

Ines Koeltzsch/Ota Konrád

FROM “ISLANDS OF DEMOCRACY”
TO “TRANSNATIONAL BORDER SPACES”:
STATE OF THE ART AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE
HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE FIRST CZECHOSLOVAK
REPUBLIC SINCE 1989¹

Because in Central Europe borders have been fluid, people mobile,
and history fraught with conflict, our mental map of its past ought
to be replete with islands of complicated configurations.

Helmut Walser Smith²

The history of the First Czechoslovak Republic undoubtedly counts among the most important fields of modern Czech history. Especially in the first decade after the Velvet Revolution of 1989, it was a topic of great traction in specialist circles and in the broader public. This has changed since the beginning of the 21st century, with Czech contemporary history since 1945 moving squarely into the centre of attention, thematically and methodologically as well as with regard to historical controversies. The history of the First Czechoslovak Republic appears by contrast, upon initial and superficial inspection, to have stagnated. The aim of this contribution – which acts as the introduction to this edition of *Bohemia* and which, together with the following contributions, is based on the workshop “Between Politics and Culture: New Perspectives on the History of the Bohemian Lands and the First Czechoslovak Republic (1880s-1930s)” organized by the Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Institute of International Studies at Charles University in May 2014 – is to take stock of previous research and to elucidate the often overlooked change of the historiography on Czechoslovakia in the interwar period. The main focus here is on the premises and narratives that fundamentally shaped the development of this historiography since the 1990s.

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² *Walser Smith*, Helmut: For a Differently Centered Central European History: Reflections on Jürgen Osterhammel, *Geschichtswissenschaft jenseits des Nationalstaats*. In: *Central European History* 37 (2004) no. 1, 115-136, here 131.

In the first section, we examine the historiography of the 1990s, the focus of which lay on a rather traditionally understood political history. This revolved especially around the triad “[Czech] nation – democracy – independent state”, where it was not rare to read of the First Czechoslovak Republic being referred to as an “island of democracy” or as a “castle” or “fortress of democracy”, all of which are metaphors adopted from the contemporary language of the interwar period.³ These represent the perspective of Czechoslovakia as a predominantly isolated entity with more or less immovable borders on the inside as well as toward the outside.

Criticism towards the dominating event-oriented, national historical representations has increased since the late 1990s. The second part of this contribution sketches out the gradual shift in historiography as a result of the growing internationalization of the humanities and the increasing assertion of transnational and global frameworks. Traditional event-oriented historical approaches have remained relevant and the nation continues to occasionally present a vanishing point, whether explicitly or implicitly. However, since the 2000s attempts have been accumulating to not only fill in the “blank spaces” of history but also to explain the paradoxes of Czechoslovakia between the world wars, to integrate it into larger geographic and temporal contexts, and, in short, to no longer imagine it as an “island of democracy” in Central Europe. This gradual departure from the island condition of the First Czechoslovak Republic was driven forward notably by recent studies into nationalism, the comeback of social history since the beginning of the 21st century, and the augmentation of political history with approaches from cultural history.

In the conclusion, we advance Johannes Paulmann’s concept of “transnational border spaces”⁴ to comprehend more clearly and conceptually this development in the historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic and its local, regional, European, and global interconnections. Even though the authors of the contributions to this volume do not explicitly engage with Paulmann’s concept of transnational border spaces, they nevertheless in their own ways underline the displacement, erosion, or reconstitution of social, political, economic, cultural, real, and imaginary boundaries from the latter stages of the First World War to the end of the First Czechoslovak Republic.

³ In this section, we focus primarily on the Czech literature produced during the 1990s on the history of Czechoslovakia between the world wars, which due to the language barrier is less known than older German and English works. On the “island” metaphor, see for example *Kárník*, Zdeněk: *České země v éře První republiky (1918-1938)*. Díl první: Vznik, budování a zlatá léta republiky (1918-1929) [The Bohemian Lands in the Era of the First Republic (1918-1938)]. Part I: The Foundation, the Building, and the Golden Years of the Republic (1918-1929). Praha 2003, 564. – *Pebr*, Michal: *Chvála a kritika prvorepublikové demokracie* [Praise and Criticism of the First Republic’s Democracy]. In: *Historie – Otázky – Problémy* 6 (2014) no. 1, 120-134.

⁴ *Paulmann*, Johannes: *Grenzüberschreitungen und Grenzräume. Überlegungen zur Geschichte transnationaler Beziehungen von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis in die Zeitgeschichte*. In: *Conze, Eckart/Lappenküper, Ulrich/Müller, Guido* (eds.): *Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen. Erneuerung und Erweiterung einer historischen Disziplin*. Köln 2004, 169-196.

*The National Historical “Revival” of the First Republic
in Czech Historiography after 1989 and Its Criticisms*

The History and Origins of the First Republic as a Legitimizing Master Narrative

After the fall of the “iron curtain”, the era of the First Republic became a popular, sometimes almost inflationary subject in Czechoslovakia and after its breakup also in the Czech Republic. The importance of this period of modern history for the transforming Czech society was clearly evidenced by streets, squares, and institutions being renamed after Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, by book production, as well as by frequent references to the interwar period as a symbol of democracy, affiliation with the West, international respect, economic success, and cultivated manners⁵ – that is, by no coincidence, all the aspects that the society of the 1990s was convinced it lacked and wanted to accomplish. The First Republic was something even apparently different political streams and personalities were able to identify with.⁶ Even a politician like Václav Havel, who did not hesitate to be critical of the flaws of the First Republic’s democracy and who deliberately opposed a number of Czech national myths, was aware of the power of the myth of Masaryk and the First Republic⁷ and became one of the co-creators of this positive national narrative in relation to the First Republic. In his famous speech in Prague’s Carolinum, *Češi a Němci na cestě k dobrému sousedství* (Czechs and Germans on the Way to a Good Neighbourship) on 17 February 1995, he said:

If someone claims now and then that the Czechoslovak Republic as the fruit of the ripening self-consciousness and the self-liberation efforts of the Czechs and the Slovaks and a product of the Peace of Versailles was an error and, as such, a cause of the subsequent disasters, he or she only reveals his or her own ignorance. The birth of the republic cannot be ascribed only to the realism that paid regard to the desire of the Czechs and the Slovaks to develop their identity, to free themselves from the rule of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy that failed to offer them an appropriate status, and to build their new, viable statehood on their association in one common state. What was no less, if not even more important was the fact that a modern, demo-

⁵ In the popular book by Pavel Tigrid, *Kapesní průvodce inteligentní ženy po vlastním osudu*, which was first published in exile in 1988 and then in 1990 with great success also in Czechoslovakia, the following is written about the First Republic: “civilized relationships between people, generally recognized hierarchy of values, modest but untractable national self-confidence, respect for tradition, for honest work as well as honest word, encouragement of those we have elected, good schools, clean trains and pubs with clean tablecloths and friendly service ... All this during the First Republic was – by far not in sufficient and equal measure – but it was.” Tigrid, Pavel: *Kapesní průvodce inteligentní ženy po vlastním osudu* [The Intelligent Woman’s Pocket Guide to Her Own Destiny]. Praha 1990, 276. – As Stanislav Holubec points out, this image of the First Republic, nurtured in exile and in dissent, concerned predominantly the lifestyle of the middle and higher classes of the First Republic society. Holubec, Stanislav: *Golden Twenty Years or a Bad Stepmother? The Czech Communist and Post-Communist Narratives on Interwar Czechoslovakia*. In: *Acta Poloniae Historica* (2014) no. 110, 23-48, here 38.

⁶ *Ibid.* 18-20.

⁷ As early as in March 1990 Václav Havel introduced, with a clear allusion to the Masaryk myth, a regular radio programme called “Hovory z Lán” [Talks from Lány], which enjoyed, especially at the beginning, considerable popularity with the listening audience, as did many political discussion programmes in the early 1990s, for that matter.

cratic, liberal state was purposefully created here on the basis of the values to which the entire democratic Europe of today is committed as well, and in which it sees its future. [...] It is true that the Czechoslovak Republic had its weaknesses [...] but it does not change in any way the fact that Czechoslovakia like France, today's Benelux countries, Switzerland and the Nordic nations was one of the few truly democratic and well-ordered states of continental Europe. [...] Thus, when the Czech Republic acknowledges its ties of continuity with Czechoslovakia this can only be to its credit.⁸

In this passage, Havel summarises, including a necessary degree of criticism, the First Republic narrative that resonated even in a considerable part of professional historiographical production. Besides the overall framing in the Czech national narrative, it is also possible to identify the following features in this concept. The first one is expressed by the metaphor of the “island of democracy” (in the case of Havel's speech, Czechoslovakia as one of the few “truly democratic and well-ordered states of continental Europe”), reflecting not only the fact that Czechoslovakia, unlike other Central and East European states, did not go through an authoritative takeover in the 1930s, but in a broader sense also the concept of Czechoslovakia as an essentially Western state that does not quite belong in Central and Eastern Europe. Hence, Czechoslovakia was a specific state, quite exceptional in a number of aspects, beyond comparison at least in the Central European region. This was connected to the second feature of similar interpretations: Czechoslovakia, its creation, and its form were regarded teleologically as a realization of the (Czech) national movement (in Havel's case, the “desire of the Czechs” – but also Slovaks – “to develop their identity”). This theme appears in a number of studies almost as a matter of course, including works by authors who have been able to depict some expressions of the First Republic's political culture without rose-coloured glasses.⁹ That is not to say that a number of authors have not given the circumstances of the establishment of the republic some thought. Zdeněk Kárník, as an expert in political programmes of Czech politics and its transformations during the world war,¹⁰ also points out

⁸ Havel, Václav: Češi a Němci na cestě k dobrému sousedství [Czechs and Germans on the Way to a Good Neighbourship]. URL: http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/showtrans.php?cat=projevy&val=201_aj_projevy.html&typ=HTML (last accessed 08.11.2016), the original Czech version in: *Havel: Projevy a jiné texty z let 1992-1999* [Speeches and Other Texts 1992-1999]. Praha 1999 (Spisy 7) 358-374, here 362.

⁹ What we are thinking of here is Klímek's *Struggle for the Castle* and the ensuing discussion. Klímek, Antonín: *Boj o Hrad: vnitropolitický vývoj Československa 1918-1926 na půdorysu zápasu o prezidentské nástupnictví. Díl 1. Hrad a Pětka* [The Struggle for the Castle: The Internal Political Development of Czechoslovakia Against the Backdrop of the Struggle for the Presidential Succession. Vol. 1. The Castle and the Pětka]. Praha 1996. – *Klímek: Boj o Hrad: vnitropolitický vývoj Československa 1926-1935 na půdorysu zápasu o prezidentské nástupnictví. Díl 2. Kdo po Masarykovi?* [The Struggle for the Castle: The Internal Political Development of Czechoslovakia Against the Backdrop of the Struggle for the Presidential Succession. Vol. 2. Who will take Masaryk's place?]. Praha 1998. – Cf. also the reviews of both volumes: Broklová, Eva: Review in: *Politologická revue* 3 (1997) no. 1, 192-199. – *Broklová: Review in: Spory o dějiny 2. Sborník kritických textů* [Disputes Over History 2. A Collection of Critical Texts]. Praha 1999, 97-101.

¹⁰ Kárník, Zdeněk: *Socialisté na rozcestí: Habsburk, Masaryk či Šmeral* [Socialists at the Crossroads: The Habsburgs, Masaryk or Šmeral]. Praha 1996. 2nd, revised edition.

the crucial influence of the world conflict on the final shift of Czech politics towards the idea of an independent state.¹¹ Even in these cases, however, the general framework of interpretation has not changed: against the backdrop of the world conflict, the Czech political elite, representing the Czech national movement as a matter of course, established a state that became the culmination of the national movement’s efforts. As Ivan Šedivý fittingly remarked already in 1998, according to the Czech conception the war was “just scenery for the establishment of an independent state”.¹²

What is mentioned above also results in distinct bohemocentrism, often even pragocentrism, of the perspective of the First Czechoslovak Republic’s history. Slovakia and above all Sub-Carpathian Rus became mere accessories of the central Czech (Prague) politics, which only came into play when they – mostly as troublemakers – influenced central politics.¹³ This perspective of Czech history actually seems to transpose the concept of the “core” of the Czech state and the so-called “minor Bohemian lands”, developed originally for the purposes of medieval history, to modern history. This resulted in establishing continuity in the Czech (national) narrative from the early Middle Ages to the present, in spite of a number of territorial transformations of the Czech state, splits, and discontinuities.¹⁴

¹¹ Cf. for example Kárník’s reflection in the mono-thematic issue of *Soudobé dějiny*: Kárník, Zdeněk: Fenomén první republiky v proudu dějin [The Phenomenon of the First Republic in the Stream of History]. In: *Soudobé dějiny* 2 (1995) no. 2-3, 147-156, here 150.

¹² Šedivý, Ivan: Vznik Československa (Možné roviny pohledu) [The Beginning of Czechoslovakia (Possible Points of View)]. In: Valenta, Jaroslav/Voráček, Emil/Harna, Josef (eds.): Československo 1918-1938. Osudy demokracie ve střední Evropě. Sborník z mezinárodní vědecké konference. Díl 2 [Czechoslovakia 1818-1938. The Fates of Democracy in Central Europe. Proceedings of the International Academic Conference. Part 2]. Praha 1999, 509-512, here 509.

¹³ Rychlík, Jan: Češi a Slováci ve 20. století. Spolupráce a konflikty 1914-1992 [Czechs and Slovaks in the 20th Century. Cooperation and Conflicts 1914-1992]. Praha 2012, 9. – For more on the perception of Sub-Carpathian Rus in interwar Czechoslovakia, cf.: Holubec, Stanislav: “We Bring Order, Discipline, Western European Democracy, and Culture to This Land of Former Oriental Chaos and Disorder.” Czech Perceptions of Sub-Carpathian Rus and Its Modernisation in the 1920s. In: Puttkamer, Joachim von/Borodziej, Włodzimerz/Holubec, Stanislav (eds.): *Mastery and Lost Illusions. Space and Time in the Modernization of Eastern and Central Europe*. München 2014, 223-250. – Most recently, cf. also: Rychlík, Jan/Rychlíková, Jana: *Podkarpatská Rus v dějinách Československa 1918-1946* [Sub-Carpathian Rus in the History of Czechoslovakia 1918-1946]. Praha 2016.

¹⁴ In the interwar period, nevertheless, a different conception of Czechoslovak history emerged. It projected the Czechoslovak state into the past and observed Czech and Slovak history more or less concurrently until their merging within the common state. Cf. Harna, Josef: *Nastal již čas zpracovat syntézu dějin Československa? (Na prahu jubilejního roku 2008)* [Has the Time Come to Create a Synthesis of the History of Czechoslovakia? (On the Threshold of the Anniversary Year 2008)]. In: *Reflexe dějin Československa 1918-1948 v historiografii na počátku 3. tisíciletí* [The Reflection of the History of Czechoslovakia 1918-1948 in Historiography at the Beginning of the Third Millennium]. Praha 2008, 9-26, here 10. – There are also references here to relevant contemporary syntheses of Czechoslovak history written by Zdeněk Tobolka, Josef Pekař or Kamil Krofta. Cf. also: Harna, Josef: Die Konzeption der “tschechoslowakischen Nation” in der tschechischen Historiographie der Zwischenkriegszeit. In: Brenner, Christiane/Franzen, K. Erik/Haslinger, Peter/Luft,

The concept of a continuous “core” of the Bohemian lands also preserves the First Czechoslovak Republic for the Czech historical narrative. That testifies to a distinct legitimation function of the First Republic, which the Czech society has not been willing to give up even after this state, Czechoslovakia, ceased to exist. In the 1990s, the First Republic became a positive point of reference for Czech transformation, a period providing inspiration and instruction for the actual building of democracy and the “return” to the West. As the closing of the above-quoted passage from Havel’s speech expresses, the Czech society – due to external circumstances rather than its own fault – was led away from this path and was returning again to its natural pro-Western democratic trajectory.¹⁵ Nevertheless, understanding these aspects of the perspective on the First Republic, which was even reflected in a number of historical studies only within categories of methodological backwardness or Czech nationalism, would be oversimplified. The persistence of these patterns, which constitute a sort of an underground river of interpretations of the First Republic and hence often recur even in unexpected places, testifies to their different anchorings. They result from the interpretation of and research on the Czechoslovak Republic and broader modern Czech history at least from 1918 to at least the 1990s. To deal with them critically, it is necessary to look at them in more detail.

The first reflections on the First Republic’s most recent history appeared as early as during its existence. The character of the predominant legitimation discourse¹⁶

Robert (eds.): *Geschichtsschreibung zu den böhmischen Ländern im 20. Jahrhundert. Wissenschaftstraditionen – Institutionen – Diskurse. Vorträge der Tagungen des Collegium Carolinum in Bad Wiessee vom 21. bis 23. November 2003 und vom 12. bis 14. November 2004. München 2006 (Bad Wiessee Tagungen des Collegium Carolinum [BWT] 28), 77-94.* – Another approach that differs from the predominant conception of the history of Czechoslovakia as essentially Czech history is the conception promoted by Rychlík, who suggests understanding the history of Czechoslovakia as a history that is already closed and determined by the years 1918-1992. *Rychlík, Jan: České, slovenské a československé dějiny – problém vzájemného vztahu v různých historických dobách [The Czech, Slovak and Czechoslovak History – the Problem of Their Mutual Relation in Different Historical Periods]. In: Česko-slovenská historická ročenka (2000) 19-23.* – Cf. also the author’s Czech-Slovak history in the 20th century, in which he intentionally focuses on the Slovak perspective, or, more precisely, Slovak history against the background of the history of Czechoslovakia: *Rychlík: Češi a Slováci ve 20. století [Czechs and Slovaks in the 20th Century]. Bratislava, Praha 1997.*

¹⁵ As far as the symbolic level is concerned, the adoption of the Czechoslovak flag by the independent Czech Republic after 1992 or maintaining 28 October as the main state holiday should be mentioned too. Moreover, this continuity was also expressed on the level of constitutional law: the Constitution of the Czech Republic, adopted on 16 December, 1992, was consciously inspired in many respects by the constitution of the First Republic from 1920.

