

CONCLUSORY ESSAY: ACTIVISTS, JEWS, THE LITTLE CZECH MAN, AND GERMANS

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THE subject and location of the conference on 'Bohemia 1945' recall British action or inaction in Munich in 1938 and how most of the British establishment had ignored Lewis Namier's warning first published in the *New Statesman* in 1916 — that is, at a time when the new country was still to have its historical name, Bohemia, not the indigestible dumpling of a name, Czechoslovakia: 'Bohemia recreated should never again be overwhelmed, and by her very existence will destroy the nightmare of a German-Magyar hegemony of Europe.'¹ The programme for a post-war re-organized Czechoslovakia clandestinely published in 1941, before the USSR's entry into the war, by the Resistance group *Petiční výbor Věrní zůstaneme* (PVVZ, We Shall Remain Loyal Petition Committee) makes a similar point: 'in 1938 the world would not understand that without a strong, free Czechoslovakia, Germany had a free hand to control the Continent, that, then, *a free Czechoslovakia was the mainstay of freedom for the whole of Europe*.'² That sounds grandiose, but is in keeping with strategic thinking in central Europe before the war.

The Soviet liberation of most of Czechoslovakia and the strong political position of the Communist Party in the country were accompanied by the imposition of a new mythologization of the Munich Agreement that diverted attention from the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. The story was that the Soviets had had troops at the ready to fly in to help the Czechoslovaks in their hour of need, but 'bourgeois' politicians had turned down the Soviet offer of help. Igor Lukes has written a detailed account of this fabrication (for example, no Czechoslovak aerodrome had runways long enough for Soviet aeroplanes) and of how President Edvard Beneš had been willing publicly to claim this had, indeed, been true, though he knew and told friends that it was not.³ Mild versions of the story may be found in liberal writers like Rajmund Habřina (1907–60): 'just airborne help from the Soviet Union, which remained loyal, was insufficient, since the two countries had no shared frontier.'⁴ One would expect a

¹ Lewis B. Namier, *The Case of Bohemia, sine loco* [London], 1917, p. 10.

² *Za svobodu. Do nové československé republiky*, 3rd edn, ed. with preface by K. J. Beneš, Prague, 1945, p. 39.

³ Igor Lukes, 'Stalin and Czechoslovakia in 1938–39: An Autopsy of a Myth', in Lukes and Erik Goldstein (eds), *The Munich Crisis, 1938. Prelude to World War II*, London, Portland OR, 1999, pp. 13–47. See also Igor Lukes, *Czechoslovakia between Stalin and Hitler. The Diplomacy of Edvard Beneš in the 1930s*, New York, Oxford, 1996, esp. pp. 194–96.

⁴ Rajmund Habřina, *Nadčlověk a nadnárod. Kapitoly jen časové?*, 2nd edn, Brno, 1946, p. 93.

Stalinist like Bedřich Reicin (1911–52, executed), at the time of writing (1943) serving as a *politruk* in the Czechoslovak Army Corps in the USSR, to report one of his men stating: ‘Of our allies only the Soviet Union did not betray us.’⁵ The journalist and novelist chiefly of works about the Great War Czechoslovak Legions in Russia, Pavel Fink (1892–1965), has a view that would be repeated often during and after the war: that the Soviet Union had not come to the aid of the Czechoslovaks because it was honour bound so to do only if France remained true to its pact with Czechoslovakia (which is technically true); that only Stalin and Roosevelt had never recognized the Munich Agreement; in fact, the agreement had affirmed the ‘correct orientation [...] of our common policy with the Soviet Union before the Munich crisis’, and the agreement had been as much an attack on the Soviets as on Czechoslovakia; Fink provides no argument for that last assertion, but it suits the time of publication.⁶ On the political right, another journalist and former writer of novels about the Czechoslovak Legions, Adolf Zeman (1882–1952), approaches the truth:

Ordinary people, having completely lost faith in the West, instinctively turned their desperate eyes to the East. It had just been announced from Moscow that Litvinov had declared that the Soviet Union had changed its attitude to Czechoslovakia and that it was willing to discuss the Czechoslovak question with the Allies. There were rumours about disagreement in the Czechoslovak government on whether to accept or reject the Munich sentence. The government, according to another rumour the president himself, had sent the Soviet legate Aleksandrovskii to Moscow with a request for help. The whole of this last phase of discussion is still today veiled in uncertainty. There was talk of Aleksandrovskii returning actually with a positive response, but too late. Another version stated that he was apparently even deliberately delayed there, so that he did not get to [Prague] Castle until after the government had accepted the Munich decision.⁷

Needless to say, the prolific Zeman never published another book.

The notion that the West had been determined to prevent the Soviets from helping was a common version of the Munich myth. One is surprised to find it in the surgeon and resourceful Resistance author Karel František Koch’s (1890–1981) one substantial post-war work, for he was no friend of Soviet-style socialism, but at least he manifests something of his sardonic humour: ‘East–West and us in the middle. The East offered help; the West forbade us to accept it. The middle paid for it. Then the West entered the lists and the East waited.’⁸ Later, he adds wryly: ‘It is as true as it is sad that democracy failed once again, that its European devotees were unable to join with Russia against Hitler [*sic*] and Mussolini and that Europe could be awakened from its frightened dreaming only by the stench of fifty million corpses.’⁹ Zeman also believes that the British had not wanted the USSR to help Czechoslovakia.¹⁰ Actually more in keeping with the Party line was the version in which the Czechoslovaks had

⁵ Bedřich Reicin and Jan Mareš, *Sokolovo. Sborník reportáží o prvním bojovém vystoupení 1. Čs. samostatného polního praporu v SSSR na sovětsko-německé frontě v roce 1943*, Prague, 1945. One will find the Party line in Gustav Bareš’s lecture of December 17 1945: ‘You know the huge effort of the Soviet Union at the time of Munich in 1938, a last-minute effort to bring together all democratic and freedom-loving forces of the world against fascism and in defence of Czechoslovakia.’ Bareš, ‘Stalin’, in Cultural Propaganda Section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (ed.), *Stalin. Pásmo k narozeninám generalissima Stalina, sine loco, sine anno*, pp. 5–24 (19).

⁶ Pavel Fink, *Hnědá bestie. Poznámky a dokumenty*, Brno, 1945, pp. 126, 134, 235.

⁷ Adolf Zeman, *Československá Golgota. Historicko-politická reportáž*, Prague, 1947, p. 154.

⁸ K.F. Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, Prague, 1946, p. 81.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

¹⁰ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 305.

turned down the Soviet offer of help.¹¹ In accord with the Sovietophilia encouraged from May 1945 and imposed after the take-over of February 1948, this alleged rejection of fraternal help deserved sentimentalization. A version far milder than one might expect from such a meticulously line-toeing novel appears in Bohuslav Březovský's (1912–76) *Lidé v květnu* (May people, 1954): we learn only that a great deal was written and spoken about Prague around the time of Munich in the Soviet Union.¹² More typical is, for example, the following statement of a Soviet officer, invented by Reicin: 'Are you saying that you did not know the whole Red Army was on the frontier, ready to hurry to your aid? After all, we had a treaty with you and we were all longing to fulfil its terms in every detail. [...] There we are on the frontier, waiting, waiting — nothing happens — and then suddenly Munich. It was no less of a blow for us than for you.'¹³ The topos appears generally to involve forgetting that Czechoslovakia and the USSR had no shared frontier at the time; so a Soviet officer gives the same version as Reicin's in Ludvík Aškenazy's (1921–86) *Květnové hvězdy* (May stars, 1955): 'in '38 [...] I was on the frontier. [...] We were waiting and waiting to climb over your mountains.'¹⁴ A panslavist version of the topos existed (see Nahodilová's article) and my example comes from the Pilsen schoolmaster Frank Wenig's (1898–1974) untitled prose commentary in an anthology concerning the 1945 Prague Uprising; in 1938, 'only two Slav nations came to our aid: the great Russian nation and the fraternal Yugoslav nation. The message that came from their countries was: "If you fight, we will join you. The German is your enemy; the German is also our enemy"'.¹⁵ Though the propaganda no doubt helped engender enthusiasm from the masses, the intelligent Czech had no illusions. Jan Hanč (1916–63), who, after 1948, joined the literary underground, writes that the Americans, British, French and Soviets had been of one mind in 1938: they were not going to risk their necks for an insignificant nation like the Czechs. It was, he continues, as if someone whose flat was being burgled said, 'Let him steal things in the entrance hall and the kitchen, as long as he leaves me alone here in the main room'.¹⁶ Beneš left Czechoslovakia soon after the Munich Agreement and soon the Second Republic Agrarian prime minister, Rudolf Beran, nominated the judge Emil Hácha to take Beneš's place, and he was duly elected by parliament on November 30; on that day Beneš sent Hácha a letter of congratulation from London. Hácha responded telling Beneš he would try 'to make the best of it'. Beneš was at this stage clearly pleased at Beran's choice, but one cannot tell whether he had had anything to do with it.¹⁷ Zeman points out that Hácha took as his motto 'Sloužím' (Ich dien) after the alleged motto

¹¹ See, for example, K[arel] J[osef] Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo* [1950], 3rd rev. edn, 1957, p. 382, or Jan Drda, *Krásná Tortíza* [1952], 3rd edn, Prague, 1953, p. 79.

¹² Bohuslav Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, 4th edn, bound together with the sequel, *Železný strop* [1959], as *Železný strop*, Prague, 1962, p. 191.

¹³ Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, p. 62. The last statement is alien to Fink's view cited above.

¹⁴ 2nd rev. edn as Ludvík Aškenazy, *Májové hvězdy*, Prague, 1960, p. 10. The words *květnové* and *májové* both mean '(of) May'; at the time the first generally referred to the Prague Uprising and Soviet liberation, whereas the connotation of the second was May Day/Labour Day and the erotic. The change in title reflects the gradual Thaw, probably also a fear that *květnové* at the time sounded a little Stalinist; *májové* constitutes sentimentalization, of which the somewhat infantile writer Aškenazy was a master. Aškenazy fought at Sokolovo and in the mid- to late 1940s was closely associated with Reicin.

¹⁵ Josef Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945. Příručka pro oslavy*, Třebechovice pod Orebem, 1947, p. 153.

¹⁶ Jan Hanč, *Události*, ed. by Jan Lopatka, Prague, 1991, p. 203.

¹⁷ See, for example, Tomáš Pasák, *JUDr. Emil Hácha (1938–1945)*, Prague, 1997, pp. 26–27, 32–33.

of King John of Luxembourg.¹⁸ It is, however, not very likely that he intended that as a sarcastic comment on British behaviour at Munich, let alone that he was aware that the tradition concerning the source of the Prince of Wales's crest and motto was, like many traditions, as much a fabrication as the Red Army waiting to cross the mountains into Czechoslovakia in 1938.¹⁹

Wars are by nature mythopoeic and one of the cultural historian's tasks is to disentangle popular from politicians' myths. General Svoboda, the man in charge of the Czechoslovak Army Corps in the USSR, the man ultimately responsible for the military-led atrocities meted out to Germans in Czechoslovakia between 1945 and 1946, and the man who was the country's president when the USSR occupied Czechoslovakia in 1968, was one of the earliest to state in print what had become a popular myth: that the Second World War had begun and ended in Prague.²⁰ That notion became part of national mythology and still survives. Nationalism accompanied the end of the war in Czechoslovakia, especially Bohemia and Moravia, as it did in all Allied states. All the articles in this *Central Europe* are to varying degrees concerned with nationalism, even Cornwall's: after all, his Ewald Mayer is a good German patriot, as he had been the whole century; his little flaw is that he appears unable to realize that being a good German patriot in May 1945 might not be considered a virtue, even though he would clearly be willing to serve the new regime; he is used to changes, 1918, 1938. He also does not realize that schoolmasters, in Czech eyes inculcators of Nazi fanaticism, were amongst the most hated Germans after the SS, the security services and judges. One of Beneš's men working on organizing the expulsion of the Germans, Jan Opočenský, wrote on April 4 1944 that Beneš had wanted the Czechs 'immediately [after the end of the war] to drive out all Gestapo men, *Ordner*, Henleinites, grammar-school and other teachers [*profesoři a učitelé*, he could mean also university teachers]'.²¹ The wise British publisher, Victor Gollancz, abhorred post-war extreme nationalism, Czech especially, but also British. He considers (extreme) nationalism 'a mode of personal gratification' and defines it as 'any undue consciousness of nationality', a 'vice because it concentrates on comparative inessentials' like language or 'blood'. 'It is,' he writes, 'partly an invention of ambitious and unscrupulous politicians, and partly a drug from which the populace derives [...] a kind of bogus and vicarious satisfaction.'²²

Czech Communists by virtue of their ideology saw nationalism as a negative bourgeois force (as against [Soviet] patriotism); typically, the ex-Decadent veteran Communist, Stanislav Kostka Neumann (1875–1947) associates nationalism with Nazi ideology in his oversentimentalized (except for the last few pages which contain political pieces) verse diary of the Occupation: 'The beast of nationalism, / Deutschland Deutschland über alles. / The beast of imperialism. / That is the independent medical diagnosis / concerning the arteries of sick humanity.'²³ Neumann's cycle contains, however, plenty of neo-Revivalist nationalist topoi, of the kind that neither Communists nor National Socialists did much to discourage in 1945.

¹⁸ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 288.

¹⁹ See J. V. Polišínský, *Britain and Czechoslovakia. A Study in Contacts*, Prague, 1966, pp. 17–18.

²⁰ Ludvík Svoboda, 'Význam pražského povstání', in Jarka Javůrková (ed.), *Pražská květnová revoluce 1945. K prvnímu výročí slavného povstání pražského lidu ve dnech 5.–9. května 1945*, Prague, 1946, p. 46.

²¹ Cited by Tomáš Staněk and Adrian von Arburg, 'Organizované divoké odsuny?', Pt 3, *Soudobé dějiny*, 3–4, 2005, pp. 465–533 (487).

²² Victor Gollancz, *Our Threatened Values*, London, 1946, pp. 83, 39.

²³ Stanislav K. Neumann, 'Diagnosa', in *Zaměřená léta. Básně 1939–1944*, Prague, 1946, pp. 100–01 (101).

The narrator of Josef Škvorecký's (born 1924) *Zbabělci* (Cowards, 1958) makes compassionate fun of such old-fashioned nationalism, as embodied in the bourgeoisie of Kostelec (= Náchod), but finds the extreme nationalism encouraged by the politicians shameful. None the less, old-fashioned nationalism abounds in a wide variety of writers. In a novel about a child being brought up to hard-line misotheutism, *Kačenka* (1947), Anna Sedlmayerová (1912–95) has Kačenka's father lecture her on the mother-country (*vlast*) as the eternal mummy (*maminka*) of all mummies; the lecture ends: 'Our Czech country, Kačenka, is the most beautiful in all the world. It is something that we must love almost more than Mummy and Daddy.'²⁴ For this author, in a novel about the resettling of the Sudetenland, even long-snouted German pigs are not a patch on short-snouted Czech pigs.²⁵ Probably the most frequent nationalist topos in literature about 1945 consists in recalling the prehistorical Libuše (Libussa), co-founder of the Přemyslid dynasty.²⁶ The official leader of the Prague Uprising, Albert Pražák (1880–1956), alludes sentimentally to her alleged prophecy about the future greatness of Prague in his memoirs, written 1948–49: 'And now [Edvard Beneš] saw again this city rising to the stars in its glory; he was to be, wanted to be its re-builder, the renewer of its fame, its power and its beauty.'²⁷ In her chaotic, but horripilant novel about the chaotic Prague Uprising, *Prager Totentanz* (Prague danse macabre, 1958), the once Czech, after 1945 German, novelist, Olga Barényiová (after mid-1942, Barényi; by the 1970s von Barényi; 1910–?), cites the same prophecy.²⁸ Both writers are expressing a love for Prague (in Barényiová's case particularly Prague culture, which she sees destroyed by the Uprising rabble), suggesting, however, some notion of ancient Czechness. Even the cynical Pavel Kohout (born 1928) has a burst of ancient nationalism in his 1995 Uprising novel, *Hvězdná hodina vrahů* (A good time for murderers), and quotes the same prophecy in a sentimental townscape: 'In the pellucid air rose Prague Castle, not disfigured from this angle by the occupiers' [Germans'] flag, not resembling the sarcophagus of an inferior and therefore extinct nation, but a lasting symbol of the metropolis where fame, in the spirit of the old legend, would touch the stars.'²⁹ Bezdíček mentions the Blaník Knights legend in his article; outside his writers, the legend's popularity appears apt for the Uprising and Liberation too, for example, the somewhat vapid poet, Jaroslav Zatloukal (1905–58), a former prisoner of the Gestapo who compares the Red Army to the Blaník Knights, and for Sedlmayerová it is a pre-war Czechoslovak Army whose uniforms suddenly reappear in the Uprising that resembles them.³⁰

Just as conventional for old-fashioned nationalism was the conception of the Germans as the Czechs' ancient enemy that Nahodilová mentions particularly in connexion with the Russian linguist and cultural historian exiled in America, Roman Jakobson's, fiercely Czech nationalist *Moudrost starých Čechů* (The wisdom of the Old Czechs, 1943). Jakobson intersperses a history of Czech medieval and early modern nationalist literature with events taking place in the Protectorate. He does indeed launch into Emanuel Rádl's book on the racist

²⁴ Anna Sedlmayerová, *Kačenka*, Prague, 1947, p. 37.

²⁵ Anna Sedlmayerová, *Překročný práh* [1949], 2nd edn, Prague, 1955, p. 136.

²⁶ Reminiscences of the Hussites are yet more frequent, but they belong elsewhere in this essay.

²⁷ Albert Pražák, *Politika a revoluce. Paměti*, ed. by Miloš Zelenka and Stanislav Kokoška, Prague, 2004, p. 162.

²⁸ Olga Barényi, *Prager Totentanz. Ein Roman aus den Tagen der Prager Revolution 1945*, Munich-Lochhausen, 1958, p. 257.

²⁹ Pavel Kohout, *Hvězdná hodina vrahů*, Prague, 1995, p. 56.

