

“THERE REALLY WERE GERMANS I WAS NOT LOATH
TO MEET”

WHAT THE CZECH HISTORIAN VÁCLAV VOJTÍŠEK
REVEALED IN 1966 ABOUT WARTIME GERMAN
COLLEAGUES

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This contribution comprises the Czech original and a German translation of a letter which Czech historian and archivist Václav Vojtíšek wrote, in 1966, to Gerda Blaschej, a young historian from (East) Berlin, as well as an introductory commentary. In the letter, Vojtíšek answers questions relating to the university having adopted, during the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and even before and without too much coercion, some Nazi views, above all the overriding importance given to considerations of a political nature. He offers a number of brief portraits of university rectors such as August Naegle and Marian San Nicolò, of professors engaged in the “*Volkstumskampf*” (the struggle for the preponderance of everything German) such as Erich Gierach, Josef Pfitzner, and Eduard Winter, of Heinz Zatschek who was a colleague of his as an archivist and teacher of the auxiliary disciplines relating to history, and of influential figures in the ranks of the Reinhard Heydrich Foundation such as Alfred Buntru and Hans Joachim Beyer. Vojtíšek’s remarks betray his

intimate knowledge of the Prague university environment and scientific scene, but also the fact that he fundamentally disapproved of all Germans at the time, and his pronounced anti-Semitism. His verdicts about his former German “colleagues” reveal how he understood his own role as a scholar and a Czech. In addition, the document offers insights in the rather complicated matter of scientific communication between the GDR and Czechoslovakia during the 1960s.