the role played by the revanchist associations and organizations within BRD. One thing which stays sure is that we do not have to fear them, there will be no second removal of our border gateways.¹⁴⁷

The Czechoslovak TV did not report only these annual gatherings but also a broader West German trends referring to the hardly forgettable fact that 1/5 of the post-war Germany were expellees *aus dem deutschen Osten* [from the German East]. Something which would find its repercussions in the Czech-(Sudeten) German relations also after the regime's soon demise. The

¹⁴⁵ ČT archive: "Televizní noviny" (May 26, 1980)

¹⁴⁶ ČT archive: "24 hodin ve světě" (June 11, 1984)

¹⁴⁷ ČT archive: "Televizní noviny" (May 17, 1986)

following transcript is the reaction to the West German TV series *Flucht und Vertreibung* broadcast in 1981:

It is being symptomatic that BRD has never produced a film or program which would show the history of Third Reich objectively. It is almost an unknown chapter for the young generation. In contrast to which new waves of revanchism come into being one after another. As this very movie serial about which the government of Bonn keeps silent. Like if it was not a contradiction to good relations between two countries, to outcomes of Helsinki Final Act, to the common reason, or to the political realism.¹⁴⁸

To sum the examples up, the Sudeten German question was in Czechoslovakia portrayed very negatively mainly because of its existing political currency which the topic gained by the Sudeten German political influence in Bundesrepublik. In the tone, one can tell the characteristic propagandist underpinning of the day. This however means not that the thread posed by expellee organisations were completely insignificant.

It is rather a popular mistake made nowadays to assume that the transfer of the 3.000.000-strong Sudeten German minority from Czechoslovakia solved the problem out. The transfer was one of the means how to deal with the Sudeten German problem of the time – as the first chapter tries to argue – not the solution to it, since it has merely transferred the problem behind the borders. The only reason why the post-war transfer looks today – in the retrospect – as a successful project is the fact that the German Federal Republic did succeed in an almost impossible task to integrate the 12.000.000 expellees in their new homeland and to curbed their – rather understandable – rage (which had been naturally translating into their political organisations), and did not explode in the meanwhile under this immense pressure. However this did not happen before the 90s (and in the way it continues until nowadays). As such, it is this uncertainty which is audible from the hysterical communist TV news of the time and this danger which the Soviet power, together with its Western Cold-War partners, kept in check.

To sum the section up: despite no official policy against the discussing the issue of transfer, the topic itself enjoyed traditionally such a political charge that it was potentially dangerous. Czechoslovakia of 70s was a state where any deviation from the tolerated behaviour could have been seen or marked as an oppositional activity. And this was a prospect taken by any normal citizen rather cautiously.

3.2.3. Civic Aristocracy

If the idea of yesterday's fear suggests the answer to *why was the Czechoslovak dissident movement so little?*, one has to ask next the question *why was it after all?* As Šiklová tells, fact that the majority of dissenters in the early-70 got only approximately 2-year long sentences empowered her and her likes to dissent and not to retreat.

Similarly, when Havel, after his initial step back from the position of the Charter's spokesperson (given up after 5 months under StB persuasions)¹⁴⁹, was offered choice to emigrate and live at large or to stay and go to prison, he memorably – however much depressed – said to his wife: „Pět let svého života jim dám, víc ne.“¹⁵⁰ [I give them five years of my life, not more] (He got 4.5). Jan Tesař, Jaroslav Šabata, and Zdeněk Vašíček serving their sentence in Bory prison in Spring 1973, were expressing their “will to intransigence” when secretly penning down the *greeting of*

¹⁴⁸ ČT archive: “Televizní noviny“ (February 2, 1981)

¹⁴⁹ Císařovská, Prečan, eds., *Charta 77 : Dokumenty...*, *op. cit.*, 43 (D15, from May 26, 1977)

¹⁵⁰ Daniel Kaiser, *Disident: Václav Havel 1936-1989* (Praha: Paseka, 2009), 167

Czechoslovak political prisoners to the 1973 World Congress of Peace Forces held in Moscow (which led to an additional criminal process staged against them).¹⁵¹ In 1973, Ivan Martin Jirous ate the middle part of the communist daily *Rudé Právo* in order to outline how eventually the general public should deal with the communists. Unfortunately, a man sitting next to him happened to be a Secret Police major in retirement and Jirous got ten months in prison, other three of his colleagues, Eugen Brikcius, Jaroslav Kořán, and Jiří Daníček, eight.¹⁵² Jirous, Brikcius, and other like-minded, tried to live like if the Normalization did not exist, which naturally led them to an opened conflict with the regime, and through this way into the opened arms of the Charter's community.¹⁵³

The answer to the aforementioned question, *why at all?*, is well formulated by the perspective of Schopenhauerian pessimistic view of human will. Said with an elegant paraphrase by Albert Einstein, we face the following thought: "Der Mensch kann wohl tun, was er will, aber er kann nicht wollen, was er will" [A man can do what he wants, but not will what he wants]¹⁵⁴ Now, how does this Schopenhauer's pessimistic voluntarism relate to the Czechoslovak dissent? If one takes a closer look at the people constituting the dissident movement, one has to admit that those people – with all necessary exceptions – represent the privileged societal cluster *none plus ultra*.

The common approach when analysing the Czechoslovak dissent is to mark them as intellectuals. They were almost all intellectuals, so far is the label correct, but they have something else on the top of it, something which privileged them from other intellectuals. Rather simply but quite right is the dissent depicted by Gil Eyal who depict them as the *humanist intellectuals*.¹⁵⁵ Still the best analysis comes from the 1991-essay by Ivo Možný. Možný noted that dissidents were having at their disposal something extra when one compares them to other societal parts, namely the *cultural & social capital* (in the sense of Pierre Bourdieu).¹⁵⁶

In my view, I find useful the following three-fold schema, according to which are the dissidents categorizable to one, or more than one, of the three following characteristics:

- 1) a vast "cultural & social capital". The capital which they inherited either through their
 - 1.1) family background¹⁵⁷ or
 - 1.2) through educational background,¹⁵⁸

¹⁵¹ Jaroslav Šabata, "Moje (politické) pobývání s Chartou" in *I Marx i Havel: vybrané texty z let 1990-2010*, TÝŽ (Praha: Masarykova demokratická akademie, 2013), 114

¹⁵² Ivan Martin Jirous, *Pravdivý příběh Plastic People* (Praha: Torst, 2008),

¹⁵³ Eugen Brikcius in "Paměť Národa": "Praha, 20.09.2016 (audio)"

¹⁵⁴ Albert Einstein, "Mein Glaubensbekenntnis", 1932, [I. Teil] [a gramophone record] (see: <https://www.einstein-website.com>. Or simply: Youtube)