³⁰ Jaroslav Zatloukal, *Čas válkou okutý*, Brno, 1946, p. 69; Sedlmayerová, *Kačenka*, p. 168.

nature of the Czech attitude to the Germans since the Middle Ages, but quotes a far greater number of works than Rádl. What strikes the reader who has at least a passing acquaintance with Old Czech literature is that while accounting for major and minor nationalist works, he omits on all occasions to mention that many of those works either condone or propagate the necessity that Czechs castrate any Germans they encounter or at least Germans who seek high office in Bohemia. The medieval Czechs do not put themselves across as such victims as Jakobson would have it. Nothing in Habřina's *Nadělověk a nadnárod* (*Übermensch and Übervolk*) suggests he has read Jakobson and he excels the latter in misoteutonic frenzy. He, too, has no time for Rádl's *Válka Čechů s Němci* (*The Czechs' war with the Germans*, 1928), but does not want to do Rádl down and so praises the same author's small book on the Nazi assumption of power and his essay on Masaryk and Nietzsche. As his title implies, Habřina wishes to restore Nietzsche to his proper place, to condemn the Nazis' misappropriation of the man; at the same time, he regards Spengler as a Nazi ideologist. In Rádl's *Válka* Habřina sees a foreshadowing of the politics of the wartime Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Rádl's

'philosophy of peace' between the Czechs and Germans who were 'two old neighbours, and often friends' was, practically speaking, current in the so-called 'Protectorate', where it found its best application, not so much under the German whip as directly under German rifle-barrels, under gallows ropes and under the lethal veto of concentration camps; in the Protectorate it [Rádl's philosophy] had only one historic mission, the extermination of the Czech nation.³¹

Hardly original, Habřina maintains that Nazism had its foundations partly in German Romanticism (he blames Fichte and Schelling for mysticizing the German nation), and particularly in German neo-Romanticism (Jung, Spengler, Heidegger), quite apart from the popular glorifiers of the German myth (Klages, Rosenberg), but also in the 'German character'.³²

The journalist and teacher of political science Karel Hoch (1884–1962) also blames Nazism on the German national character, and in particular on an hereditary proclivity to violence. His *Pangermanismus* (1946) is, however, far more sober a work than Jakobson's or Habřina's; by tracing the fluctuating power of the Holy Roman Empire he endeavours to demonstrate the inevitability of Nazi theory and practice; his conclusion is that the extent of the defeat of the Third Reich means, he hopes, at last the obliteration of the Holy Roman Imperial heritage of violence — something the early twenty-first-century writer, Radka Denemarková does not accept, as we learn from Nahodilová's article. Habřina omits the fact that the Romantic Jahn had proposed that Bohemia and Moravia be surrendered by Austria to Prussia, when he writes of a 1900 anonymous pamphlet, *Groß-Deutschland*, that had suggested that Bohemia be split up between Saxony and Bavaria, and Moravia and Austrian Silesia be given to Prussia; Czechs would receive vouchers from Prussia and would exchange them for living quarters in Russia. Similarly in his *Großdeutschland, die Arbeit des XX. Jahrhunderts* (1911), Richard Tannenberg had written that the Czechs were destined for germanization and that those who did not accept this would have to leave the country. In other words, Hitler's plan to annihilate the Czechs was not new.³³ Hoch mentions both these works, but examines them in greater detail.³⁴ Like Habřina and, indeed, K. F. Koch, Hoch is an admirer of Nietzsche. Hoch is not

³¹ Habřina, *Nadělověk a nadnárod*, p. 78.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 86–87.

³⁴ Karel Hoch, *Pangermanismus*, Prague, 1946, pp. 153–54.

entirely certain that German hereditary violence has been extirpated, but he cannot find it in himself to be a convinced believer in the heritability of what has been learned:

Anyway, beside the effect of tradition there is the question of the influence of the heritability of moral characteristics, still a matter for debate, and therefore practically of little significance (even if all other influences were successfully removed) because, particularly in their dangerously impressionable years, almost all German young people were permeated by Nazi propaganda, which was thus a vehicle for the hereditary. If the heritability of certain instincts and perhaps also moral ideas exists, one must reckon with the fact that *it will continue to operate in Germany*.³⁵

Hoch also fears lest the Germans' pathological sense of inferiority that had been intensified by defeat in 1918 might be intensified by 1945: 'There is no doubt that symptoms of mental disease were evident in the German nation before 1914', and after 1918 the rest of the world did what it could to ensure the Germans bore the mark of 'moral and political inferiority'. Defeat in 1945 appears at the moment to be 'a new, fateful step with which the German nation is falling into the miserable morass of its psychological isolation from the world'. One must, then, be aware of the fact that the Germans' 'mental balance is seriously upset', that they are 'digging themselves ever more deeply into their moral isolation; they are ashamed and they hate, curse Fate'.³⁶

There were people who tried and failed to deny the conception of the Germans as the Czechs' age-old enemy. The novelist K. J. Beneš (1896–1969), who spent three and a half years in German concentration camps and prisons for his activities in the Resistance, at least reduces the duration of Czech–German hostility from Jakobson's 1,000 to 500 years.³⁷ When he was still a Czechoslovak nationalist and a lecturer at the military academy, the man who was to become a Nazi and by far the most powerful member of the last two Protectorate governments, Emanuel Moravec (1893–1945, suicide), more or less rejects implicitly Rádl's *Válka*, and comes to a somewhat enigmatic conclusion: 'Our Professor Rádl often theorizes more than he lives, but still he was right when he said that we have been enriched by two experiments: the Hussites succeeded in extirpating Germanness from the Kingdom of Bohemia and the Counter-Reformation did the same to Czechness. I think, however, that these two experiments also enriched German experience.' Moravec continues by stating that historically the Germans had exerted considerable pressure on the Czechs, but that this had made the Czechs 'a tough nation that never indulged in adventures'.³⁸ The pre-war leader-writer for the establishment *Naše doba* (Our time), Emil Sobota (1892–1945), continued to write leader-like articles during the war and buried them in his garden; the Gestapo arrested him less than a month before the end of the war and his execution took place eleven days later. In one of these articles, from November 1940, he writes ironically:

For the foreseeable future the fate of our nation is determined by the question whether we resist the danger that our German neighbours are engineering. There are people amongst us today who refute Palacký's contention that our history had always been a defensive fight against Germanness. What has been has been. Perhaps during the reign of St Wenceslas, or before and after the Battle of the White Mountain, germanization was not threatening us most of all. Perhaps we avoided greater Scyllas when the German Charybdis swallowed a bit of us. But after all, no sincere,

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 272–73.

³⁷ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivé písmo*, p. 126.

³⁸ Emanuel Moravec, *Obrana státu* [1935], 5th edn, Prague, 1937, pp. 144–45.

well-advised man, after the experience of the last century and particularly the last few years, would honestly pretend that in the future a really substantial defence against Germanness will not be our nation's existential question.³⁹

No one could argue with the last sentence.

During and immediately after the war, whatever their political persuasion, Czech writers, other than Nazi-sympathizers, repeated *ad nauseam* the assertion that the Germans had always been their enemies; it became more or less *de rigueur*. For example, Ludvík Svoboda speaks of the Germans as the 'ancient inveterate enemies of the Czechoslovak people',⁴⁰ and the liberal novelist Čestmír Jeřábek (1893–1981) writes in what is probably the war diary most informative of intellectuals' reactions to the Protectorate, *V zajetí Antikristově* (In thrall to the Antichrist, 1945), of 'that nation on the other side of the Czech frontier that has been interested since ancient times only in aggression and hegemony'.⁴¹ The ethnographer Karel Chotek (1881–1967) has a more complex view: there had always been a 'Czech Question', which had generally been solved by cultural assimilation and the adaptation of alien influences; the real threats to Czech individuality had always lain in two extreme reactions to the German threat: 'stubborn resistance and a hopeless struggle with the fierce, ruthless enemy, linked with cultural and thus intellectual and economic stagnation. And the opposite of this, an obtuse passivity that, out of laziness, allows itself to be carried along and, unresisting, to be tossed about by alien currents.'⁴² The Council of Three (R3, Rada tří) Resistance leader Veselý-Štainer (1906–93) cites an underground manifesto that applauds the first extreme reaction, to believe that the Czechs had survived by valour: 'Czech warriors, politically aware, strong, skilful and intellectually alert always scared the Teutons, and so it will be now in the decisive battle.'⁴³ As was the case with Ludvík Svoboda's words about the inveterate enemy, these words actually intend to stir the fighting spirit, exploit clichés for the sake of propaganda. Particularly in writing after the Communist take-over, the age-old enemy had been defeated by the lower classes, for example we learn from Josef Štefánek (1919–72) that an 'essential characteristic' of the war was 'patriotism, faith, and the heroic fight of our people against the occupiers'.⁴⁴ The Communist lord-mayor of Prague during the Uprising, Václav Vacek (1877–1960), manhandles history differently, puts a hyperbolic version of the victim interpretation on it, and this is also propaganda, for it more or less justifies contemporary Czech brutality, at least in the eyes of those politicians who either ignored it or never mentioned it publicly, since such brutality made for pukka revolutionary chaos: 'During its 1,000 years' battling with the Germans the Czech nation has often been in danger of humiliation and extermination. Not for nothing did our prince Wenceslas pray, "Do not allow us or our descendents to perish".'⁴⁵ In fact, St Wenceslas did not pray thus. Vacek is quoting an over-quoted pair of lines from the so-called Wenceslas chorale, a prayer addressed to

³⁹ Emil Sobotka, *Glossy 1939–1944*, Prague, 1946, p. 58.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, p. 17.

⁴¹ Čestmír Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, Olomouc, 1945, p. 25. Jeřábek was one of the writers outlawed in the first attempt at a Stalinist 'academic' work on what literature and criticism should be like, Josef Štefánek, *Česká literatura po válce*, Prague, 1949, p. 28.

⁴² Karel Chotek, 'O českém lidu', in Javůrková (ed.), *Pražská květnová revoluce 1945*, pp. 90–92 (91).

⁴³ Karel Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje. Bojový vývoj domácího odbojového hnutí v letech 1938–1945*, Prague, 1947, p. 49.

⁴⁴ Štefánek, *Česká literatura po válce*, p. 37.

⁴⁵ Václav Vacek, 'Pražské povstání', in Javůrková (ed.), *Pražská květnová revoluce 1945*, pp. 48–50 (49).

Wenceslas, actually from one of the stanzas added in the fifteenth century to the original twelfth-century poem; whether he knows it or not, Vacek is, then, contributing to the well-worn convention of associating the Uprising with the Hussite Wars. In all the writers I have quoted so far, the Second World War appears essentially to constitute a climax to an age-old continuous enmity between Czechs and Germans.⁴⁶ Occasionally one will find a slightly different version based more evidently on the *Drang nach Osten* myth, that is, a portrayal of the war as part of the ancient struggle between Germans and Slavs. Apart from anything else that fits neatly with the panslavism Stalin had encouraged during the war; it also comports with how Bethmann-Hollweg or Edvard Beneš had, at least intermittently, comprehended the Great War. On the other hand, the Nazis were often inclined to see the Second World War similarly. Branald points that out when he has a fanatical German lieutenant muse on the fact that the Wehrmacht had been waging war 'to save European civilization from Slav barbarism' in what was the most widely read of Uprising novels, *Lazaretní vlak* (The hospital train, 1950).⁴⁷

In war one side will inevitably criticize the other for its devious tricks, and the sly, deceptive, treacherous German has formed a topos in Czech literature since 1306 (the verse Judas legend), and by 1314 the first vernacular chronicler had devised a rhyme embodying the contrast between German deceit and Bohemian honour that was periodically repeated into the sixteenth century. In the Nazi period, first, Hitler was not known for keeping his word and, second, the Nazis were fond of the concept 'Nordic cunning'. Once again the mythopoeic appeared to have become palpable reality. Even when the war was clearly about to end Veselý-Štainer sent a message to another Resistance group advising them to be careful in all negotiations with Germans, for one must 'reckon with their guile'.⁴⁸ 'Loyalty was never in the German vocabulary,' writes Zeman.⁴⁹ Attempting to be more sophisticated than that, Habřina states:

Deceit is a virtue as the ferocious conqueror of old Teutonic myth knew and as every good German of the Third Reich should know. And lying, if the end justifies the means is blessed. After all, the 'blond beast' that once freely roamed the Teutonic forests in accordance with the needs of his instincts was mendacious, hard, aggressive, unscrupulous.⁵⁰

The notion of inherited moral traits is here again. Under Nazism, writes Koch, somewhat similarly to Habřina, 'the Germans [*sic*], then added lying to their virtues, lying dressed up in the imposing robe of cunning'.⁵¹ *Belles-lettres* teem with lying, tricky Germans (for example, in Drda or Branald) and German mendacity constitutes a theme of Petr Kříčka's (1884–1949) lively cycle of satirical verse, *Dábel frajtrem* (Lance-corporal Devil).

The apparently dominant view amongst non-Communists that the Germans' vices were hereditary naturally led to the view that Nazis would remain Nazis after the war or at the very least that the German tendency to lie, rob and destroy would not be expunged by defeat. In

⁴⁶ For more examples in Czech verse, see Jan Wiendl, 'Obraz Němce v české poezii v letech 1945–1946', in Gertraude Zand and Jiří Holý (eds), *Transfer. Vertreibung, Aussiedlung im Kontext der tschechischen Literatur. Vyhánění, odsun v kontextu české literatury*, Brno, 2004, pp. 58–75 (62–64).

⁴⁷ Adolf Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, Prague, 1950, p. 25.

⁴⁸ Veselý-Štainer, *Cesta národního odboje*, p. 287.

⁴⁹ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 316.

⁵⁰ Habřina, *Nadčlověk a nadnárod*, p. 38.

⁵¹ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 160.

the conclusion to his cycle, Kříčka writes of the Germans' 'age-old rancour' and continues by declaring that the idea of re-educating them is illusory, for 'Teach him to bleat, practise day after day — / still a wolf will not turn into a lamb'.⁵² Sedlmayerová's narrator in *Dům na zeleném svahu* (The house on the green hillside, 1947), or possibly the main character, Renata, in her thoughts, believes the same: 'It is impossible for us to continue to drug ourselves with the idea of their defeat, their humiliation and dejection. People either die or pull themselves together. Unfortunately that nation did not die. And everyone knows it will pull itself together. If people become frightened once it rises again, the nerves of those who see it will be shattered.'⁵³ K. J. Beneš describes Germans' post-war faith in Hitler through the Nazi farmer Grabmüller: 'whatever you think, gentlemen, Adolf Hitler meant well. Adolf Hitler was an idealist; he didn't want the war; after all, he proved that too, at the beginning and later, if everything had gone according his wishes, it would've never broken out. Everything that went on around him was the fault of his bad advisers.'⁵⁴ Thus were the deeds of evil monarchs excused in medieval romances and of other leaders and rebels later, and that is what the well-educated K. J. Beneš is playing on. For the SS nun in Vladimír Körner's (born 1939) *Zánik samoty Berhof* (The end of the remote farm Beerhof [sic], 1973), up in the borderland mountains some months after the end of the war, the Second World War will never end.⁵⁵ Habřina says much the same as K. J. Beneš suggested with his Grabmüller, as well as what Körner's nun believes. Since the end of the war the Nazis have been wishing that Hitler had had better advisers so that victory had come after all; he informs his reader that Nazism remains the 'most popular movement' in Germany and that the Hitler cult had produced worshippers who believe that the Führer will have a second coming and lead the Germans to victory. The Czech nation should keep a permanent close eye on Germany, for the Greater German idea survives in those who had been brought up with it and: 'If the historical German philosophy is war, the Czech national philosophy must be vigilance and defence.'⁵⁶

The conception of innately dangerous Germans leads to all manner of metaphorical portrayals of that evil. One remarks straight away in the most popular of all Uprising works, Jan Drda's (1915–70) short-story collection *Němá barikáda* (The mute barricade, 1946), that something grotesque attends any German death, but something glorious and heroic every Czech death. Whether he knew it or not, Drda was returning to a convention of medieval and early modern *exempla* — the differentiation between the deaths of those who have confessed and those who have not. In his *Ohnivé písmo* (Letters of fire), K. J. Beneš tries to fuse his own, conventional, views with the Party line on Germans. He attempts to mythicize the German past and future in a new way, actually a somewhat forced, clumsy way. Although most of the novel positively encourages the reader to hate Germans, he does suggest that Time will decide whether that hatred will obtain. That appears banal, but we are meant to find it central, given his use of the novel's metaphorical title precisely in this context. The question

⁵² Petr Kříčka, 'Jsou zde!', in *Ďábel frajtrej. Druhé války světové stručný přehled veršem*, Prague, (title-page 1946, colophon 1947), p. 101.

⁵³ Anna Sedlmayerová, *Dům na zeleném svahu*, Havlíčkův Brod, 1947, p. 153.

⁵⁴ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivé písmo*, pp. 80–81.

⁵⁵ Vladimír Körner, *Zánik samoty Berhof*, reprinted in Körner, *Podzimní novely*, Prague, 1983, p. 168. Such elements in this novel are characteristic of the 1970s Normalization return to 1940s and 1950s topoi. On the other hand, this novel as a whole breaks the rules of the earlier period, particularly the rule of silence on Czech brutality.

⁵⁶ Habřina, *Nadělověk a nadnárod*, pp. 20–21, 100, 102.

of whether Czechs will hate Germans is, he writes, waiting to be answered; this is the fiery writing of Time (*ohnivé písmo času*), the writing on the wall that is as yet indecipherable. Time is a barrier, but 'all people of good will and a firm faith in Man and in the future of the human race' would now begin their march across a frontier of Time.⁵⁷ A good Communist (we remember that K. J. Beneš was one of the tiny number of Czech writers allowed to deliver a speech at the first congress of the Czechoslovak Union of Writers in 1949) was aware that only the Party knew how to step over the frontier of Time. Socialism is, however, not there in 1945 (the novel's setting) and so conventional misotheutism may still exist in the writer. Thus German Nature cannot be attractive to the Czech hero Antonín: 'But this was the German countryside, inhospitable and wilfully hostile even in its humiliation, and Antonín could not help himself: for more than three years this countryside had deprived him of all civil and natural rights, indeed had endeavoured to destroy in him any consciousness of human dignity. How could he see beauty in this countryside? How could he be moved by the pastoral song of its May awakening? His mind was too embittered, the very core of his being too deeply wounded for him to be able to separate the countryside from those who, in the name of their aberrant superiority and might, had proudly promoted themselves to slave-drivers and executioners.' Another result of this wound is that he is incapable of feeling any compassion with the wretched defeated Germans. Their trying to knock humanity out of him made it impossible to have human emotions about or for them.⁵⁸ One might compare that with Sedlmayerová's (no doubt idealizing) statement on the new settlers of the formally Sudeten German village of Dubnice: 'even the railwayman Šimáček, whose son-in-law and grandson had been executed and who mortally hated all Nazis, had joined the rest in feeling the weight of the downcast eyes and taciturn humiliation of the remaining inhabitants of this village.'⁵⁹ Solely on the basis of *belles-lettres* and historical or political books published in the 1940s and the first half of the 1950s, however, manifesting compassion for Germans was as rare as manifesting compassion for Judas Iscariot or Pontius Pilate. It was a matter of politico-religious faith.