¹⁶ There were, of course, also different voices. These were not only Sudeten German conceptions, rivalling the Czech national narrative (*Pfitzner, Josef: Sudetendeutsche Geschichte. Reichenberg 1935. – Pfitzner: Sudetendeutsche Einheitsbewegung. Werden und Erfüllen. Karlsbad 1937*), but also alternative Czech interpretations. This especially concerns the study by *Rádl, Emanuel: Válka Čechů s Němci. [The War of the Czechs with the Germans]. Praha 1928.* – Prokš even cites altogether six conceptions created as early as during the First Republic. *Prokš, Petr: Přehled základní literatury o vzniku Československa [The Summary of Essential Literature on the Establishment of Czechoslovakia]. In: Reflexe dějin první*

was partly determined by the conceptions of the two central figures of the state – Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Edvard Beneš. In their texts written during the war or as war memoirs of the two men,¹⁷ the establishment of Czechoslovakia is presented as a part of the global conflict between the modern forces of democracy and reactionism, embodied in Central Europe by the Central Powers. According to the texts, the Czechs, due to their history, stand on the side of modern forces, embodying progress and democracy. The establishment of the republic thus is a part of a broader European or global movement, but at the same time it demonstrates the uniqueness and specificity of Czechs and Slovaks, the latter who were adopted into the concept as another branch of the Czechoslovaks, and the role they play in Central Europe. In any case, this narrative legitimized the new state – even in the literal sense: At the Paris Peace Conference, Beneš often used the argument that Czechoslovakia is a stable and resilient state capable of guaranteeing order in Central Europe. This stability was supposed to result, among other things, from the will of the Czech nation to crown its regeneration efforts with state independence.¹⁸ This is what gave rise to the “nation-democracy-state” triad, which played an essential role from this point onwards and which, in addition to other campaigns, also led to categorizing all those who, for whatever reasons, stood up against the state as having anti-democratic attitudes – which especially concerned Germans.¹⁹

Československé republiky v české a slovenské historiografii: sborník referátů přednesených na kolokviu pořádaném Historickým ústavem AV ČR v Praze 18. listopadu 1997 [The Reflection of the History of the First Czechoslovak Republic in Czech and Slovak Historiography: A Collection of Papers presented at a Symposium Organized by the Historical Institute of the Academy of Sciences in Prague on 18 November 1997]. Praha 1998, 13-22. However, the one who played a significant role in the discussions of the 1990s was, most importantly, Rádl, whose book was published in a new edition in 1993, and (indirectly) also the Sudeten German criticism of the Czechoslovak state.

¹⁷ *Masaryk*, Tomáš Garrigue: Nová Evropa. Stanovisko slovenské [New Europe. The Slavonic Standpoint]. Praha 1920. – *Masaryk*: Válka a revoluce: Články – memoranda – přednášky – rozhovory 1914-1916 [War and Revolution: Articles – Memoranda – Lectures – Interviews 1914-1916]. Praha 2005. – *Masaryk*: Válka a revoluce II [War and Revolution II] (1917). Praha 2008. – *Masaryk*: Světová revoluce. Za války a ve válce 1914-1918 [The World Revolution. During the War and in the War 1914-1918]. Praha 1925. – *Beneš*, Edvard: Světová válka a naše revoluce. Vzpomínky a úvahy z bojů za svobodu národa. 3 sv. [The World War and Our Revolution. Memories and Reflections from the Time of Struggle for the Freedom of the Nation. 3 vols]. Praha 1927-1928.

¹⁸ Cf. especially the letter by Edvard Beneš to the British foreign minister Balfour from 20 December, 1918 and Beneš's memorandum “Problem Touching the Germans of Bohemia” addressed to the Supreme Council of the Paris Peace Conference from February 1919. Both documents were published in the following edition: *Hájková*, Dagmar / *Horák*, Pavel (eds.): Edvard Beneš, Němci a Německo. Edice dokumentů. Sv. I [Edvard Beneš, the Germans and Germany. An Edition of Documents. Vol. I]. Praha 2014. Doc. No. 65 and No. 68.

¹⁹ Already in the above mentioned memorandum Beneš wrote about the development in the 19th century: “Two conceptions of absolutely opposite character stood face to face: democracy on one side, autocracy on the other. In fighting the Germans, they [the Czechs; O. K.] fought against absolute power; their adversaries, in Austria, were the pillars of autocracy.” *Hájková* / *Horák*: Edvard Beneš, Němci a Německo. Doc. No. 68, 340 (cf. fn. 18). – This view showed incredible endurance through all the regimes. In the 1960s, Karel Kreibich commented on this conception shared by some of his contemporaries ironically

That does not mean that texts written within this framework during the First Republic are not valuable. On the contrary, the best of them remained in many cases the dominant authorities on the subject in question for a long time. This applies not only to *Budování státu* (Building the State) by the journalist Ferdinand Peroutka, but also to works of professional historians, such as Jan Opočenský, who was able, as the head of the archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to take advantage of his access to archival sources; Kamil Krofta and his summary of the foreign policy of the young state; or Milada Paulová and her work on the resistance during the war.²⁰ There were also noteworthy attempts to view Czechoslovak foreign policy or Czechoslovak minority policy in a broader context.²¹

German occupation – predominantly perceived by Czech historiography again within the national framework mainly as a Czech disaster, that is to say, regardless of the pan-European circumstances of the occupational policy of the Nazi state, including the Holocaust and the genocide of Roma²² – strengthened this formula

from the perspective of international socialism: “Anyone who has read nothing about the situation in 1918-1919 except for the historical reflections of César, Černý, Horka and Reimann must think that at that time there was nothing else on the Czech side but revolution, democracy and national liberation, and nothing else on the German side but chauvinism and imperialism.” Quoted according to: *Sommer, Vítězslav: Angažované dějepisectví: stranická historiografie mezi stalinismem a reformním komunismem (1950-1970)* [Engaged Historiography: Party Historiography between Stalinism and Reform Communism (1950-1970)]. Praha 2011, 321. – Also for a number of authors in the 1990s, Germany and Germans in the interwar period were a synonym for antidemocratic “political culture”. Cf. *Broklová, Eva: Německý stát nad stranami a československý stát stran* [The German State above Parties and the Czechoslovak State of Parties]. In: *Occursus – Setkání – Begegnung. Sborník ku počtě 65. narozenin prof. dr. Jana Křena* [A Collection of Essays in the Honour of the 65th Birthday of Prof. Dr. Jan Křen]. Praha 1996, 69-79.

²⁰ *Peroutka, Ferdinand: Budování státu: československá politika v letech popřevratových*. 5 sv. [Building the State: The Czechoslovak Politics in the Years after the Coup. 5 vols]. Praha 1933-1936 (further editions in 1991 and 2003). – *Opočenský, Jan: Vznik národních států v říjnu 1918* [The Birth of National States in October 1918]. Praha 1927. – *Opočenský: Konec monarchie rakousko-uherské* [The End of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy]. Praha 1928. – *Krofta, Kamil: E. Beneš a československá zahraniční politika 1924-1933* [E. Beneš and Czechoslovak Foreign Policy, 1924-1933]. In: *Beneš, Edvard: Boj o mír a bezpečnost státu. Československá zahraniční politika v projevech ministra dra Ed. Beneše 1924-1933* [The Struggle for Peace and the National Security. Czechoslovak Foreign Policy in the Speeches of the Minister Dr. Ed. Beneš, 1924-1933]. Praha 1934, 3-229. – *Paulová, Milada: Dějiny Mafie: odboj Čechů a Jihoslovanů za světové války 1914-1918*. 2 sv. [The History of Maffia: The Resistance of Czechs and Yugoslavs during the World War 1914-1918. 2 vols]. Praha 1937, 1939.

²¹ *Procházka, Rudolf: Labyrint míru: Likvidace války 1920/1930* [The Labyrinth of Peace: The Liquidation of War 1920/1930]. Praha 1938. – *Chmelař, Josef: Die nationalen Minderheiten in Mitteleuropa*. Praha 1937.

²² For critical reflection on the state of Czech research of the period 1938/1939-1945, see: *Kučera, Jaroslav / Zimmermann, Volker: Zum tschechischen Forschungsstand über die NS-Besatzungsherrschaft in Böhmen und Mähren. Überlegungen anlässlich des Erscheinens eines Standardwerkes*. In: *Bohemia* 49 (2009) no. 1, 164-183. – See also *Kolář, Pavel / Kopeček, Michal: A Difficult Quest for New Paradigms. Czech Historiography after 1989*. In: *Antohi, Sorin / Trencsényi, Balázs / Apor, Péter* (eds.): *Narratives Unbound. Historical Studies in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*. Budapest 2007, 173-248, esp. 208-210. –

even further. The expulsion of the Germans, the "national and social revolution" of the year 1945, and redressing the mistakes of the First Republic was supposed to place the republic on solid ground. In any case, the perception of the republic as national state and realisation of the legitimate aspirations of Czech and Slovaks was strengthened.

The First Republic from the Shifting Perspectives of Communist Historiography

Historiography after 1948 was undoubtedly different from the previous era. It was not just its ideologization but an overall new understanding of science and its tasks in society, which after the purges was adopted and promoted by some of the earlier historians (mainly, however, being Communist Party functionaries) and within the framework in which the new generation of professional historians was educated.²³ Nevertheless, a radical reinterpretation of the First Republic did not occur immediately after the Communist Party seized power. Especially Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk was initially perceived positively as an important non-communist figure in the narrative of social and national emancipation. It was only in the early 1950s that the attitude turned radically against T. G. Masaryk. Masarykism was declared false consciousness that was supposed to distract the population from thinking about class struggle.²⁴ Because its residue in the society was identified as the cause of the new regime's problems, uncovering and criticizing this false consciousness also acquired a completely topical political dimension.²⁵ Like the figure of Masaryk and his impact, the establishment of Czechoslovakia was also "deconstructed" within the framework of the thesis of the "stolen" revolution. "The people fought, but the bourgeoisie seized power. That was how the Czechoslovak Republic came into being as a bourgeois republic", claim the authors of the official history of the Czechoslovak Communist Party published in 1961.²⁶ Accordingly, in its emergence was encoded its later failure, which manifested itself in the Munich period as the betrayal of the internal bourgeoisie.

Frankl, Michal: The Sheep of Lidice: The Holocaust and the Construction of Czech National History. In: *Himka, John-Paul/Michlic, Joanna Beata* (eds.): *Bringing the Dark Past to Light. The Reception of the Holocaust in Post-Communist Europe*. London 2013, 166-194.

²³ Cf. *Sommer: Angažované dějepisectví* (cf. fn. 19). The following brief summary of the historiography of the 1950s and 1960s is based on the conclusions of this study.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 133. – *Knapík, Jiří*: Oni a Masaryk (Téma T. G. Masaryka v interpretačních proměnách KSČ 1945-1955) [Them and Masaryk (The Topic of T. G. Masaryk within the Shifts of interpretation of the CPC, 1945-1955)]. In: *Acta historica et museologica Universitatis Silesianae Opaviensis* 6 (2003) 363-385.

²⁵ Cf. especially: *Král, Václav*: O Masarykově a Benešově kontrarevoluční protisovětské politice [On the Counter-Revolutionary and Anti-Soviet Policies of Masaryk and Beneš]. Praha 1953. – And the edition of documents: *Dokumenty o protilidové a protinárodní politice T. G. Masaryka* [Documents on the Anti-Popular and Anti-National Policy of T. G. Masaryk]. Praha 1953.

²⁶ Quoted according to: *Sommer: Angažované dějepisectví* 216 (cf. fn. 19). – The book in question is: *Dějiny Komunistické strany Československa* [The History of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia]. Praha 1961.

A change in the historiographic paradigm, in which the First Republic played an important part, was eventually brought about by the reform historiography of the 1960s. A substantial expansion of knowledge on modern Czech history, which, to a large extent, the state of knowledge was based on until the 1990s,²⁷ was also accompanied by a more general discussion about the specific Czechoslovak road to socialism. “The combination of the national and social revolutionary factors”, as Vítězslav Sommer interprets the text *K syntéze našich novodobých dějin* (On the Synthesis of Our Modern History) by Jan Křen and Michal Reiman published in 1963, “was the main theme of recent Czech history. Křen and Reiman saw a clear line of evolution from the anti-war anti-monarchism and anti-militarism of 1918 to the anti-imperialism and anti-fascism of 1945. Here they found the Czechoslovak specifics in which the distinctive ‘Czechoslovak road to socialism’ was rooted”.²⁸ Within the framework of this conception, the non-violent communist takeover in February 1948 appeared to be the evidence of Czechoslovak specifics arising from national democratic traditions. Conversely, the repressive system of the 1950s was perceived as an import from abroad.²⁹ Reform historiography therefore created a new national narrative, in which the First Republic again played one of the crucial roles, that legitimized the present.

The failure of the reform communist movement marked the end of reform historiography as the mainstream research on modern history. Most of its protagonists were silenced and pushed out of professions as historians. After personnel purges and institutional changes,³⁰ the official historiography returned in many respects to prereform interpretations,³¹ although in a far more moderate form. As far as T. G.

²⁷ Some of the most important monographs on the history of the First Republic at that time were: *Kvaček, Robert: Nad Evropou zataženo: Československo a Evropa 1933-1937* [Overcast Europe: Czechoslovakia and Europe 1933-1937]. Praha 1966. – *Gajanová, Alena: ČSR a středoevropská politika velmocí (1918-1938)* [The Czechoslovak Republic and the Central European Policy of the Great Powers (1918-1938)]. Praha 1967. – *Olivová, Věra: Československo v rozrušené Evropě* [Czechoslovakia in a Disrupted Europe]. Praha 1968. – *Lvová, Míla: Mnichov a Edvard Beneš* [Munich and Edvard Beneš]. Praha 1968. – *Křen, Jan: Do emigrace: západní zahraniční odboj 1938-1939* [Into Exile: The Western Resistance Abroad 1938-1939]. Praha 1969. 2nd edition. – *Křen: V emigraci: západní zahraniční odboj 1939-1940* [In Exile: The Western Resistance Abroad 1939-1940]. Praha 1969. – *Kárník: Socialisté na rozcestí* (cf. fn. 10).

²⁸ *Sommer: Angažované dějepisectví 340* (cf. fn. 19).

²⁹ Cf.: *Opat, Jaroslav: O novou demokracii. Příspěvek k dějinám národně demokratické revoluce v Československu v letech 1945-1948* [For a New Democracy. A Contribution to the History of the National Democratic Revolution in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1948]. Praha 1966.

³⁰ For example, the Czechoslovak Institute of the History of Socialism (originally the Institute for the History of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia), which had become one of the main centres of reform historiography in the 1960s, was abolished. On the ending of reform historiography, cf.: *Sommer: Angažované dějepisectví 444-462* (cf. fn. 19).

³¹ A partly different situation reigned in Slovak historiography. Cf. e.g.: *Bystrický, Valerián/Deák, Ladislav: Európa na prelome: diplomatické a politické vzťahy v rokoch 1932-1933* [Europe at a Turning Point: The Diplomatic and Political Relations in 1932-1933]. Bratislava 1974. – *Deák: Zápas o strednú Európu 1933-1938. Politicko-diplomatické vzťahy* [The Struggle for Central Europe 1933-1938. Political and Diplomatic Relations]. Bratislava

Masaryk was concerned, silence set in instead of direct attacks, Munich was regarded as a betrayal of Western bourgeoisie rather than Czech bourgeoisie,³² and some symbolic non-communist figures of the First Republic even gained, especially in the last years of the regime, positive appraisal, as illustrated by the case of Karel Čapek and his presentation in the 1989 film *Člověk proti zkáze* (Man against Destruction), which is still appreciated today.³³ The changing attitude to historiography is also reflected in the fact that in the year 1988, 28 October – the day in which Czechoslovakia became independent – was again declared a state holiday.

As for historiography, it was also not until the 1980s that certain liberalization occurred.³⁴ Notwithstanding, the prevalent interpretation kept repeating the thesis of the establishment of the republic as the "stolen revolution" in which its failure was rooted and which indirectly taught a lesson about the need for a conscious proletarian party. The resulting "capitalist Czechoslovakia relying on imperialist powers", according to Václav Král, one of the main protagonists of normalization historiography, "did not have a chance of a long existence".³⁵

Apart from the official historiography in the 1970s and 1980s, however, there was also a world of historiography in exile and, most importantly, in dissent. In spite of not quite convenient conditions for scholarly work (i. e., access to sources, publishing possibilities, etc.), it was there that prolific discussion unfolded on the subject

1986. – For Slovak historiography, cf.: *Hudek*, Adam: Najpolitickéjšia veda: slovenská historiografia v rokoch 1948-1968 [The Most Political Science: Slovak Historiography 1948-1968]. Bratislava 2010. – *Michela*, Miroslav: Historici a súperenie o podobu nových národných dejín na Slovensku po roku 1989 [Historians Contending for the Shape of the New National History in Slovakia after 1989]. In: *Šustrová*, Radka/*Hedlová*, Lubomíra (eds.): Česká paměť: národ, dějiny a místa paměti [Czech Memory: Nation, History and Places of Memory]. Praha 2014, 131-159. – *Hudek*, Adam/*Michela*, Miroslav: Slovenský štát ako predmet záujmu historiografie po roku 1945 [The Slovak State as a Subject of Historiography after 1945]. In: Slovenský štát 1939-1945: predstavy a realita [The Slovak State 1939-1945: Conceptions and Reality]. Bratislava 2014, 297-308. – *Rychlík*, Jan: Československé dějiny a pokusy o napsání společného česko-slovenského příběhu [The Czechoslovak History and the Attempts to Write a Common Czechoslovak Narrative]. In: Posláním historik. Pocta prof. Robertu Kvačkoví k 80. narodeninám [The Mission of the Historian. Homage to Professor Robert Kvaček on the Occasion of his 80th Birthday]. Praha 2012, 376-395. – *Hudek*, Adam: Images of Edvard Beneš in Slovak Marxist and Nationalist (Ludák) Narratives. In: *Konrád*, Ota/*Küpper*, René (eds.): Edvard Beneš: Vorbild und Feindbild: Politische, historiographische und mediale Deutungen. Göttingen 2013 (VCC 129) 247-260.

³² *Holubec*: Golden Twenty Years 35 (cf. fn. 5).

³³ The film featured prominent Czech actors of the time, such as Josef Abrhám playing the part of Karel Čapek and Hana Maciuchová as Olga Scheinpflugová. Masaryk, as played by Svatopluk Beneš, had unequivocally positive traits corresponding to the Masaryk myth of a wise statesman.

³⁴ Cf. e.g.: *Bíman*, Stanislav/*Malíř*, Jaroslav: Kariéra učitele tělocviku [The Career of a Gym Teacher]. Ústí nad Labem 1983. – *Bíman*/*Cílek*, Roman: Poslední mrtví, první živí [The Last Dead, the First Living]. Ústí nad Labem 1989.