¹⁵⁵ Acc. to Gil Eyal's interpretation, it were only these humanistic scholars who were able to withstand the regime's general punishment which consists in removing dissidents from their qualified jobs, namely the dissidents once being fired, they – as proper humanistic scholars – took books to their unqualified jobs and kept reading and studying. [Gil Eyal, *The origins of post-communist elites: from Prague Spring to the breakup of Czechoslovakia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) 62 and esp. the footnote № 1 (belonging to the chapter 3, pp. 215-216

¹⁵⁶ Prof. Možný simplifies Bourdieu's original concept in the following manner:

For the first orientation, after some simplification, we can [...] say that the source of cultural capital is a certain ability [...] of handling informations, especially those which are contained in symbols. [...] This ability is possible to accumulate, to store them for a later usage. That is to transform them into the capital. Which generates the interest rate but itself does not diminish. On the contrary, the social capital derives from the ability to create complex fabric of social nets, to understand how do these fabrics work and to use this knowledge to one's own benefit. Especially by putting into strategically advantageous position ourselves and our close ones. Also this ability can be accumulated. [...]. [viz Ivo Možný, *Proč tak snadno...* (Praha: Slon, 1991), 31]

¹⁵⁷ 1.1) family background:

a) From old non-Socialist families, could be named a few following: Václav Havel & Ivan Havel, Ivan Medek, Pavel Rychetský, Jiří Stránský, Tomáš Halík, and later on also e.g. the dissident children, such as Martin Palouš, Jáchym Topol, Ondřej Němec, Jiří Dienstbier, jr. etc.

b) Socialists: From those having the Socialist family background could be named: Rudolf Slánský, jr., Petr Ptihart, Jan Urban, Jiří Ruml, Anna Šabatová, Martin Milan Šimečka, and also in his own way František Janouch et. al.

¹⁵⁸ 1.2) educational background:

• 1.3) or by belonging to the very social elite already during the 60s.¹⁵⁹

• 2) or they were having the – classical Greek – *Muses* on their sides.¹⁶⁰

• 3) And often, though not always, many of them were having a serious *stigma* of the reformists or anti-socialists from the 60s.

It is of course possible to find many persons non-fitting the pattern of “privileged ones”. There were people, such Augustin Navrátil, Tomáš Hradílek, Václav Malý, or – in a way – also – Ján Mlynárik, and others. Inspiration of these for joining the dissent came from different directions. And there were of course ever incalculable *Radicals & Tricksters* which do not fall in (such as Petr Uhl, Jan Tesař, Jan Palach & Jan Zajíc, Pavel Wonka, or for instance Petr Cibulka).

The question really is how difficult was it to step from a normal opposition to the dissent. The permeability between these clusters was not so easily trespassable as it might look like at first sight. Let us take a short illustrative example of Tomáš Hradílek.¹⁶¹ Hradílek, having been disgusted by the post-1968 atmosphere, immediately after that he heard about Charter 77 declaration, he took Zlaté Stránky (telephone address book), found the names of some officially damned and disgraced Chartists (for they still had their telephones, a privilege soon ruled out by the state), namely Jiří Hájek and František Kriegel, then took a train from his little Moravian village and made an attempt to visit them in their Prague homes. Since the house of J. Hájek was swarming with the secret police on that day, he visited F. Kriegel, and with the help of his wife, Riva Kriegelová, finally became one of the signatories.¹⁶² This story is so interesting because it shows – in small – how un-spontaneous was it to become a signatory. There were so many things which could went wrong. F. Kriegel and his wife were of course initially very suspicious towards T. Hradílek. The dissidents did welcomed everybody to join their struggle but it was not the same thing to be accepted among them.

a) By the special educational background do I refer to those who were not only educated in universities but having an access to the very top inspirational sources such Jan Patočka, Josef Lukl Hromádka (in case of Nová Orientace), or pupils of Zvěřina-Mádr tandem, etc. Here would belong Jiří and Dana Němec, Daniel Kroupa, Julius Tomin, Radim Palouš, Jan Sokol etc. From evangelical circles Jakub Schwarz Trojan, Ladislav Hejránek, Milan Balabán, Miloš Rejchrt, Jan Šimsa, Alfréd Kocáb and also e.g. Svatopluk Kárásek et. al. Her own place would have here also Jiřina Šiklová

b) The other big group would constitute here the students going through the elite Socialist schooling who were becoming public persons in 60s., many of them were named in the chapter two.

¹⁵⁹In the social elite of the 60s we would find many of the names from above, journalists, cultural figures, public intellectuals, etc.

a) The younger and middle generation, such as: Jiří Dienstbier, Luboš Dobrovský, Otta Bednářová, Milan Hübl, Jan Štern, Bedřich Utitz, Antonín Liehm, Ludvík Vaculík, Jan Procházka, Karel Kosík, Milan Šimečka, Jaroslav Šabata, Pavel Kohout & Václav Havel, Rudolf Battěk, and many others.

b) And there would belong also the old elite: Jan Patočka, Václav Černý, Božena Komárková, Milan Machovec, but also Josef Zvěřina & Oto Mádr, Zdeněk Bonaventura Bouše etc. And old Socialist political elite: Gertruda Sekaninová-Čákrťová, Jiří Hájek, Zdeněk Mlynář, Věněk Šilhán, Jaroslav Šabata, František Kriegel.

¹⁶⁰ Concerning the point of Muses, not only has the Charter 77 movement its origin in the process with independent musicians (I. M. Jirous, Vlastislav Brabec, Svatopluk Kárásek, and Pavel Zajíček [see, e.g. Václav Havel a Karel Hvizďala, Dálkový výslech: rozhovor s Karlem Hvizďalou (Praha: Melantrich, 1990), 116]. But also, more importantly, the Charter 77 was to a large degree a “Musical phenomenon”, which is a much to forgotten point, recently brought up back to light by Eugen Brikcius [to see dozens of names of artists signed on the Charter 77 declaration, see Eugen Brikcius, “Sen o Chartě” in Charta story: příběh Charty 77, Zuzana Brikcius, ed. (V Praze: Národní galerie, 2017), 11 – 13]. Just to name very few of artists in opposition: Eugen Brikcius, Václav Havel, Pavel Kohout, in a way also Jaroslav Seifert, Jiří Gruša, Arnošt Lustig, Josef Topol, Karol Sidon, Milan Uhde, Jiří Kolář, Alexander Kliment, Egon Bondy, Vlasta Chramostová, Pavel Landovský, Marta Kubišová, Dominik Tatarka, Eva Kantůrková, Ludvík Vaculík, Ivan Klíma, Jaroslav Hutka, Vlastimil Třešňák, but also Rudolf Battěk (e.g. with his musical aphorisms) and many others.