Hence also the frequency of the term 'martyr' for Czech victims of the Germans. The Second World War saw a heyday for that element in Czech nationalism known as 'the Czech martyr complex' that T. G. Masaryk wrote so firmly against in *Česká otázka* (The Czech question, 1895). Masaryk would have been at least disturbed to see a pro-Nazi Czech writing of another as a martyr. In his introduction to a volume of posthumously published essays by the reasonably intelligent, largely self-educated journalist on *České slovo* (Czech word), Karel Lažnovský (1906–41), a fellow-journalist on *České slovo* and *Lidové listy* (People's mail), František Josef Prokop (1901–73), writes: 'Karel Lažnovský was separated from life by an insidious violent act of a kind that strikingly brings to mind the handiwork of the Judaeomasonic fraternity who are capable of anything. Karel Lažnovský fell like a warrior and his martyr's death is the death of a hero.'⁶⁰ But Masaryk would have been angry at the professor of biology Jan Bělehrádek's (1896–1965) words in his essay on Czech scholars and the war-time Resistance:

⁵⁷ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, pp. 127, 384.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 44.

⁵⁹ Sedlmayerová, *Překročení práh*, p. 144.

⁶⁰ Fr. J. Prokop, untitled introduction to Karel Lažnovský, *Na rozcestí věků. Z literární pozůstalosti*, Prague, 1941, pp. 5–14 (11). The Germans alleged that Lažnovský had been poisoned by smørbrod at a Prague Castle reception.

The element of martyrdom has always played a great role in the history of our nation. Our greatest historical figures were often national martyrs. Amongst Czech scholars one thinks of John Huss, Dr Jan Jesenius, executed on Old Town Square [1621], Jan Amos Komenský [Comenius], and in modern times the great leaders of the nation, T. G. Masaryk and Dr Edvard Beneš were persecuted. Our nation is accustomed to the fact that anyone who leads it most safely in accordance with its just line before history [*sic*], easily becomes a victim of our age-old enemies.⁶¹

In the view of an historian of today this 'self-pitying [*bolestínský*]' aspect of war-time nationalism that led to concepts like 'the national Calvary' or 'the crucifixion of the nation' actually strengthened the Czechs' will to resist, to 'bring a sacrifice to the altar of the nation', a nation that, he asserts, was loved as never before because of the German threat to annihilate it.⁶² That may be so, but the essential function of the martyr myth was actually propagandistic — and that is true also for such as Emil Sobota, writing for a tin box in the garden rather than for the drawer. Hyperbole and melodrama constitute weapons to rally believers. So Sobota writes of 'hecatombs of executed people and the mass of martyrs' and of 'tens of thousands of dead, not fallen armed fighters, but martyrs'.⁶³ Those who were executed by the Germans were martyrs or Christ-like; Zatloukal's Slávka Horská is a martyr, for example, and the men condemned to death now visited by their women are Christs in Pražák: 'They [the women] waited by the prison and bore inhuman insults in order to get inside and, at least for a moment, to wipe with the veil of love the mortal sweat from the faces of the man to be crucified for the sake of our vision of freedom like biblical [*sic* — a literary scholar's howler] St Veronicas.' When they were being led to execution, it was a Way of the Cross and the place of execution was Golgotha.⁶⁴ Josef Kuchynka (1906–78) writes of concentration-camp inmates, whether they survived or not, as martyrs⁶⁵ and in his mini-drama for schools, set in May 1944, 'Šla smrt nad Čechami, a za ní nový den' (Death was passing above Bohemia and behind her a new day, 1947), one of the characters declares: 'We are redeeming a new freedom by suffering. Lidice, Ležáky. The executed, Czechs in concentration camps.'⁶⁶ Pražák loathes sentimentality of this sort, although he had indulged in some himself; chiefly, however, he abhors sentimental mock heroism; he writes sarcastically:

The enthusiasm for suffering as a result of resisting the Germans. People boasted that their daughter, son, father, mother had been imprisoned for reading an anti-German pamphlet, had received one and not said from whom they had received it. Although it was forbidden, people listened to foreign broadcasts; prison was nothing to them — let the Germans imprison the whole nation.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Jan Bělehrádek, 'Česká věda a český odboj', in Javůrková (ed.), *Pražská květnová revoluce 1945*, pp. 95–97 (97).

⁶² Václav Kural, *Vlastenci proti okupaci. Ústřední vedení odboje domácího 1940–1943*, Prague, 1997, p. 196.

⁶³ Sobota, *Glossy*, pp. 17, 115.

⁶⁴ Zatloukal, *Čas válkou okutý*, p. 47; Albert Pražák, 'Ženy udržovatelky naděje' [1945], in Kuchynka (ed.), 5.–9. květen 1945, pp. 41–42 (41); *ibid.*, p. 42.

⁶⁵ Josef Kuchynka, 'Utrpení a štěstí národa v poesii', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5.–9. květen 1945, pp. 98–103 (99).

⁶⁶ Jiří Medula [= Josef Kuchynka], 'Šla smrt nad Čechami, a za ní nový den', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5.–9. květen 1945, pp. 12–17 (16). Lidice and Ležáky were two villages razed to the ground in 1942, their menfolk murdered. This special issue does not treat Czech concentration-camp and prison literature. For a substantial introduction to it, see Derek Paton, 'The Politicization of Mass Murder. Immediate Czech Reactions to the Shoah', in Robert B. Pynsent (ed.), *The Phoney Peace. Power and Culture in Central Europe 1945–49*, London, 2000, pp. 71–86; for a taxonomy of this literature, see Marie Uhlířová, 'Typologie dokumentární literatury s vězeňskou a koncentračnickou tematikou (1945–1948)', in Sylva Bartůšková (ed.), *K české literatuře 1945–1948*, Brno, 1992, pp. 59–63; see also Jiří Holý (ed.), *Holokaust v české, slovenské a polské literatuře*, Prague, 2007.

⁶⁷ Pražák, *Politika a revoluce*, p. 81.

In his preface to an anthology of last letters from prisoners awaiting execution or, in one case, death in her concentration-camp 'block', František Halas (1901–49) follows the Communist Party line, but also that of thinking patriots, by refuting the notion of martyrdom. Those who had died thus, he writes, had died as 'a matter of course [...] far from any play-acting at martyrdom'.⁶⁸ Heroes were preferable to martyrs, heroes active, martyrs passive. In the end, the Communists 'succeeded' in establishing firmly only one hero, the literary critic Julius Fučík (the attempt to create a female counterpart in Marie Kudeřiková failed), who remained the official state hero to the very end of the Communist regime; because of his status the mass of educated Czechs was convinced, unfairly, that he was a villain. A man who was certainly a Resistance hero, but not a Communist, wrote in his book from 1946, coincidentally expressing a view similar to Halas's: 'resistance does not have saints, just parishioners who faithfully go to church.' On the other hand, any Resistance worker 'who expects gratitude is a scoundrel and anyone who refuses it an even greater scoundrel'.⁶⁹

The post-war cult mythology of resistance and martyrdom offered easy parallels with the burning of John Huss at the stake in 1415 and with the subsequent Hussite Wars. In the modern period, the Huss cult was reignited in the mid-nineteenth century and by the 1880s was in full swing; the Great War soldiers in the Czechoslovak Legions, mainly in Russia, but also in France and Italy, identified themselves (or at least their leaders and the intellectuals did) with the Hussites, and the Communist Party encouraged the Huss(ite) cult throughout their rule. Indeed, so firm a place did the Hussites have in Czech nationalist mythology that, during the Second World War, pro-Nazi writers and journalists (known as Activists) could not ignore it, especially in the early stages of the war; thereafter they changed their view in accordance with the Nazis' cult of Luther and their unwillingness to recognize Czechs as anything but an inferior nation. One of the few educated and intelligent Activists, Emanuel Vajtauer (1892–?; he escaped the Protectorate in the first days of May 1945, never to be seen again), whom Short mentions in his article, uses Huss and the Hussite Wars to defend Nazism against its calumniators abroad. The book I here quote from was written and published before the Americans entered the war and before Hitler launched his invasion of Soviet-occupied Poland and the Soviet Union proper. In the Lenin quotation he gives here, one greatly favoured by Communists right up to 1989, although it is actually a fairly old proverb, Vajtauer betrays his Communist Party past; he was in the Party from the beginning, though he appears to have had Trotskyite tendencies, and the Communist writer Ivan Olbracht (1882–1952), whom he accompanied illegally to Moscow, remained a friend of his. Vajtauer was expelled from the Party in 1929. He was a nuisance and had had an unsuccessful career in America as a journalist and trade-union agitator, and had spent some time in prison there;⁷⁰ hence, however, the American angle of his writing here, which, as the subtitle of the book informs us, was, at least in part, aimed at Czech Americans. Just as the British had labelled George Washington a barbarian, he writes, insults will be heaped on the leaders of the Nazi revolution, and:

⁶⁸ František Halas (ed.), *Poslední dopisy*, Prague, 1946, p. 5.

⁶⁹ K. F. Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, pp. 86, 88.

⁷⁰ Information on Vajtauer's life and doings, including the manipulation he became involved in to ensure he received a 'doctorate' at the end of his undergraduate studies (not that he was not bright enough to get one, however wild his end-of-studies dissertation was) I have from a recent study that has a half-hidden bias against the man, but is not unscholarly: Bořivoj Čelovský, *Strážce Nové Evropy. Prapodivná kariéra novináře Emanuela Vajtauera*, Šenov u Ostravy, 2002.

It is the lot of all nations that, at a certain turning-point in history, they regard themselves as the chosen instrument of progress and fulfil their mission with fanatical self-sacrifice, and that in the eyes of their contemporaries they appear to be bandits and barbarians. In such periods, it is possible to break down the accustomed order, or disorder, only by violence and ruthlessness and, as Lenin used to say, 'One cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs [*Když se káci les, lítají třísky*].' Once in our history we also regarded ourselves as the 'sacrosanct nation', chosen by God to undertake a great task. That was during our Hussite insurgency. But because of that, was not Huss called a heretic and perditionable, John Žižka a bandit and Antichrist and the whole people godless rabble, blasphemers, highwaymen and assassins?⁷¹

The Activist-in-chief, Moravec, is still positive about the Hussite tradition in the most-read of his works, a work written partly before the German occupation of March 15 1939, and partly after it, *V úloze mouřenína* (Muggins' turn, 1939). In this work Moravec seeks to demonstrate on the basis of ample quotation from his First Republic articles and books, that his decision to support the Germans and the Protectorate was consistent with his earlier views — including his furious attempt to persuade President Beneš to defend the country by fighting. Before the Munich Agreement he had frequently referred to the Czech military tradition, to the Czechs as warriors and here he repeats himself in order to attack Masaryk's preaching of *Humanität* (the fullest possible humanness) and Beneš's enthusiasm for the League of Nations. In all the propaganda, he writes,

the mottoes '*Humanität*' and 'democracy' were fluttering about everywhere, *but the Czech nation was actually living off its great military tradition* of Hussitism and revolutionary armies. All attempts to smother the old-soldierly character that was in the blood of this people led nowhere. The soppy lemonade of moribund pacifism offered in the fragile glass of the League of Nations (that was after 1919 already cracked) was enjoyed only by a group of the intelligentsia that had a particularly girlish character.⁷²

In his preface to the German translation of *V úloze mouřenína*, Moravec appears to regard the followers of Huss as typically Czech naive politicians:

The Czech people has never had any sensitivity to current affairs. They were always prepared to defend the stale and unviable. In the Middle Ages, they wanted to reform the moribund Western Gothic with the Hussite movement. In the Great War, they lapsed into a primitive Slavophonic doctrine and then they began to throw in their lot with morally putrid Western democracy.⁷³

Elsewhere, he presents a version of Hussite Bohemia apparently in order to spite national mythology; he is not entirely unwise here, but that could be coincidental: he needs the parallel with his own day: 'After the chaos of the Hussite period, enlightened Roman Catholicism brought us the National Revival. After the troubled present it will be European National

⁷¹ Emanuel Vajtauer, *Malé národy v nové Evropě. Epištoly k americkým krajanům*, Prague, 1941, p. 34.

⁷² Emanuel Moravec, *V úloze mouřenína (Československá tragedie r. 1938)*, 2nd edn, Prague, 1940, p. 222. Activists frequently launched into Czech *Humanität*. For example, in his *Hovory s dějinami* (1940), Lažnovský writes: 'Why did we, who in our own interest proclaimed so much about Masarykian *Humanität*, not have adequate human understanding for the lot of a Germany enslaved by the *Diktat* of Versailles? [...] Why did we never say to the world that it was inhuman to allow such a great and industrious people to starve? [...] Is *Humanität* that knows only its own needs and overlooks those of others at all moral?' Karel Lažnovský, *Ein Tscheche über das Benesch-Regime*, Prague, 1940 (hereafter Lažnovský, *Ein Tscheche*), pp. 27–28. (Czech original not accessible to me.)

⁷³ Emanuel Moravec, 'Vorwort zur deutschen Ausgabe', in Moravec, *Das Ende der Benesch-Republik. Die tschechoslowakische Krise 1938*, Prague, 1941, pp. 5–26 (22).

Socialism that rescues the Czech soul and something of old Czech efficiency.⁷⁴ A year later, he makes a similar point in a more profoundly ideologized fashion: ‘Hussitism was no reformation, for the Hussites did not want to separate themselves from the Roman Catholic Church at any price, and Czech democratic socialism [Masarykian terminology] was no social revolution, for it did not want to separate itself from Western plutocracy.’⁷⁵

The nationalist Habřina distorts history more than these two Activists. After quoting a little from a long Hussite polemical poem, whose misoteutonism is no greater than that of works published over a century earlier, he claims that it was in Hussite times that the Germans conceived their lasting ‘blind hatred’ for the Czech nation, ‘For from the advent of our first, classic Czech national revolution, the Hussite revolution marks our first period of universal import, which the Germans have never been able to forget.’⁷⁶ The Prague professor of history Václav Vojtěšek (1883–1974) maintains that John Huss was ‘the greatest hater of Germans’,⁷⁷ an historical nonsense, though this view comports with that of pre-war popular historians and, to a degree, that of Stalinists; it fitted in neatly with national mythology. Hoch has the Hussites anti-German and Bezdiček writes in his article that such misoteutonism was actually largely a matter of plundering incursions on ‘German’ territory — in fact, there were German Hussites in Bohemia, but also in, for example, Dresden. Hoch is right when he asserts that many Hussite manifestoes or pamphlets were anti-German, but his assertion that the movement was essentially anti-German is at the very least debatable — however popular some fourteenth-century misoteutonic works were at the time.⁷⁸ None the less, the version of the Hussites to prevail in *belles-lettres* is that adopted by Moravec in *V úloze mouřenína*, that of a tradition of stout Czech warriors. So in a marching song of the Czechoslovak Army Corps: ‘Side by side with the descendants of glorious Russian heroes [bohатыři] / forward marches the grandson of the Hussites.’⁷⁹ Josef Roedl (?–?) echoes the ‘warriors of God’ of the Taborite battle hymn when he writes of the Red Army as ‘His [God’s] people’, a startlingly inept label for those soldiers.⁸⁰ Pražák employs a later forged addition to the battle hymn to describe the atmosphere on the first days of the Prague Uprising, and thereby, one presumes unintentionally, indicates Czech bloodthirstiness in the Uprising: May 5 ‘was the day of suddenly ignited vengeance for them [victims of the Germans], a day resounding with the Taborite exhortation “strike them, spare no one!” That hymn saddled the wild horse of our Prague Uprising’.⁸¹ In her novel *Pět dnů* (Five days, 1959) the former Avant-garde actress, then feminist novelist, Jarmila Svatá (1903–63), melodramatically compares the noisy building of a barricade outside the block of flats that forms the setting of the novel with the ‘old hymn of the Hussite

⁷⁴ Emanuel Moravec, *Tatsachen und Irrtümer. Der Weg ins neue Europa. Die Tschechen und der gegenwärtige Krieg* [Czech original to which I had no access: *Děje a bludy. O šíře evropské cesty, o zarostlé národní pěšince a nejvíce o této válce* (1941)], Prague, 1942, p. 112.

⁷⁵ Emanuel Moravec, *O český zítřek*, Prague, 1943, p. 22.

⁷⁶ Habřina, *Nadčlověk a nadnárod*, p. 80.

⁷⁷ Václav Vojtěšek, ‘Novou slávou ozdobená’, in Javůrková (ed.), *Pražská květnová revoluce 1945*, pp. 80–83 (82).

⁷⁸ For Hoch’s view on Hussite nationalism, see *Pangermanismus*, pp. 238, 73, 237.

⁷⁹ Jan Mareš, ‘Směr Praha’, in Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, p. 11.

⁸⁰ Josef Roedl, ‘Zima 1945’, in Roedl, *Roční doby. Na památku let 1938–1945*, Prague, 1945, unpaginated.

⁸¹ Albert Pražák, ‘Podstata 5. května’ [1946], in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 130–32 (131). The same quotation was used in the battle directions of the R3. See Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, p. 222.

warriors, before the sound of which the German army scattered at Domažlice'.⁸² Reicin also refers to the same hymn, quoting a different part from Pražák: 'Private Černý fought heroically [. . .]. Having no regard for his life, with his deeds he vividly reminded one of the words of the battle chorale of Žižka's troops: "Fear not the enemy — heed not their number."' The same work contains a comparison of the women who fought for Žižka at Vítkov with the women in the Czechoslovak Army Corps.⁸³ L. M. Pařízek (1907–88), someone who between 1940 and the 1980s published numerous novels set in Africa, wrote an enthusiastic fictionalized reportage account of the Uprising and his fighting unit, one of the first prose accounts of the Uprising altogether, in which he informs us that the Prague radio station had at one point encouraged the insurgents with the words: 'Soldiers and fellow-fighters! [. . .] You are defending the honour of Žižka and Masaryk before the whole world and before history.'⁸⁴ The nationalist cliché is to associate Masaryk with Huss; one could imagine that this is Masaryk in his post as organizer of the Czechoslovak Legions (Masaryk and Žižka were frequently associated in legionary literature), or simply Žižka as the Czech military spirit and Masaryk the Czech mind. One finds the same link in an anonymous poem allegedly written by a member of the Resistance: 'Forward, forward, / Žižka and Masaryk are leading us!'⁸⁵ Miloslav Nohejl (1896–1974) maintains that in the Prague Uprising the Hussite warrior spirit was retrieved from the Pragers' unconscious, that the barricades were a reincarnation of Žižka's barriers of wagons.⁸⁶ Pařízek, too, sees history repeating itself in the Uprising, finds the Hussite spirit in the insurgents, but also the spirit of the Bohemian troops taking Milan in 1162.⁸⁷ Zatloukal gives the nominal leader of the Uprising, Albert Pražák, Hussite qualities, which would have pleased him: 'Your raised voice, your revolutionary voice / rang out from the microphone like a Hussite chorale.'⁸⁸

The beginnings of the new ideologization of Hussitism in national mythology is evident in its association with people's democracy. Vojtíšek writes, manifesting the uncertain beginnings of Czech Socialist style:

when the Prague Old Town town-hall [gutted by German tank-fire during the Uprising] is renovated by Czech work and the Czech spirit and enriched by new values, when it returns to its tasks in administering the new course and new rules of people's democracy, the government of the people [*lidu*, Bezdiček explains the often menacing polysemy of *lid*; here it may not be at all Lincoln-esque], by the people and for the people, which the town-hall was advocating in Hussite times; [when it is thus functioning] our people will go about in it with even more pious respect and warmer emotions than they did before.⁸⁹

In Stalinist times, as was to be expected, Hussite warriors became fifteenth-century versions of the proletariat. In a 1954 novel set in the former Sudetenland, a novel which actually constitutes a tract against the Benešite Minister of Justice Prokop Drtina, Václav Řezáč (1901–56) demonstrates how the bourgeoisie are doing everything they can to desocialize

⁸² Jarmila Svatá, *Pět dnů. Příběh z pražské květnové revoluce*, 2nd edn, Prague, 1975, p. 33. Here, too, a child uses the same quotation as Pražák, p. 24.