³⁵ *Král*, Václav: 60. výročí Velké říjnové socialistické revoluce a Československo [The 60th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and Czechoslovakia]. In: *Slovenské historické studie* 12 (1979) 5-21, here 18.

of Czech-German relations and the expulsion of Germans. This issue, which the reform historiography in the 1960s only touched upon,³⁶ became one of the main perspectives from which modern Czech history was discussed in dissent.³⁷

1989: Back to the Beginning – The First Republic as a National or a Multinational State, or the Comeback of the (Sudeten) German Question

After 1989, Czech historiography sought an interpretive keystone to its modern history, which is evidenced by several collective publications aimed at performing a kind of revision of the current state of research.³⁸ This uncertainty is not surprising – it reflected not only the hectic times of the early 1990s, the flood of diverse book production on modern history, and the hitherto unseen plurality of opinions, but also current political events, predominantly the break-up of Czechoslovakia, which brought the question back up of this state's place in Czech history as well as conflicts in Czech-German relations.

What soon became one of the most important subjects of research on modern Czech history and related disputes was the Czech-German question, predominantly the issue of the expulsion of Sudeten Germans after 1945.³⁹ The dispute over

³⁶ Cf. especially: *Křen*, Jan: Odsun Němců ve světle nových pramenů [The Transfer of Germans in Light of New Sources]. In: *Dialog* (1967) no. 4, 1-5; No. 5, 6-10; No. 6, 9-13.

³⁷ Discussion was triggered especially by the work of Ján Mlynárik, who, under the pseudonym of Danubius, published “Tézy o vysídlení československých Němců” [The Theses about the Displacement of Czechoslovak Germans]. Major contributions to the discussion, including Mlynárik's “theses”, were published in 1990: *Černý*, Bohumil/*Křen*, Jan/*Kural*, Václav/*Otáhal*, Milan (eds.): *Češi, Němci, odsun: diskuse nezávislých historiků* [Czechs, Germans, Transfer: Discussion of Independent Historians]. Praha 1990. – Even certain fundamental works, which were published again in the 1990s, were created in the milieu of the dissent: *Křen*, Jan: *Konfliktní společenství* [Community of Conflict]. Toronto 1989 (further Czech editions 1990 and 2013. The German version: *Křen*: *Die Konfliktgemeinschaft Tschechen und Deutsche 1780-1918*. München 1996). – And the follow-up work by *Kural*, Václav: *Konflikt místo společenství? Češi a Němci v československém státě (1918-1938)* [Conflict instead of Community? Czechs and Germans in the Czechoslovak State 1918-1938]. Praha 1993.

³⁸ The monothematic issue of *Soudobé dějiny* (1995) no. 2-3, dealing with the First Republic (cf. fn. 11). – *Reflexe dějin* (cf. fn. 14). – *Harna*, Josef/*Valenta*, Jaroslav/*Voráček*, Emil (eds.): *Československo 1918-1938: osudy demokracie ve střední Evropě. Sborník mezinárodní vědecké konference v Praze, 5.-8. října 1998, Valdštejnský palác – Senát Parlamentu České republiky. 2 sv.* [Czechoslovakia 1818-1938. The Fates of Democracy in Central Europe. Proceedings of the International Academic Conference 5-8 October 1998, the Wallenstein Palace – the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, 2 vols]. Praha 1999. – *Mares*, Antoine/*Harna*, Josef (eds.): *Co nevíme o první Československé republice. Záznam z diskuse pořádané 25. března 1999 v Cefres v Praze* [What We Do Not Know about the First Czechoslovak Republic. The Records of a Discussion Held on 25 March 1999 in Cefres, Prague]. Praha 1999. – Cf. also the study by *Křen*, Jan: *Bílá místa v našich dějinách?* [White Spots in Our History?]. Praha 1990.

³⁹ Cf. the synoptic work, *Kopeček*, Michal/*Kunštát*, Miroslav: “Sudetoněmecká otázka” v české akademické debatě po roce 1989 [“The Sudeten German Question” in Czech Academic Debate after 1989]. In: *Soudobé dějiny* 10 (2003) no. 3, 293-318. – The discussion on the Sudeten German issue could follow up on the discussion in the dissent due to the publi-

the expulsion also contained a number of sub-subjects concerning, among other things, the First Republic and its evaluation. These included the question of authorization for the establishment of the independent state, the quality of Czechoslovak democracy, the behaviour of the political elite in the fateful year 1938, as well as the causes of and responsibility for the communist coup in February 1948. With some degree of simplification, one can claim that it was the attitude towards the expulsion of Germans that defined attitudes on other issues as well. To the critics, the expulsion represented one of the peaks of the wrong path that the Czech society set out on in the 20th century. Czechoslovak politics was not able to gain the loyalty of either Germans or Slovaks during the existence of the First Republic, and hence Czechs had a significant share of responsibility for the disintegration of the state in 1938. The expulsion itself was an expression of a peculiar "national socialist" revolution, which as a result brought the communists to power and which led to the return of Czech historical consciousness similar to that emerging from the Central European nationalism of the 19th century.⁴⁰ What was also typical of this approach was a moral plane of argumentation from the position of contemporary critics of Czech nationalism.⁴¹

To the advocates of the First Republic's democracy, the emergence of Czechoslovakia as a national state of Czechs and Slovaks was fully legitimate. According to this perspective, the democracy of the First Republic was exemplary, and if certain problems occurred in it – such as the process of creating the constitution, the Pětka, the weakening of the parliament, the power of political parties, corruption, etc. – they were minor blemishes caused by the oppressive situation and the need for the stabilization of the Czechoslovak state. Its failure, that is to say Munich, has to be understood as a combination of the "betrayal" of a part of its own inhabitants – the Sudeten Germans – who had mostly assumed a negative attitude to the republic and democracy at the beginning of the First Republic, and external circumstances, meaning the policy of Nazi Germany and the betrayal of the Western allies, which were beyond the reach of Czechoslovak politics. Accordingly, the expulsion of Germans in 1945, in spite of deplorable excesses, appeared to be an essentially legitimate step towards the restoration of Czechoslovak statehood and democracy. Similarly, it was also possible to understand the February 1948 as a coup of one of the initially anti-system and anti-democratic parties and at the same time as a consequence of the expansion of the Soviet Union, facilitated by the repeated betrayal of Central and

cation of essential works; translated literature, however, was also being published, some period texts were being republished, and, last but not least, even original post-November production appeared, based already on open access to archives: Staněk, Tomáš: Odsun Němců z Československa 1945-1947 [The Transfer of Germans from Czechoslovakia 1945-1947]. Praha 1991. – Kučera, Jaroslav: Odsunové ztráty sudetoněmeckého obyvatelstva. Problémy jejich přesného vyčíslení [The Transfer Casualties of Sudeten German Population. Problems of Accurate Quantification]. Praha 1992.

⁴⁰ Cf. especially: Mandler, Emanuel: Benešovy dekrety – proč vznikaly a co jsou [Beneš's Decrees – Why They Originated and What They Are]. Praha 2002.

⁴¹ The discussion is summarized in Kopeček/Kunštát: "Sudetoněmecká otázka" 300-302 (cf. fn. 39).

Eastern Europe by the Western powers. This framework of interpretation especially determined works on the First Republic by Věra Olivová,⁴² Eva Broklová,⁴³ and later Jindřich Dejmek (with an emphasis on foreign politics).⁴⁴

As far as perception of the First Republic democracy is concerned, this conception is reflected comprehensively in the texts of Josef Harna published in the new millennium: According to Harna, the Czechoslovak political system and political culture were characterized by the ability to find consensus and to make compromises.⁴⁵ It was thanks to this that democracy was preserved until 1938, when it collapsed due to external circumstances. The exceptionality of Czechoslovakia is confirmed by the comparison with Germany and Austria, presented by Harna as negative mirrors in which the extraordinariness of Czechoslovak democracy in the Central European

⁴² Olivová, Věra: Československá republika v letech 1918-1938 [The Czechoslovak Republic 1918-1938]. Praha 1993. – Olivová: Dějiny československé republiky [The History of the Czechoslovak Republic]. Praha 2000.

⁴³ Broklová, Eva: Politická kultura německých aktivistických stran v Československu 1918-1938 [The Political Culture of German Activist Parties in Czechoslovakia 1918-1938]. Praha 1999. – In this context, it is worth mentioning the discussion between Broklová and Kučera. While Broklová advocates the thesis of the Czechoslovak nation as a chiefly political nation, which was open also to those Sudeten Germans who would be interested in participating in the democratic culture of the First Republic, Kučera demonstrates that in practice the Czechoslovak nation was conceived from the beginning in the ethnic sense, and hence potential integration of members of different nations was more than limited. Kučera, Jaroslav: Politický či přirozený národ? K pojetí národa v československém právním řádu meziválečného období [Political or Natural Nation? On the Concept of the Nation in the Czechoslovak Law of the Interwar Period]. In: Český časopis historický (ČČH) 99 (2001) 548-568. – Broklová: Politický nebo etnický národ? [Political or Ethnic Nation?]. In: ČČH 100 (2002) 2, 379-394.

⁴⁴ Dejmek, Jindřich: Historik v čele diplomacie: Kamil Krofta. Studie z dějin československé zahraniční politiky v letech 1936-1938 [A Historian Leading the Diplomacy: Kamil Krofta. A Study of the History of Czechoslovak Foreign Policy 1936-1938]. Praha 1998. – Later on, Dejmek focused on the figure of Edvard Beneš. His research resulted in a two-volume “political biography”, which at the same time presents a detailed description of Czechoslovak foreign policy specifically in the interwar period. Here, too, Dejmek deliberately endorses the interpretation of Czechoslovakia as, in the given circumstances, an exemplary democracy: Dejmek: Edvard Beneš: politická biografie českého demokrata. Část první: Revolucionář a diplomat (1884-1935) [Edvard Beneš: A Political Biography of a Czech Democrat. Part I: A Revolutionary and Diplomat (1884-1935)]. Praha 2006. – Dejmek: Edvard Beneš: politická biografie českého demokrata. Část druhá. Prezident republiky a vůdce národního odboje (1935-1948) [Edvard Beneš: A Political Biography of a Czech Democrat. Part II: The President of the Republic and the Leader of National Resistance (1935-1948)]. Praha 2008. – A balanced and in many respects critical view of the Czechoslovak diplomacy of the 1930s was presented in the following work: Lukeš, Igor: Československá diplomacie mezi Stalinem a Hitlerem: Diplomacie Edvarda Beneše v 30. letech 20. století [Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler: The Diplomacy of Edvard Beneš in the 1930s]. New York 1996 (published in Czech under the title “Československo mezi Stalinem a Hitlerem: Benešova cesta k Mnichovu” [Czechoslovakia between Stalin and Hitler: Beneš's way to Munich]. Praha 1999).

⁴⁵ Harna, Josef: Konsenzus a kompromis: budování politického systému první Československé republiky 1918-1922 [Consensus and Compromise: Building the Political System of the First Czechoslovak Republic 1918-1922]. Praha 2013.

space is reflected more distinctly.⁴⁶ These specific features of the Czechoslovak political culture were influenced more by "cultural" and "ideological" factors, such as the close connection of the Czech national emancipation project with democracy, the role of personalities, or the reserved attitude of the Czechs towards the state, dating back to the time of the monarchy, which – unlike Germany or Austria – hindered the emergence of conservative, authoritative mentality among civil servants. As a result, these factors formed the foundation of the Czech project. In the interest of this project and for its defence against disloyal opposition on the part of minorities and anti-system parties such as the Communist Party Czech political parties managed to unite and reach consensus and compromise, thus maintaining the democratic system for the whole interwar period. The Czech national project, therefore, was a precondition for democracy, or, more precisely, the existence of the parliamentary system, and vice versa.⁴⁷

However, the tumultuous discussion about the interpretation of modern history, which was often focused on the Sudeten German issue, did not only concern the subject matter. Its significance for contemporary Czech internal and foreign politics as well as public perception and Czech national identity made it possible for this debate and with it also its participants, professional historians, and historical "laymen" to enter the public space. As a consequence, it gave rise to a specific perception of a historian as an expert in history and at the same time a public figure who becomes involved in public and political discussions. In 1999, historians Jindřich Dejmek, Jan Kuklík, and Jan Němeček published a "booklet for the public" with the intention of dealing with Czech and foreign voices critical to the expulsion of the Germans after 1945.⁴⁸ Even more awareness was raised by two other texts published at that time. Before the parliamentary elections in 2002, the Association of Czech Historians (or, more precisely, its committee⁴⁹) published a statement entitled *Historikové proti znásilňování dějin* (Historians against the Violation of History), in which its authors attempt to outline the limits of professional and

⁴⁶ Harna, Josef: *Krise evropské demokracie a Československo 30. let 20. století: (srovnávací sonda)* [The Crisis of European Democracy and Czechoslovakia in the 1930s (A Comparison)]. Praha 2006.

⁴⁷ A kind of "anti-Harna" is presented by a study by Josef Ladislav Beran, who comes to the opposite conclusion: "Therefore, the cause of the weakening of the Sudeten German democracy is the consequence of the denial of its success" on the part of Czech politics. Beran, Ladislav Josef: *Odepřená integrace. Systémová analýza sudetoněmecké politiky v Československé republice 1918-1938. [Integration Denied. A Systematic Analysis of Sudeten German Politics in the Czechoslovak Republic 1918-1938]*. Praha 2009, 358. Beran understands Sudeten German politics as a reaction of this political "subsystem" to the "inputs" coming from the "system" of the official Czechoslovak politics. Nevertheless, the work with literature, sources and the assumption of the existence of some internally integrated national blocks – Czech and Sudeten German – lessen the value of the work and place it back on the level of discussion and state of knowledge of the 1990s.

⁴⁸ Dejmek, Jindřich/Kuklík, Jan/Němeček, Jan: *Kauza: tzv. Benešovy dekrety. Historické kořeny a souvislosti. (Tři české hlasy k diskusi)* [The Case of the So-Called Beneš Decrees. The Historical Roots and Context. (Three Czech Voices in a Discussion)]. Praha 1999.

⁴⁹ Kopeček/Kunštát: "Sudetoněmecká otázka" 309 (cf. fn. 39).

scientifically truthful, hence legitimate, discourse on the past and Czech-German relations. In so doing, they repeat, in a number of points, the traditional Czech national, or, more precisely, national democratic interpretation.⁵⁰ Similar concern is prevalent in the text *Česká historická věda a české historické vědomí. Několik námětů do diskuse* (Czech Historical Science and Czech Historical Consciousness. A Few Subjects for Discussion), authored by Jaroslav Pánek, then the chairman of the Association of Historians of the Czech Republic – Historical Club. Pánek criticizes the “negative” perspective on Czech history based on the Sudeten German interpretation.⁵¹

Reading the studies written by both the critics and the advocates of the First Republic, as well as watching the public performances of historians at this time, one cannot but feel that the argumentation was often circular. And indeed, when the critics, for instance, claimed that February 1948 was the consequence of previous development, mistakes in Czechoslovak politics, and the specific national socialist revolution led by Edvard Beneš, they were only repeating, although with a different evaluation, Opat’s thesis from the 1960s about the specific democratic Czechoslovak path to socialism. The same thesis – without the culmination in February 1948, obviously – also resounded in the interpretation of the advocates of the First Republic in the 1990s.

The keystone of interpretation in all these cases was always the national framework of considering Czechoslovakia as, in a certain sense, a Central European rarity, a state still viewed as – whether legitimate or regrettable – a realization of the national movement. It was, therefore, the same perspective we pointed out at the beginning of this text as one of the main approaches to viewing the history of the First Republic after 1989. Because of that, even after 1989, until the 21st century, historiography continued the tradition of interpretation dating back to the First Republic, through the reform socialism of the 1960s until the 1990s. The result of this was the dominance of classical history of both internal and foreign politics in terms of research on acting, thinking, and decision-making of political elites of the Czechoslovak state.⁵²

⁵⁰ Pánek, Jaroslav/Pešek, Jiří: Historikové proti znásilňování dějin. Stanovisko Sdružení historiků České republiky. [Historians against the Violation of History. The Standpoint of the Association of Historians of the Czech Republic]. In: Zpravodaj Historického klubu 12 (2001) no. 2. – Cf. also the publication originally intended as a presentation of the official standpoint of the Czech government, or, more precisely, the Ministry of Education, on the subject in question: Beneš, Zdeněk/Jančík, Drahomír/Kuklík, Jan/Kubů, Eduard: Rozumět dějinám. Vývoj česko-německých vztahů na našem území v letech 1848-1948 [Understanding History. The Development of Czech-German Relations in Our Land in 1848-1948]. Praha 2002. The book was also published in German, English and French.

⁵¹ Pánek, Jaroslav: Česká historická věda a české historické vědomí (několik námětů do diskuse) [Czech Historical Science and Czech Historical Consciousness (Several Subjects for Discussion)]. In: Zpravodaj Historického klubu 10 (1999) no. 1, 1-14. – The text resulted in a turbulent discussion, taking place mainly at the 8th Congress of Czech Historians. See also Kolař/Kopeček: A Difficult Quest 223-224 (cf. fn. 22).

⁵² Within this framework, the person who became the embodiment, in both the good and the bad sense, of the First Republic and Czech history in the first half of the 20th century, was

The Gradual Overcoming of Traditional Political History, or New Methods Bring New Perspectives

This narrowing of the field in terms of subject matter and method is all the more surprising when we realize that at the same time, in many cases, research on the 19th century, which was similarly thriving, proceeded in different directions. This concerns syntheses that take into consideration social and intellectual aspects of historical development,⁵³ comparative sociohistorical and cultural-historical research,⁵⁴ Czech and German politics of the 19th century in the broader context of the monarchy and Central Europe⁵⁵, or cultural-historical approaches.⁵⁶ Even gender history or everyday history were beginning to gain ground. It is, therefore, possible that the explanation can be found in the contemporary topicality of the subject of the First Republic, which logically gave priority to the interest in the rewarding history of politics.⁵⁷

It would, nevertheless, be an oversimplification, if not conscious distortion, to reduce the research on the First Republic only to the above-mentioned alternatives and authors. In fact, apart from them there were also studies that have more or less disrupted the paradigm of the national history in the sense presented above. On the basis of detailed primary source research, a number of them have managed to agitate some of the assumptions passed on by tradition.⁵⁸

Edvard Beneš, a historical figure who was adored as much as he was repudiated. *Konrád/Küpper*: Edvard Beneš: Vorbild und Feindbild (cf. fn. 31).

⁵³ *Kořalka*, Jiří: Češi v habsburské říši a v Evropě 1815-1914. Sociálněhistorické souvislosti vytváření novodobého národa a národnostní otázky v českých zemích [Czechs in the Habsburg Empire and in Europe 1815-1914. Social Historical Contexts of the Creation of the Modern Nation and Questions of Nationality in the Bohemian Lands]. Praha 1996.