¹⁶¹ As another point in case could easily serve the story of Václav Malý and his way to the Charter through Ivan Medek and Ladislav Hejránek, see Jonathan Bolton, Worlds of dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe, and Czech culture under communism (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2012), 183

¹⁶² Tomáš Hradílek in “Paměť Národa”: Lipník nad Bečvou, 29. 09. 2011 (audio)

Fortunately for him, T. Hradílek, although educated technically (in the field of agriculture) unlike most of other dissidents, was intellectually brilliant, a great speaker, and thoroughly determined to resist the normalizatory regime for its “anti-civic character”.¹⁶³ To repeat myself, everybody could be part of the opposition in one way or another according to one’s wish but to get oneself involved into the dissident structures was a much more complicated matter.

Let us consider last two illustrative examples. Example № 1: When Julius Tomin (*1938) decided not to vote in elections, and later not to enter the compulsory military service, both in early 60s (for his refusal of the military service, he served 3 months in prison), he did it solely on behalf of the reading Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, his ideas on pacifism, most concretely Tolstoy’s view of state as institutionalized violence.¹⁶⁴ Example № 2: From the prison (1971 - 1974), Rudolf Battěk were writing letters to his family, where we read, in his singular style, that he made himself his prison cell an ashram, by which he thought a spiritual hermitage where he trained himself different meditation techniques.¹⁶⁵

The point these two examples intend to illustrate is the *pre-condition* for the mentioned activities. In other words, what does it presupposes to arrive at the *will* to prefer Tolstoy’s ideas over a prison sentence (although a short one) in the first case, and to be able to pursue a meditative self-training, in the second one. When thinking about J. Tomin, there was a whole bundle of coinciding people, decisions, activities, and events which after all led Tomin to fall for Tolstoy’s pacifism. In his case, the decisive factor was played by his teacher, a Russian she-immigrant who introduced him into reading Tolstoy in the native Russian. The whole adoption of Tomin’s early pacifism took years to develop and involve much of energy, impulses, encouragement etc. of his broader environment, beginning with his teachers, his family etc. Continuing in this way, Tomin later landed, through the contacts with professor Milan Machovec, in the influence sphere of the pensioned professor of philosophy J. Patočka and via this way, such as many others, he found his way to the Charter, and then to emigration.¹⁶⁶

R. Battěk political and civic ripening has its own history. What is interesting about his prison meditative praxis is its link with the crucial issue of dissident existence: the grim prospect of the imprisonment. “Sometimes I think of whether I am already mature enough for going to prison. I fear that.” opens Ludvík Vaculík his famous feuilleton on the courage.¹⁶⁷ Be it E. Brikcius who, when being in prison, writes his hilarious piece on *Lenin v Praze, mýtus a skutečnost* [Lenin in Prague, myth and reality] as an article to a local prison magazine;¹⁶⁸ be it Milan Šimečka scribbling his classical work on Normalization, *Obnovení pořádku*,¹⁶⁹ [Restoration of order] in between little pauses when operating his excavator at a construction where he worked to make his living; be it V. Havel writing his thoughts encoded as the letters to his wife Olga;¹⁷⁰ or be it “Magor” Jiřous writing his unparalleled *labutí písně* [Swan songs] in four years between 1981 – 1985 in three different prison houses.¹⁷¹

One does not have to take at face value J. Zvěřina’s short, *tongue-in-cheek*, utterance at the *Letná plain* in November ‘89, where he told the cheering crowd that they, political prisoners (in his case 1952 – 1965), were happy to pay the price of prison for a good cause. Surely being a political

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Julius Tomin in “Paměť Národa”: “Praha, 17.11.2016 (audio)”

¹⁶⁵ Rudolf Battěk and Jiřina Rybáčková, ed., *Jako Červenej karkulák : dopisy z vězení* ([Praha]: Gallery, 2002),

¹⁶⁶ Julius Tomin in “Paměť Národa”: “Praha, 17.11.2016 (audio)”

¹⁶⁷ Ludvík Vaculík, “Poznámky o statečnosti” *Zpravodaj* [an exile periodical based in Zürich] 12/4 (1979): 1

¹⁶⁸ Eugen Brikcius in “Paměť národa”: “Praha, 20.09.2016 (audio)”

¹⁶⁹ Milan Šimečka, *Obnovení pořádku : příspěvek k typologii reálného socialismu* (Köln: Index, 1979), 12

¹⁷⁰ Havel, Václav and Lopatka, Jan, ed. *Dopisy Olze: červen 1979 - září 1982*. Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers, 1985. 474 s.

¹⁷¹ Jiřous, Ivan Martin. *Magorovy labutí písně*. München: PmD, 1986. 102 s.

prisoner was not fun (although there were great many of hilarious moments clearly discernible from the dissidents' narrations). The point is that these, and the similar stories are the division line between the *civic aristocracy* and the other normal Czechoslovak citizens. The thing which became clear to anybody who considers how many years, and teachers, and one's own energy does it take to build one's *will* to want to write, or to meditate or to smuggle illegal political texts out of the prison.

Seen from this standpoint, the dissident activities were not irrational, for they had been embedded into a broader net of their values and life philosophy, their cultural and social capital. But this which had its own rationality for dissidents would have been an act of arrant irrationality for those having no sufficient skills as a buffer against the state's power. Dissidents were much different and it is this difference which is meant by the term *civic aristocracy*.

3.3. Conclusion

Third chapter is divided into two parts, the first (3.1.) is rather a story, it focuses to the endeavours of Ján Mlynárik whose fate – up to a point – usefully resembles all main points of the second analytical part (3.2.).

Second analytical part attempts to take a broader view and to explain the methodological frame behind the Czechoslovak dissent. Its main idea is that there was a mutual correlation between the strength of the dissent and the strength of the transfer debate. The claim is built on the idea pondered in the previous chapter two, that the public debate on the transfer was massively awakening within the Czech society prior to the August invasion during the 60s and the dissidents were the only inheritors of it in the 70s.

Following this logic further, the section 3.2., asks the question of why was the Czechoslovak dissent such a – relatively – little group within the 15 million-strong republic? I consider two theses (the *totalitarian* and the *consumer socialism* one) just to refute them and formulate my own *yesterday's fear thesis* instead. *Yesterday's fear thesis* stands on rather a simple idea that the reason why Czechoslovak society did flee Husák's normalizatory regime was – not its oppressive character, nor the consumerist attitude of the Czechoslovak citizens but rather – the genuine persuasion that the Bolshevik murderous techniques of the 50s – which had popped up onto the public light only recently before – are coming back. Although it was a miscalculation, the people – apart to the minor minority of the dissidents – fled massively their civil responsibilities and, as a matter of historical irony, got one of the toughest communist regime in Central Europe. This paradox – illustrated by the story of Kocourkov dwellers (see p. 37) – is being best debunked by the famous *Thomas Theorem* which states: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."¹⁷² Said clearly, that what broke the backbone of the Czech popular resistance against the Normalization was an imagined fear.