⁸³ Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, pp. 92, 119.

⁸⁴ L[adislav] M[ikeš] Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, Prague, 1945, p. 85.

⁸⁵ 'Píseň českých rebelů', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 44–45 (45).

⁸⁶ Miloslav Nohejl, 'Slavný 9. květen', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 86–89 (87).

⁸⁷ Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, Prague, 1945, pp. 43–44.

⁸⁸ Zatloukal, *Čas válkou okutý*, p. 69.

⁸⁹ Vojtíšek, 'Novou slávou ozdobená', p. 83.

people's democracy and thus why the February 1948 Communist take-over was necessary. One of his characters in accordance with the nationalist Marxist interpretation of history, says: 'There was once a time of great unity in the Czech nation, the Hussite period. Who built the firm foundations of this unity? The working class.'⁹⁰ One sees how far this association can go in the words of one of Drda's narrators:

I so like dipping into Palacký's history [that is, his history of the Czechs], most of all what he writes about John Žižka, about Hussite times, when the ruling classes of all Europe quivered before our flails. And about George of Poděbrady's reign in Bohemia.

But how beautiful it will be when some new Palacký writes for us about our Klement Gottwald: how he dealt with the ruling classes in Hussite style [. . .]. I should wish nothing more than to be able to rise from six foot under in, say, 100 years, just for a week, to look around this most beautiful Czech land and read the pages of the History of our times that will be written some time to delight and instruct our descendants.⁹¹

No one can determine the boundaries between nationalist euphoria, melodramaticity and a statement of hallowed self-perception by a people who had become or just unbecome a subject nation. The writers I have quoted were, naturally, mostly intellectuals, or at the very least members of the intelligentsia.⁹² Proportionately speaking, this group had the worst war. The working classes generally had a better war because the Germans needed them — Hetzer tanks were still coming off the line, even after Allied bombing of the Škoda Works, when the Americans liberated Pilsen. It was because of economics that the Protectorate suffered a good deal less terror than other occupied lands, especially Poland or Ukraine. Czech workers in explosives and armaments factories, and indeed in chemical factories like the producer of Zyklon B in Kolín, received not only high wages, but also increased food rations, and the more the war turned against Germany, the better off the workers were.⁹³ Terror did affect virtually the whole Czech population during the (acting) protectorship of Reinhard Heydrich, and immediately after his assassination. On the whole, however, at least until the last months of 1944, the Protectorate was, comparatively speaking, a peaceful part of German-occupied territory, and that is truer of Bohemia than of Moravia for the last four months of the war. Indicative of that is the fact that at the end of the war, under 50 per cent of railway track was usable in Moravia, but 75 per cent in Bohemia.⁹⁴ The number of Czechoslovak citizens who died in the war was, however, large as a proportion of the population. Statistics are necessarily difficult, because 'Czechoslovak' includes members of the Wehrmacht from the Sudetenland. Furthermore, according to Frommer, approximately 70,000 Czechs in the Protectorate voluntarily became German citizens.⁹⁵ Bryant, however, informs us that 'the Czechoslovak minister of the interior estimated that one in every twenty-five "Czechs" — about 300,000 people — had been registered as Nazi [*sic*] citizens in the occupied Bohemian

⁹⁰ Václav Řezáč, *Bitva*, 3rd edn, Prague, 1955, p. 282.

⁹¹ Drda, *Krásná Tortíza*, p. 24.

⁹² I use the term intelligentsia as it was still used by Czechs at the time, to mean someone who had been to grammar school and passed the school-leaving exams. One did not have to have that qualification to be(come) an intellectual.

⁹³ See Alice Teichova, 'The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia: the economic dimension', in Mikuláš Teich (ed.), *Bohemia in History*, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 267–305 (276, 280, 283).

⁹⁴ Zdeněk Fierlinger, 'První vláda republiky plnila košický program' [October 30 1945], in Václav Osvald (ed.), *Národní shromáždění zahajuje*, Prague, 1946, pp. 43–63 (54).

⁹⁵ Benjamin Frommer, *National Cleansing. Retribution against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia*, Cambridge, 2005, p. 18.

lands before liberation'.⁹⁶ In 1946, an authoritative Communist politician gave the number of Czech war dead as 160,000;⁹⁷ Wenig writes in 1947 that 250,000 Czechs were murdered by the Germans, a figure which concurs with Teichova's figure for Czechoslovaks who died in concentration camps or were otherwise murdered, two-thirds of whom were Czechs.⁹⁸ The post-war Czechoslovak government estimate was 245,000 (7,000 in air-raids, 38,000 Resistance workers executed or otherwise killed, 200,000 in concentration camps).⁹⁹ More recently, Frommer gives the following figures for the Protectorate and Sudetenland: 77,000 Jewish Czechs, between 36,000 and 55,000 Gentile Czechs (4,000 in air-raids), 7,000 Gipsies, 200,000 Sudeten Germans serving in the Wehrmacht; the figures for anti-Nazi Sudetenländer not known; Frommer cites 'at least 766' Sudeten Social Democrats,¹⁰⁰ but certainly many more than that died. One might add that thirty-one Sudeten German Catholic priests were Dachau inmates (and eight Protectorate German priests).¹⁰¹

The projected annihilation of the Czech nation was delayed till Hitler's final victory because the Germans needed the labour force; Czechs were not conscripted, unless they had been left in the Sudetenland and had had German citizenship thrust upon them.¹⁰² Czechs who had voluntarily adopted German citizenship, or their children, could be conscripted. Emanuel Moravec's eldest of three sons, for example, served in the Waffen-SS on the Eastern Front.¹⁰³ The mechanisms of the germanization of the Protectorate economy are described in detail by Teichova in the essay I have quoted. The most visible germanizing consisted in the bilingual (German first) street-name plates and shop signs. In print, the most obvious was the rule concerning the spelling of toponyms in the Reich, including the Generalgouvernement. Initially, sometimes even as late as 1941, one will find the Czech form in parentheses after the German, but generally speaking, from 1941 onwards only German forms were permitted: instead of *Mnichov* for Munich, *München* with the adjective *münchenský*. The rule was applied pedantically, so that *Berlín* became *Berlin* and the locative ending altered (*v Berlíně* became *v Berlinu*) and while the Elbe remained *Labe* because its source lay in Bohemia, the Rhine (*Rýn*) became *Rhein*. The Nazis' favourite shorthand name for first Czechoslovakia, then the Protectorate,

⁹⁶ Chad Bryant, *Prague in Black. Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism*, Cambridge MA, London, 2007, p. 4. Bryant is concerned with what it means to be or 'act' Czech or German and so writes usefully on citizenship statistics during the Protectorate. See especially pp. 161, 177–78 and 52, 54, 56, 69–71, 74.

⁹⁷ Josef Smrkovský, 'Pražské povstání 1945', in Javůrková (ed.), *Pražská květnová revoluce 1945*, pp. 70–72 (70).

⁹⁸ Wenig, untitled commentary in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, p. 156; Teichova, 'The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia', p. 284.

⁹⁹ R. R. Betts, 'Czechoslovakia', in Betts (ed.), *Central and South East Europe 1945–1948*, London, New York, 1950, pp. 163–95 (165).

¹⁰⁰ Frommer, *National Cleansing*, p. 25.

¹⁰¹ See Bedřich Hoffmann, *A kdo vás zabije ... Život a utrpení kněžstva v koncentračních táborech*, Píerov, 1946, listed with 'crimes' *passim* pp. 379–434. Amongst the crimes are telling children to attend the funeral of a Czech priest, praying for an imprisoned superior, seditious remarks during religious studies classes, and baptizing Jews.

¹⁰² It could happen in the Protectorate that the Germans suddenly decided that a child was German because of a grandparent (or because [s]he had a German name), as a means of intensifying germanization. See Sobota, *Glossy*, pp. 168–70.

¹⁰³ I have no other direct evidence for Moravec's having assumed German citizenship and Jiří Pernes does not mention it or explain how Moravec's eldest son could be in the SS or his youngest in the Hitlerjugend. See Pernes, *Až na dno zrady. Emanuel Moravec*, Prague, 1997.

was *die Tschechei*,¹⁰⁴ and this name remains anathema to Czechs to this day. In fact, German nationalists apparently used the form *Tschechien* (which Czechs approve of, and many still want English-speakers to say ‘Czechia’ for the Czech Republic) a few years before Hitler assumed power. In 1930 Berlin the main character of František Zavřel’s (1885–1947) novel *Fortinbras* (1930, confiscated by police) comes across a map ‘of the future Germany. Austria was, of course, already part of Germany, so that Bohemia was surrounded by Germany on three sides. The German regions of Bohemia and Moravia were the same colour as Germany itself. A small area remained in the middle with five or six cities and the ignominious name “Tschechien”’.¹⁰⁵ Moravec became the chief implementer of germanization by means of manipulating the school system. He explains, for example, why it was vital for Czechs that German had become a compulsory subject at school:

Every Czech who desires to excel in the future must acquire the German language so that work opportunities in all fields are open to them not only in the Reich, but also in Europe and the whole world. [...] it is clear to all of us that the chief language, the language in which all European nations communicate with one another, will be German, which the intelligentsia of half Europe already speak. So learn German in order that the Czechs’ good reputation can spread way beyond the frontiers of Bohemia and Moravia. [...] To us [...] the German language means even more than that. The Bohemian Lands are our home, but the Greater German Reich is our state.¹⁰⁶

A Czech must be capable of speaking literary Czech, but also correct German so that he can communicate with a Frenchman, a Finn, an Hungarian and a Portuguese. All small nations will have to be bilingual.¹⁰⁷ In the end, the rules implemented by Moravec (including, for example, matters like the use of the word *vůdce* [leader, Führer], which should be replaced by *vedoucí* [leading person] except in established words like *strojvůdce* [engine-driver]), rules of political correctness made it easier for post-Liberation Czech to accept a new political correctness, the linguistic sovietization discussed by Short in his article.

Some aspects of the impact of Protectorate rules are far more sinister. The German *Volksgerichtshof*, people’s court, becomes in 1945 *lidový soud*, and the aryanizer (*Treuhänder*) becomes *národní správce* (national manager). Furthermore the explanation for brutal murder sent to families and so forth, ‘shot while trying to escape’, was taken over by the Czechs for Germans murdered in detention or during the expulsion process. The only piece of fine literature in Czech to deal with the expulsion that I have come across, the hymn to spiritual and physical beauty, Jaroslav Durych’s (1886–1962) *Boží duha* (God’s rainbow, 1969), presents a profoundly ironic and simultaneously emotive instance of the employment of this excuse. The young German at the centre of the novel is being marched off from home with her mother and hunch-backed aunt; the two Revolutionary Guards (RG) decide they will rape the young

¹⁰⁴ When the President of the Second Republic, Hácha, entered Hitler’s office on March 15, 1939, ignorant of the fact that his country was at that moment being occupied, Hitler greeted him with the words: ‘Es ist mein fester Entschluß, die Tschechei zu besetzen.’ See, for example, Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 361. ‘Die Tschechei’ was used colloquially in German, east and west, into the late 1960s even by educated young Germans who certainly had no desire to disparage the country or its people.

¹⁰⁵ František Zavřel, *Fortinbras*, 4th ‘post-confiscation’ edn, Prague, 1931, p. 207. A map of Bohemia and Moravia labelled ‘Tschechien’ will be found in Oskar Ullrich, *Der Grosse Irrweg der Tschechen*, Prague, Amsterdam, Berlin, Vienna, 1943, p. 23. Ullrich was a Nazi expert on the Czechs. He wrote the preface to the German translation of Lažnovský’s *Hovor s dějinami*.

¹⁰⁶ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 54.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

woman and so shoot her mother and aunt; the young woman retains her composure during her rapes by gazing into her mother's dimming eyes. The RG report that the two women had been shot while trying to escape. Durych had completed his novel in the mid-1950s, but since Czechs allegedly did not do such things, it could not appear until the reform-Communist period and then was not republished until after the Changes. The naivety with which Stalinist literature attempted to justify or whitewash Czech brutality is exemplified by Aškenazy's short story 'Polibek' (The kiss) in *Májové hvězdy*. A Soviet officer reprimands a Czech internment camp commandant for ill-treating his civilian and army prisoners, many of whom were wounded or sick. The Czech commandant had spent five years in Sachsenhausen, which Aškenazy intends as an excuse. The Soviet officer orders that the German internees be allowed to wear boots or shoes (barefoot German men and women doing slave labour is a topos of, mostly German, fiction, but also a frequent subject of photographs from the period). The commandant obeys, with the result that at least one German escapes, and this German kills the Soviet officer. In other words, first, it was sensible that Czechs had kept Germans and collaborators barefoot; secondly, kindness gets one nowhere with Germans; thirdly, our beloved Soviets were always kind and generous; fourthly, Germans were always trying to escape and would kill others if one did not kill them or prevent them from trying to escape. The meticulous and prolific historian of the expulsion, Tomáš Staněk, describes an incident in Rovensko pod Troskami that has some features in common with Aškenazy's story. I quote the whole core of Staněk's account because it is typical. The murderers involved here were Soviet soldiers and a band of 'revolutionary' fighters (more often than not synonymous with marauders or death-squads) and 'partisans', some of whom spoke Russian. A column of German women and soldier prisoners, many of them no longer in complete uniforms, arrived in Rovensko on May 10 1945. They were all frisked, but then something happened by the school:

Allegedly, one of the prisoners attempted to escape and in the process had shot a Russian partisan *politruk* dead and it was said that at the same time some senior Soviet officer was killed by another German. The situation was easily resolved. When a few men selected for a retaliatory execution allegedly tried to 'scatter', the order was given to shoot the whole column. The chairman of the national committee [local council] 'intended to stop the mass shooting', but was overruled by a statement on 'revolutionary justice'. According to eyewitness accounts the local inhabitants simply watched 'from a distance' the execution of 365 people. Their corpses were taken to a field behind the school and buried in a common grave. This was followed by 'washing the road' clean of the spilt blood with a motorized fire hose. When asked what sort of people had been executed, the armed men replied that 'it was not relevant; they were Germans and this had been very minor as retaliation for all the horrors the Germans had perpetrated in Russia and in this country'.¹⁰⁸

The RG, who may well have constituted these 'revolutionary fighters' (in published photographs and in Barényiová's novels the RG frequently wore SS uniforms with Afrika-Korps pith helmets), although officially set up more or less as military units at the beginning of the Uprising, during and after it functioned very much like the SA.

Socialism had complete continuity with Nazism in a different sphere of life as well. The Protectorate authorities, led by Moravec, organized concerted press attacks on the intelligentsia; once that ceased the Stalinists led attacks of the same nature against intellectuals (and *intelektuálština*). The Czech Communists had little trouble with the pre-war political élite;

¹⁰⁸ Tomáš Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy' v českých zemích v roce 1945 a jejich vyšetřování*, Prague, 2005 (hereafter Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*), pp. 173-74.

large numbers who remained in the Protectorate were imprisoned or sent to concentration camps, as were the relations of prominent exiles (several members of President Beneš's family were Auschwitz inmates), or were otherwise killed, or simply suborned to such a degree that they could not exercise any political authority after the war.

It would be facetious to maintain that something of this continuity was foreshadowed by the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact — which did become a problem for the manipulators of Czech(oslovak) public opinion after the war. The historical works of Fink, Zeman and Hoch omit it completely, even though Hoch especially spends some time on German-Soviet diplomatic relations. In Jan Weiss's (1892–1972) *Volání o pomoc* (Calling for help, 1946), a slipshod novel that pitches a Communist-led Resistance cell against an Activist journalist and his friends from the *haute bourgeoisie*, one climax consists of a conversation between the journalist, Chotek, and a middle-class old-fashioned patriot, Tomášek, who is rather feeble until the Gestapo arrest him, presumably at Chotek's behest. Tomášek has been busy hiding or destroying left-wing publications and newspaper cuttings. Here Weiss is attempting to summarize Czech reactions to the pact:

'But what I don't understand,' said Chotek, astonished, 'is why you hide all this printed matter when we've raised our glasses with the Soviets to eternal friendship?'

'That's it, but they're still arresting old Communists and sending them to concentration camps! You don't believe this glorious pact will last to the end of the war, do you?'

'Why shouldn't it? Unfortunately it will! Both sides are doing well out of it. We have to admit that it was a cunning trick of genius on the Führer's part to cover his back like that!'

'Russia — shouldn't have done it! When I read it in the paper I forgot to turn the gas out in the bathroom, I was so upset — and our geyser was demolished — No — the Soviets shouldn't have done that. It looked like treason.'

'Well, we'll see which side pulled a fast one!'¹⁰⁹

Whatever one might say about the construction of this dialogue, it appears to sum up Czech reactions pretty accurately. Čestmír Jeřábek is a little more informative, though far briefer: 'I could not believe my eyes when I read the news in the paper. The Germans are crowing over the success of their diplomacy and the wrecking of the Anglo-Russian discussions. Ribbentrop is jubilant and is promising that the signing of the pact with the Soviets will take place soon. The mood amongst our people is desperate ...' Jeřábek cheers up a little on April 7 1940, when he sees new rules and regulations for libraries and notices that the works of Lenin, Stalin, Dimitrov, Krupskaja, Molotov, Trotsky and other Soviets have to be withdrawn from school libraries.¹¹⁰ Kural informs us that President Beneš, though having no time for the pact, continued to count on the Soviet Union as an ally against Hitler in the future. On the other hand, after the pact the underground Communist Party changed tactics and began talking of Beneš as a lackey of imperialism. By contrast, the underground periodical *V boj* (Into battle) began to publish articles asserting that the fight for Czechoslovak freedom would now have to contend with both the German and the Soviet dictatorship, though even here all faith in the Russians was not lost. On the whole, however, especially when the Russo-Finnish war broke out, the majority of the Resistance groups had begun to hold anti-Soviet views. Soon Beneš was convinced that the aim of the pact lay in Stalin's hope that it would help him revolutionize Germany and the rest of central Europe. At this stage Beneš would not consider a Communist-led regime in a liberated Czechoslovakia.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Jan Weiss, *Volání o pomoc*, Prague, 1946, pp. 43–44.

¹¹⁰ Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, pp. 47–48, 66.

¹¹¹ Kural, *Vlastenci proti okupaci*, pp. 44, 46, 62.