⁵⁴ *Hroch*, Miroslav: V národním zájmu: požadavky a cíle evropských národních hnutí devatenáctého století v komparativní perspektivě [In the National Interest: Demands and Goals of European National Movements of the 19th Century: A Comparative Perspective]. Praha 1996. – *Hroch*: Na prahu národní existence: touha a skutečnost [On the Eve of the National Existence: Desire and Reality]. Praha 1999. – Cf. also the comparative work from the area of urban history: *Pešek*, Jiří: Od aglomerace k velkoměstu: Praha a středoevropské metropole 1850-1920 [From Agglomeration to Metropolis: Prague and Central European Metropolises 1850-1920]. Praha 1999.

⁵⁵ *Křen*: Konfliktní společenství (cf. fn. 37).

⁵⁶ *Rak*, Jiří: Bývali Čechové. České historické mýty a stereotypy [They Were Czechs: Czech Historical Myths and Stereotypes]. Praha 1994. – And, more recently, especially *Štaif*, Jiří: Obezřetná elita: česká společnost mezi tradicí a revolucí 1830-1851 [The Careful Elite: The Czech Society between Tradition and Revolution 1830-1851]. Praha 2005. – As early as in 1983, the following groundbreaking work was published: *Macura*, Vladimír: Znamení zrodu: české obrození jako kulturní typ [The Sign of Revival: Czech Rebirth as a Cultural Type]. Praha 1983 (an expanded version entitled "Znamení zrodu a české sny" [The Sign of Revival and Czech Dreams] was published in 2015).

⁵⁷ *Machačová*, Jana/*Matějček*, Jiří/*Musilová*, Dana/*Pavelčíková*, Nina: Zpráva o stavu výzkumu sociálních dějin v období 1938-1948 od začátku 90. let 20. století do současnosti [The Report on the State of Research of Social History in the Period 1938-1948 from the Beginning of the 1990s to the Present]. In: *Reflexe dějin* (2008) 125-143, here 126.

⁵⁸ *Klímek*: Boj o Hrad Díl 1 (cf. fn. 9). – *Klímek*: Boj o Hrad Díl 2 (cf. fn. 9).

A study by Jaroslav Kučera uses the example of the language issue⁵⁹ to focus on the central problem of the Czech nationality policy, mainly the relationship between Czechs and Germans. The author disproves a number of simplifying myths, whether on the Czech side (the exemplary minority policy, which the Sudeten Germans did not want to or could not appreciate) or on the German side (the language policy as an intended instrument for the assimilation of the German-speaking population). The evaluation of Czechoslovak language policy, consequently, reveals ambivalence. On the one hand, in everyday life it enabled the majority of the German population to communicate with the authorities in their own language; according to Kučera, most German-speaking inhabitants did not even need knowledge of Czech, despite being the state language, for most of their life.⁶⁰ Moreover, the democratic system impeded radical nationalist tendencies that could have endangered national minorities. On the other hand, however, it did nothing to help the identification of all the inhabitants with the Czechoslovak state. Establishing the Czechoslovak state language ranked “non-Czechoslovak” ethnic groups as non-state nations. This *Staatsdoktrin* was something that Czech or Czechoslovak political parties were not willing to change in any way. For that reason, the possibilities for German activist politics remained limited, and they had no other option than to look for solutions in partial adjustments. Such adjustments, however, were insubstantial in improving the relation between the Czechs and Germans in the First Republic. A well-considered and realistic programme for such a change was missing, as Kučera points out, on the side of both Czech and German politicians. The language policy, Kučera concludes, made the inclusion of the numerically, economically, and culturally important German minority difficult, to say the least, “turned out to have serious consequences on the stability of Czechoslovakia’s internal politics in the late 1930s, on the stability of its territory and, as a result, also on its state sovereignty”. It was because the Czechoslovak politics “in its fear of a loss of identity was not able to give

⁵⁹ *Kučera*, Jaroslav: *Minderheiten im Nationalstaat. Die Sprachenfrage in den tschechisch-deutschen Beziehungen 1918-1938*. München 1999. – On the subject of Sudeten Germans and Czechoslovakia, cf. the following German works: *Jaworski*, Rudolf: *Vorposten oder Minderheit? Der sudetendeutsche Volkstumskampf in den Beziehungen zwischen der Weimarer Republik und der ČSR*. Stuttgart 1977 (in Czech, “Na stráží německví nebo v postavení menšiny? Sudetoněmecký národnostní boj ve vztazích výmarské republiky a ČSR”, Praha 2004). – *Luh*, Andreas: *Der Deutsche Turnverband in der Ersten Tschechoslowakischen Republik. Vom völkischen Vereinbetrieb zur volkspolitischen Bewegung*. München 1988 (VCC 62). – *Boyer*, Christoph/*Kučera*, Jaroslav: *Die Deutschen in Böhmen, die Sudetendeutsche Partei und der Nationalsozialismus*. In: *Möller*, Horst/*Wirsching*, Andreas/*Ziegler*, Walter (eds.): *Nationalsozialismus in der Region*. München 1996, 273-285. – Discussion in *Bohemia* 38 (1997) no. 2 with contributions by Christoph Boyer and Jaroslav Kučera, Ronald M. Smelser, Václav Kural and Ralf Gebel. – *Gebel*, Ralf: *Heim ins Reich! Konrad Henlein und der Reichsgau Sudetenland (1938-1945)*. München 1999 (VCC 83). – *Zimmermann*, Volker: *Die Sudetendeutschen im NS-Staat: Politik und Stimmung der Bevölkerung im Reichsgau Sudetenland (1938-1945)*. Essen 1999 (in Czech, “Sudetští Němci v nacistickém státě. Politika a nálada obyvatelstva v říšské župě Sudety, 1938-1945.”) For more literature cf. *ibid.* fn. 77.

⁶⁰ *Kučera*: *Minderheiten im Nationalstaat* 307 (cf. fn. 59).

up the presumption of a national state exclusively of Czechs and Slovaks by giving equal rights to all languages".⁶¹

Peter Heumos came to similar conclusions. In 1995 he published in Czech a noteworthy study on the Czechoslovak political system and political culture, in which, on the basis of political science and sociohistorical approaches, he deconstructs the image of exemplary democracy.⁶² According to Heumos, the proportionalization of power, as one of the main features of the political culture of the First Republic, had a stabilizing function as long as the division of the "social loot" among political parties concerned particular issues. This way could, as a result, at least contribute to orderly coexistence of nationalities in the Czechoslovak Republic. Nevertheless, the stability was achieved at the cost of the absence of an opposition that could propose alternatives, the consequence of which was a limitation of the possibility of political-social innovation at a time of big structural problems of the republic, especially during the economic crisis. It is a pity that this work, although it was published in one of the main Czech historical journals, did not, concerning an interpretation of Czechoslovak interwar politics, elicit any major response.

Heumos's study was in fact only followed up many years later by Peter Bugge.⁶³ Bugge poses the question whether the rapid disintegration of democracy and political parties after September 1938 can be explained by merely psychological motives, such as the shock resulting from the September crisis. In fact, according to Bugge, the development in the Second Republic raises the question about the solidity of the First Republic's democracy. Drawing on Heumos, Bugge notices the connection between stability and insufficient flexibility and effectiveness of the political system. One of the main disadvantages of the stabilizing Czech "democratic myth" is the fact that it did not leave much space for non-national qualities within the democratic idea. Being against Czechs meant being against democracy and vice versa:

If the Czech commitment to democracy rested on the assumption that there was a harmony between world history, national interests, and democratic rule, a profound crisis in the national ethos had to occur since this correlation was no longer perceived as valid. This happened in October 1938.⁶⁴

Based on primary source analysis or political science concepts, Kučera, Heumos, and Bugge have focused on the way in which the politics in Czechoslovakia worked,

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 310, 311.

⁶² Heumos, Peter: Strukturální prvky první Československé republiky. Politicko-společenský systém, intermediární organizace a problém stability [Structural Elements of the First Czechoslovak Republic. The Political-Social System, Intermediary Organizations and the Problem of Stability]. In: Soudobé dějiny 2 (1995) no. 2-3, 157-168. – See also Heumos: Konfliktregelung und soziale Integration. Zur Struktur der Ersten Tschechoslowakischen Republik. In: Bohemia 30 (1989) no. 1, 52-70.

⁶³ Bugge, Peter: Czech Democracy 1918-1938 – Paragon or Parody? In: Bohemia 47 (2006/2007) no. 1, 3-28.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 24. – On the issue of the political system, political parties and associations, cf. also the older German work: Bosl, Karl (ed.): Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als multinationaler Parteienstaat: Vorträge der Tagungen des Collegium Carolinum in Bad Wiessee vom 24.-27. November 1977 und vom 20.-23. April 1978. München 1979 (BWT 9).

and at the same time they have highlighted the hitherto prevalent high degree of Czechocentrism that dealt with the history of the First Republic only from the Czech perspective.⁶⁵ Similar scholastic enrichment also has included works, although rare, attempting to make a comparison or broader European contextualization of the First Republic. Here, let us mention Křen's synthesized work based on the author's lectures at the Institute of International Studies of the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University from the late 1990s. Křen's work – with its focus on the macroregion of Central Europe instead of the national frame – presents a radical break from the traditional framing of Czech history.⁶⁶ On more than 1,000 pages, the author observes by comparison the fates of Central European societies from the end of the 18th century to the present. In so doing, Křen calls attention to not only “high politics” but also takes into account social, economic, cultural, and ideological developments.

Partial transcending of the national frame was also characteristic of economic history. After 1989, this field of research could follow up on the work by, among others, Alice Teichová.⁶⁷ The authors have dealt with Czechoslovak economy in relation to contemporary economic development,⁶⁸ or within the framework of the development of Central European economies after the disintegration of the common economic space,⁶⁹ and have explored the subsequent strategy of economic nation-

⁶⁵ In this context, cf. also the study by Šebek, Jaroslav: *Mezi křížem a národem. Politické prostředí sudetoněmeckého katolicismu v meziválečném Československu* [Between the Cross and the Nation. Political Environment of Sudeten German Catholicism in Interwar Czechoslovakia]. Brno 2006. – The Czech-German and Slovak-German commissions of historians also published a series of conference proceedings dealing with “burning” topics: *Hoensch, Jörg K./Kováč, Dušan* (eds.): *Das Scheitern der Verständigung. Tschechen, Deutsche und Slowaken in der Ersten Republik (1918-1938)*. Essen 1994. – *Brandes, Detlef/Kural, Václav* (eds.): *Der Weg in die Katastrophe. Deutsch-tschechoslowakische Beziehungen 1938-1947*. Essen 1994. – *Brandes, Detlef/Ivaničková, Edita/Pešek, Jiří* (eds.): *Erzwungene Trennung. Vertreibungen und Aussiedlungen in und aus der Tschechoslowakei 1938-1947 im Vergleich mit Polen, Ungarn und Jugoslawien*. Essen 1999.

⁶⁶ *Křen, Jan: Dvě století střední Evropy* [Two Centuries of Central Europe]. Praha 2005. – The European context is also the setting of the edition project of a popularizing character, *České země v evropských dějinách* [The Bohemian Lands in European History]. The last part deals with the history of the 20th century: *Cubra, Jaroslav/Ellinger, Jiří/Gjuričová, Adéla/Smetana, Vít: České země v evropských dějinách. Díl 4. Od roku 1918* [The Bohemian Lands in European History. Part 4. After 1918]. Praha 2006. – Another work oriented, like Křen's book, to a larger territory as the framework of interpretation was written by a group of authors: *Vykoukal, Jiří/Tejchman, Miroslav/Litera, Bohuslav: Východ: vznik, vývoj a rozpad sovětského bloku 1944-1989* [The East: Formation, Development and Dissolution of the Soviet Bloc, 1944-1989]. Praha 2000.

⁶⁷ *Teichová, Alice: Mezinárodní kapitál a Československo v letech 1918-1938* [The International Capital and Czechoslovakia 1918-1938]. Praha 1994. The book was originally published in 1974 under the title *An Economic Background to Munich. International Business and Czechoslovakia 1918-1938*.

⁶⁸ *Lacina, Vlastislav/Doležalová, Antonie/Pátek, Jaroslav/Jakubec, Ivan/Kubů, Eduard/Jančík, Drahomír: Mýtus a realita hospodářské vyspělosti Československa mezi světovými válkami* [The Myth and the Reality of the Economic Advancement of Czechoslovakia between the World Wars]. Praha 2000.

⁶⁹ *Lacina, Vlastislav/Hájek, Jan: Kdy nám bylo nejlépe? Od hospodářské dezintegrace*

alism in this region.⁷⁰ Christoph Boyer focuses on the Czech-German economic relations in the First Republic, the logic of which disrupted the traditional borders between the Czech and German worlds drawn by political historians.⁷¹ There have also been synthesized works on economic development of the Bohemian lands in the modern period.⁷² Works by Eduard Kubů or Drahomír Jančík enrich the traditional history of foreign politics with a perspective coming from economic development and they raise the issue concerning the influence of economic factors on acting and decision-making of Czechoslovak diplomacy, which had traditionally been viewed only through the prism of national or state interests and rationality.⁷³

Last but not least, let us mention the work by Ivan Šedivý.⁷⁴ Especially in the second part of his book, Šedivý presents the Great War from the perspective of the history of society and history of everydayness. It is against this backdrop that he concentrates on Czech politics and the emerging concepts of the independent Czechoslovak state. His work is not only a significant contribution to the history of the Bohemian lands during World War I, but at the same time unravels the Czech "mesianism"⁷⁵ and the idea of Czechoslovak uniqueness, as well as the teleological view of the establishment of the First Republic. Above all, however, for the purposes of this monothematic issue, he suggests that the history of Czechoslovakia cannot be begun directly on 28 October because longer continuities in all areas of life of the society or societies located in this particular territory were as important as the decisions and actions of the new revolutionary political elite.⁷⁶

As we have already mentioned, a significant feature of the research remaining

k integraci střední Evropy [When Were We at Our Best? From Economic Disintegration to the Integration of Central Europe]. Praha 2002.

⁷⁰ Kubů, Eduard/Schulz, Helga (eds.): *Wirtschaftsnationalismus als Entwicklungsstrategie ostmitteleuropäischer Eliten*. Berlin 2004. – More recently on the subject: Jančík, Drahomír/Kubů, Eduard: *Nacionalismus zvaný hospodářský. Střety a zápasy o nacionální emancipaci/převahu v českých zemích (1859-1945)* [A Nationalism Called Economic. Conflicts and Struggles for the Economic Emancipation/Domination in the Bohemian Lands (1859-1945)]. Praha 2011.

⁷¹ Boyer, Christoph: *Nationale Kontrahenten oder Partner? Studien zu den Beziehungen zwischen Tschechen und Deutschen in der Wirtschaft der ČSR (1918-1938)*. München 1999. – Barth, Boris/Faltus, Josef/Křen, Jan/Kubů, Eduard: *Konkurrenzpartnerschaft. Die deutsche und die tschechoslowakische Wirtschaft in der Zwischenkriegszeit*. Essen 1999.

⁷² Průcha, Václav et al.: *Hospodářské a sociální dějiny Československa 1918-1992*. 2 sv. [Economic and Social History of Czechoslovakia 1918-1992. 2 vols]. Brno 2004, 2009.

⁷³ Kubů, Eduard: *Německo – zahraničněpolitické dilema Edvarda Beneše. (Hospodářské vztahy s Německem v československé zahraniční politice 1918-1924)* [Germany – Edvard Beneš's Foreign Policy Dilemma (Economic Relations with Germany in Czechoslovak Foreign Policy 1918-1924)]. Praha 1992. – Jančík, Drahomír: *Třetí říše a rozklad Malé Dohody. Hospodářství a diplomacie v Podunají v letech 1936-1939* [The Third Reich and the Disintegration of the Little Entente. The Economy and the Politics in South-East Europe 1936-1939)]. Praha 1999.

⁷⁴ Šedivý, Ivan: *Češi, české země a Velká válka 1914-1918* [The Czechs, the Bohemian Lands and the Great War 1914-1918]. Praha 2001.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 5.

⁷⁶ Most recently, this approach has been articulated in the book by Judson, Pieter: *The Habsburg Empire. A New History*. Cambridge 2016, 385-452.

within the national framework has been its bohemicentrism. This view has been challenged for a long time in the works of Jan Rychlík,⁷⁷ and the research centre of Masaryk University in Brno has also played an important role in this respect, although its authors have concentrated more on the history of the long 19th century.⁷⁸ Also in these works, political history has remained the main research focus.

Accordingly, in the 1990s, social history was on the periphery of the prevalent interest in modern history, which concentrated mainly on the history of politics. Social history, associated for many authors after 1989 only with research on the history of the proletariat and the workers' movement, suddenly lost its attractiveness. It was, nevertheless, the area of social history in which several synthesized works transcending the dominant historical focus, like in the case of economic history, came into being at that time.⁷⁹ One of the most important attempts to write a comprehensive history of the First Republic is Zdeněk Kárník's synthesis *České země v éře První republiky* (The Bohemian Lands in the Era of the First Republic), which aims at combining social, economic, and cultural history.

The book by Kárník was, beside Antonín Klimeks *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české* (The Great History of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown), the second synthesis of the First Czechoslovak Republic that summarized the discussions within the Czech historiography of the first decade after 1989.⁸⁰ While Antonín Klimek in his two-volume history of the First Republic focuses on the basis of detailed knowledge of archival sources, chiefly on political history – the chapters on society, culture, and economy give the impression of being more of a supplement to the main subject⁸¹ – Kárník's work is a real synthesis, a work in which the author attempts to interconnect individual aspects of the development of the First Republic.⁸² This

⁷⁷ Rychlík, Jan: *Češi a Slováci ve 20. století. Díl 1. Česko-slovenské vztahy 1914-1945* [Czechs and Slovaks in the 20th Century. Vol. 1. Czech-Slovak Relations 1914-1945]. Bratislava, Praha 1997.

⁷⁸ Malíř, Jiří: *Od spolků k moderním politickým stranám. Vývoj politických stran na Moravě v letech 1848-1914* [From Associations to Modern Political Parties. The Development of Political Parties in Moravia, 1848-1914]. Brno 1996. – Fasora, Lukáš/Hanuš, Jiří/Malíř, Jiří/Vykoupil, Libor (eds.): *Člověk na Moravě v první polovině 20. století* [A Man in Moravia in the First Half of the 20th Century]. Brno 2006.