The last important point of the analytical part follows the further rumination over the question why when the majority run away, the dissidents did not? They did not because they belonged to a group of *civic aristocracy*. My label of *civic aristocracy* wants to designate those

¹⁷² The full text of W. I. Thomas goes the following way:

For his [human's – VH] immediate behaviour is closely related to his definition of the situation, which may be in terms of objective reality or in terms of a subjective appreciation - "as if" it were so. Very often it is the wide discrepancy between the situation as it seems to others and the situation as it seems to the individual that brings about overt behaviour difficulty. To take as extreme example, the warden of Dannemora prison recently refused to honor the order of the court to send an inmate outside the prison walls for some specific purpose. He excused himself on the ground that the man was too dangerous. He had killed several persons who had the unfortunate habit of talking to themselves on the street. From the movement of their lips he imagined that they were calling him vile names, and he behaved as if this were true. If man define situations as real, they are real in their consequences. [William Isaac Thomas and Dorothy Swaine Thomas, *The child in America: Behavior problems and programs* (New York: Knopf, 1928), 572]

members of Czechoslovak society who behaved according to the ideal of the modern *citizenship*, and they continued to do so even against the odds of regime's persecutions. When one looks at those people closer, one sees that they were almost all exceptional: either by their cultural & social capital, kiss of Muses, or stigma they carried from the past (see pp. 39-40).

Chapter 4: DEMOCRATIC REALPOLITIK

The Velvet Revolutions in Central Europe catapulted former dissidents into highest political posts. The immediate post-1989 events, cheerfully welcomed by almost everybody, followed the slogan “Coming back to Europe”. The Czechoslovak case is often being described as probably the most successful post-communist transformation in the whole region. Put by Jacques Rupnik: “Nowhere in post-Soviet Eastern Central Europe has decommunization (both legal and rhetorical) gone further than in Czechoslovakia (and later in the Czech Republic).”¹⁷³ Jiří Přibáň: “In contrast to [...] Poland or Slovakia, the Czech Republic introduced the lustrations [extraordinary legal measures against the former communist official] already in 90s; introduced the largess physical restitutions in the post-communist bloc; rehabilitated and recompensed political prisoners; and opened archives of the secret police, etc.”¹⁷⁴ Stanislav Holubec: “As the only post-communist country, we have introduced return of property nationalized after the year 1948, the so-called restitutions.”¹⁷⁵

A lot have been written about the transformation of the Czechoslovak economics and Václav Klaus’ way. Soon came new problems, such as the abrupt dissolution of the Czecho-Slovak Federation. The “Privatisation”, and during the Socialist times the virtually unknown unemployment. The arriving problems were at the time skilfully summed up by Petr Robejšek:

When measured by OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – VH], Czechoslovakia had 3, 4% adults living under the minimum living standard in 1988. Germany had 9, 9%, France 15, 7%, and England 18, 2%. Some of the Western countries display continuously for years the unemployment rate around 15% but one cannot call them politically unstable. The population of Eastern Europe was almost overnight confronted with the difficulties of the hitherto almost unknown problem of the unemployment. As a consequence even only the half of the West European unemployment rate constitutes here a precarious social burden. Easter Europe is, also in this sense, “coming back to Europe” and its consequence is the political instability.¹⁷⁶

In terms of the Czech-Sudeten-German problems, the events of 1989 seemed to have given almost everybody, the Czechs, the Germans, and also the Sudeten Germans, the hope that thing will go reasonably well.

4.1. The Czech new German politics

As we saw in the previous chapters, after the invasion of 1968, there was no *public* debate on the Sudeten German issue. Yet, as the previous chapter’s section, 3.2.2., showed, the official public space of communist Czechoslovakia was annually filled up with expressions of harsh criticism on behalf of the Sudeten Germans. However, it would be wrong to assume that in 1989, 45 years after the war, there were any substantially strong feelings felt in favour of the transfer. The Sudeten Germans had a difficult standing in the Czech eyes, that is completely true, and there were of course a lot of respective resentments, but to describe the societal mood as anti-Sudeten German is to my mind a false interpretation.¹⁷⁷ False but nonetheless very much believed by the current historians. In

¹⁷³ Jacques Rupnik, “Coming to Terms with the Communist Past: The Czech Case from a Comparative Perspective” Tr@nsit Online October 14, 2002

¹⁷⁴ Karel Hvizďala and Jiří Přibáň, *Hledání dějin: o české státnosti a identitě: 883 - 1918 - 2018 : rozhovor* (Praha: Univerzita Karlova, nakladatelství Karolinum, 2018), 221

¹⁷⁵ Stanislav Holubec, *Výměna elit: sociologické aspekty tzv. sametové revoluce* (Praha: Futura, 2002), 10

¹⁷⁶ Petr Robejšek, *Obrana bez armády* (Praha: Nadas-AFGH, 1992), 35-36

¹⁷⁷ In his book on the Czech media in the 90s, Stanislav Holubec points out rightly that the two peaks of the Czech anti-Germanism happened in the early year of 1992 and 1997 (in both cases in relation to the bilateral contracts between

reality, it is rather impossible to tell what exactly should have been the Czech position on the transfer or the Sudeten Germans because there were not one, nor two, nor three but many different standings on it.

The key, I believe, is to be searched for in the vast de-politicisation of the masses and the devastation of civil society throughout the communist, and esp. the normalizatory period. The point being made is that: it was not only Charter 77 but also the so-called Anti-Charter which was not taken seriously by the general population.¹⁷⁸ Put differently, the citizens who drew back to their privacy, did not risk the open conflict with the regime, but it does not mean that they would necessarily buy into the official propaganda. Said in one sentence, it is very easy to build a picture of the anti-Sudeten German stance in the post-communist Czech[o-Slovak] Republic, for in the ten million strong land there is by definition hundreds of political speeches (public expressions, written documents, TV material etc.) which might prove the point. Nonetheless, one should not take the popular belief about the strong popular anti-Sudeten German stance at the face value. More than anything else the topic was in-significant to the masses, since almost nobody has cared about the issue in the previous 45 years, and the new generation, which grew up in the meanwhile, did not care about it as well. This of course does not mean that these un-interested people did not speak their mind when asked what did they think about it (, for the citizen in modern times has to have his political opinion always.) And it was this – together with the political game run by the oppositional parties (such as the communist, *Sládek's Republicans*, etc.) – which created the picture of the general anti-Sudeten German atmosphere.