None the less, pro-Western feeling was not deep amongst the Czechs, who did not forgive the betrayal of Munich. In the early stages of the war considerable pro-British sentiment existed, but after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union that diminished, and in some immediately, in some gradually, changed into pro-Soviet sentiment. For a few weeks after the war that pro-Soviet stance remained firm amongst intellectuals, but many, however grateful for the liberation, quickly turned anti-Soviet, a far greater proportion of the population than we shall ever be able to prove with data. On the other hand, the Communist Party was still popular a year after the war, and the Munich Agreement was by no means forgotten. Propaganda was helped when, after the 1947 drought, the Soviet Union sent altogether 600,000 tons of corn to Czechoslovakia to help prevent starvation. This corn gift was to remain part of Communist national mythology for the whole Socialist period. Betts points out that over the same period the Soviets sent 700,000 tons to the United Kingdom.¹¹² During the war the change from pro-British to pro-Soviet sentiment is as evident in liberals as it is in the left-leaning. The entry of the Soviet Union into the war, Kural informs us, led to an increase in numbers willing to join Resistance groups as well as an increase in mass passive resistance. As early as July 1940, however, rumours of coming German-Soviet conflict had already begun to raise Czech spirits.¹¹³ The real change seems to have come for most people, however, in 1944, by which time it was clear that they were likely to be liberated by the Red Army. The family portrayed in Sedlmayerová's *Kačenka* have always listened to broadcasts from London, but at some time in 1944 begin listening to Moscow. The change comes at about the same time in the diary of the Jewish teenager Otto Wolf (1927-45), who was hidden with his parents and sister in dug-outs, lofts or sheds by some brave, very ordinary Moravians from the time of deportations from Olomouc (though almost at the very end, Otto is rounded up with others as a suspected partisan by a Cossack unit of the German army, was discovered to be a Jew, tortured and killed; the courageous death of his brother Kurt at the Battle of Sokolovo is described by Reicin and Mareš). Even when Wolf is beginning in 1944 to admire the Soviets, he never loves them and continues to call only the Western Allies 'naši' (our boys). He reports, however, that the locals are furious about the fact that towards the end of the war British escaped POWs are walking about freely, hoping to be able to join the partisans, but 3,500 Soviet prisoners are so starved, so weak, that food has to be collected for them in the whole area; even the hidden Wolfs give something of their meagre supplies.¹¹⁴

The development of attitudes to West and East is particularly clear in Sobota's war diary, but for him it has started before war broke out. In the 'leader' for August 1944, he writes angrily that alliance with the West had proved useless and that the West had not felt threatened at all until the invasion of Poland; in 1938 the West had come to the decision that Czechoslovakia's importance to them was but slight. No Czech can, he writes, expect more from the USSR than that it will give the Wehrmacht a good trouncing, keep it occupied for long enough for the West to invade. He already sees that when peace comes, the Soviets will be the chief advocates of the Czechoslovak cause, but in their own interest.¹¹⁵ He has clear-sightedly developed that prophecy by December 1941, when he writes:

¹¹² Betts, 'Czechoslovakia', p. 183.

¹¹³ Kural, *Vlastenci proti okupaci*, pp. 150, 202, 77.

¹¹⁴ *Deník Otty Wolfa 1942-1945*, ed. by Margita Kárná, Miroslav Kárný and Ludvík Václavek, Prague, 1997, p. 316.

¹¹⁵ Sobota, *Glossy*, pp. 78-80.

If the SU is co-builder of a new order, that means that the fourth estate will realize as much of that new order as will be at all possible at the time, and that this estate will realize the maximum of those reforms it regards as important. But then, anyone who is against these reforms [...] will be considered anti-social and an unreasonable, troublesome component of the new society.¹¹⁶

The Soviets, he imagines in June 1943, will take the decisions for all eastern and a large part of central Europe and, in addition to that, the new order will have a strong Panslav element.¹¹⁷ Sobota does not judge the probable outcome, but recognizes the Soviets' right to impose such an order. Here we see a liberal coming to terms with radical social revolution.

In Jeřábek the development has at least initially less in common with the Resistance view of what should or would have to happen after the war than in Sobota. Jeřábek chiefly reproaches the British for doing nothing. Under April 9 1940, he declares ironically: 'They [the Germans] were saving us from "internal disintegration", something they sowed themselves. They will save the Danes and Norwegians from the British, who, at least so it appears to us distant observers, manifest very little activity or initiative.' Later, under May 11, when the Germans have invaded Belgium and the Netherlands, he asks, perhaps sardonic rather than ironic this time, 'Will John Bull at least wake up from his lethargy this time?'.¹¹⁸ On the same day he expresses relief that Churchill had taken over from Chamberlain, and now he warms to Britain, and (under May 24) is particularly impressed by the British resolve expressed in a broadcast by George VI. Jeřábek maintains a generally pro-Western stance, at least in writing, until his entry for July 1 1942, when the reprisals for the assassination of Heydrich are angering him:

If a new, better world comes out of this crazy war, it will be primarily to the credit of Russia — the Russia that was until recently excluded from the drawing-rooms of civilization and at whose way of life the representatives of Western culture superciliously shrugged their shoulders. / Even the Czechs being murdered (150 died yesterday) depart from life facing the East. They sense that salvation will come from there, and not only salvation, but also a revenge that will strike hard and ruthlessly at false Western sentimentality.¹¹⁹

This passage is particularly significant because from the diary we gather that Jeřábek is a practising Christian. Under June 24 1942, his growth of warmth for the Soviets is obvious: 'In contrast to the British, the Russians are fighting truly heroically.' Similarly, under September 8 1942 we find: 'The Anglo-Saxons are talking and the Russians fighting.'¹²⁰ K. J. Beneš clumsily encapsulates the relocation of Czech sympathies from London to Moscow in the Ostrýt family. They escape to England at the beginning of the war, but soon tire of bourgeois government-in-exile circles and move to Moscow: 'Both became very fond of Moscow, which, in spite of all the restrictions the war imposed on everyday life, greatly impressed them by its grandeur as a world-class metropolis. They were soon at home there if only because all the Muscovites with whom they came into daily contact were kind and considerate to them, unlike the stiff Londoners.'¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 89–90.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 142–43.

¹¹⁸ Jeřábek, *V zajejtí Antikristově*, pp. 67, 70.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 215–16. Bezdíček deals with the quasi-religious period topos, 'salvation from the east', in his article.

¹²⁰ Ibid., pp. 215, 222.

¹²¹ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, pp. 228–29.

For those left in the Protectorate, it appears that Czech culture, in particular literature and music were quite literally a life-line. I presume that the writers who discuss this during and immediately after the war meant a life-line for the middle classes, though in those days literature still had a status in the majority of individuals' life that was perhaps natural in a nation who had, so to speak, to regard literature as the donor of their present national character until they had the psychological security of their own nation state. The Protectorate returned them to the nation-statelessness they had known just over twenty years earlier under the Habsburgs. Hitler had promised them 'cultural autonomy' when the Protectorate was declared on March 16 1939, the day after the Germans had occupied the rump republic. The PVVZ pronounced this loudly in its 1941 manifesto:

For the second time history is convincing us that *the life of the nation is most firmly anchored in culture*. The first time, after the loss of Bohemian independence, in the period of the Revival, the work of tireless cultural workers and activists was a true light in the darkness that returned life to the nation. The second time, after the fall of the Czechoslovak First Republic, it was a concentration on cultural values where the nation found itself most and consolidated itself most. [...] The tradition of our history and, indeed, of the last twenty years of independence give us a place in European culture — but our approach to the culture of individual European nations will be more critical than during the First Republic. [...] we shall concentrate more on *our own cultural activity* — on no account in order superficially to cultivate individuality, autochthony and provincialism, but because we can thus best fulfil our national mission.¹²²

In fact, the Second World War saw a general cultural boom. Jeřábek writes (December 21 1939): 'As in the last war, so now too people are returning to books and the theatre. The bookshops are full; tickets for plays and operas are normally sold out.' And, under November 16 1940: 'Never have so many Czech books appeared as now. Printers can hardly keep up with the demand for new editions of great literary works and [new] books. [...] Pressure inspires counter-pressure and the Nazi gale is fanning a fire even in hearts that seemed cold.'¹²³ Moravec records the same boom, but is deliberately lying about the press: 'There has never been such a favourable period for the press and literature as today. You know well how much is being read and how great the demand for books is.'¹²⁴ Later on in the war (and one remembers that the majority of the Communist writers and writers closely associated with the First Republic Establishment, like Karel Čapek, were not published after 1941, in a few cases 1940), Jeřábek is far less sanguine about the state of literature, but he is hardly accurate in stating how few new works were appearing (March 21 1944): 'I read books that bear witness to the past, for there are no new books and as far as they do exist [...], they avoid the present. Books, paintings, music, they all express a distant world far removed from today.'¹²⁵ Immediately after the war, Pařízek points out that a literary Resistance of sorts existed, though, given his style and apparent unculturedness, one doubts he had read much of it: 'How much thinking, deliberation and prudence was demanded in the paltry matter of slipping in between the lines the suffering of our nation in some of the books published! Many Czech fiction-writers and poets

¹²² *Za svobodu. Do nové československé republiky*, pp. 110–11. Compare Sobota: before Heydrich 'we had our theatre and music and the illusion existed that if we withdrew into these, the deepest roots of our national being, we would be able to sustain our life in them similarly to during the Great War. Our autonomy of thought remained.' *Glossy*, p. 83.

¹²³ Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristové*, pp. 58, 113.

¹²⁴ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 426.

¹²⁵ Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristové*, pp. 278–79.

managed to cope and said what they wanted to say — they were lucky. Some failed and some did not try at all.¹²⁶ Bohumil Polan (1887–1971) is more cynical about the boom, which the Activists and their German masters had so lauded; the Germans had not been interested in depriving those who worked for them of intellectual relaxation. Furthermore,

the boom in the book and art markets did not worry them any more than the milling crowds before the entrances to theatres and concert-halls. Just as these things did not worry [the Germans], so they did not always inspire enthusiasm in us, because for us they were becoming horribly tainted by self-seeking opportunism, which certainly profited extraordinarily from the complete lack in the shops of everything really practical on which to use the mighty welter of useless money.¹²⁷

Nothing positive should be said about the Protectorate. Pražák is virtually as negative as Polan, but, as often, unconvincing on account of his melodramaticity: ‘Soon newspapers and books were censored, periodicals merged, closed down; we were meant to have as few manifestations of culture as possible, to return culturally first to 1914, then to 1882 [before the division of Prague University into Czech- and German-speaking institutions?], and finally to 1861 [before the February Constitution and when Prague went Czech politically?].’¹²⁸ By contrast the Communist Karel Konrád (1889–1971) and the politically influential scholar of Romance literature Václav Černý (1905–87) considered that Czech culture, particularly literature, had made a vital contribution to the survival of the Czech spirit during the war. For Konrád the Czech book had been ‘A mass hero. Grown out of the most beautiful desires of all the people. The most adored tribune! An invulnerable champion! [...] hero of all heroes! Messenger of hatred, confessor, *Trutznachtigall*’.¹²⁹ Černý writes that ‘in those six years of servitude we had no other mother country than our poets, nothing more noble, more encouraging, nothing happier in all our pain. [...] art and all culture are in essence heroic [...]. In the most horrific moment in its destiny, actually Czech culture manifested plenty of character’.¹³⁰ In this essay, Černý maintains the nineteenth-century view that the artist, writer, has and will have the role of leader, here revolutionary leader, bearer of new ideas. In his *Železný strop* (Iron ceiling, 1959) Březovský has a Jewish writer, Krammer (a vicious caricature of the diplomat novelist Egon Hostovský [1908–73], who defected) condemn the notion of writer as leader: ‘To hell with the so-called mission of the writer! If a writer thinks he has some mission, he does not normally get anywhere and writes rotten books. Moral tracts!’¹³¹ This statement is intended to demonstrate Krammer’s depravity.

The Activists had praised a few Czech writers from the past. In this matter one sees the intellectual difference between Vajtauer and Moravec. The former writes of the Romantic Máchá that, in the narrow confines of Bohemia, Máchá (like the Symbolist Otakar Březina) had ‘made life among the planets his spiritual mother country’,¹³² which may be true if by

¹²⁶ Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, p. 108.

¹²⁷ B.P. [Bohumil Polan], ‘Zachráněná duše’, in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 114–16 (115).

¹²⁸ Pražák, *Politika a revoluce*, p. 64.

¹²⁹ Karel Konrád, ‘Největšímu hrdinovi’, in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 24–26 (24). *Trutznachtigall* refers to Felix Kadlinský’s adaptation of von Spee’s long poem. During the National Revival, this adaptation was the only Baroque work patriots recognized in a period they maintained was devoid of high Czech literature. In national mythology the Baroque was a period of ‘decay’ and ‘germanization’.

¹³⁰ Václav Černý, ‘Pozdrav mrtvým . . .’, *Kritický měsíčník*, 6, 1945, 1, pp. 9–15 (10).

¹³¹ Bohuslav Březovský, *Železný strop*, 2nd edn (see note 11), p. 384. Řezáč’s Jewish factory-owning poet, Püchler, a latterday Decadent, who takes a job in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in *Bitva*, is probably also based on Hostovský.

¹³² Vajtauer, *Malé národy v nové Evropě*, p. 45.

planets he meant the afterlife. The latter, however, appreciates Mácha only because he had written in German before Czech (and so had apparently the Poetic Realist Jan Neruda, usually praised by Activists primarily for his extensive pamphlet, *Pro strach židovský* [For fear of the Jews, 1870]). In the times of Mácha and Neruda, writes Moravec, ‘Czech and German artists had an amicable, human relationship. Let us not be ashamed of the fact that German culture was the awakener of Czech culture, and that was [...] because every culture is a spatial phenomenon. For 1,000 years the Germans and Czechs have been living in the same spiritual space, which a shared blood relationship fertilizes’.¹³³ Moravec would continually exploit anything he could in order to emphasize the so-called St Wenceslas tradition, whereby Bohemia had always been part of the German Empire, Czech culture part of German culture, but in a different language. It does not matter that Neruda was fundamentally misoteutonic. Vajtauer expresses admiration for Julius Zeyer, particularly for his adaptations of European medieval epics — all part of the Czechs’ adoption of European-ness ‘to compensate for Czech smallness [*malost*]’. That has a certain irony to it. First, Czech patriots were at the same time celebrating Zeyer for different reasons — and that lasted practically the whole war. Zeyer’s mother was a converted Jew and so Zeyer was also Jewish according to Jews and the Nuremberg Laws (it was not generally known then that Zeyer’s father was ultimately descended from a Dutch Jewish family). In the same paragraph Vajtauer also praises another late nineteenth-century writer, Jaroslav Vrchlický, as a poet and as a translator, largely from Romance, English and Oriental literature, and utters the provocative view that with his translations of great works ‘he was a greater Czech than Neruda in *Povídky malostranské* [Stories from the Prague Lesser Town, 1878]’,¹³⁴ a work generally considered to be quintessentially ‘Czech’. The uneducated Moravec writes that ‘Vrchlický led us back to German culture [...]. And the Czech cultural snob [...] could not forgive him that’.¹³⁵ Czech literary histories consistently point out that Vrchlický drew the Czechs away from the German cultural influence that had branded their literature. Moravec also exploits Vrchlický to try to make himself look more rational, perhaps even liberal, than Protectorate intellectuals; in a piece in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the poet’s death, he attacks squabbling and calumny amongst the Czech élite. In this case, ‘At the beginning a slander spread in the Protectorate that Vrchlický was not a pure-blooded Aryan. Because of that, without anyone’s having investigated the matter, his plays ceased to be performed and the abyss of oblivion was meant to close over his works’.¹³⁶ At the same time Moravec supported an investigation into Vrchlický’s origins. The result of that was an academic study that ‘dispelled the rumour’ that he was a Jew, published by the Royal Bohemian Learned Society (Královská česká společnost nauk).¹³⁷ Moravec wrote his piece with its mockery of the critic F. X. Šalda’s two-faced attack on Vrchlický clearly under the influence of his employee and protégé František Zavřel, who included a piece in his vituperative memoirs *Za živa pohřben* (Buried alive, 1942), in which, like Moravec,

¹³³ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 216.

¹³⁴ Vajtauer, *Malé národy v nové Evropě*, pp. 45–46.

¹³⁵ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 257.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 253–54. Jeřábek comments on Moravec’s piece that ‘Vrchlický cannot defend himself and the lips of the living are sealed. [...] he [Moravec] has again demonstrated to what deep moral decay collaboration with the Germans has led him. A sentence of Nietzsche’s occurs to me [...]: “Der Umgang mit Deutschen verdirbt den Charakter, sonderlich wenn man keinen hat”.’ *V zajetí Antikristově*, p. 223.

¹³⁷ Karel Doskočil, *Původ Jaroslava Vrchlického*, Prague, 1944.

he writes of Vrchlický's being trounced by small-minded Czech intellectuals.¹³⁸ There is yet another link. Zavřel has in all his novels a scene in which the main character returns to his or her place of birth to recuperate. They all have Zavřel's own place of birth. In the first of these novels, *Hora Venušina* (Mons Veneris, 1928), the Nietzschean hero has a Jewish grandmother. The writer of would-be comic tales about life in the Austrian army, author of incompetent antisemitic essays, and leading Czech antisemitic caricaturist Karel Rélink (1880–1945, suicide) put it about that Zavřel was a Jew. Zavřel's first reaction is an epigram addressed to Rélink: 'I have a large nose like an eagle or vulture / when they dive headlong after a black-bird. / No, I am not a Jew. Don't be stupid, Sir! / Not everyone's nose can be snub.'¹³⁹ There were, we learn later, repercussions: 'I have been gathering birth certificates to defend myself against the little fools who confuse my aquiline nose with a Jewish nose. So far I have sixteen of them. I shall need them tomorrow, since I am seeing the little man who sent for the police to have me expelled from a public premises as a Jew.'¹⁴⁰ I do not know whether 'the little man' was Rélink. Zavřel was not actually an antisemite, even if he pays spineless lip service to the Protectorate regime by calling T. G. Masaryk a 'mediocre politician, supported by Jewish journalists'.¹⁴¹ Indeed, *Hora Venušina* itself is fundamentally a philo-Semitic novel. Far more significant and barely comprehensible, unless he was such a protégé of Moravec's that no one could touch him, he devotes a chapter of his memoirs (still intact in the third, expanded edition of 1944) to the popular Jewish Czech writer Jaroslav Maria (1870–1942), who had been a good friend to him and had introduced him to Italy, the only country Zavřel loved. Maria was murdered in Auschwitz.