⁷⁹ Macháčová, Jana/Matějček, Jiří: *Sociální pozice národnostních menšin českých zemí 1918-1938* [The Social Position of Ethnic Minorities in the Czech Lands 1918-1938]. Opava 1999. – Kalinová, Lenka (ed.): *K proměnám sociální struktury v Československu 1918-1968* [Changes in Social Structure in Czechoslovakia 1918-1968]. Praha 1993.

⁸⁰ For Masaryk's presidency see also Kovtun, Jiří: *Republika v nebezpečném světě. Éra prezidenta Masaryka 1918-1935* [The Republic in a Dangerous World. The Era of President Masaryk 1918-1935]. Praha 2005. – After the author's death, the unfinished manuscript that covers the second half of the 1930s and focuses on the foreign policy of Czechoslovakia and international relations was published: Kovtun: *Republika v obležení. První éra prezidenta Beneše 1935-1938* [The Republic under Siege. The First Era of President Beneš 1935-1938]. Praha 2016.

⁸¹ Klimek, Antonín: *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české* [The Great History of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown]. Díl 12 (1918-1929). Praha 2000; Díl 14 (1929-1938). Praha 2002.

⁸² Kárník, Zdeněk: *České země v éře První republiky (1918-1938). Díl první. Vznik, budování a zlatá léta republiky (1918-1929)* [The Bohemian Lands in the Era of the First Republic (1918-1938). Vol. 1. The Formation, Building and Golden Years of the Republic (1918-

three-volume synthesis, as well as the subsequent *Malé dějiny československé* (Small History of Czechoslovakia) by the same author,⁸³ demonstrate how far the research after 1989 has gone, and in many respects also suggests transcending the 1990s paradigm that focuses on the national framework, the specific Czech national narrative, and political history. This is evidenced, for example, by Kárník's depiction of the establishment of the republic, who considers the historical context and the unique international political situation, and describes it as a multiple national revolution (Czech, German, and Slovak) in this particular territory.⁸⁴

In spite of that, a large extent of research on modern history in the 1990s and at the beginning of the 21st century has been shaped by many factors: These include national framing, the Czech appropriation of the history of the First Republic, as well as a concentration on political history. Furthermore, dealing with Czechoslovak history as something specific, whether in the positive or negative sense of the word, as well as a certain disposition of the historian – including ideas of his or her public responsibility and competence for normative judgements on both modern history and the present, and after 1989 also an aversion to theories as something "Marxist" – also have been characteristic.

*New Approaches and the Ongoing Internationalization of Historiography
since the Beginning of the 21st Century*

In 2007, the historians Pavel Kolář and Michal Kopeček published an essay on modern Czech history with a rather critical point of view towards Czech historiography since 1989, arguing that it has not been accompanied by a deeper interest in methodological discussions and has remained largely "descriptive, event-oriented history writing".⁸⁵ With regard to the historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic, they underline the ongoing predominance of a "traditional ethnocentric view".⁸⁶ When looking at most of the publications by established scholars, one can only agree with Kolář and Kopeček. In spite of this, first shifts in the Czech (and Slovak) historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic can be observed since the first decade of the 21st century. This applies mainly, but not only, to a younger generation of scholars – to which Kolář and Kopeček also belong – who were born in the 1970s and 1980s and produced their first publications at the beginning of the 21st century but who have not established themselves in an institutional sense yet.

1929)]. Praha 2000; Díl druhý. Československo a české země v krizi a v ohrožení (1930-1935) [Vol. 2. Czechoslovakia and the Bohemian Lands in Crisis and in Danger (1930-1935)]. Praha 2002; Díl třetí. O přežití a o život (1936-1938) [Vol. 3. For Survival and for Life (1936-1938)]. Praha 2003. – On his concept of a social history of the First Czechoslovak see also Kárník: Die Erste Republik im Strom der Sozialgeschichte. In: Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen (ISB) 23 (2000) 74-90.

⁸³ Kárník, Zdeněk: *Malé dějiny československé (1867-1939)* [A Small History of Czechoslovakia (1867-1939)]. Praha 2008.

⁸⁴ Kárník: *České země* 1, 33-49 (cf. fn. 82).

⁸⁵ Kolář/Kopeček: A Difficult Quest 225 (cf. fn. 22).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 206.

Slovakia witnessed not only a generational shift but also a political change in historiography, which has become increasingly depoliticized since the end of the Mečiar regime in 1998, even though the explicit division between “national” and “liberal” historians has since left its mark.⁸⁷

In the following, we will exemplarily discuss recent publications and approaches in their interconnection with the international historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic. The latter as well underwent an important transformation after the end of the Cold War: The history of Czechoslovakia is no longer exclusively presented in German- and English-language research literature as “peripheral”, as one of the “islands of complicated configurations” that made up Central Europe in the past. In fact, attempts have increased, as Anna Veronika Wendland identifies in relation to East (and East Central) European history in general, “to offer integrated perspectives rather than to exclude the various ‘others’ from the ‘general’ history”.⁸⁸ The historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic has grown together more and more over the past fifteen years. Intensified exchange, increasing interconnection, proceeding digitalization, and economization are ongoing processes, and at the moment we cannot fully estimate their long-term effects. These processes are not linear and they depend in particular on the general political framework and the politics of science. They do not automatically remove all barriers and misunderstandings within the “academic community”, but also produce new ones.

The most striking example of the long-term effects of political processes is the lack of real “Czechoslovak” histories of the interwar period, with the exception of books, for example, by Martin Zückert on the Czechoslovak army and its nationalities politics, by Michal Frankl and Miloslav Szabó on the role of anti-Semitism during the state-building process, and by various Czech and Slovak art historians on the representations of Czechoslovak statehood in arts, architecture, and design, as well which indicate a change in this regard.⁸⁹ Other projects nearing completion include work

⁸⁷ See *Hlavičková, Zora*: Wedged between National and Trans-National History: Slovak Historiography in the 1990s. In: *Antohi/Trencényi/Apor*: Narratives Unbound 249-310, here 263 (cf. fn. 22). – An excellent platform on recent historiography (including art history and the history of literature) in Slovakia, which also provides complete versions of published books from roughly the last 15 years, is *Forum Historiae. A Journal and Platform for History and Related Disciplines*. URL: <http://forumhistoriae.sk/casopis> (last accessed 01.08.2016); including the E-Knižnica. URL: <http://forumhistoriae.sk/e-kniznica> (last accessed 01.08.2016).

⁸⁸ *Wendland, Anna Veronika*: Randgeschichten? Osteuropäische Perspektiven auf Kulturtransfer und Verflechtungsgeschichte. In: *Osteuropa* 58 (2008) no. 3, 95-116. – On the criticism of narrow concepts of the German and “Central European” history *Walser Smith*: For a Differently Centered Central European History (cf. fn. 2).

⁸⁹ *Zückert, Martin*: Zwischen Nationsidee und staatlicher Realität. Die tschechoslowakische Armee und ihre Nationalitätenpolitik 1918-1938. München 2006 (VCC 106). – *Frankl, Michal/Szabó, Miloslav*: Budování státu bez antisemitismu? Násilí, diskurz loajality a vznik Československa [Building the State without Anti-Semitism? Violence, Loyalty and the Making of Czechoslovakia]. Praha 2015. – *Bartlová, Milena/Vybíral, Jindřich et al.* (eds.): Budování státu. Reprezentace Československa v umění, architektuře a designu [Building a State. The Representation of Czechoslovakia in Art, Architecture and Design]. Praha 2015.

by Dagmar Hájková, Pavel Horák, and Miroslav Michela on the construction of national identities through commemoration, by Andrea Talabér on the same topic but in a comparative perspective with Hungary, and by Felix Jeschke on the conceptualization of national territory through infrastructure in interwar Czechoslovakia, which will soon lead to further publications.⁹⁰ Despite these recent attempts to broaden the interpretation of Czechoslovakia, the dissolution of the state in 1993 has left deep marks on the historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic and should become a topic of historiography itself.

The Deconstruction of National History: Influences of International Historiography

The works discussed in this part unify the – reflected or unreflected – aspiration to go beyond the paradigm of national history,⁹¹ to critically re-examine “traditional” topics of the historiography on the First Republic, or to deal with so far marginalized topics that obviously did not fit into the frame of a nation-centred history. As a result, the historiography has become more differentiated and is not devoted to one single master narrative. The aim of these recent studies is not to continue considering Czechoslovakia between the world wars as an isolated “island”, but to place the Czechoslovak state and society into its various regional, European, and global contexts. Czechoslovakia is thus reconstructed as a transnational border space according to which various, often conflicting developments, being more or less typical in comparison to other societies at that time, can be observed. The research on the interwar period, furthermore, is no longer restricted to the traditional caesuras of 1918 and 1938, the “zero hours in Czechoslovak history”, which “obscured the many legacies of Austrian political culture that shaped Czechoslovak democracy, as well as the interwar institutions and conflicts that informed life under Nazi rule”, as Tara Zahra points out,⁹² and one could add the manifold entanglements with post-Second World War and socialist Czechoslovakia.⁹³

⁹⁰ See among others the article by *Hájková, Dagmar/Horák, Pavel*: Oslavy narozenin prezidentů v meziválečném Československu [The Birthday Celebrations of the Presidents of Czechoslovakia in the Interwar Period]. In: *Střed/Centre* 7 (2015) no. 2, 32-58, as a preliminary result of the research project “Konstruování národní identity: Státní svátky za první Československé republiky” [The Construction of National Identities: State Holidays during the First Czechoslovak Republic] as well as the articles by Andrea Talabér and Felix Jeschke in this issue of *Bohemia*.

⁹¹ This is explicitly formulated in a collective volume by a younger generation of Slovak historians: *Hudek, Adam* (ed.): *Overcoming the Old Borders: Beyond the Paradigm of Slovak National History*. Bratislava 2013. – See especially the chapter on the interwar period by *Benko, Juraj*: The State and Its People. The Political Socialisation of the Slovak Population after the Creation of the Czechoslovak Republic. In: *Ibid.* 71-83. URL: <http://forumhistoriae.sk/documents/10180/285989/hudek-borders.pdf> (last accessed 01.08.2016).

⁹² *Zahra, Tara*: *Kidnapped Souls. National Indifference and the Battle for the Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900-1948*. Ithaca 2008, 108-109.

⁹³ See for example *Stegmann, Natali*: *Kriegsdeutungen, Staatsgründungen, Sozialpolitik. Der Helden- und Opferdiskurs in der Tschechoslowakei 1918-1948*. München 2010. – *Balcar, Jaromír/Kučera, Jaroslav*: *Von der Rüstammer des Reiches zum Maschinenwerk des Sozialismus. Wirtschaftslenkung in Böhmen und Mähren 1938 bis 1953*. München 2013

The most important impact on the historiography of the interwar period (and of course of the second half of the 19th century) has been the constructivist concepts of the history of nationalism as formulated by Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson, and Rogers Brubaker, as well as the criticism by Miroslav Hroch.⁹⁴ Consequently, research on the Bohemian lands in the late 19th and early 20th centuries has for the past fifteen years mainly dealt with “imagined communities” and “imagined territories”, with the construction of national identities and loyalties as well as with the importance of national indifference and imagined “non-communities”, respectively. American scholars such as Jeremy King, Pieter Judson, and Tara Zahra, who also apply these concepts in part to the First Czechoslovak Republic, thus mainly criticize the predominant ethnocentric approach to the Bohemian, Moravian, Silesian, Upper Hungarian, and Czechoslovak societies in the heyday of modern nationalism at the turn of the last century. They especially analyse national activists together with the strategies and instruments they employed to divide society along seemingly clear-cut ethnic boundaries, as well as the reactions by the “ordinary people” to these processes of ethnicization.⁹⁵

In a similar vein, Peter Haslinger reformulates Benedict Anderson’s concept of “imagined communities” and expands its spatial dimension. He analyses the forms and scopes of “imagined territories” that helped to propagate ideas of a homogenous “Czech” or “Czechoslovak” territory.⁹⁶ Nancy Wingfield, Cynthia Paces, and, more recently, Dagmar Hájková, Miroslav Michela, Pavel Horák, and Andrea Talabér follow the means and processes of the construction of national identities through commemoration, monuments, and other particularly top-down mechanisms in the creation of modern national identities between the world wars.⁹⁷ All in

(VCC 128). – *Bartlová/Vybíral* et al.: Budování státu (cf. fn. 89). – *Brenner*, Christiane/*Braun*, Karl/*Kasper*, Tomáš (eds.): Jugend in der Tschechoslowakei: Konzepte und Lebenswelten (1918-1989). Göttingen 2016 (BWT 36) 153-179. – *Rákosník*, Jakub/*Šustrová*, Radka: Rodina v zájmu státu. Populační růst a instituce manželství v českých zemích 1918-1989 [The Family in the Interest of the State. Population Growth and the Institution of Marriage in Czech Lands 1918-1989]. Praha 2016.

⁹⁴ See for example *Haslinger*, Peter: Nation und Territorium im tschechischen politischen Diskurs 1880-1938. München 2010 (VCC 117). – *Řezník*, Miloš: Národní kategorie a současná historiografie [Die Nationalkategorie und die gegenwärtige Geschichtswissenschaft]. In: *Dějiny – teorie – kritika* 3 (2006) 1, 7-34. – *Řezník*, Miloš: Miroslav Hroch a evropské studium formování moderního národa [Miroslav Hroch and the European Research on Modern Nation-Building]. In: *Střed/Centre* 3 (2011) no. 2, 82-105.

⁹⁵ *Zahra*: Kidnapped Souls (cf. fn. 92). – *Zahra*: Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis. In: *Slavic Review* 69 (2010) no. 1, 93-119. – *King*, Jeremy: The Nationalization of East Central Europe. Ethnicism, Ethnicity, and Beyond. In: *Bucur*, Maria/*Wingfield*, Nancy M. (eds.): Staging the Past. The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present. West Lafayette 2001, 112-152. – *King*, Jeremy: Budweisers into Czechs and Germans. A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948. Princeton 2005. – *Judson*, Pieter M.: Guardians of the Nation. Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria. Cambridge 2006.

⁹⁶ *Haslinger*: Nation und Territorium 16-22, 34-38 (cf. fn. 94).

⁹⁷ *Wingfield*, Nancy: Flag Wars and Stone Saints. How the Bohemian Lands Became Czech. Cambridge/Mass. 2007. – *Hájková*, Dagmar/*Wingfield*: Czech(-oslovak) National Commemorations during the Interwar Period: Tomáš G. Masaryk and the Battle of White

all, these works clarify the success, limits, and ambiguities of practices of national ascription that were already shaped during the late Habsburg Monarchy and gained momentum in the new nation-state on a centralized as well as on a local level.⁹⁸

Martin Schulze Wessel advocates a rather critical approach to the term "identity", which is often missed in the research on national identities. He suggests instead an extended definition of the term "loyalty", which "keeps the perspective open for the coexistence of various premodern and modern patterns of identification that do not result in a zero sum game but rather even enrich each other in paradoxical constellations".⁹⁹ According to him, loyalties possess not only a vertical but also a horizontal dimension and are of central importance for the development of personal and collective identities.

In the course of the breakthrough of constructivist concepts in the history of nationalism and the "rediscovery" of the polyethnic composition of the societies of the Bohemian lands, Upper Hungary, and Czechoslovakia respectively, studies of urban history and of negotiations and representations of various national and non-national identities in urban spaces have become typical over the past two decades. These include Brünn/Brno,¹⁰⁰ Budweis/České Budějovice,¹⁰¹ and Prague,¹⁰² and

Mountain Avenged. In: *Acta Historiae* 18 (2010) no. 3, 425-452. – *Hájková*, Dagmar: Constructing National Unity. Commemorations of Tomáš G. Masaryk's Death. In: *Střed/Centre* 4 (2012) no. 1, 33-55. – *Michela*, Miroslav: "A Home Should Be a Home to All Its Sons": Cultural Representations of the Saint Stephen in Slovakia. In: *Hudek*: Overcoming the Old Borders 97-110 (cf. fn. 91). – See also the special issue by *Střed/Centre* "Chléb a hry. Oslavy a svátky v Československu 1918-1938/Bread and Circuses. Celebrations and Holidays in Czechoslovakia 1918-1938" with contributions by Nancy Wingfield, Dagmar Hájková, Pavel Horák, Johannes Kontny, and Michal Pehr. – *Galandauer*, Jan: Chrást bez boha nad Prahou: památník na Vítkově [The Temple without a God above Prague: The Vítkov Memorial]. Praha 2014.

⁹⁸ *Zabra*: Kidnapped Souls 108 (cf. fn. 92).

⁹⁹ *Schulze Wessel*, Martin: "Loyalität" als geschichtlicher Grundbegriff und Forschungskonzept. Zur Einleitung. In: *Schulze Wessel*, Martin (ed.): *Loyalitäten in der Tschechoslowakischen Republik, 1918-1938. Politische, nationale und kulturelle Zugehörigkeiten*. München 2004 (VCC 101) 1-22, here 10.

¹⁰⁰ The polyethnic society of Brno/Brünn before the Second World War has been a central focal point for ethnological, sociological, and cultural studies examinations. See especially *Pospíšilová*, Jana/*Altman*, Karel (eds.): *Leute in der Großstadt*. Brno 1992. – *Steinführer*, Annett: *Öffentlichkeit, Privatheit und städtische Integration. Tschechische Erinnerungen an das Leben in Brünn vor 1939*. In: *Hofmann*, Andreas R./*Wendland*, Anna Veronika (eds.): *Stadt und Öffentlichkeit in Ostmitteleuropa 1900-1939. Beiträge zur Entstehung moderner Urbanität zwischen Berlin, Charkiv, Tallinn und Triest*. Stuttgart 2002 (*Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa* 14) 111-131. – *Wessely*, Katharina: *Theater der Identität: Das Brünner deutsche Theater der Zwischenkriegszeit*. Bielefeld 2011. – *Nosková*, Jana/*Čermáková*, Jana (eds.): "Měla jsem moc krásné dětství". Vzpomínky německých obyvatel Brna na dětství a mládí ve 20. až 40. letech 20. století/ "Ich hatte eine sehr schöne Kindheit". Erinnerungen von Brünner Deutschen an ihre Kindheit und Jugend in den 1920er-1940er Jahren. Brno 2013.

¹⁰¹ *King*: *Budweisers* (cf. fn. 95).