Importantly enough, the topic itself became very soon one of the *shibboleths* of the new Czech politics. It fuelled it and gave it its new charge. Not only on the Czech side, also among Sudeten Germans themselves. And through them it became – in an intricate way I show in a moment – a political issue for the whole German Bundespolitik.

The new conception of Czech German politics towards Sudeten Germans was coined by the former dissidents. The first phase lasted at about two years: between the December 1989 and, approximately, the first Czechoslovak-German treaty on the *Good-neighbourly Relations and Friendly Co-operation*, signed in the February 1992. Its main architects were President Havel, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic (within the Federation)¹⁷⁹ Petr Pithart, Foreign Ministers Jiří Dienstbier. Very important role was played by President's advisers, such as Ivan Medek and Karl Schwarzenberg, and soon esp. by a new ambassador to Germany, Jiří Gruša. Not an insignificant political support was provided by men as Milan Uhde, Jaroslav Šedivý, Luboš Dobrovský, Pavel Rychetský, Daniel Kroupa, Václav Benda *et al.*

The new conception could be characterized as *a belatedly attempted repentance and apology for the transfer on the national level*; whereas the term apology had in itself always the tension between those who wanted to apologize a) for the transfer itself (i.e. that it happened) and b) only for the crimes committed and the pain inflicted on the Sudeten Germans; importantly enough, none

ČR [ČSRF] and BRD). (viz Stanislav Holubec, *Ještě nejsme za vodou: obrazy druhých a historická paměť v období postkomunistické transformace* [Praha: Scriptorium, 2015], 145 and 147). What is easily visible are big cases covered by media (such as demonstration of “couple of dozen people“ in the occasion of Bundeskanzler Kohl signing the 1997 *Czech-German Declaration* in Prague [Jiří Dienstbier, *Od snění k realitě: vzpomínky z let 1989-1999* {Praha: NLN, 1999}, 300], in-famous extravagances made by MPs – *Sládek's Republicans* – Josef Krejza and Rudolf Šmucr at the act of piety in Terezín in 1994; and one would find other examples.). What is missing from the picture is what has *not been* happening, namely any serious anti-(Sudeten) Germanic popular moods expressed.

¹⁷⁸Michal Pullmann, “Násilí a sametová revoluce” in *Co byla normalizace?: studie o pozdním socialismu*, Pavel Kolář and Michal Pullmann (Praha: NLN, 2016), 89

¹⁷⁹The Czechoslovak Prime Minister was of course Marián Čalfa, an unlimited administrator, with no real political power, though, due to his previous political stigma.

of these two groups had a will to commit themselves into restitutions, financial compensations, or even territorial concessions. Put differently the new politics was conceived as a noble gesture untainted by anything so ignoble as, e.g., the money, or the material gains.

The first step was done by not-yet a president Havel when sending a letter of apologize to German Bundespräsident Richard von Weizsäcker in October 1989. Not two month later, President Weizsäcker read from the letter – with Havel’s preceding consent – in his public presidential Christmas speech.¹⁸⁰ And shortly before his presidential election, Havel did repeat his stand for the Czechoslovak TV. And the first public debate on the transfer came into being. The time was 45 years after the war.

In Havel’s understanding of the transfer, there was not much space for the security argument (as described in the first chapter), he seems to have seen the transfer solely as a revengeful injustice. In his article from March 1993, Havel tried to encapsulate his position for the general public:

I condemn the post-war transfer of Sudeten German as such. I believe that crimes should be punished by courts after the investigations of the individual guilt and its subsequent classification according to the existing juridical code. The forced expulsions of people from their homes based on their national identity I find immoral. It is a typical totalitarian practice, characteristic of regimes as that of Hitler or Stalin. A big part of our German neighbours accepted Hitler’s ideology, they were betraying their homeland, and part of them were committing crimes (expulsions included) on Czechs. That, however, does not mean that we had the right to behave the very same way after the war. First we adopted the totalitarian practices and subsequently paid the high price ourselves. The transfer was the beginning of communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia. It created necessary conditions for it, mental as well as real ones: the communist ministers of agriculture and interior were consciously and systematically building their electoral base with it. But if it is possible to explain the transfer, up to a point, as a lapse tantamount to the atmosphere of time, then the violence and bestialities which were taking place cannot be excused by any means. The Potsdam Conference recognized the transfer which was already under way as an unavoidable fact. And as such it bestowed it with its own sort of legal backing. The initiative was not coming from it, though. The only one who really gained from it was obviously Stalin.¹⁸¹

However it was not the president to whom belonged the sharpest critical words pronounced over the transfer. Milan Uhde, the Culture Minister (1990 – 1992), appeared in March 1990 on the TV saying:

In Kr-pole [“Brno – Královo Pole”, the place Uhde’s family used to live – VH], there was certainly no mood in favour of Nazis. On the contrary [...] those people had enough of the common sense to be able to differentiate. However the transfer decree differentiated not. It was simply the deportation. And I cannot do otherwise than to appeal to the international definition of genocide. There is being said that the mass deportation belongs among the genocidal acts. Nowhere there is being said that one genocide can be explained or justified by another preceding genocide. Even if it were a larger, deeper genocide, and so on.

I am convinced that genocide is genocide. And this is a moral debt with which we have to come to terms. I feel it myself somehow very personally, without references to those practical issues. [...] to my mind this has not yet been reflected here [in the Czech lands – VH] enough, it has not yet been spoken out. And this is that what we, as intellectuals, owe [to the public – VH]. This reflection, this truth, or how do you want to call it be it more pathetic or less pathetic, it is simply here. [...] Simply, this has to be said. It was said by Danubius, our friend Ján Mlynárik, once upon a time in the dissent, and the reaction to it was bitter that time inside of the dissent. Not to speak of the reaction outside of the dissent. That question was never taken seriously, never finished. And now it is being wrapped into new emotional clothing.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Daniel Kaiser, *Prezident: Václav Havel 1990-2003* (Praha: Paseka, 2014), 152

¹⁸¹ Rozhovor Václava Havla s Respektem, “Jsou křivdy, které nelze napravit” *Respekt* 9 (March 2, 1992)

¹⁸² ČT archive: “Klub Netopýr: Sousedé z druhé strany” (March, 1990)

Less emotional and explicit, with the stronger sense for the historical context were expressions and activities of P. Pithart and J. Dienstbier. The latter was on the 13th November 1992, in the Federal Assembly defending the 1992–Czechoslovak-German treaty with the following words:

If we want to step into the family of free nations with honour, we must not shy away from the truth about ourselves. Also we have not always behaved as we should have. [...] In case we request or insist that others accept the consequences of their guilt, then it has to be also us who let their conscience to speak truly.¹⁸³

Even the Czechoslovak TV, in contrast to the communist customs prior to 1989, was at the beginning of the 90s broadcasting its reports in quite a different tone [though later it went worse again]:

The representatives of the Bavarian and federal government have visited today the main gathering within the 41st Sudeten German Days. Sudeten Germans has long ago given up the revenge and retaliation. Instead they appealed to the idea of partnership of free nations and nationalities within free Europe. Current Sudeten German Days were for the first time attended by guests from DDR and ČSR. Bavarian Prime Minister Max Streibl [...] has acknowledged principal changes in the relationships between ČSR and BRD [...]. This teamwork was valued by the Speaker of Sudeten German Homeland Association Franz Neubauer. Who, together with Max Streibl, highlighted the words of Václav Havel on behalf of the Sudeten German transfer which created a platform for the mutual understanding and reconciliation. Franz Neubauer mentioned among other things that Sudeten German Homeland Association would welcome if ČSR distanced herself from the decrees of Dr Edvard Beneš, which were the basis for the transfer of ca. 3.000.000 of Germans from ČSR.¹⁸⁴

4.2. Czech politics of withdrawal

The whole historical problem of Germany and its expellees, no matter how crucial, must be here described only in the next two pages.

First, post-war Germany had to integrate 13.000.000 expellees, which constituted one fifth of its then-population. These expellees and refugees in West Germany – East Germany is another story – found soon their own political representation exerting their political will onto the West German post-war politics. The history of West Germany during the Cold War is not only the history of the de-nacification but also of the integrating a great number of these new un-satisfied citizens who felt, only naturally, to be victims of the transfer's injustice.

The communist Czechoslovakia was always aware of these revisionist tendencies from their West neighbour and this led to mutual tensions between the two states (esp. with Bavaria where after the war ended up ca. 1.000.000 of the Sudeten Germans).

The West German politics naturally had to answer to expellees' feelings. And although one can designate the West German politics as relatively reasonable after WW2, one can be hardly surprised that its politics was full of this ambivalence.

Best is this ambivalence seen in Helmut Kohl's political praxis. The German Bundeskanzler, since 1982 running the CDU/CSU government was – up to a point – captive of the Sudeten German

¹⁸³ Jiří Dienstbier, *Od snění k realitě: vzpomínky z let 1989-1999* (Praha: NLN, 1999), 294-295

¹⁸⁴ ČT archive: "Deník ČST" (March 6, 1990)

interests (or rather he was captive of paying the lip-service to it. And the very same trouble applies, of course, to all Bavarian prime ministers)¹⁸⁵.

More than sufficient illustration is displayed by the German federal elections since 60s, if not since the very beginning in 1949. What is being shown by its results is the considerable equality of the CDU/CSU and SPD votes. To cut the long story short: any radical refusal of the expellee agenda made by CDU/CSU would necessarily mean their political suicide and self-removal from the government.

The whole puzzle, which took a little while to the new dissident politics to understand, was the following German *double bondage*: Sudeten German support for the Bavarian CSU was as unexpendable as support of CSU for the CDU party. Put the other way around, CDU could not rule without the Bavarian CSU, which was however answerable – to a certain extent – to its Sudeten German population. As a consequence, the German Bundeskanzler was either compelled to play the ambivalent politics (to appease the claims of the *Flüchtlinge und Vertriebene*), or to resign its chancellorship at once and hand the rule over to his SPD competitor.

Unfortunately for the Sudeten Germans themselves, the Czech reconciliatory politics came in the wrong moment when the government of CDU/CSU was in power. This timing sets out of the game the German left and liberals – esp. the Social Democrats –, who were traditionally oriented, first, towards the Czech left liberal dissident intellectuals and, second, against its own inner German *Vertriebenenpolitik*. Said bluntly, the Sudeten German standing in the Bundespolitik was too strong under the CDU/CSU support. Had the SPD government been in power, the Sudeten Germans would have gotten much better position for engaging in dialogue with the Czech side.

To illustrate the situation further, on the 19th March 1995, Günter Verheugen, a leading SPD politician of that time, appeared on the Czech TV and put the matter clearly on public:

The whole debate [on the compensation of the Czech victims of the Nazi forced labour which went around at that time – VH]¹⁸⁶ lasts so long because the Federal Government stands under the pressure of CSU. And CSU itself stands under the pressure of a radical wing within Sudeten German Landsmannschaft. It revolves around a small radical minority within Germany – really small – which is influential within CSU, and therefore also here in Bonn. The Chancellor is personally responsible for the link: *no compensation of [Czech] victims of Nazism without [some concession] for Sudeten German Landsmannschaft*. And he is therefore also responsible for untying this knot.¹⁸⁷

According to the very same historical logic, after the CDU/CSU lost its leadership and Helmut Kohl was exchanged by the socialist chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, the whole Czech-Sudeten German dispute were rather quickly quelled. Not surprisingly led the early steps of Bundeskanzler Schröder to the annual expellee gathering *Tag der Heimat* of 2000 where he presented a speech – rejecting the hitherto direction of German *Vertriebenenpolitik*.¹⁸⁸ Expellees' influence did not cease to exist by this completely. But it went through a significant transformation. By the year 2000 however, the Czech-Sudeten German reconciliation project from the early-90s – once envisaged and pushed forward by the Czech president and other dissidents-politicians – was already a long-time a forgotten issue.

¹⁸⁵See, e.g., interview with Eva Hahn "Sudeten Dialogues Martin D. Brown and Dr. Eva Hahn : Left-wing understanding..." *Central European Review: the fortnightly journal of Central and East European politics, society and culture*, [electronic journal] 3/167 (May 2001), (see the footnote № 16)

¹⁸⁶The discussion which broke out soon after the signing of the first 1992 - Czech-German Treaty

¹⁸⁷ČT archive: "21 – neděle" (March 19, 1995)

¹⁸⁸3.9.2000, Rede von Bundeskanzler Gerhard Schröder anlässlich des 50. Jahrestages der Charta der deutschen Heimatvertriebenen am "Tag der Heimat" (see the Archive von Bundesregierung: <https://archiv.bundesregierung.de>)

The very last audible political skirmish ended with the accession of the Czech Republic into the European Union on the 1st April 2004. In reality, the audibility of the political quarrelling misled many (politicians, intellectuals, and historians) to subscribe it the level of importance it has never possessed. The opposite was the true. With an exception of a few politicians from among the *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*, there was no substantial power whatsoever to block the Czech Republic its way to EU. (The second common mistake is to attribute a peak importance to the Czech-German Declaration of February 1997. The audibility was that time even stronger, but again the whole matter was wanted – substantially enough – by all important players, German and Czech, of the time.)