Moravec made one lasting contribution to Czech culture (lasting, that is, at least up to 1989), and that was, apparently, inventing the phrase 'to write for the drawer'. Jeřábek remarks on this as follows: 'Once Moravec abused Czech writers in the press [...] for writing "for the drawer". He was correct. Honourable, truthful thoughts have to be locked away. Freedom of expression is granted only to Judases and Tartuffes.'¹⁴² No Czech was more hated in the Protectorate than Emanuel Moravec, commonly known as the Czech Quisling.¹⁴³ He declares himself a believer in the thousand-year Reich, and his use of the first-person plural is that of a demagogue orator:

We Reich and European Nazis are not at all surprised that in our own nation we have a gang of inveterate, relentless enemies against us. [...] our struggle [*náš boj*, that is, *unser Kampf*] against Jewish finance and Bolshevik reaction is something more than a mere personal conflict of views about the development of the world. It also concerns the morrow of the Czech nation that we

¹³⁸ František Zavřel, 'Vrchlický', in *Za živa pohřben. Vlastní životopis*, Prague, 1942, pp. 19–23. He repeats that view in 'Faust', pp. 24–25, and, like Moravec, attacks Šalda for two-faced criticism of Vrchlický in 'F. X. Šalda', pp. 27–31.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁴² Jeřábek, *V zajeť Antikristově*, p. 279.

¹⁴³ See, for example, Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 151. The schoolmaster, M.P., and deputy chairman of the exile State Council, František Uhlíř, who had been in Great Britain during the war, writes of him as 'the greatest quisling, most hideous monster that had ever appeared in our history [...] a man without a heart, without conscience or strength of character'. *Z poroby ke svobodě. Projev poslance Františka Uhlíře k ostravským učitelům a profesörům přednesený dne 24. května 1945 v kině Kosmos v Moravské Ostravě*, Moravská Ostrava, 1945, p. 18. Uhlíř's title reminds us of that of a volume of poems and essays edited by Prokop Vavřínek after the Great War: *Z temna poroby k slunci svobody* (1921).

followers of Adolf Hitler greatly care about. So far the Czech nation has lived amidst the German nation for a full 1,000 years as members of the Empire, and now the goal of our present work is to secure the Czech future for a whole further millennium.¹⁴⁴

For Zeman there was not a 'more reactionary, anti-social and immoral man' than Moravec.¹⁴⁵ The popular exiled satirical dramatists-cum-revue artistes, Jiří Voskovec (1905–81) and Jan Werich (1905–80), broadcast two dialogues in the American Office of War Information in 1942, first published in book-form in 1946. The satire on Moravec (and other Protectorate politicians, and Mussolini, Franco, Hitler) is hardly inspired. None the less, the idea of the cheering crowds appearing wherever Moravec goes, as a result of which a rainbow emerges from his head to denote, among other things, that he has 'a character born for leadership' and that he has given the Czechs flowing milk and honey, does work as a burlesque version of the contents of Moravec's speeches and articles, and of the poker-faced ideological optimism behind his contumelious ranting.¹⁴⁶ Vacek labels him the 'minister of fascist propaganda', but also 'Hácha's mouthpiece', which is a nonsense that reflects Communist demonization of the wretched, mortally sick Hácha.¹⁴⁷ Jeřábek considers the popularity and respect Moravec had enjoyed in the pre-Munich Republic, when he wrote, normally under the pseudonym Stanislav Yester, for *Lidové noviny* (People's news), a paper of the intellectual élite. On October 13 1943, he reads a leader by Moravec from March 1938 and is amazed that he and others had not noticed that he was such a 'sterile spirit'; his style was 'prolix, unwitty, clumsy' and the content of the article manifested 'vacuous thinking, a lack of firm judgement and of imagination'.¹⁴⁸ What Moravec wrote in the First Republic was, indeed, normally long-winded, but it was not necessarily vacuous. Looking back on pre-war days, Jeřábek might have considered the following on propaganda and compared it to the propaganda uttered by Moravec which Jeřábek justly mocks:

During the [Great] war and, finally, after the war miracles were expected from *propaganda* and from so-called *patriotic education* [...]. It turned out here too that you can have too much of a good thing and that it is too late to try to convince a soldier or a worker of the importance of a war that has already broken out. Wild propaganda was often intended to replace *systematic education* and the word *example*. That is a mistake. Experience teaches us that the propaganda that does best is that which has been preceded by good education and which is a propaganda of evident, just and straightforward truth. Propaganda for something that is not well founded soon fails and changes into the exact opposite.¹⁴⁹

When one reads Moravec's views on German executions of Czechs, one can easily imagine that Resistance groups had him in their sights. Writing of the assassins of Heydrich and of those who hid them or did not divulge who they were, Moravec's rhetoric is that of nationalist extremism, but also foreshadows the rhetoric surrounding the early 1950s

¹⁴⁴ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 5.

¹⁴⁵ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 112.

¹⁴⁶ V[oskovec] + W[erich], *Balada o Moravcovi. Nápisý na hrobech*, Prague, *sine anno* [1946], pp. 9–10.

¹⁴⁷ Vacek, 'Pražské povstání', p. 48.

¹⁴⁸ Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, p. 266. By contrast, of the pre-war Moravec Zeman writes: 'Although he was superficial and not conscientious, he was not without talent and he knew a great deal.' *Československá Golgota*, p. 218.

¹⁴⁹ Moravec, *Obrana státu*, p. 59. An erudite and perspicacious account of Moravec's own propaganda and activities as minister is to be found in Jiří Brabec, 'Protektorátní kultura pod tlakem kolaborantských projektů (1941–1945)', *Soudobé dějiny*, IX, 2002, 3–4, pp. 412–28 (421–26).

show-trials: 'the person who has betrayed his nation is no ordinary enemy, but a wild animal that should be struck down at first sight. It is entirely right and in the national interest, if, for example, 7,000 traitors perish so that seven million people can continue their contented lives.' Or:

We read in the press every day that so and so many incorrigible madmen, criminals and their accomplices have paid with their lives for ignoring the laws of our land and the Reich. We must grit our teeth and silently wish that this time the Reich conducts this purging thoroughly, even though it involves our blood, for it is essentially corrupt blood that the worst diseases could have brought into the healthy Czech body and that could actually threaten the life of the whole nation. [...] like good gardeners we have to cut off anything on the national tree that has become desiccated or is rotting after the bad winter we have had.¹⁵⁰

As early as in the winter of 1939–40 the small group (the Three Kings) led by the Czechoslovak Army officer Josef Mašín (1896, arrested by Gestapo May 1941, tortured, attempted to commit suicide, executed in June 1942) sent a bomb in the post to Moravec.¹⁵¹ Veselý-Štainer's group managed to organize that messages got to the Gestapo that Moravec was constructing his own Resistance network, 'But this was too much even for the Gestapo'.¹⁵² The huge mass rallies Moravec addressed in various towns of the Protectorate (two in Prague) after the assassination of Heydrich were attended, under compulsion, by workers and civil servants.¹⁵³ Photographs of these rallies became part of the propaganda apparatus. For example, they form a supplement to the former gardener Activist Antonín Bouchal's (?–?) *Beneš atentátník* (Beneš the assassin, 1943), a book wherein the author supports Moravec's line on the killing of Heydrich and blames everything on Edvard Beneš and his Jewish gang in London. On Moravec's rally in Brno Jeřábek writes:

From 5 to 8 p.m. the railway was closed down so that the workers could not leave the city. When Moravec finished his speech, which consisted in empty abuse of President Beneš, the band struck up 'Kde domov můj' [Czech national anthem: Where is my home]. The crowds on the square remained silent. Moravec himself began singing angrily, but he was trying in vain to persuade the rest to accompany him.¹⁵⁴

The rallies were intended to demonstrate that ordinary people condemned the assassination.¹⁵⁵

Moravec was soon fully aware of what most Czechs thought of him, and he argued unconvincingly that he was no traitor:

The Czech nation has had and has nothing in common with the eastern world. By virtue of its way of living, its race and its social structure the Czech nation is a member of the Germanic-Roman family of nations and tribes. It is thus not treason for me to say that the Czech people belongs to the Reich and that this belonging is not only historical, but also racial.¹⁵⁶

In fact, German race-scientists on investigating the population of the Protectorate (frequently by means of sham X-raying for TB), came to the conclusion that 45 per cent of Czechs were

¹⁵⁰ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, pp. 188, 189.

¹⁵¹ Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, p. 41.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹⁵³ Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, p. 209.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

¹⁵⁵ See, despite its slight sentimentality, Kural, *Vlastenci proti okupaci*, p. 216.

¹⁵⁶ Moravec, *Tatsachen und Irrtümer*, p. 93.

racially unimpeachable, and Heydrich himself decided that between 40 and 60 per cent of Czechs were germanizable.¹⁵⁷ Moravec actually only slightly changed his mind as far as the St Wenceslas tradition is concerned. In the First Republic, for all his warnings about potential German aggression, he supported some co-operation with the Third Reich: 'A clear political line starts with St Wenceslas: *if the Czech nation wants to preserve itself, it must accept Christianity and seek a settlement with the German empire. This settlement is, however, possible only in co-operation, not in blind subordination and servitude.*'¹⁵⁸ In the introduction to the first edition of *V úloze mouřenína*, he again states that the Czechs must come to an agreement with the Germans, and that the Czechs should make the first move, be like Wenceslas, for 'St Wenceslas was murdered by the political opposition that // wanted not conciliation, but war with the Germans'.¹⁵⁹ Later, the advocacy of the tradition is full-blown; he sacrifices Emil Hácha as a result: 'The Protectorate was not our ruin, but our last hope. From this point of view Dr Hácha as a statesman will have much in common with St Wenceslas in Czech history.'¹⁶⁰ Moravec even turns the saint into the Protectorate's guardian angel: 'Duke Wenceslas shall protect us from the death Britain threatens us with and from the grave-diggers who speak Czech, but think Jewish.'¹⁶¹ Jeřábek expresses the normal Czech view succinctly: Moravec is 'a former colonel of the Czechoslovak Army and now a German lackey'.¹⁶² Sobota calls him an acrobat,¹⁶³ and Kříčka a chameleon (I cannot render the Yester:*ještěř* [saurian] pun in the following in English):

The chameleon is a reptile, / hideous and greedy, / a saurian with a nimble [*mrštný*: also 'glib' of tongue] tongue, / entirely bald-headed. // The chameleon is a creature / which changes colour. / If he was Yester[day's] yesterday, / today he is not today's [in Czech = wasn't born yesterday]. // September in thirty-eight, / in forty January [= 1942?]. / It's true it has two names, / but it is the same bastard. // Yesterday Stanislav Yester, / today Eman Moravec, / yesterday a Czech officer, / today a German squire. // Yesterday Stáňa, today Eman [both hypocorisms], / just as the times demand. / For safety's sake, the day after tomorrow / we'll hang them both.¹⁶⁴

Usually, however, Moravec appears to have been so loathed that writers did not have such fun with him. In *Lidé v květnu* Březovský portrays the weak-spined, unimportant collaborator with the Germans (who did cause someone's death, indirectly, and out of cowardice rather than anything else), Fišar, as an upright man compared with Moravec, though Moravec himself looks hardly a villain, just a little slow:

The minister Moravec himself had asked him whether he would not like to continue writing his [...] essays for the revived *Přítomnost* [The present]. Alfréd Fišar declined. He had a friendly conversation with the minister, for they had known each other from the pre-Munich *Přítomnost*, he told him he felt tired and just up to beginning to put his memoirs in order. He recommended he do the same. The minister did not notice Fišar's irony, wished him a healthy life and said he was sorry.

¹⁵⁷ Jan Rataj, 'Obraz Němce a Německa v protektorátní společnosti a v československém odboji', in Jan Křen and Eva Broklová (eds), *Obraz Němců, Rakouska a Německa v české společnosti 19. a 20. století*, Prague, 1998, pp. 207–35 (213).

¹⁵⁸ Moravec, *Obrana státu*, p. 188.

¹⁵⁹ Moravec, *V úloze mouřenína*, p. 8.

¹⁶⁰ Moravec, *Tatsachen und Irrtümer*, p. 110.

¹⁶¹ Moravec, *O český zítěk*, p. 266.

¹⁶² Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, p. 187.

¹⁶³ Sobota, *Glossy*, p. 55.

¹⁶⁴ Kříčka, *Đábel frajtre*, pp. 33–34.

For a Stalinist like Březovský, the link with the pre-Munich *Přítomnost* tarnishes Fišar anyway. None the less, as he informs the Gestapo man who will become more important a character in the sequel, Moravec had gone too far in his collaboration, whereas the other members of the third Protectorate government were in their hearts Beneš's men.¹⁶⁵ The Communists condemned all members of all four Protectorate governments, even though the pre-1948 retribution court had finally been lenient towards them.¹⁶⁶ Another collaborator, Drda's history master in *Němá barikáda*, wants the horrified other masters to write expressing loyalty to K. H. Frank (the State Secretary of the Protectorate throughout, at least since 1935 a Nazi and Czech-hater, who had once run a bookshop in Carlsbad) and to Moravec after the Germans had found a radio transmitter nearby. Drda is making fun of cowardly collaborators, but at the same time the pairing of Moravec and Frank as, for example, Sobota had done, serves to emphasize the extent of Moravec's treachery.¹⁶⁷ Drda may also be obliquely referring to the devastation of Czech grammar schools that Moravec was largely responsible for and to the fact that history teaching, except for teaching about Bohemia in the Empire/Reich in council schools, had ceased during the Protectorate. K. J. Beneš refers to this, to the germanization of schooling and to Moravec's pet creation, the Kuratorium pro (povinnou) službu mládeže (Board for the [obligatory] service of youth) that he established as a Czech version of the Hitlerjugend. His hero Antonín's wife remembers their sons 'learning German poems by heart and cursing Moravec, the Kuratorium and the humiliating servitude imposed by Protectorate schooling'.¹⁶⁸ By the last months of the war, Moravec is trying to come to a compromise with the Czechs, but still appears to be unaware of just how loathed he was. In a talk broadcast on December 1 1944, he menacingly begged the Czechs: 'Leave politics to the Prague government that intends to lead the Czech nation out of this terrible war in such a way that it will not suffer hardship, that it will have a future and not cease to exist.'¹⁶⁹ His approach has not changed a few days before the Uprising. On April 27 1945 he wrote:

If the Reich is on the way to defeat, as its enemies suppose, it is no matter whether this fall comes a day sooner or later. Let us say that a Czech uprising would shorten this war by two or three days and would cost 200,000 or 300,000 Czech lives, would that make any sense? [...] The general situation is at this very time changing by the hour. The government has literally to be on guard. For that it needs calm in the territory that it governs and for which it is responsible. Only under such conditions will its word have the necessary authority in all the places where everything is moving towards a final political decision.¹⁷⁰

We may only guess at what was actually going on in his mind. But we do know that on the first day of the Uprising he was in a German lorry on his way to make a broadcast when the lorry broke down and he shot himself.

Of the Activists I mention only briefly the major Vajtauer and minor Bouchal before I come to Activist antisemitism. Čelovský makes much of the fact that Vajtauer had one leg considerably shorter than the other, so that the reader infers a resemblance to Goebbels. Sobota has a whole essay on him in his *Glossy*. Vajtauer, he writes, had been an enthusiast of

¹⁶⁵ Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, pp. 39, 54.

¹⁶⁶ See Frommer, *National Cleansing*, pp. 280–93, for the lengths to which the Party was willing to go to re-try them.

¹⁶⁷ Drda, *Němá barikáda*, pp. 24–25; Sobota, *Glossy*, p. 123.

¹⁶⁸ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, p. 244.

¹⁶⁹ Quoted by Stanislav Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945. Historie jednoho povstání*, Prague, 2005, p. 70.

¹⁷⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 103–04.

the mind, never of the heart, whether that enthusiasm was Communist, liberal intellectual, or Nazi. Sobota points out that Vajtauer had written in 1919 of the danger of Germans acquiring the majority of the national wealth in the new state, that Czechoslovakia could easily become a Judaeo-German province, and that now he is writing that the only future for the Czechs is to join the Germans, possibly for as long as a few centuries. Vajtauer had been a rebel, but 'he has long grown out of rebeldom, and anyway he had only ever been a rebel when and where not too much risk was attached to it'.¹⁷¹ Heydrich had labelled Vajtauer the 'heir' to the Czech 'father of the country', that is, to Charles IV.¹⁷² Like Moravec, Vajtauer despised the figure of the Good Soldier Švejk, and everything it stood for amongst contemporary Czechs.¹⁷³ Vajtauer reveals something of Fascist thanatophilia in one of his onslaughts on Czech smallness:

The Czech had never been able to permit himself that indifference to life that characterizes youth, but also a strong nation. The smallness of his country and its constricted conditions turned many into earth-bound rats and shortsighted rascals who killed all heroism. After all, an individual's lot very often improved only when a gap was left by another's death, or when that gap was made by intrigue.¹⁷⁴

That last sentence demonstrates how banal Vajtauer can be. He mocks the Czechs for being (justifiably) concerned about the future of their nation, and here he refuses to adopt the view of a Moravec or a Bouchal that the Munich Agreement had been a disaster: 'Since the supposed blow of Munich some still have their heads buried in the sand and do not dare extract them. [. . .] Those who have buried their heads represent the fundamental motif of our psyche: fear for the nation.'¹⁷⁵ 'The tragedy of small nations,' he writes, 'is not that they are included in great historic collectives, but that they want to be independent even when the command of historic progress does not allow it,' and: 'Any whole in which it may be incorporated is not determined by choice. It is assigned to it by Fate. It is according to where it lives and the period in which it achieves maturity. For our nation the whole is the Reich.'¹⁷⁶ Vajtauer's employment of Fate here contrasts with Lažnovský's or Moravec's of history, not that Moravec does not employ the term Fate — the concept Fate, or Destiny, was vital in the Nazi ideological lexicon.

Bouchal appears, unlike Vajtauer, to have had little impact. Much of what he says about Beneš and the degenerate First Republic consists of Activist clichés. Bouchal appears to loathe Beneš as much as any other Activist. He was not alone in using as evidence against him quotations from Alberto Vojtěch Frič's (1882–1944) anti-Beneš periodical *Očista* (Lustration). In the 1920s *Očista* had soon been banned by the police from shops and kiosks and when Frič changed tactics and used only street-vendors, police attacks on these vendors led to his having to stop publishing it. Frič had been sent by the foreign ministry to South America in 1919, but Beneš had withdrawn him from his post. He was a botanist, a world expert on cacti, an explorer and his politics approached anarchism. *Očista* did not have a vast readership, but Bouchal could write: 'finally, the nation believed the words of the scholar and traveller A. V. Frič, who years ago said to some delegation, pointing at a picture of Beneš: "*Gentlemen, look*

¹⁷¹ Sobota, *Glossy*, pp. 12–17.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 174.

¹⁷³ Vajtauer, *Malé národy v nové Evropě*, p. 31; Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 139.