¹⁰² *Koeltzsch*, Ines: *Geteilte Kulturen. Eine Geschichte der tschechisch-jüdisch-deutschen Beziehungen in Prag (1918-1938)*. München 2012 (VCC 124). – *Adam*, Alfons: *Unsichtbare Mauern: Die Deutschen in der Prager Gesellschaft zwischen Abkapselung und Interaktion (1918-1938/39)*. Essen 2013.

especially Pressburg/Poszony/Bratislava¹⁰³ and Kaschau/Kassa/Košice.¹⁰⁴ These local studies, following the general boom of (East) Central European local histories since the late 1980s, often convincingly demonstrate the importance of local *Eigen-sinn* (*self-will*) and the variety of identities and loyalties through the “reproduction of the local”.¹⁰⁵ While these works mostly focus on large- and medium-sized cities, the histories of small rural towns and villages within the polyethnic state have not been a prominent topic to date. The *longue durée* history of the village Ouběnice in Central Bohemia by Josef Petrář represents an exception here. Although he applies a rather traditional approach to local history and lacks, above all, reflections upon concepts of space and identity, he does include the history of marginal groups – such as Jews and refugees – and perspectives of everyday life in his broader narrative of the Bohemian countryside. Looking at the implementation of democratic order on a microhistorical level in his chapter about the First Czechoslovak Republic, Petrář convincingly describes the social, economic and cultural conflicts as well as the related fears, hopes and forms of indifference of local protagonists that contradict the official representation of the *převrat* (revolution) as a primarily euphoric event.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ *Mannová, Elena*: Objavovanie mnohovrstvovosti. Diferencovaná prezentácia minulosti multietnického mesta po politických zlomoch 19. a 20. storočia [Revealing Multi-layeredness. A Differentiated Presentation of the Past of a Multiethnic City after the Political Reversals of the 19th and 20th Century]. In: *Czoch, Gábor/Kocsis, Aranka/Tóth, Árpád* (eds.): Kapitoly z dejín Bratislavy [Chapters from the History of Bratislava]. Bratislava 2006, 49-62. – *Engemann, Iris*: Die Slowakisierung Bratislavas. Universität, Theater und Kultusgemeinden 1918-1948. Wiesbaden 2012. – *Schvarc, Michal*: Finis Pressburg. Germans in Bratislava 1918-1948. In: *Hudek*: Overcoming the Old Borders 111-123 (cf. fn. 91). – See also the recently published innovative works by the literary historian *Tancer, Jozef*: “Der schwarze Sabbat”. Die Brandkatastrophe in Pressburg 1913 als Medienereignis. Bratislava 2012. The article can be accessed online. URL: https://fphil.uniba.sk/fileadmin/fif/katedry_pracoviska/kgm/Pressburger_Akzente_02.pdf (last accessed 13.08.2016). – *Tancer*: Neviditeľné mesto. Prešporok/Bratislava v cestopisej literatúre [The Invisible City. Pressburg/Bratislava in Travel Writings]. Bratislava 2013.

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, *Kovács, Éva*: Felemás asszimiláció: A kassai zsidóság a két világháború között (1918-1938) [Ambivalent Assimilation. The Jews from Kassa between the World Wars (1918-1938)]. Somorja, Dunaszerdahely 2004. – *Kovács*: Identität oder Loyalität: Die Juden von Košice (Kaschau, Kassa) von der Ziehung der tschechoslowakisch-ungarischen Grenze bis zum Ersten Wiener Schiedsspruch. In: *Haslinger, Peter* (ed.): Grenze im Kopf: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Grenze in Ostmitteleuropa. Frankfurt am Main 1999, 103-114. – *Szeghy-Gayer, Veronika*: “Vrátme si mesto!” Prejavy nespokojnosti ‘mestského občana’ v politickom diskurze v Prešove 1918-1938 [“Let us Return the City!” Expressions of Dissatisfaction of the ‘Local Citizen’ in the Political Debate in Prešov 1918-1938]. In: *Forum Historiae* 9 (2015) no. 2, 56-68. URL: http://forumhistoriae.sk/documents/10180/1273455/4_szeghy-gayer.pdf (last accessed 01.08.2016).

¹⁰⁵ *Kovács, Éva*: Die Ambivalenz der Assimilation: Postmoderne oder hybride Identitäten des ungarischen Judentums. In: *Feichtinger, Johannes/Prutsch, Ursula/Csáky, Moritz* (eds.): Habsburg postcolonial: Machtstrukturen und kollektives Gedächtnis. Innsbruck, Wien 2003, 197-208, here 204. – *Koeltzsch, Ines*: History Takes Place. Neuere Forschungen zur Geschichte multiethnischer Städte Zentral- und Osteuropas im 20. Jahrhundert. In: *Střed/Centre* 7 (2015) no. 1, 131-149.

¹⁰⁶ *Petrář, Josef* [in collaboration with *Lydia Petrářová*]: Dějiny českého venkova v příběhu Ouběnic [A History of the Czech Countryside: The Case of Ouběnice]. Praha 2011.

New Approaches from the Margins: The History of Jews and Anti-Semitism

The discussion of terms like identity and loyalty has also been relevant for some time within the historiography on the Jews in interwar Czechoslovakia. As early as the 1990s, and into the early 2000s, the Hungarian sociologist Éva Kovács has suggested in her research on the Jews of Kaschau/Kassa/Košice extending the term identity and including the term loyalty.¹⁰⁷ Although modern Jewish history is still not fully established within the curricula of modern history at universities in the Czech Republic (and even less so in Slovakia), and was often left out in previous research on Czech-German relationships, the current historiography on Jews in interwar Czechoslovakia has advanced the research on "fluid" identities and loyalties.¹⁰⁸ Kateřina Čapková, for example, deals with the construction of national identities among the Jewish population in the Bohemian lands in the First Czechoslovak Republic. She emphasizes the importance of social ties among Jews and non-Jews and states that "it was not at all unusual for individual Jews from Bohemia to adopt another national identity without making great changes in their everyday lives; nor was it unusual to be without any clearly defined national identity."¹⁰⁹ In her pioneering work, she not only fills in "blank spaces" but she also challenges the predominant view of Czech-, German-, and English-language historiography that has until now characterized the Bohemian and Moravian Jews as a more or less clearly defined group standing "between the Czechs and Germans".¹¹⁰

The authors of other recent studies on the Jewish history of interwar Czechoslovakia have also shown the differentiation and plurality of Jewish identities and loyalties.¹¹¹ While some authors have focused mostly on the relationships between

¹⁰⁷ Kovács: Identität oder Loyalität (cf. fn. 104). – Kovács: Felemás asszimiláció (cf. fn. 104).

¹⁰⁸ See Črbková, Marie: Jewish Studies in the Czech Republic. In: Journal of Modern Jewish Studies 10 (2011) no. 1, 135-143. – Koeltzsch, Ines: Modernity, Identity, and Beyond: Historiography on the Jews of the Bohemian Lands in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries. In: Studia Judaica 19 (2016) no. 1, 41-64. – Beginning in 2015, a series on modern Jewish history in Czech has been established for the first time by Kateřina Čapková and Michal Frankl in cooperation with the publishing house *Lidové noviny* with the title *Židé – Dějiny – Paměť* [Jews – History – Memory].

¹⁰⁹ Čapková, Kateřina: Czechs, Germans, Jews? National Identity and the Jews of Bohemia. New York 2012, 253. – While her book, the first edition of which was already published in 2005, was only rarely received by "general" historians – despite its success among a broader, non-academic public – her research has garnered more attention in recent years following publication of a second Czech and especially of an English edition of the book. See also: Čapková: Češi, Němci, Židé? Národní identita Židů v Čechách 1918-1938. Praha, Litomyšl 2005 and 2nd extended edition Praha, Litomyšl 2013.

¹¹⁰ On this master narrative, see especially *Ibid.* 241-245. – Frankl, Michal: "Emancipace od židů". Český antisemitismus na konci 19. století ["Emancipation from the Jews". Czech Antisemitismus at the End of the 19th Century]. Praha 2007, 36-53 (German edition: "Prag ist nunmehr antisemitisch". Tschechischer Antisemitismus am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts. Berlin 2011). – Shumsky, Dmitry: Zweisprachigkeit und binationale Idee: Der Prager Zionismus 1900-1930. Göttingen 2013, 27-73.

¹¹¹ Kovács: Identität oder Loyalität (cf. fn. 104). – Kovács: Felemás asszimiláció (cf. fn. 105). – Shumsky: Zweisprachigkeit (cf. fn. 110). – Kieval, Hillel J.: Negotiating Czechoslovakia:

the state and its Jewish citizens and thus mainly on vertical loyalties, authors such as Éva Kovács, Ines Koeltzsch, and Martina Niedhammer – the latter focusing on the 19th century but with a more generally relevant methodology – have emphasized the importance of microhistorical approaches to show the ambiguity and, most importantly, the coexistence of various concepts of identity and loyalty in the past.¹¹²

In their book *Nejisté útočiště* (Uncertain Refuge), published in 2008, Kateřina Čapková and Michal Frankl deal with the Czechoslovak policy towards refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria, their everyday lives, and refugee relief, and in doing so call special attention to the refugees of Jewish origin, who constituted the largest group of refugees. While the Czechoslovak government followed a partial integration policy towards the elite of the refugees, the most common experience of Jewish refugees was, according to the authors, rather being unwanted and being forced to make a hard living. Čapková and Frankl thus disavow the common conception of Czechoslovakia as an “island of democracy” and show the ambiguities of the policy towards refugees in the First Czechoslovak Republic, which also helps to explain the rapid exclusion of Jews and other “others” during the Second Republic.¹¹³

The current historiography on the Jews between the world wars mainly centres on a respective region, mostly Bohemia and Prague. As a result, it also still lacks a consolidated Czechoslovak perspective that takes notice of the geographical peripheries of the Bohemian lands and Czechoslovakia, including Sub-Carpathian Rus.¹¹⁴ This is even more striking when considering that the Jews have often been described by contemporaries and historians alike as the “Czechoslovak” citizens par excellence.

Dealing with so far “marginal” topics of the “general” historiography can lead to major and valuable results and a reinterpretation of the First Czechoslovak Republic, as is confirmed by the book *Budování státu bez antisemitismu?* (Building the

The Challenges of Jewish Citizenship in a Multiethnic Nation-State. In: *Cohen, Richard J./Frankel, Jonathan/Hoffman, Stefani* (eds.): *Insiders and Outsiders: Dilemmas of East European Jewry*. Oxford, Portland 2010, 103-119. – *Koeltzsch: Geteilte Kulturen* (cf. fn. 102). – *Klein-Pejšová, Rebekah*: *Mapping Jewish Identities in Interwar Slovakia*. Bloomington 2015. – *Lichtenstein, Tatjana*: *Zionists in Interwar Czechoslovakia: Minority Nationalism and the Politics of Belonging*, Bloomington 2016. – *Strobach, Vít*: *Židé: národ, rasa, třída. Sociální hnutí a “židovská otázka” v českých zemích 1861-1921* [Jews: People, Race, Class. Social Movements and the “Jewish question” in the Bohemian Lands]. Praha 2015.

¹¹² A groundbreaking work for its micro-historical examination, albeit relating to the 19th century, is *Niedhammer, Martina*: *Nur eine “Geld-Emancipation”? Loyalitäten und Lebenswelten des Prager jüdischen Großbürgertums 1800-1867*. Göttingen 2013. – For the interwar period, see above all *Kovács: Felemás asszimiláció* (cf. fn. 104). – And *Koeltzsch: Geteilte Kulturen* (cf. fn. 102).

¹¹³ *Čapková, Kateřina/Frankl, Michal*: *Nejisté útočiště: Československo a uprchlíci před nacismem, 1933-1938* [Uncertain Refuge. Czechoslovakia and the Refugees from Nazi Germany and Austria, 1933-1938]. Praha 2008. In German: *Čapková, Kateřina/Frankl, Michal*: *Unsichere Zuflucht: Die Tschechoslowakei und ihre Flüchtlinge aus NS-Deutschland und Österreich 1933-1938*. Wien, Köln 2012.

¹¹⁴ See especially the comprehensive history by *Jelínek, Yeshayahu*: *The Carpathian Diaspora. The Jews of Subcarpathian Rus’ and Mukachevo, 1848-1948*. New York 2007.

State without Antisemitism?) by Michal Frankl and Miloslav Szabó, which analyses the role of anti-Semitism during the state-building process through practices of violence, discourses on loyalty, and political mobilization. Picking up Peter Bugge's thesis of the paradoxical character of the political system of the First Czechoslovak Republic, "where virtue and vice were intrinsically linked",¹¹⁵ they explain that anti-Semitism, despite its considerable extent during the state-building process between 1917 and 1921, did not become a political force in the First Czechoslovak Republic because of the shortcomings of Czechoslovak democracy. These shortcomings – most obviously in connection with the Pětka – limited the potential for anti-Semitic actions. According to Frankl and Szabó, the remobilization of this potential in autumn 1938 was resonance from the building of the state and the construction of national unity around 1918.¹¹⁶

The Comeback of Social History and the History of Ideas and Religion

Aside from these numerous studies on the (re)construction of national identities and the mutual processes of integration and exclusion within the Czechoslovak polyethnic society, new Czech studies on social history, principally on the history of workers, have been published in the past fifteen years. These topics belonged to the main research fields of Marxist historiography before 1989 and had become rather taboo for the historiography following the Velvet Revolution, by contrast to the history of the nobility and the bourgeoisie. The writings of Jakub Rákosník, Stanislav Holubec, and Martin Jemelka, however, have revived the interest in the history of the working classes, contributing not only to a more nuanced picture of this history but also pointing to the tensions of Bohemian/Moravian/Czechoslovak society before the Second World War.¹¹⁷

Most recently, Rudolf Kučera advances the social and cultural history of workers with his widely recognized book *Rationed Life*. Against the background of scientific and political discourses, he addresses questions of nutrition, the rationalization of work, gender relations, and protests and their impacts on the everyday life of the working classes during the First World War. Although he primarily focuses on the war era, he raises questions of continuity and discontinuity in relation to the interwar period, among other issues.¹¹⁸ The blurred transitions between the First World

¹¹⁵ Bugge: Czech Democracy 1918-1938, 25 (cf. fn. 63).

¹¹⁶ Frankl/Szabó: Budování státu bez antisemitismu esp. 308 (cf. fn. 89).

¹¹⁷ Rákosník, Jakub: Odvrácená tvář meziválečné prosperity. Nezaměstnanost v Československu v letech 1918-1938 [The Other Side of the Interwar Prosperity. Unemployment in Czechoslovakia in the Years 1918-1938]. Praha 2008. – Holubec, Stanislav: Lidé periferie. Sociální postavení a každodennost pražského dělnictva v meziválečné době [People of the Periphery. The Social Situation and the Everyday Life of the Working Class in Interwar Prague]. Plzeň 2009. – Jemelka, Martin: Na Šalomouně: společnost a každodenní život v největší moravskoostravské hornické kolonii (1870-1950) [Shaft Šalomoun: Society and Everyday Life of the Biggest Mining Settlement in the Region of Moravian Ostrava (1870-1950)]. Ostrava 2008. – Jemelka (ed.): Lidé z kolonií vyprávějí své dějiny [People from the Mining Settlement Tell Their Stories]. Ostrava 2009. – See also the current project of the author: Jemelka: Náboženský život průmyslového dělnictva českých zemí (1918-1939):

War and the immediate post-war period is also the topic of a new project by Rudolf Kučera, Ota Konrád, and Václav Šmidrkal on violence on the home front in the Bohemian lands and in Austria. From a cultural history perspective, this project analyses the question of how the war and the post-war period influenced the forms, languages, and practices of violence.¹¹⁹

The history of ideas and knowledge, and of intellectuals and religion, represent other prospering fields in the historiography on the Bohemian lands and Czechoslovakia at the beginning of the 20th century. Pavel Kolář, Ota Konrád, and Petr Lozoviuk analyse the institutions and conceptions of the humanities, in addition to other topics, at the Czech and German universities in Prague before and after the First World War and compare these with their Central European counterparts.¹²⁰ In

institute, religiozita a sociální otázka [Religious Life of the Industrial Workers in the Bohemian Lands (1918-1939): Institutions, Religiosity, and the Social Question].

¹¹⁸ *Kučera, Rudolf*: Život na přiděl: válečná každodennost a politiky dělnické třídy v českých zemích 1914-1918 [A Rationed Life: War, Everyday Life and Labour Politics in the Czech Lands 1914-1918]. Praha 2014. – Extended English edition: Rationed Life. Science, Everyday Life, and Working-Class Politics in the Bohemian Lands, 1914-1918. New York, Oxford 2016.

¹¹⁹ For the first results of the project see: *Šmidrkal, Václav*: Fyzické násilí, státní autorita a trestní právo v českých zemích 1918-1923 [Physical Violence, State Authority, and Criminal Law in the Bohemian Lands 1918-1923]. In: ČČH 114 (2016) no. 1, 89-115. – *Konrád, Ota*: Die unfertige Nation: Überlegungen zur Gewaltgeschichte der böhmischen Länder während des Ersten Weltkriegs und in der unmittelbaren Nachkriegszeit. In: *Neutatz, Dietmar / Zimmermann, Volker* (eds.): Von Historikern, Politikern, Turnern und anderen: Schlaglichter auf die Geschichte des östlichen Europa. Festschrift für Detlef Brandes zum 75. Geburtstag. München 2016, 103-117. – *Kučera, Rudolf*: Exploiting Victory, Bemoaning Defeat: Uniformed Violence in the Creation of the New Order in Czechoslovakia and Austria, 1918-1922. In: *Journal of Modern History* 88 (2016) 827-855 and the article by Ota Konrád in this issue of *Bohemia*.