To conclude, one can say that the both historical events, of 1997 and 2004, were two important events in the terms of Czech-German diplomacy. As such, I did not want to play them down. However, one who asks the question of what was the crucial moment of the Czech-Sudeten German debate on the whole, he has to come up with a different answer. To the best of my knowledge, the very last point when the Czechs and Sudeten Germans were able to *do* something about their tumultuous past was within the first few years after the 1989 events: 1) when the Czech political representation was willing to do so; 2) when the Czech society on the whole had no idea about it but bestowed its confidence onto its new – and still very popular – dissident-politicians; 3) when German Chancellor wanted it not (for he had much more important issues, namely the European integration process, than the problems-causing expellees); 4) and when the Sudeten German political representation was by far not ready for this step.

4.3. An unfinished discussion

It is not fully correct to charge V. Havel, or the dissident politics in general, with the offence of being *naïve* on behalf of the Sudeten German matter. That what stays historically provable is Havel's initial belief that his good will would be appreciated and reciprocated from the German side. (However not all the dissident-politicians, such as J. Dienstbier to name one, shared Havel's original expectations.) Nevertheless, the new Czech politics has oriented itself relatively quickly in the unknown Sudeten German waters and set itself to defence. After the first sobering period (ca. 1989 – 1992), there were only occasional and cautious attempts to push the discussion further, be it from the Czech side in general or from Havel himself.

The last point of Havel's strong personal initiative came in 1992 when he offered the Bundeskanzler the double Czech-German citizenship for Sudeten Germans, provided they themselves asked for it.¹⁸⁹ Havel's offer was conditioned by the positive reciprocal step from the Bundeskanzler's side consisting in public rejection of the Sudeten German Landsmannschaft's claims. The offer was made in full secrecy between the two, although it leaked out later.¹⁹⁰ And there were some practical difficulties connected to it (not only that the chancellor refused it in the form it was offered, but also the German law did not allowed the double citizenship). After this point, there was not much energetic investments from the Czech side and the process took its stalemate character leading through the 1997 Czech-German Declaration further up to 2004.

What concerns the consequences for the Non-Sudeten German question (i.e. the topic of this very work), it has to be said that when Havel's 1989-letter addressed to President Weizsäcker opened the first public debate, and the support from other dissident-politicians fuelled and further it, their later

¹⁸⁹• Jiří Dienstbier, *Od snění k realitě: vzpomínky z let 1989-1999* (Praha: NLN, 1999), 284 and 286 • Daniel Kaiser, *Prezident: Václav Havel 1990-2003* (Praha: Paseka, 2014), 156 • Rozhovor Václava Havla s Respektem, "Jsou křivdy, které nelze napravit" *Respekt* 9 (March 2 1992)

¹⁹⁰See, e.g., the article in *Rudé Právo* from the 24th of February 1992, "Havel nabízel restituce sudetským Němcům"

rather abrupt silence – as the consequence of Bundesskanzler's own political stance – left the public debate stuck right in the middle of the way. To put it simply, dissidents opened the debate within the Czech society, which had not been dealing with the topic properly for 40 years. And then instead of exerting more and more pressure to push and nurture the debate further, the dissident-politicians simply stopped and left the discussion to the estranged public alone. One just has to read articles and speeches of that time by the communists, *Sládek's Republicans*, or, later on, also by the Czech Social Democrats to get a picture of how was the matter handled. The society, having dealt with the topic for the first time, reacted to the matter naturally very passionately. The paradox being is this: dissidents' politics *had to & at the same time could not* continue to support the debate. It *had to* when it wanted to lead it to a successful end & yet it *could not* without having the German Chancellor on its side, without whose political support and guarantee was it a futile project.

4.4. Derailment

As already foreshadowed at the end of the 1st chapter (see p. 14), the post-1998 debate took the way of derailment from its logical rail (speaking more precisely, this derailment was here already in the dissident debate during the 70s and 80s). Put understandably, the punitive-security entanglement which was the transfer so to speak born with, got colonized by a different set of questions. These were not addressing the question of *was or wasn't the transfer right?* But the questions were rather broken up into smaller sub-questions addressing a number of particular issues without having a big idea in front of its eyes. As a consequence, the debate was never brought to an end (which is in the case of public debates only very natural). It would be wrong to think of these sub-questions as if they were of any derogatory quality, they were not. As a matter of necessity, the general public, after having been severed from the discussing the transfer issue for 40 years, was naturally in need of coming through this stage at last.

Many of these sub-questions belong – according to my own categorization – to the category of punitive argumentation, some of them into the security one, others are rather of the matter-of-fact nature, last not least some were completely artificial, created by the politics of the day. To name a few, on the Czech side, the most resonating were questions of the complicity of the Sudeten German population in Nazism (i.e. how far was Nazi thinking spread out among the Sudeten Germans). The question of complicity was in a special connection to another question relating to the different interpretations of Sudeten German autonomist strivings preceding the Munich Agreement. Another, not a less important one, concerned the number of Sudeten German victims during the transfer's implementation.

Probably the biggest problem-causing factor of the whole post-1989 debate was its politicization which polarized it and re-defined its key priorities. As already partly described earlier, the issue became soon matter of the both national body politics which automatically highlighted hitherto secondary topics and catapulted them onto the level of the highest importance. The case in point is, for instance, the dispute over the so-called *Beneš decrees*. Or to name another case: within the political negotiations over the final text of the 1997 *Czech-German Declaration*, the Czech side finally conceded to put into the text, among others, its expression of regret over the murdered Sudeten Germans during the infamous excesses;¹⁹¹ the whole political irony consists in the fact, that no Czech government was ever disputing the righteousness of murdering during the so-called excesses. As a matter of fact, the Czech negotiators (led this time by Alexandr Vondra) were trading the sentences of regret for the German stance on the Munich Agreement.

¹⁹¹ See: Article III of *Česko-německá deklarace o vzájemných vztazích a jejich budoucím rozvoji*

If one romped through the public debate on the 90s, one would see that the voices arguing with the security argument – such as given by Jaroslav Valenta (see the footnote № 40) – were as scarce as hen's teeth. The debate was either driven on the basis of the logically dubious *punitive-security entanglement*, or it succumbed into a series of sub-questions. Such an analysis however exceeds the work's scope here.

4.5. Conclusion

The conclusion to this chapter can be summarized in the following words: *it has ended right after its start*. The public debate encoded from the very beginning in the very dual nature of the transfer, came into its first full fruition after the regime's change in 1989. The vital particle in the discussion were of course the dissident-politicians who were the only ones who were prepared for it (first because they discussed it for a decade, second, for they were intellectuals able of the public debating). But these very dissident-politicians had to stop fuelling the public debate for the dangerous charge that the matter obtained from the German side (namely the chancellor's reluctance to dissociate himself from the Sudeten Landsmannschaft agenda). Without the vital support and further intellectual investments from the dissident-politicians, the public debate was lost, resp. dominated by different minor groups (such as communist, nationalists, and later on also the Czech Social Democrats).