¹⁷⁴ Vajtauer, *Malé národy v nové Evropě*, p. 9.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 32.

at his skull, that is the skull of the criminal who will take the nation into total ruin.”¹⁷⁷ Obersturmbannführer Walter Jacobi (1909–47, executed), whose books appeared more or less simultaneously in Czech and German, also mentions Frič, for entirely different reasons. He writes of his generosity in supporting legionary war invalids and the widows and orphans of Czechoslovak legionaries in France, and second, because Frič had called a Prague Jewish improver of the light-bulb ‘the Czech Edison’, of whose patents Jacobi avers that they were of no importance.¹⁷⁸ He distorts Frič’s political leanings considerably by associating presumably Masarykians or National Socialists with communism; the sentence makes little political logic: ‘At one time, immediately after the war, Frič was a decided opponent of the Beneš-Masaryk system, which he endeavoured to disable with various revelations until finally, under pressure from [Prague] Castle [...] he went over to the humanist democratic front and began to consider Bolshevism the natural development and Jews a particularly intelligent nation.’ And then he quotes Frič on a Jew who had tricked the priest who was baptizing him and then cleansed himself for a week in a synagogue.¹⁷⁹ So for Jacobi, Frič is reprehensible as a Jew-lover, but usable for reprinting a would-be comic anecdote about a Jew. The irony of the whole matter is that during the war, in league with a rich German woman who refused to speak German after the occupation, and another German woman, an aristocrat, Frič was organizing the hiding of Jews. Amongst those he hid was the writer Jiří Weil (1900–59).¹⁸⁰

A broad seam of political, and economic, antisemitism runs through Czech literature, particularly from 1848 onwards (medieval and early modern anti-Judaism is irrelevant). It is impossible to tell how far the Czech Nazi variety builds on the Czech tradition, while taking over the German variety. Often, in, say, Palacký or Neruda, the old type of antisemitism was simultaneously misoteutonic. One will find antisemitism even in Masaryk some years before his involvement in the Hilsner/Polná trial which was one of the sources of Activist invective against him as a Jew-lover. In the last part of his anonymous review (1888) of Edouard Drumont’s *La France juive*, Masaryk sees the ‘Jewish Question’ as part of the social question, for it is ‘the working classes who suffer most under the weight of Jewish capital’. At the same time, the ‘foremost nihilists and leaders of cosmopolitan revolution are Jews. The Jew imposes on the whole movement the direction that he wants.’ That foreshadows the main theme of twentieth-century propaganda. On the other hand, Masaryk believes that the Jewish Question

¹⁷⁷ Antonín Bouchal, *Beneš atentátník*, Prague, 1943, p. 164.

¹⁷⁸ Walter Jacobi, *Země zaslíbená*, Prague, 1943, p. 34.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 46. It remains doubtful that this SS officer wrote his two books, though it is slightly more believable of this book than of his reasonably well written first, *Golem ... Geißel der Tschechen* (The Golem ... scourge of the Czechs, Prague, 1942), an account of Freemason infiltration of the Sokol nationalist gymnastics movement and of the Boy Scouts, with only a few touches of antisemitism. Nakonečný informs us that the former Czech Fascist, a homosexual occultist with doctorates in laws, philosophy and in theology, Jiří Arvéd Smíchovský (1897–1951), who had worked as an SD agent during the war, had accused Jacobi of using his material for both his books (Milan Nakonečný, *Novodobý český hermetismus*, Prague, 1995, p. 248). It took two years after the war before Smíchovský had his people’s court trial; he received a death sentence, which was commuted to life imprisonment because of various confidential documents he possessed. It took two years because he acted as a witness in so many earlier trials. In prison, he began working for the Czechoslovak secret police, but when the Communist Party was in turmoil at the beginning of the 1950s, it ordered his accidental death; a warder gave him a fatal blow on the head (*ibid.*, pp. 192–94). Brabec’s view that Smíchovský helped Jacobi write his books is more convincing: Jiří Brabec, ‘Antisemitská literatura 1939–1945’, *Revolver Revue*, 50, 2002, pp. 273–302 (296).

¹⁸⁰ Michal Mareš, *Ze vzpomínek anarchisty, reportéra a válečného zločince*, Prague, 1999, pp. 233–38.

could be solved by complete assimilation, that this would eradicate 'Jewish corruption'. He advocates legal steps to limit Jewish activity:

When an insignificant minority fights for its life with a huge majority under otherwise identical conditions and if the minority nevertheless wins (at least in the material and political fields), there is proof that the battlefield is uneven, that the minority is not averse to guile. This inequality of weaponry must be stopped, and that by the law. The Jews must put up with certain legal restrictions commensurate with their racial characteristics and customs. That is a requirement of the just self-defence of the Aryan race, whose realization appears at the moment still to be unfulfillable, whose speedy fulfilment, however, depends to a great degree on the progress of the intelligentsia and our own morality.¹⁸¹

Naturally, one cannot be at all sure that this was actually written by Masaryk, but the emphasis laid on the 'social question' and so forth certainly suggests a Masarykian. What it does tell us is that amongst reforming political thinkers in late 1880s Bohemia, the idea of race legislation was present. Following Hitler's assumption of power in Germany, intellectuals responded with dignified warnings. Amongst the best-known of the responses was Hugo Iltis's (1882–1952) *Rasa ve vědě a v politice* (Race in scholarship and politics, 1935). Iltis accepts the notion of race, the division of Europeans into two different races, that is, on the whole accepts racialism, but not racism. He writes of Europe as the most racially mixed continent in the world, explains how Jewry even before the diaspora was racially mixed, explains why miscegenation is harmless, racial hygiene nonsense, and critically analyses the main works, French and German, of race theory (he does mention Linnaeus, but without comment), and of race 'science'. He has fun with assessing the definition of Germanic, as he understands it from Houston Stewart Chamberlain and others: 'the most noble flower of the Germanic race' were 'the Viking pirates, those blond robbers that harried people from the eighth to the eleventh century with murder and fire', and 'racism tried to introduce Viking methods into scholarship'.¹⁸² Iltis's prophecies were fulfilled; the German treatment of the Jews is 'a warning to all states and nations that neighbour Germany. When the time comes, their racial inferiority will be proved by German professors [. . .]. Their race must be inferior, for their country, their soil is needed'; 'millions of innocent people will perish if this racist madness maintains its hold [. . .] the smell of blood is passing through the world . . . Brutality is glorified, humanity vilified. *From antisemitism to racism to Brutalism — to the brutal deprecation of political and economic opponents, [. . .] to an unbridled free for all, to contempt for humanity and the victory of animal brutality — that is the path that racism leads mankind along*'. 'The poison gas of chemicals factories is to implement what the intellectual poison gas of racism has prepared'.¹⁸³

Iltis approves of the collection of essays published by the Academy of Arts and Sciences a year previously, a collection that considered race theory as well as the science abused by the Germans, eugenics. Like Iltis, the leading eugenicist Vladislav Růžička (1870–1934) maintains that all nations are racially mixed. Růžička writes in favour of eugenics, but against racial hygiene and German race legislation. On the other hand, he believes that race laws will eventually perform what eugenics could; he favours sterilization, for reproduction is no longer

¹⁸¹ [Anon.], 'Časová otázka ve Francii. Leží před námi 104. vydání knihy La France juive od Ed. Drumonta,' in T. G. Masaryk, *Z bojů o rukopisy. Texty z let 1886–1888*, Prague, 2004, pp. 429–53 (448–49).

¹⁸² Hugo Iltis, *Rasa ve vědě a v politice*, Prague, 1935, pp. 34, 65. The assimilationist Czech-Jewish movement insisted that Jews were of mixed race and did not constitute a nation. 'Miscegenation' had been evident in O. T. times. See Stanislav Schulhof, *Jsou Židé Semity a národem?*, 2nd edn, Prague, 1908.

¹⁸³ Iltis, *Rasa*, pp. 95, 99–100, 101.

a private matter; the state needs to regulate it, for economic as well as social reasons: 'For the informed there is no doubt that the German so-called race laws will finally have the same result as this eugenic goal. The longer we take to introduce laws, the longer we shall lag behind the German nation.'¹⁸⁴ Chotek denies the usefulness of the concept race.¹⁸⁵ He also divides the Jews of Czechoslovakia into two groups, Bohemian and Moravian are one and those east of Moravia are another, *de facto*, *Ostjuden*; the latter group has been disadvantaged by isolation and thus not been able to contribute culturally or economically to the state; he passes no judgement whatsoever, for his approach is anthropological.¹⁸⁶ The whole volume takes for granted that antisemitism is morally wrong; Matiegka (1862–1941) mentions it as an aberration used by followers of Gobineau, though its roots do not lie in race-theory.¹⁸⁷ Matiegka admires the Jews' ability to adapt to the customs of the countries they live in as far as religion allows it and their considerable contribution to the 'cultural progress of the nations that host them'.¹⁸⁸ He also points out that 12 per cent of Nobel Prizes had gone to 'men of Jewish or half-Jewish origin'.¹⁸⁹ Růžička maintains sensibly that not just the Nordic race, but all races, including the Jewish, Arab, Mongolian, and, say, extinct American races, had made an equally valuable contribution to human culture; it is an offence to humanism for one race to repress another.¹⁹⁰ Jiří Horák's (1884–1975) essay, incidentally, one of the most enlightened appraisals of Czech (and general Slav) nationalism altogether, contains a statement that was becoming a convention of writers discussing antisemitism and the Czechs: 'Race hatred in the meaning it has today never existed amongst the Slav common people [*lid*] and if it ever erupted (antisemitism), it was usually instigated by external influences, that is, for example, superstition (ritual murder), the inflammatory propaganda of "better educated" people or (more frequently) social antagonism.'¹⁹¹

As the German threat increased, so the Czech intelligentsia, chiefly, however, the left, Communists, rebelled against the antisemitism that had begun to spread openly amongst Czech politicians of the right. The uncommonly courageous Communist journalist Jan Krejčí (1903–41, executed) followed Masaryk in stating that the 'Jewish question is essentially a social question, always had its roots in social tension', but antisemitism, he maintains, was alien to Czech culture:

Since the times of its Awakening there has been no place in the Czech nation for an anti-Jewish movement of any size. [...] Not even the Hilsner Affair could break this fine tradition, for the great fighter Masaryk was helped by the finest forces in the nation, the majority of which comprehended that it was not a matter of defending some accused Jew, but of the nation's moral health. Anti-Jewish material was always [*sic*] imported to us from abroad and very little such material has domestic origins. [...] The great majority of [Czech writers] tried to destroy this alien [*čizácký*]

¹⁸⁴ Vladislav Růžička, 'Zlepšení stavu národa plemennou hygienou či eugenikou?', in Karel Weigner (ed.), *Rovnocennost evropských plemen a cesty k jejich ušlechťování*, Prague, 1934 (hereafter Weigner, *Rovnocennost*), pp. 75–88 (88).

¹⁸⁵ Karel Chotek, 'Rasa a kultura', in Weigner, *Rovnocennost*, pp. 121–34 (121–22).

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 129–30.

¹⁸⁷ Jiří Matiegka, 'Rovnocennost evropských plemen po stránce duševní', in Weigner, *Rovnocennost*, pp. 61–74 (61–62).

¹⁸⁸ Jiří Matiegka, 'Dnešní stav znalosti evropských plemen', in Weigner, *Rovnocennost*, pp. 33–45 (37).

¹⁸⁹ Matiegka, 'Rovnocennost evropských plemen po stránce duševní', p. 70.

¹⁹⁰ Růžička, 'Zlepšení stavu národa plemennou hygienou či eugenikou?', pp. 84–85.

¹⁹¹ Jiří Horák, 'Rasové problémy a lidové podání slovanské', in Weigner, *Rovnocennost*, pp. 136–46 (145).

poison and to lead the Czech nation to a critical judgement of the Jewish Question and did not try to conceal the positive contribution the Jews had made to humanity.¹⁹²

Another Marxist, expelled from the Communist Party in 1936, Závěš Kalandra (1902–50, executed), who spent the war in concentration camps, wrote the preface to the ‘metal-worker’ Jeřábek’s brief *Antisemitismus a dělnická třída* (Antisemitism and the working class, 1938). Since the publishing was also paid for by Jeřábek, and since the style is not that of an ordinary metal-worker, the reader will suspect that Kalandra wrote the whole essay. The preface begins with a justified attack on the agile proponents of humanitarianism and pacifism who do not dare to tackle the question; ‘it is,’ Kalandra writes, ‘pleasant and cheap to be a pacifist in peacetime, when war is not impending; it is noble and pleasant to be a humanitarian when not a hair on anyone’s head is being harmed’. Kalandra mistrusts the notion of popular/folk [*lidový*] antisemitism and maintains that the ebb and flow of antisemitism depends on the level of political ‘reaction’. Workers need to see antisemitism as part of the class struggle, as an instrument of the bourgeoisie to divert workers’ attention from the real enemy, themselves.¹⁹³ Kalandra’s argument looks forward to the immediate post-war argument of the Communists before the Stalinist wave of antisemitism began. Jeřábek’s essay starts as an attack on Ferdinand Peroutka (1895–1978), the editor of *Přítomnost* (who also spent 1939–45 in concentration camps). Jeřábek states that even those journalists who had once condemned antisemitism were now writing ambiguously, if they could not avoid mentioning it. He quotes Peroutka’s virtually suggesting a quota system, if the Jews ever went over certain ‘reasonable’ limits (percentages) in public or business life, lest antisemitism should arise amongst the Czechs who hitherto had been ‘more or less immune to the infection of antisemitism’. The Jews had got on with ‘our nation’ (*sic*), Peroutka believes, because there had been an unwritten rule that the Jews should remain ‘inconspicuous’. This rule would be broken if the state allowed into the country ‘strange-looking Jews from the east’, and with this he was, Jeřábek maintains, advising Jewish Czechoslovaks not to allow their co-believers to ask for political asylum. In the end, he claims, Peroutka has revealed himself to be an antisemite. War will not solve the problem of antisemitism, but only a new world order. The Germans are confiscating Jewish property solely to finance their armaments industry. All antisemites are instruments of ‘reaction’, and one should ‘never make compromises with it, but rather spit in its eyes’. Finally, Jeřábek calls on all democrats to help the persecuted Jews of Germany.

Peroutka’s attempt to compromise finds a parallel in one small group of the not quite extreme right, TANK (Tvorba a národní kultura, Art and national culture), originally set up to fight the degenerate wiles of Surrealism. In his ‘Židovská otázka’ of 1938, the insurance expert, Václav Režný (1906–?) suggests that the Jews reading law or medicine should voluntarily restrict their numbers before the Second Republic set about introducing a quota system (racial *numerus clausus*). In the Second Republic, the government Party of National Unity (Strana národní jednoty) did not accept Jews, but neither did it accept non-Czechs; Jewish civil servants were sometimes dismissed, sometimes forced into early retirement. The Sokol patriotic physical training organization once again expelled Jewish members and the Czech doctors’ association banned Jews from working in hospitals, and the lawyers’ association sought to eliminate Jewish-run law firms.¹⁹⁴ The Party of National Unity’s ‘Principles of

¹⁹² Ludvík Klecanda [= Jan Krejčí], *Židovská otázka*, Prague, *sine anno* [1939], pp. 10, 52.

¹⁹³ Z[ávěš] Kalandra, ‘Úvodem’, in Ferdinand Jeřábek, kovodělník, *Antisemitismus a dělnická třída*, Prague, 1938, p. 3.

¹⁹⁴ Bryant, *Prague in Black*, p. 25.

Cultural Policy' (*Zásady kulturní politiky*) included the statement: 'As the spiritual originators of Social Democracy and Communism and as enthusiastic representatives of materialist philosophy, pansexualist psychoanalysis and physical and moral relativism, Jews ferment the disintegration of all culture.'¹⁹⁵ None the less Režný insists that the state should protect Jewish businessmen, particularly those in foreign trade, since the country depended on them. The state should have no fear, for 'To assert that Jews have a different morality, a worse morality, is ridiculous; [...] the unchanging principles of Christian morality obtain in business: honour and decency'.¹⁹⁶ The same year as Kalandra/Jeřábek and Režný's essays appeared saw the publication of Czech Fascist antisemitic works. The drop-out medical student Jan Rys (1901–46, executed) published a long work on the Jewish nature of especially Czechoslovak Freemasonry, *Židozedenářství — metla světa* (Judaemasonry — scourge of the world).¹⁹⁷ Rys had been a major ideologue of the Fascist Vlajka movement and was involved in the pogroms that broke out on the news that the Germans had occupied the rump state in March 1939. In 1943 the Germans sent him to Dachau as a prisoner of honour. In the prolix, repetitious, inept *Židozedenářství* we encounter not only primitive antisemitism, but also attacks on the poison of 'demoliberalism' and, as frequently as in post-Munich Moravec, on the notion of the 'strong individual'.¹⁹⁸ Rys attempts to demonstrate a joint world conspiracy of Jews and Freemasons. As one might expect, 'A Gentile Freemason is [...] a traitor to his nation in the service of Jewish messianism.'¹⁹⁹ In such writing 'messianism' denotes 'desire to rule the world'. The stereotypical Jewish vices are all here, but sometimes the hyperbole is especially risible, for example, when Rys claims that 'reliable historians' have written that the Jews incited Nero to persecute the Christians.²⁰⁰ By the time one reaches almost the end, one will have also learned that the Duke of 'Conaufht' and Douglas Fairbanks are Masons and that the latter lives in 'Boverly Hill' in 'Los Angelos'.²⁰¹

From the same year, though published at the author's own expense, Rélink's *Vývin židomarxisty* (The evolution of the Judaemarxist) was probably more dangerous, not as much because of the half-dozen would-be articles as of the fairly competently drawn vicious caricatures. The title of the book barely matches the content of the articles, although the Jews' and Marxists' contempt for Christ does make for a recurrent motif, however little Christian there appears to be about Rélink. Rélink had once been chief secretary of the National Fascist Community (Národní obec fašistická, NOF).²⁰² Something of the Czech nationalism of those days is evident in the opening cartoon, where an Orthodox Jew reading the Talmud is sitting on a chamber-pot inscribed 'Slavs'.²⁰³ Other cartoons portray Jewish moneybags' involvement in the Communist movement, the secret police (common motif in Czech Great War

¹⁹⁵ Cited in Jan Gebhart and Jan Kuklík, *Druhá republika 1938–1939. Svár demokracie a totality v politickém, společenském a kulturním životě*, Prague, Litomyšl, 2004, p. 188.

¹⁹⁶ Václav Režný, 'Židovská otázka', in Režný, *Palčivé otázky*, Prague, 1938, pp. 11–21 (16–17).

¹⁹⁷ Jacobi or Smíchovský appears to have derived the title of Jacobi's book on Czechoslovak Freemasonry from Rys (see note 179).

¹⁹⁸ Jan Rys, *Židozedenářství — metla světa*, Prague, 1938, pp. 7, 8.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 328, 348.

²⁰² Tomáš Pasák, *Český fašismus 1922–1945 a kolaborace 1938–1945*, Prague, 1999 (hereafter Pasák, *Český fašismus*), p. 197.