¹²⁰ *Kolář, Pavel*: Geschichtswissenschaft in Zentraleuropa. Die Universitäten Prag, Wien und Berlin um 1900. Leipzig 2008. – *Konrád, Ota*: Dějepisectví, germanistika a slavistika na Německé univerzitě v Praze 1918-1945 [Historiography, Germanistics and Slavistics at the German University in Prague 1918-1945]. Praha 2011. – *Lozoviuk, Petr*: Interethnik im Wissenschaftsprozess. Deutschsprachige Volkskunde in Böhmen und ihre gesellschaftlichen Auswirkungen. Leipzig 2008. – On the academic history of the First Czechoslovak Republic, see among others: *Albrecht, Stefan / Mališ, Jiří / Melville, Ralph* (eds.): Die „sudetendeutsche Geschichtsschreibung“ 1918-1960. Zur Vorgeschichte und Gründung der Historischen Kommission der Sudetenländer. München 2008 (VCC 114). – *Kaiserová, Kristina / Kunštát, Miroslav* (eds.): Die Suche nach dem Zentrum: Wissenschaftliche Institute und Bildungseinrichtungen der Deutschen in Böhmen (1800-1945). Münster 2014. – *Höhne, Steffen* (ed.): August Sauer (1855-1926). Ein Intellektueller in Prag zwischen Kultur- und Wissenschaftspolitik Köln 2011. (Intellektuelles Prag im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert 1). – *Nešpor, Zdeněk R.*: Republika sociologů: zlatá éra české sociologie v meziválečném období a krátce po druhé světové válce [The Republic of Sociologists: The Golden Age of Czech Sociology in the Interwar Period and shortly after the Second World War]. Praha 2011. – See also the seminal writings by Alena Míšková, to which the aforementioned Studies relate: *Glettler, Monika / Míšková, Alena* (eds.): Prager Professoren 1938-1948. Zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik. Essen 2001. – *Míšková, Alena*: Německá (Karlova) univerzita od Mnichova k 9. květnu 1945: (vedení univerzity a obměna profesorského sboru) [German (Charles) University From Munich Agreement to 9th of May 1945: (The

her recently published book, Sabine Witt deals with the concepts and cultural practices of nation among the Slovak intellectual elite.¹²¹ In his book *Art and Life in Modernist Prague*, Thomas Ort places the writer Karel Čapek – one of the most influential intellectuals and cultural politicians of the First Czechoslovak Republic – and his intellectual co-fellows into the contexts of Austrian modernization, the First World War, and the generational conflict with the leftist avant-garde in the 1920s.¹²² Witt and Ort both underline the importance of the nation in the discourses and cultural practices of the intellectuals, revealing the wide scope of inclusive and exclusive concepts lingering between cosmopolitanism and patriotism.

The book *Revolution und religiöser Dissens* (Revolution and Religious Dissent) by Martin Schulze Wessel holds a rather exceptional status within the historiography on the Bohemian lands. Comparing the Roman Catholic and the Russian Orthodox clergy as the protagonists of religious transformation between 1848 and 1922, the author offers an intriguing interpretation of the revolution in 1918. Even though the symbolic acts of the revolution often revealed an antireligious or at least an anticlerical character – for instance, the removal of the statue of the Virgin Mary in Prague and other provincial towns – Schulze Wessel argues that these symbolic acts remained connected to religious ideas. The revolution of 1918 led to a reformulation of political and religious loyalties of the clergy, which also included a reconfiguration of political Catholicism.¹²³

Political History with New Orientations

Finally, political history, which was especially dominant in the 1990s, has also maintained its relevance over the past fifteen years. On the one hand, works are still emerging that deal, for example, with the nationalities politics in Czechoslovakia as a history of events in a rather traditional and/or descriptive manner.¹²⁴ On the other

Head of the University and the Replacement of the Professorate)]. Praha 2002. German edition: Die Deutsche (Karls-) Universität vom Münchener Abkommen bis zum Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges: Universitätsleitung und Wandel des Professorenkollegiums. Prag 2007.

¹²¹ Witt, Sabine: Nationalistische Intellektuelle in der Slowakei 1918-1945. Kulturelle Praxis zwischen Sakralisierung und Säkularisierung. Berlin, München, New York 2015.

¹²² Ort, Thomas: Art and Life in Modernist Prague. Karel Čapek and His Generation 1911-1938. New York 2013.

¹²³ Schulze Wessel, Martin: Revolution und religiöser Dissens. Der römisch-katholische und der russisch-orthodoxe Klerus als Träger religiösen Wandels in den böhmischen Ländern und in Russland 1848-1922. München 2011 (VCC 123) especially 117-123.

¹²⁴ Petráš, René: Menšiny v meziválečném Československu. Právní postavení národnostních menšin v první Československé republice a jejich mezinárodněprávní ochrana [Minorities in Interwar Czechoslovakia. The Legal Position of National Minorities in the First Republic and Its International Legal Protection]. Praha 2009. – Eiler, Ferenc/Hájková, Dagmar et al. (eds.): Czech and Hungarian Minority Policy in Central Europe 1918-1938. Praha 2009. – Tóth, Andrej/Novotný, Lukáš/Steblík, Michal: Národnostní menšiny v Československu 1918-1938. Od státu národního ke státu národnostnímu? [National Minorities in Czechoslovakia 1918-1938. From the National State to a Multinational State?]. Praha 2012. – Kuklík, Jan/Němeček, Jan: Od národního státu ke státu národností? Národnostní statut a snahy o řešení menšinové otázky v Československu v roce 1938

hand, there are also attempts to grasp this topic analytically, while offering new impulses towards legal and administrative history as well as the history of state institutions.¹²⁵

An example of this is a pioneering study by Martin Zückert on the national politics of the Czechoslovak army. This institution, one of the main pillars of the independent state of the “Czechoslovaks”, had to deal with the reality of the polyethnic society of the First Czechoslovak Republic in its everyday functioning. Zückert, being interested in the national politics “from below”, so to speak, focuses on “the significance of the ethnically heterogeneous population structure for the development of the state and for the lives of its citizens generally”.¹²⁶ Zückert arrives at the conclusion that, in spite of the pragmatic and often even successful efforts to solve everyday problems of this polyethnic society through conciliation and compromise, the possibilities of integration of non-Czech and non-Slovak ethnic population groups were clearly determined by the concept of the state as a national state of the “Czechoslovaks”.

Local and regional histories have attempted to establish new perspectives on well-trodden topics such as German-Czech relations in Czechoslovakia or the Sudeten German crisis in the spring and summer of 1938.¹²⁷ Comparative studies of national minorities as political actors inside and outside Czechoslovakia are still the excep-

[From a Nation-State to a State of Nationalities? The Charter of Nationalities and the Attempts to Solve the Question of Minorities in Czechoslovakia in 1938]. Praha 2013. – *Balcarová*, Jitka: “Jeden za všechny, všichni za jednoho!”: Bund der Deutschen a jeho předchůdci v procesu utváření “sudetoněmecké identity” [“One for All, All for One!”: Bund der Deutschen and Its Predecessors in the Process of Forming the “Sudeten German Identity”]. Praha 2013. – See also the attempt at an all-encompassing interpretation, which however is not convincing and offers no new information: *Heimann*, Mary: Czechoslovakia. The State that Failed. New Haven, London 2011. As well as the review by Volker Zimmermann, who uncovered the unintended and unreflected parallels of the book to Sudeten German narratives: *Zimmermann*, Volker: Rezension zu: *Heimann*, Mary: Czechoslovakia. The State That Failed. London 2009. In: H-Soz-Kult, 03.08.2011. URL: <http://www.hsozkult.de/publicationreview/id/rezbuecher-13833> (last accessed 13.08.2016).

¹²⁵ See for example *Zückert*: Zwischen Nationsidee (cf. fn. 89). – *Osterkamp*, Jana: Verfassungsgerichtsbarkeit in der Tschechoslowakei (1920-1939). Verfassungsidee – Demokratieverständnis – Nationalitätenproblem. Frankfurt am Main 2009. – *Kladiwa*, Pavel: National Classification in the Politics of the State Census. The Bohemian Lands 1880-1930. In: *Bohemia* 55 (2015) no. 1, 67-95. – As well as the contributions of Philip J. Howe, Thomas A. Lorman, Daniel E. Miller, and Johannes Kontny in this volume of *Bohemia*.

¹²⁶ *Zückert*: Zwischen Nationsidee 4 (cf. fn. 89).

¹²⁷ *Brandes*, Detlef: Die Sudetendeutschen im Krisenjahr 1938. München 2008 (Czech version: Sudetští Němci v krizovém roce 1938. Praha 2012). – *Plyer*, Ségolène: La ‘communauté conflictuelle’ germano-tchèque à l’échelle locale. L’évolution des Allemands des Sudètes à Broumov entre 1918 et 1938. In: *Revue d’Allemagne et des pays de langue allemande* 44 (2012) no. 3, 359-374. – *Schvarc*: Finis Pressburg (cf. fn. 103). – An attempt to reinterpret the rise of the Sudeten German Party from a communication theory perspective was conducted by *Vierling*, Birgit: Kommunikation als Mittel politischer Mobilisierung: Die Sudetendeutsche Partei (SdP) auf ihrem Weg zur Einheitsbewegung in der Ersten Tschechoslowakischen Republik (1933-1938). Marburg 2014.

tion, with Gábor Egry’s book about the Hungarian minorities and the relationships between nationalism and regionalism in Romania and Czechoslovakia before and after 1938, which is to date only available in Hungarian, constituting a pioneering work.¹²⁸ By contrast, the genre of political biography enjoys particular popularity,¹²⁹ of which the inspiring study by Mark Cornwall on the Sudeten German youth functionary Heinz Rutha stands out. Cornwall here sketches the world of a young political leader, concentrating closely on connections between youth culture, homosexuality, and nationalism, which were characteristic of Rutha’s biography.¹³⁰

Further works have been published in the past decade that have expanded the focus of political history by bringing in questions from cultural and social history. These include Andrea Orzoff’s *Battle for the Castle*, which examines the cultural politics of the “castle”, popular culture, and mass media with regard to the construction of the myth of Czechoslovakia as the “Golden Republic”, and Melissa Feinberg’s analysis of Czechoslovak understandings of democracy and the concept of citizenship from a gender perspective.¹³¹ Gender history, and notably the concept of masculinity, has also been recently explored by Jiří Hutečka. In his book *Muži proti ohni* (Men against Fire), he analyses the war experience and motivation of

¹²⁸ Egry, Gábor: Etnicitás, identitás, politika. Magyar kisebbségek nacionalizmus és regionalizmus között a két világháború közötti Romániában és Csehszlovákiában 1918-1944 [Ethnicity, Identity, Politics. The Hungarian Minorities between Nationalism and Regionalism in Romania and Czechoslovakia in the Interwar Period, 1918-1944]. Budapest 2015. – For a comparison of the political strategies of Hungarians in Southern Slovakia and Germans in the Bohemian borderlands see: Simon, Attila: Parallelen und Differenzen: Der Aktivismus der Ungarn in der Slowakei und der Sudetendeutschen zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen. In: *Bohemia* 54 (2014) no. 2, 368-291.

¹²⁹ See for example Soubigou, Alan: Thomas Masaryk. Paris 2002 (in Czech: Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. Praha 2004). – Küpper, René: Karl Hermann Frank (1898-1946). Politische Biographie eines sudetendeutschen Nationalsozialisten. München 2010 (VCC 119). – Rokoský, Jaroslav: Rudolf Beran a jeho doba. Vzestup a pád agrární strany [Rudolf Beran and His Time. The Rise and Fall of the Agrarian Party]. Praha 2011. – Křestan, Jiří: Zdeněk Nejedlý. Politik a vědec v osamění [Zdeněk Nejedlý. The Lonely Politician and Scientist]. Praha 2012. – Horák, Pavel: Bohumil Laušman. Politický životopis. Riskantní hry sociálnědemokratického lídra [Bohumil Laušman. A Political Biography. The Risky Games of the Social Democratic Leader]. Praha 2012. – Hájková, Dagmar: Emanuel Voska. Špiónážní legenda první světové války [The Legendary Spy of the First World War]. Praha 2014.

¹³⁰ Cornwall, Mark: The Devil’s Wall. The Nationalist Youth Mission of Heinz Rutha. Cambridge 2012. – A number of seminal surveys of the hitherto scarcely recognized history of homosexuality have recently been published in Czech: Putna, Martin C.: Homosexualita v dějinách české kultury [Homosexuality in the History of Czech Culture]. Praha 2011. – Himl, Pavel/Seidl, Jan/Schindler, Franz (eds.): “Miluji tvory svého pohlaví”. Homosexualita v dějinách a společnosti českých zemí [“I Love the Creatures of My Own Sex”. Homosexuality in the History and Society of the Bohemian Lands]. Praha 2013. – Seidl (ed.): Teplá Praha: průvodce po queer historii hlavního města 1380-2000 [Queer Prague: A Guide to the LGBT History of the Czech Capital 1380-2000]. Brno 2014.

¹³¹ Orzoff, Andrea: Battle for the Castle. The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914-1948. New York 2009. – Feinberg, Melissa: Elusive Equality. Gender, Citizenship, and the Limits of Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1918-1950. Pittsburgh 2006.

Czech soldiers of the Great War.¹³² He thereby manages to contribute a new perspective to the traditional and circular Czech discussion about the behaviour of Czech soldiers during the First World War.¹³³ As in the home territories,¹³⁴ the traditional gender order was shaken on the front: Hutečka depicts this process on the basis of the formative experience of a Czech soldier – mobilization, everyday experience of the war, friendship, military authorities, home, and fighting itself – as a developing crisis of the original form of “hegemonic masculinity”. Within this frame of interpretation, Hutečka also takes notice of the role of nationalization, which according to him occurred among a number of soldiers towards the end of the war. The application of gender history makes it possible to cast the traditional issue of the formation of the Czechoslovak national state in a new light:

Not only for Czech soldiers, then, the impending possibility of the establishment of a national state and an open avowal of the national identity could eventually amount to an unexpected victory in a ‘tournament of masculinity’, i.e. a belated achievement of masculinity through a new socio-political context.¹³⁵

The expansion of political history has also especially been driven in recent years by art history studies, which have examined the manifold connections between architecture and representations of hegemony and statehood.¹³⁶ The questions raised

¹³² *Hutečka, Jiří: Muži proti ohni. Motivace, morálka a mužnost českých vojáků Velké války 1914-1918 [Men Against Fire. Motivation, Morality, and Masculinity of Czech Soldiers of the Great War 1914-1918]. Praha 2016.*

¹³³ From the outset, the legend of the nationally motivated reluctance and aversion of Czech soldiers to taking part in the war in Austrian uniforms suited the representatives of Czechoslovakia as a proof of national resistance, as well as serving German nationals in both Austria and Czechoslovakia who, however, interpreted it as Czech “treachery” and “cowardice”. This myth was deconstructed on the basis of a detailed study by *Lein, Richard: Pflichterfüllung oder Hochverrat? Die tschechischen Soldaten Österreich-Ungarns im Ersten Weltkrieg. Wien, Berlin 2011.* Lein pointed out a number of situational factors influencing the behaviour of Czech troops among others on the front, such as the case of the “betrayal” of Infantry Regiment 28. – For more on this *Fučík, Josef: Osmaadvacátníci: Spor o českého vojáka Velké války [Twenty-Eighters: The Dispute on the Czech Soldier of the Great War]. Praha 2006.* – *Zückert, Martin: Antimilitarismus und soldatische Resistenz. Politischer Protest und armeefeindliches Verhalten in der tschechischen Gesellschaft bis 1918.* In: *Cole, Laurence/Hämmerle, Christa/Scheutz, Martin (eds.): Glanz – Gewalt – Gehorsam. Militär und Gesellschaft in der Habsburgermonarchie (1880 bis 1918).* Essen 2011, 199-220.

¹³⁴ *Kučera: Rationed Life 94-129 (cf. fn. 118).*

¹³⁵ *Hutečka: Muži proti ohni 196 (cf. fn. 132).* – *Kučera, Rudolf: Entbehrung und Nationalismus. Die Erfahrung der tschechischen Soldaten der österreichisch-ungarischen Armee 1914-1918.* In: *Bachinger, Bernhard/Dornik, Wolfram (eds.): Jenseits des Schützengrabens. Der Erste Weltkrieg im Osten: Erfahrung – Wahrnehmung – Kontext.* Wien 2013, 121-137.

¹³⁶ See, most importantly, *Marek, Michaela: Nationale oder universale Geschichte? Historisamen in der Staatsarchitektur der Ersten Tschechoslowakischen Republik.* In: *Architectura 32 (2002) 73-88.* – *Marek: Universität als “Monument” und Politikum. Die Repräsentationsbauten der Prager Universitäten 1900-1935 und der politische Konflikt zwischen “konservativer” und “moderner” Architektur.* München 2001 (VCC 95). – *Marek: Weltkriegsgedenken und Staatsraison. Zur Denkmälerpolitik in der Tschechoslowakei nach 1918.* In: *Kostrbová, Lucie/Malinská, Jana (eds.): 1918. Model komplexního transformač-*

in cultural and social history have also played an increasing role in parliamentary history,¹³⁷ the history of political ideas, and the history of political mass movements.¹³⁸ Michal Pullmann's manuscript on a comparative history of the 1918 revolutions in Vienna, Prague, and Berlin and the crystallization of new value systems, completed in 2002, has unfortunately to date not been published.¹³⁹

The history of international relations, the domain of "traditional" historiography on the Czechoslovak interwar period, has also evinced a strong tendency in recent years towards cultural and social history. In his book *Ani vojna, ani mír* (Neither War nor Peace), Vít Smetana explores international relations in Central Europe in the years 1938-1948 in seven chapters. Smetana is especially interested in the perceptions and expectations of the actors involved in the negotiations during this tumultuous period. He refers to the openness of the situations in question and places the decisive moments of modern Czech history in the years 1938-1948 within the broader circumstances surrounding the development of European and global politics. In doing so, he also deconstructs a number of Czech national myths about betrayal and helplessness: "My major motivation", Smetana writes in the introduction,

consisted in the effort to at least cast some doubt on the sedimented journalistic ballast claiming that the perfidious powers always struck deals at the expense of the small ones, first in Munich and later in Yalta, and that the small ones, especially the Czechoslovak democrats, bore no blame for their bitter destiny.¹⁴⁰

ního procesu? [1918. The Model of a Complex Process of Transformation?]. Praha 2010, 255-279, as well as most recently the exhibition catalogue *Bartlová/Vybíral* et al.: Budování státu (cf. fn. 89).

¹³⁷ *Gjuričová, Adéla/Schulz, Andreas/Velek, Luboš/Wirsching, Andreas* (eds.): *Lebenswelten von Abgeordneten in Europa 1860-1990*. Düsseldorf 2014.

¹³⁸ *Strobach: Židé: národ, rasa, třída* (cf. fn. 111). – *Balík, Stanislav/Fasora, Lukáš/Hanuš, Jiří/Vlba, Marek: Český antiklerikalismus. Zdroje, témata a podoba Českého antiklerikalismu v letech 1848-1938* [Czech Anticlericalism. Sources, Topics, and Forms of Czech Anticlericalism 1848-1938]. Praha 2015. – *Fasora, Lukáš: Stáří k poradě, mladí k boji. Radikalizace mladé generace českých socialistů 1900-1920* [Old Ones for Advice, Young Ones for Fighting. The Radicalization of the Young Generation of Czech Socialists 1900-1920]. Praha 2015.

¹³⁹ *Pullmann, Michal: Revoluce a utváření nového: Vídeň, Praha a Berlín kolem roku 1918. K hodnotovým aspektům tří revolucí ve střední Evropě* [Revolution and the Emergence of the New. Vienna, Prague, and Berlin around 1918. Facets of Values of the Three Revolutions in Central Europe]. Praha 2002 (unpublished PhD thesis).