The stumbling stone of the whole debate was the initial underestimation of the German politics which, being democratic, had to take into account the interests of its *populus*, the people. These *pupulistic* politics – in relative terms – of the German Bundeskanzler (who found himself under the double bondage of CSU, and therefore of the Sudeten German influence) offered the only option for Havel's and the dissidents' initial reconciliatory strategy: to stop it.

Chapter 5: CONCLUSION

To give a brief and comprehensive summary of the presented work, I would say this: an unspoken, implicit presupposition underlining the whole work infers that there seems to have been a *certain* logic behind the Czech public debate on the transfer. And that this hard detectable logic is ever since sort of driving the public debate over its developments throughout the 2nd half of the Czech 20th c.

By constructing the motive of the punitive-security entanglement (illustrated by the metaphor “murdering executioner” [see p. 13]), I tried to shed light on this evasive logic. And with the help of my genealogical method – much frowned upon by all positivist philosophies of history –, I ventured to spot and highlight main pivotal points, its events and motives, of the whole debate between 40s and 90s.

Now, what is this logic, shall we imagine it as a sort of mysterious power – Homer’s gods in Troy – pulling strings from above? Not really. Rather, it is a cultural logic brought into the history self-referentially by the human agency itself. The claim followed in the text supposes that since the Czechs got entangled in their own cultural values when having justified the transfer on behalf of the – [cultural-] logically incoherent – punitive-security argument, they subjected themselves to the consequences of such an entangled logic. Said hyperbolically, the transfer's Nemesis carries the Czech, not the Sudeten German nationality.

Yet, this cultural logic is not exclusively Czech, for no matter of the differences, the Czechs co-shares their cultural values together with the Sudeten Germans, or Europeans and Westerners in general, and some of its core principles are shared much further. (Yet probably not by all, for there might be some rather obscure polities on the face of the planet, such some of those hidden in the Amazon basin, which built their world-views on much different principles; as we are being told by the 20th c. anthropology).

Had there really been such a cultural logic, I insinuated, then its only agents, its movers and realisers, had to have been people sensitive to the respective cultural appeals and bondages. On the scope of four preceding chapters, I tried to highlight some of these agents.

My work argues that the biggest – not chronologically the first ones – agents of this kind were the Czechoslovak dissidents. With them did the whole debate stand or fall since they were the most important link of the chain (which is only alluded to by the very negative prefix – “Non-” – in the title of this work).

But they were not first. The roots, when tracing the debate’s genealogy, are to be sought in the 2nd half of the 60s, especially within the historiographical industry, but not only this, which *paved* the way for the subsequent endeavours (2.1.). Seen as such, the Czechoslovakia only belongs among the family of nations, such as France, Germany, Israel and others, which grappled with their tumultuous histories inherited from the recent past (see p. 18).

Coming back to the dissidents, to understand the transfer debate, I argued, one has to first understand the dissent. These two are mutually inter-connected. The link which binds these two is, as I claim, the culture of civic virtue. And the only ones who were able to carry the culture of civic virtue throughout the uneasy times of Normalization was – as I dubbed them – the civic aristocracy. This civic aristocracy was able to do so because – as the aristocratic metaphor alludes – they were better equipped for such a task, indeed privileged (concretely then, by the cultural/social capital, the Muses, or stigma [see pp. 39-40])

If the Czechoslovak dissent really played such a crucial role in the whole debate, as I claim it did, only then we would see why the question on the dissent's power & powerlessness makes such a sense. To obtain the answer, I cunningly navigated between the Scylla of *totalitarian thesis* & Charybdis of *consumer socialism thesis*, just to propose the third thesis of *yesterday's fear* (3.2.1.). Which is to say that the Czechoslovak society fled in fear in vain, for the situation was desperate but not serious (as the story Kocourkov dwellers (see p. 36) and the Thomas theorem (see the footnote № 172) try to illustrate).

As Nietzsche's epitaph installed at the opening of this work suggests, the man is to a large degree chained to history from whence he springs into his world, and this shapes his world-views. To be Czech – such is my claim – means to be born into a particular culture of *not-seeing* the transfer differently than by the *punitive-security entanglement*.

Clearly, the particular forms of this entanglements do change in times. Put differently, the proportions of the ingredients of which this entanglement consists look differently in every epoch. The cocktail is different but the principle stays. Thus, the generations living through the Munich crisis and the subsequent German Protectorate, probably, saw the entanglement tending more towards the side of its punitive accent and not much on the side of the cool-headed security reasoning. Later in the 60s, with the arrival of the new generation of socialist academics, the interpretation (confined to a rather small groups of intellectuals) drifted more towards the security argument, further from the punitive accent. The same era saw the awakening of opinions of inverted-punitiveness (i.e. self-criticism directed against the Czechs by the Czechs themselves). And this very opinion was, together with others, much visible in the post-1989 democratic era. However, be it with the ingredients as it may, the principle of the entanglement stays the same.

If one takes in front of his eyes the equation from the first chapter (see p. 15), one is confronted with the adamant *cultural* logic: *if security, then innocent, and therefore betterment / if punitive, then guilty, but whereof a proof*. Much celebrated dictum E. P. Thompson, stated as his motive for writing his *history of the English working class*, says: "I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the 'obsolete' hand-loom weaver, the 'utopian' artisan, and even the deluded follower of Joanna Southcott, from the enormous condescension of posterity."¹⁹² My work takes a different objective than Mr. Thompson's, for he was an English gentleman and not Bohemian; my own intention comes from a different space:

if a Lunarian – a man of the Moon – had landed in the 90s in the Czech Lands and looked around, he would have been struck by many things, one of them being the Czech mind-set on the transfer. He would have seen that some Czechs went for the punitive rational, some of them sought to establish the Sudeten German guilt on behalf of the argument either of Nazi crimes, or of the Sudeten German dis-loyalty to the Czechoslovak Republic, or of the supreme right of the Czechs over *their* Czech Lands, etc.; some Czechs, on the other hand, saw the matter differently and were able to re-consider the punitive for the security reasoning and to realize the innocent status of the expellees but the political charge of the matter during the 90s prevented them from drawing the logical consequences to the end. Some went so far as to join the counter-punitive interpretation which saw the transfer as a retributive injustice, a mere revenge committed by the Czechs on its former oppressors after the six years under the Nazi rule. But a very few ones – although there were such ones – were able to follow the logic properly and see further – beyond the security reasoning, further beyond the innocent status – up to its logical consequences. That is to say how would have

¹⁹²Edward Palmer Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), 12

they seen the Sudeten German issue, had they spotted the alternative way of how to read the recent troubled history.

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