¹⁴⁰ *Smetana, Vít: Ani vojna, ani mír. Velmoci, Československo a střední Evropa v sedmi dramatech na prahu druhé světové a studené války* [Neither War nor Peace. The Powers, Czechoslovakia, and Central Europe in Seven Dramas on the Threshold of the Second World War and the Cold War]. Praha 2016, 6. – *Konrád, Ota: Nevyvážené vztahy. Československo a Rakousko 1918-1933* [Unbalanced Relations. Czechoslovakia and Austria 1918-1933]. Praha 2012. Konrád analysed the discursive aspects of the Czechoslovak-Austrian relationship, looking at the self-perceptions and representations of the diplomacy at various meetings. While Austria took on a rather passive role, Czechoslovak diplomacy presented the First Republic self-confidently as the new centre of Central Europe, as a guarantor of stability and peace.

This broadly sketched overview of the historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic, including its pre- and post-history, demonstrates that Czech as well as international historiography has been in a state of flux since the beginning of the 21st century and has by no means stagnated, as is often suggested in passing. The deconstruction of national history has become the major narrative and is mainly supported by new approaches on the history of nationalism, dealing with the hitherto often forgotten history of Jews and anti-Semitism, the resurgence of social history and the history of ideas and religion, as well as by new orientations within political history. Although the works mentioned here have contributed to a differentiated view on the First Republic beyond the black-and-white scheme of idealization and condemnation, the demands for a transnationalization of history that have been made repeatedly in European historiography since the 1990s have only come partially to fruition.

Outlook: Czechoslovakia in the Interwar Period and the Displacement of Real and Imaginary Boundaries

The attempts over the last fifteen years to no longer conceive of the First Czechoslovak Republic as a relatively static, isolated entity, but rather to fathom the flexibility and contrariness of its borders, both internally and toward the outside, can, in our opinion, be outlined and developed very well with the concept of transnational border spaces as suggested, among others, by Johannes Paulmann in 2004 with regard to research into international relations. Paulmann understands transnational border spaces as “spheres of activity”, as “transitional spaces of compressed communications between two or more cultures, here always understood as transmutable ensembles of patterns of interpretation and behaviour with potentially existing particular cultures which emerge from precisely these zones, among other things”.¹⁴¹ With this concept, Paulmann primarily foregrounds the actors, networks, institutions, media, dynamics, as well as concrete spaces and places of transnational processes and movements on local, regional, and global levels.¹⁴² He thereby opens up numerous methodological points of departure that should be profited from in the historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic.

¹⁴¹ *Paulmann: Grenzüberschreitungen 183-184* (cf. fn. 4). Paulmann’s text emerged in the context of discussions since the 1990s concerning comparative, transfer, and entangled history, especially in German and French historiography. For a summary of the debate on comparison and transfer, see: *Arndt, Agnes/Häberlen, Joachim C./Reinecke, Christiane* (eds.): *Vergleichen, verflechten, verwirren? Europäische Geschichtsschreibung zwischen Theorie und Praxis*. Göttingen 2011.

¹⁴² See also: *Geyer, Martin H./Paulmann, Johannes: The Mechanics of Internationalism*. In: *Geyer/Paulmann* (eds.): *The Mechanics of Internationalism. Culture, Society, and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War*. Oxford 2001, 1-25. Even if the concept of internationalism proposed here by Geyer and Paulmann in opposition to transnationalism has not established itself, their considerations nonetheless remain relevant for research into transnational questions.

Migration and Flight

The regional, European, and transatlantic processes of migration and flight taking place both inside and outside the Czechoslovak territory need to be examined more closely, and not only in their relation to political strategies of action but also to the resulting processes of collective constructions of identity and loyalty. During the First World War, the Bohemian lands, as well as Upper Hungary, for the first time in modernity became an important “transit space” for refugees. The authors of recently published studies and ongoing projects on East European Jewish refugees during the First World War in particular – their numbers, which are very difficult to determine, ranged from about 100,000 to 150,000, which was about as many as the number of local Jews – have demonstrated that the presence of wartime refugees led to a reformulation of collective conceptions of identity and loyalty and, in the long term, influenced the Czechoslovak politics towards refugees and (Czechoslovak) citizenship.¹⁴³ Other small-scale mobilities and migrations as well as life on the state borders to Poland, Germany, or Austria, have also received little scholastic interest thus far. Further research into the numerous successful or prevented relationships of exchange and migratory movements could offer insights into the perception of borders, their erosion, or their proliferation.¹⁴⁴ This is also true for the process of emigration from the Bohemian lands and/or Czechoslovakia. Individual experiences

¹⁴³ A summary and critique of the state of the field is offered in: *Frankl*, Michal: Exhibiting Refugeeedom: Orient in Bohemia? Jewish Refugees during the First World War. In: *Judaica Bohemica* 50 (2015) no. 1, 117-129. – See also: *Klein-Pejšová*, Rebekah: Beyond the “Infamous Concentration Camps of the Old Monarchy”: Jewish Refugee Policy from Wartime Austria-Hungary to Interwar Czechoslovakia. In: *Austrian History Yearbook* 45 (2014) 150-166. – *Morelon*, Claire: L’arrivée des réfugiés de Galicie en Bohême pendant la Première Guerre mondiale: rencontre problématique et limites du patriotisme autrichien. In: *Histoire@Politique* 10 (2016) no. 1, 5-18. – *Panter*, Sarah: Jüdische Erfahrungen und Loyalitätskonflikte im Ersten Weltkrieg. Göttingen 2014. – The perspectives of the wartime refugees themselves and their contacts and interactions with local populations especially in rural Bohemia and Moravia are the topic of research in Ines Koeltzsch’s current project on Jewish (trans)regional migrations in the rural and small-town spaces of Central Europe between 1860 and 1938.

¹⁴⁴ *Donert*, Celia: Der “internationale Zigeuner” in der Tschechoslowakei: Eine transnationale Geschichte der Grenzkontrolle 1918-1938. In: *Duhamelle*, Christoph/*Kossert*, Andreas/*Struck*, Bernhard (eds.): *Grenzregionen: Ein europäischer Vergleich vom 18. bis 20. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt am Main 2007, 295-314. – See also, more generally *Haslinger*: *Grenze im Kopf* (cf. fn. 104). – For the Bohemian-Saxon border in the 19th century cf. *Lehnert*, Katrin: “Der Streit um den Hausierer ist ein Kampf der durch seine Thätigkeit berührten Interessen” – Wanderhandel im Zeichen ländlicher Interessens. In: *Volkskunde in Sachsen* (2012) no. 24, 141-163. – *Lehnert*: Die Grenze war ein böhmisches Dorf: Eine Mikroperspektive auf die Entstehung moderner Staatsgrenzen. In: *kulturen* 7 (2013) no. 2, 18-33. – On the Bohemian-Bavarian border during the Cold War: *Kind-Kovács*, Friederike: Historische Ambivalenzen von “Transfer”- und Grenzgeschichte(n): Bevölkerungsverschiebung und Literaturschmuggel im bayerisch-böhmischen Grenzraum. In: *Meinke*, Markus A. (ed.): *Die tschechisch-bayerische Grenze im Kalten Krieg in vergleichender Perspektive*. Politische, ökonomische und soziokulturelle Dimensionen. Regensburg 2011, 93-108.

of spatial change and the displacement of boundaries are moreover connected to questions of formation, perception, and activation of national and other collective identities.¹⁴⁵

Global and Local Perspectives

A global historical perspective is developing in relation to economic history, as Sarah Lemmen demonstrates in her contribution to this volume.¹⁴⁶ Future projects may focus more on transnational networks of, among others, economic actors, on the increasing interconnections between “mobile actors”, and on actors inside and outside Czechoslovakia as well as their potential impact on changing the perspective of the world.¹⁴⁷ After all, concrete contacts and the exchange of goods has always been bound up with the transfer of ideas and aesthetic conceptions, as can be seen for example in film, not least of all in the emergence of talking film around 1930.¹⁴⁸

As Johannes Paulmann emphasizes, transnational border spaces do not only refer to the “zones of compressed communication” extending beyond the borders of a state, but also the “areas on territorial peripheries” as well as “concrete spaces and places within territories”.¹⁴⁹ Microhistorical and everyday historical perspectives on concrete spaces and places in the centre and on the peripheries of interwar Czechoslovakia offer insights into the processes of (de)nationalization, the perception of and politics towards “others”, including the reactions to the actors perceived as different;¹⁵⁰ to exoticism within the country,¹⁵¹ which was characteristic of the view

¹⁴⁵ See for example *Hájková, Dagmar: Naše česká věc. Češi v Americe za první světové války* [Our Czech Case. Czechs in America during the First World War]. Praha 2011. – *Doubek, Vratislav: Česká politika a (východní) vystěhovalectví 1848-1922* [Czech Politics and (Eastern) Emigration 1848-1922]. Praha 2012.

¹⁴⁶ See the contribution of Sarah Lemmen in this volume of *Bohemia* as well as further studies by this author on the global historical approach, especially with regard to travel literature: *Lemmen, Sarah: Globale Selbst- und Fremdverortungen auf Reisen. Tschechische Positionierungsstrategien vor und nach 1918*. In: *Comparativ* 20 (2010) no. 1/2, 124-143. – *Lemmen: Noncolonial Orientalism? Czech Travel Writing on Africa and Asia around 1918*. In: *Hodkinson, Jame/Walker, John/Mazumdar, Shaswati/Feichtinger, Johannes* (eds.): *Deploying Orientalism in European Culture and History*. Rochester 2013, 352-383. – A global historical approach in relation to economic history could also hopefully lead to its revitalization, as it has led a shadowy existence in recent years. On potential new impulses, see for example the project of Ségolène Plyer “La Bohême de l’est dans la première mondialisation (années 1870-1940)”.

¹⁴⁷ See for example *Matějka, Ondřej: Erziehung zur “Weltbürgerlichkeit”: der Einfluss des YMCA auf die tschechoslowakische Jugend der Zwischenkriegszeit*. In: *Brenner/Braun/Kasper* (eds.): *Jugend in der Tschechoslowakei 153-179* (cf. fn. 93).

¹⁴⁸ *Szczepanik, Petr: Konzervy se slovy* [Canned Words]. Brno 2009. – *Houtermans, Sarah: Mediale Zwischenwelten. Audiovisuelle Kunst in der Tschechoslowakei (1919-1939)*. Köln, Weimar, Wien 2011.

¹⁴⁹ *Paulmann: Grenzüberschreitungen 184* (cf. fn. 4).

¹⁵⁰ *Donert: Der “internationale Zigeuner”* (cf. fn. 144). – *Zimmermann, Volker: “Zigeuner” als “Landplage”. Diskriminierung und Kriminalisierung von Sinti und Roma in Bayern und den böhmischen Ländern (Ende 19. Jahrhundert bis 1939)*. In: *Hlavačka, Milan/Luft, Robert/Lunow, Ulrike* (eds.): *Tschechien und Bayern. Gegenüberstellungen und Vergleiche vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*. Konferenzband des Collegium Carolinum, des Historický ústav AV ČR und des Hauses der Bayerischen Geschichte zur Bayerisch-

of the western parts of the country towards the eastern regions; and to the construction of various overlapping and conflicting conceptions of identity and loyalty.

This also includes the hitherto underresearched concept of "Czechoslovakism", constructed as much from above through the politics of culture, infrastructure, education, or administration¹⁵² as it was appropriated, reformulated, or rejected from below. A focus on Czechoslovakism would offer a potential departure from the prevailing bohemocentrism and create opportunities for an integrated Czechoslovak history. Czechoslovakism offered the possibility of integrating the Czech and Slovak communities after the First World War, one of numerous strategies for making the transition from the old to the new order. In this context, it appears necessary to re-examine the traditional topic of Czech historiography, namely the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic,¹⁵³ as well as the continuities from the old into the new order in relation to the First World War and the immediate post-war period in a comparative European perspective.¹⁵⁴

To This Volume

The authors of the contributions collected in this volume of *Bohemia* reflect on how the transitions, transgressions, erosions, and/or reconstitutions of ostensibly fixed, real and imaginary, interior and exterior boundaries of the polyethnic state, conceived of as a nation-state in the interwar period, can be analysed. Ota Konrád's contribution about collective violence in the Bohemian lands during the First World War demonstrates that the boundaries running straight through the wartime society were not defined so much ethnically or nationally – as was frequently claimed by contemporaries and later also by historians with considerable rhetorical efforts after the "revolution" – but rather primarily socially. The boundaries between those affected by the war and those who profited from the war on the home front were situ-

Tschechischen Landesausstellung 2016/2017 in Prag und Nürnberg. München 2016, 207-223. – *Herza*, Filip: Ne/normativní feminita, mateřství a sexualita. Případ sester B. (1878-1922) [Non-/Normative Femininity, Maternity, and Sexuality. The Case of the Sisters B. (1878-1922)]. In: *Lidé města/Urban People* 16 (2014) no. 3, 359-380.

¹⁵¹ For initial important steps in this direction, see *Holubec*: "We bring order ..." (cf. fn. 13). – *Hubatová-Vacková*, Lada et al.: Folklorismy. Užití, využití i zneužití folkloru a lidového umění [Folklorisms. Use and Abuse of Folklore and Folk Art]. In: *Bártlová/Vybíral* et al.: *Budování 177-245* (cf. fn. 89).

¹⁵² See the contribution by Felix Jeschke in this volume of *Bohemia*.

¹⁵³ See for example *Frankl/Szabó*: *Budování státu bez antisemitismu* (cf. fn. 89). – *Kučera*: *Exploiting Victory* (cf. fn. 119). – *Pullmann*: *Revoluce* (cf. fn. 139). – *Šmidrkal*: *Fyzické násilí*. – *Morelon*, Claire: *Street Fronts: War, State Legitimacy, and Urban Space, Prague 1914-1920*. University of Birmingham 2014 (unpublished PhD thesis). – *Šmidrkal*, Václav: *Abolish the Army? The Ideal of Democracy and the Transformation of the Czechoslovak Military after 1918 and 1989*. In: *European Review of History/Revue européenne d'histoire* 23 (2016) no. 4, 623-642.

¹⁵⁴ *Beneš*, Jakub: "Zelené kádry" jako radikální alternativa pro venkov na západním Slovensku a ve středovýchodní Evropě 1917-1920 ["Green Cadres" as a Radical Alternative for the Countryside in Western Slovakia and East Central Europe 1917-1920]. In: *Forum Historiae* 9 (2015) no. 2, 20-35. – *Gerwarth*, Robert: *The Vanquished. Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917-1923*. London 2016.

ational, as Konrad proves with numerous case studies. He reveals that violent demonstrators driven by wartime shortages oriented themselves not towards an imagined grand community of the nation but rather towards the imagined worlds of smaller communities such as families and neighbourhoods while developing their own canon of justice and punishment.

In their political science-oriented contribution, Philip J. Howe, Thomas E. Lorman, and Daniel E. Miller attempt to objectify the often emotionally and normatively led debate about democracy in the First Czechoslovak Republic, which often sees the year 1938 as its ending point, with the help of the model of consociational democracy. They emphasize that forms of stable democracy in the sense of consociationalism were and are also possible in societies characterized by strong ethnic and national lines of conflict, such as Czechoslovakia. Through the application of this time- and space-transcending model, which is always based on a comparison of various societies, they demonstrate that boundaries also have to be transgressed in a methodological sense in order to develop new perspectives on ostensibly known facts.

Johannes Florian Kontny examines the cities of Znaim/Znojmo and Eupen, which are both located on state borders, as case studies for analyzing the impact on local communities through changes in sovereignty and the reconstitution or displacement of state borders after the end of the First World War. While Znaim/Znojmo in this comparison emerges as an example of acceptance of new borders, resulting, according to the author, in a high degree of civil society mobilization among the Czech- and German-speaking populations of the town in the interwar period, the case of Eupen is characterized by the central motif of distrust between the centre and the newly acquired periphery. Communal self-government was accorded only a marginal sphere of activity under the Belgian government and provincial administration. Nevertheless, the newly defined state borders resulted in a considerable drive towards modernization in both cities after 1918.

Andrea Talaber offers a comparative examination of whether and how old and new senses of belonging functioned after 1918 in a shrunken and almost ethnically homogeneous Hungary and in the newly created multiethnic Czechoslovak Republic through the establishment of national memorial days. While the Hungarian state was able to connect to previously established memorial days, which due to their ambiguity could speak to the Hungarian populations both inside and outside of the country, the Czechoslovak state struggled – despite all external similarities in the instrumentalization of national memorial days – to win over its fragmented society, through an aggressive rhetoric, with its new offers of identification. The author especially focuses on the border regions of southern Slovakia, in which Czechoslovak and Hungarian national memorialization compete with each other. Talaber underlines how parts of the Hungarian population in southern Slovakia quickly adopted the Czechoslovak memorial days, but undermined these, especially in the late 1930s, with Hungarian nationalist symbolism.

The abolition of interior boundaries and the connection of economically, socially, and culturally diverse regions in western and eastern Czechoslovakia through the creation of new railroad links are the subject of the contribution by Felix Jeschke.

Through a cultural historical and above all a post-colonial perspective, he examines the creation of a national Czechoslovak space in Slovakia and in Sub-Carpathian Rus, both former Hungarian territories, through the example of railway projects and opening ceremonies of railroad links. Although prior geographical and political boundaries were overcome through the new railroad network, the discourses surrounding the new railroad projects also revealed a rehierarchization of this space, in which Slovakia and Sub-Carpathian Rus were imagined by experts as authentic but backwards provinces on the periphery.

Finally, Sarah Lemmen discusses the engagement of primarily Czechoslovak economic elites with world regions in Asia, Africa, and South America during the interwar period. Through the case of economic debates, the activities of the Oriental Institute in Prague in 1928, and the discussion surrounding the creation of Czechoslovak colonies as a solution for the problem of emigration, she demonstrates the growing global consciousness that was characteristic of the First Republic specifically and in general of the (East) Central European state in the interwar period. The increased orientation towards the non-Western regions of the world was regarded as a necessity by the elites in order to secure the "survival" of the Czechoslovak nation. Regardless of their chances of success, these debates and projects demonstrate, according to Lemmen, that the expectations and worldviews of contemporaries in the interwar period cannot be adequately reconciled with the interpretation popular in historiography on the First Czechoslovak Republic as a relatively small and vulnerable state.

The contributions briefly introduced here underline that the First Czechoslovak Republic has lost its insularity both geographically and temporally in the historiography of the last decade. Consequentially, this path must be pursued.

Translated by Tim Corbett and Pavla Přerovská