²⁰³ Karel Rélink, *Vývin židomarxisty. S zeti celostrannými i menšími ilustracemi a textem*, Prague, 1938, p. 4.

antisemitism), Freemasonry, the Communist press, anti-Fascist agitation; one cartoon makes a link between the Communist Party, Freemasonry, the League of Nations and the Talmud and another refers to the 'jewification' of the Sokol movement. Several refer to the Hilsner trial, and one to the 1840 Damascus blood-libel and the Beilis trial. In the articles, most of them published previously, one in a Berlin antisemitic paper, others in the Czech Fascist press, the most frequent target is Judaeobolshevism; indeed, the first piece starts with an attack on the creator of Švejk, Jaroslav Hašek, as a Judaeobolshevik. The second most frequent target is Masaryk's Realist Party, a party criticized for its large Jewish membership even after the Second World War. He makes the grotesque claim that Hašek's Švejk novel was hawked around the country (it first appeared in fascicles distributed by colporteurs) under the aegis of Judaeomarxists and Realists.²⁰⁴ The Realists, like the Communists, are 'Jew-lovers'; Masarykian *Humanität* and Judaeobolshevism are inspired by the Talmud and *Shulkhan Arukh*;²⁰⁵ the often cited Masaryk motto, 'democracy is discussion', is mysteriously associated with the Jews' benefiting from the Slump. Mentions of the words 'Jewish conspiracy' come a poor third.²⁰⁶ Naturally, Jews are responsible for a trade in Gentile prostitutes 'for their "massage" parlours, bars, and other brothels'. Rélink claims that Jewish women are never prostitutes (which runs counter to earlier antisemitic writing as well as reality), but frequently earn their living by running brothels with Gentile prostitutes, and in this connexion he quotes a Talmud teaching: 'A Jew is not committing adultery if he violates a Christian woman, even if he is married, for an unbeliever's woman may be used'²⁰⁷ (see my discussion of Richter below). Rélink also employs the ubiquitous central European notion of Jews' stinking of garlic and onions.²⁰⁸ The articles of *Vývin židomaxisty* manifest a man of very little brain; his invective is derived; the jingles he places under many of the cartoons are primitively unrhythmical and unfunny. Rys and Rélink's books appeared in 1938, during or in the run-up to the Second Republic with its government's anti-Jewish policy, and altogether presented itself as something close to a Fascist regime. None the less, the leading Activist Krychtlák (1903–47, executed) will have nothing of the prime minister Beran:

People who knew Beran's Jewish background were very curious about how he would solve the Jewish question. First of all, he placed draconian restrictions on censorship according to which no newspaper was permitted to publish a single line against the Jews. Then, under pressure from all sides, he did prepare to announce his standpoint on the Jews, who in the meantime were selling their ill-gotten property and going abroad with the money.²⁰⁹

To varying degrees Karel Rélink's themes are repeated in Activist antisemitic writing, including Krychtlák's, but in the Occupation their treatment involves sometimes sinister political cynicism, sometimes a crass crowing over mass murder. Alois Kříž (1911–47, executed), the broadcaster and journalist, 'chief of the headquarters' of the Czech Fascists'

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 6. In this article Rélink is in the third person, but the brash style is such that the reader has little doubt that Rélink is the author.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 33, 47 and 71, 53.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 31, 32, 69.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 64, 66.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 37, 63.

²⁰⁹ Vladimír Krychtlák, *Bolševici, Beneš a my*, Prague, 1941, p. 154. For an account of Krychtlák's activities and trial, see Jan Cebe's detailed 'Vladimír Krychtlák — osud neslavně slavného novináře', in Štěpán Filípek et al., *Ztracení v davu. Osudy novinářů ve 20. století*, Prague, 2005, pp. 97–143.

Svatopluk Guard and frequent speaker at the ill-attended rallies of the League against Bolshevism,²¹⁰ organized a series of wireless talks for October and November 1941 which were to serve listeners as would-be rational background material to the first deportation of Prague Jews to the Łódź ghetto (October 16 1941) and the first deportations to Theresienstadt (December 4, though ghetto not ‘opened’ for another few months). The deportations are never mentioned in those talks for that would wreck their sham impartiality. Kříž assembled these talks and, together with four articles from the press and his own introduction, published them as *Co víte o Židech?* (What do you know about Jews, 1941).²¹¹

I look now at the ideological points made by Kříž’s authors in connexion with those of other Activists, but omit for the time being Hanuš Richter (?–?) because his major antisemitic work is as a whole cleverer than even the few slightly sophisticated pieces I use from this junk journalism. In war-time antisemitic works one will find inconsistencies about the evil of Jewry that arise from the Activists’ duty to fuse pan-European antisemitic topoi with Nazi mythology and politics. The core example of this is the fusion of two notions, that Jews are quintessentially seditious and simultaneously pillars of the First Republic Establishment. Their seditious quality tends to be demonstrated in other, often Ancient, societies. Another inconsistency is the notion that Jews have no sense of nationality (perhaps derived from Herder, but common in Czech literature, too, from the late Revival onwards) and the racist imperative to regard Jews as a nation so that they can be labelled alien parasites on the German/Czech nation. That Jews are foul plutocrats and (especially after the invasion of the USSR) foul Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyites simply exemplifies the variety of seditious tricks they employ to destroy European culture. The railway employee Emilián Peřina (1900–72) writes that for the Jews the Babylonian captivity was no real captivity, since the bankers and merchants in Babylon were all Jews; it was in their interest that Palestine be united with Babylon and, anyway, Jews are incapable of ruling themselves, for: ‘As far as the concept nation is concerned, it was completely unknown to them.’²¹² The zoologist and former leader of the Fascist student association in Brno, Vladimír Teyrovský (1898–1980), writes that Jews must always be regarded as a ‘racially alien element, as representatives of alien races’ and that one must ‘call the Jews a nation’.²¹³ In his nasty diatribe, František Šulc (?–?) makes much of the fact that Neruda had spelled ‘Jew’ (*žid*) with capital *Ž* in his *Pro strach židovský*, for that indicated that Neruda recognized the Jew as a ‘member of a nation and by no means just an adherent of a religion’ better than many Czech publicists today.²¹⁴ In the then current Czech spelling rules *žid* meant ‘Jew’ and *Žid* (Ancient) Israelite. Nazis and Activists always used *Ž*. The problem came earlier than the Occupation as a result of Zionism. Egon Hostovský has his Orthodox schoolmaster Jakub Wolf encounter difficulties with it: ‘He was sometimes [...] criticized in his function as a master: some wanted him to spell *žid* with a big *Ž* and when he

²¹⁰ Pasák, *Český fašismus*, p. 363.

²¹¹ For Kříž’s other broadcasting activities and the place this series had in these activities — and for some audience responses, see Peter Richard Pinard, ‘Alois Kříž a cyklus rozhlasových relací “Co víte o Židech a zednářích?”’, in Jaroslava Milotová (ed.), *Tereziánské dokumenty 2005*, Prague, 2005, pp. 193–245. The book was published before the radio-talk series was over, so urgent did the authorities consider this propaganda.

²¹² Emilián Peřina, ‘Vycházíme z Palestiny’, in Alois Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech? Podle stejnojmenného cyklu politických přednášek Českého rozhlasu*, Prague, 1944, pp. 9–14 (13).

²¹³ Vladimír Teyrovský, ‘Do Evropy prostě nepatří’, in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 21–26 (24, 25).

²¹⁴ František Šulc, ‘Byl Jan Neruda taky “zrádce”?’’, in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 56–60 (56).

did so, those who did not consider Jewry a nation complained.²¹⁵ Hostovský used ž; he was all too aware of the extreme right's use of Ž. Šulc blames the confusion on the Jews themselves: 'Writing the word *Žid* with a lower-case initial letter was one of those inconspicuous measures that laymen easily failed to notice, intentional measures by which the Jews in the erstwhile state tried to turn their alien and racially distinct group into mere innocent adherents of the Mosaic confession.' Neruda had been a true Czech and in his appeal to his listeners Šulc aligns him with the Activists by employing the labels normally given them by Czech patriots:

Inscribe this anti-Jewish creed of the deceased genius on your hearts, all of you who are still searching expressions of sympathy with the Jews, whose just fate still awakens a feeling of misplaced compassion! Certainly, Neruda was neither a 'traitor to the nation' nor 'hireling of the Germans' and yet as long ago as that he was able to utter the beautifully manly confession of an implacable anti-Jewish fighter.²¹⁶

There was no place for compassion, since the Jews were responsible for most evil.

Moravec subserviently accepts a version of the Nazi line on the previous war: 'The Great War was a war of competition between British and German industrialism [*sic*]. In that war the Jews were on Britain's side. Then, too, the Jews prepared the United States' entry into the war.'²¹⁷ Following Hitler, he also blames them for the current war: 'This baleful race has this war on its conscience and it must therefore reckon with retribution from Europe and all the other parts of the world that it has dragged into the war.'²¹⁸ In his 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko' (Why Soviet Russia failed), probably the most consistent statement of the Nazi brand of political antisemitism in Czech, Lažnovský explains how right-minded Germany was now, that is, in 1941, facing the Allies for the sake of humanity, for all three major Allies are Jew-ridden:

In spite of all their campaigns against the capitalist world and in spite of the millions of Russian socialists whom they executed as 'deviants' from the world proletarian revolution, the *Judaebolsheviks* and their Communist International have in the end joined up with the two last and most typical capitalist regimes — with British and American *Judaedemocracy*. By that they betrayed socialism altogether, for they sacrificed the Russian nation in order to preserve Jewish plutocratic power in America and Britain. [...]; actually, the *Judaebolsheviks* have perpetrated the most repugnant counter-revolution against socialism. [...] Is it possible to provide a more striking proof of Jewish baseness?²¹⁹

The co-founder of the tiny pro-Nazi National Radical Party (1937) and committee member of the League against Bolshevism, Hugo Tuskány (1887–?, sentenced to life imprisonment by people's court) states the same as Moravec and Lažnovský in a garish, clumsy profusion of Nazi jargon:

Only the Jews are the cause of the war into which they cast the democracies led by Masonic slaves so that they can achieve the world rule they long for after the best sons of the various nations have

²¹⁵ Egon Hostovský, *Dům bez pána* [1937], 4th edn, Prague, 1994, p. 78. Since the Changes, the capital initial letter has taken over again, probably both because of copy-editors' lack of cultural knowledge and because of fashionable ahistorical political correctness. It sends shivers down the spines of some Czechs of a certain age.

²¹⁶ Šulc, 'Byl Jan Neruda taky "zrádce"?', pp. 56, 58.

²¹⁷ Moravec, *Tatsachen und Irrtümer*, pp. 22–23.

²¹⁸ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 197.

²¹⁹ Karel Lažnovský, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', in Lažnovský, *Na rozcestí věků*, pp. 97–169 (139–40).

slaughtered each other. For this conspiracy with which the Jews want to destroy Greater Germany, they have mobilized all the corrupt forces of democracy — [. . .] since 1933 Jewish gold, together with the corruption of Masonic lodges and the whole dark power of the Moloch mammon has been working on a trap that would swallow up the Reich of light, from which rays of knowledge, truth and strength ignited the Aryan fire in the lands of Europe.

The Jews had also whipped up the misotheutonism of Germany's enemies: 'The press, film, literature, the wireless, schools, parliaments, churches and cartels, finance and stock-exchanges; in short, they paralysed the whole life of nations subjugated to Judah by means of a psychosis of crazed hatred for the land that was to bring salvation and liberation from Jewish slavery. / The arrogant race of vampires, oversated with gold, had no doubts about its invincibility.'²²⁰ Once again we notice old antisemitic clichés (finance, gold, vampires, press) warmed up. Lažnovský first employs the vampire/bloodsucker cliché in the course of the lengthy passage on the political importance of blood in his 'Proč padla Francie' (Why France fell). He writes that he considers 'capitalism and Judaeoaristocratic plutocratism disasters for nations precisely because in their pursuit of millions, thousands of millions, it [the pursuit] goes so far that it uses up the very vital (haematic) essence of nations'. A little later in the essay he writes of the marrow of the French being 'sucked out' by Jewish and native French capitalists, and then using 'shark' to mean 'vampire', he states that Jews and capitalists had 'sucked out' the whole of Europe, which the Reich had tried to put a stop to by invading and defeating France.²²¹

Jews are to be blamed for anything destructive. They had been associated with social democracy or revolutionary socialism in Czech literature since the end of the nineteenth century and aggressive antisemitism, even suggestions of the need to 'exterminate' Jews had been expressed by Czech writers since the very beginning of the twentieth century. Generally, throughout the national movement Jews were associated with the enemy, the Germans, and that to such a degree that Jewish Czech-hatred was written about as fact abroad before the Great War. We may read in 1910, for example, that the Germans 'shared with the Hebrews the banking institutions of the country [Bohemia], and most of the foreign and domestic commerce. [. . .] Indeed, the two races, antagonistic in Germany and Austria [*sic*], form one people in Bohemia. They speak the same language, patronize the same schools, and have a common hatred for the Bohemians'.²²² That was the convention in Czech antisemitic writing and so the pro-German Activists had, generally, to make their antisemitism of universal import, to blame Jews for world-wide destruction, not just for destruction in the Bohemian Lands. Thus, according to Krychtálek, the notion of collectivization was of Jewish provenance.²²³ Lažnovský regards the notion of class conflict as typically destructive, a typically Jewish invention for bringing about the decomposition of an Aryan nation or state.²²⁴ Krychtálek writes of Bolshevism as the Jewish enslaving of the Russian peasant — and so the German invasion of Russia means the liberation of those peasants from servitude to the Jews.²²⁵ Because of the Jewishness of Communism, Europe needs socialism of another kind, writes Lažnovský: 'Marxist socialist parties have been mostly occupied by Jews, who, of course, did not educate the people [*lid*] to recognize the exploitative nature of the Jewish race

²²⁰ Hugo Tuskány, 'Tato válka v pravém světle', in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 61–65 (61, 63).

²²¹ Karel Lažnovský, 'Proč padla Francie', in Lažnovský, *Na rozcestí věků*, pp. 17–96 (40, 49, 58).

²²² Will S. Monroe, *Bohemia and the Czechs*, Boston MA, 1910, p. 181.

²²³ Krychtálek, *Bolševici, Beneš a my*, p. 60.

²²⁴ Lažnovský, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', pp. 123, 149–50.

²²⁵ Krychtálek, *Bolševici, Beneš a my*, p. 65.

... / A socialist revolution in Europe [...] can succeed only if it is a revolution against the Jews and against the Anglo-Jewish plutocracy's domination of a quarter of the world.²²⁶ The British Empire constitutes, then, the first attempt at world rule, and the USSR the second. After all, when Marx wrote, 'Workers of the world unite', that was the same as the 'Zionist' call, 'Jews of the world, unite'.²²⁷ The Jewish influence on world politics is according to the Activists immeasurable. The Jewish-run Comintern was responsible for allowing both Edvard Beneš and Anthony Eden to be elected; any political errors Carol II of Romania committed were due to his Jewish mistress.²²⁸ Stalin behaved and thought like a Jew, which is not surprising — and Lažnovský's assertion of that reeks of the notion of 'guilty by association' that propagandists adore: 'The most important thing about Stalin is the fact that from his youth (in the seminary) he has been a fanatical supporter of social revolution and has excessively abounded in imagination. These characteristics of Stalin made him a kindred spirit of the no less fanatical Jews.'²²⁹ Like T. G. Masaryk, Beneš was a Jew-lover; Beneš had not wanted to get along with the Germans, to avoid Munich, because of his love for the Jews, and in London he was in league with the Jews.²³⁰ It stands to reason that Bouchal should more or less directly blame the Jews for the assassination of Heydrich and the threat that brought to the existence of the nation; he writes of the responsibility of 'Beneš and of the whole society around him, made up mainly of Jews'.²³¹

The First Republic had also been at the mercy of Jews. To a considerable degree, Czechoslovakia becomes amongst Activists something akin to the Weimar Republic. In the Introduction to his assembly of tirades, Kříž asserts that those who had governed Czechoslovakia had been in the service of the Jews and had ceased concealing that fact only when they went into exile.²³² An admirer of Alfred Rosenberg and Henry Ford, Vladimír Chmelař (?-?), maintains that the Republic had been 'one of the mainstays in the construction of Jewish world domination', but before the Jews had been able to complete their work, 'the *New Age* had crushed them by force of spirit and arms'.²³³ For Jacobi it had all started early, during the Great War, when Jews had financed the activities of Masaryk and Beneš; Jews abroad had been the mortar used in the construction of Czechoslovakia that helped ensure the country's judaization.²³⁴ At the Sokol jamboree of 1938, Jewish athletes from Palestine had brought greetings to the Czechs, which actually expressed world Jewry's 'gratitude to the Sokol for its help in the power-political development of Jews in the Czech [*sic*] republic'. In 1935, Jacobi writes, the joint forces of the Freemasons, Jewry and the Sokol had started a country-wide campaign to boycott the Berlin Olympic Games.²³⁵ In fact, Jacobi appears to be using arguments to demonstrate Jewish and Freemason influence on Sokol as much in order to give reasons for the German banning of the organization as to disseminate politically correct views on the First

²²⁶ Lažnovský, 'Proč padla Francie', p. 34.

²²⁷ Lažnovský, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', p. 117.

²²⁸ Krychtálek, *Bolševici, Beneš a my*, pp. 78, 18.

²²⁹ Lažnovský, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', p. 117.

²³⁰ See, for example, Krychtálek, *Bolševici, Beneš a my*, pp. 16, 21, 77; Lažnovský, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', pp. 130, 148–49.

²³¹ Bouchal, *Beneš atentátník*, p. 5.

²³² Alois Kříž, 'Úvod', in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 5–7 (5).

²³³ Vladimír Chmelař, 'Z ghetta do parlamentu', in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 38–44 (44).

²³⁴ Jacobi, 'Země zaslíbená', p. 122.

²³⁵ Jacobi, *Golem* . . . , pp. 95, 72.

Republic. The Sokol continued underground as an efficient Resistance grouping and successfully hid Jews, although, at least since the end of the nineteenth century, the Sokol had been a strongly antisemitic organization, though the death, still in office in 1932, of the man who had been chief Sokol (*starosta*) since 1905, led to some liberalization of the movement's ideology.²³⁶ František Šulc was one of the most cynical Activists and, no doubt, for him the judaization of the Sokol was simply typical of the cosmopolitan Jews' general undermining of the First Republic:

In what a monstrous, fateful half-sleep the Jews kept our nation in those twenty years' democratic abuse, soothing us in narcotic internationalism in order all the more easily to crush our national soul, all the more easily to achieve the triumph of their indestructible 'nationalism', while by means of this sophisticated swindle they were enfeebling the political maturity of the nations amongst whom they were living! In the interests of their entirely selfish goals [egoistic Jews topos] they succeeded in the most scoundrelly manner in arousing the interest of the nation they had thus deluded — which believed it was fighting for higher ideals. Today we are witnessing how the Jews have managed at the right moment to exploit in their own interest the patriotic sentiments of another nation, to lead them astray, lead them down the wrong track.²³⁷

The other nation is the British and Šulc's attack, like Bouchal's and most Activists', is levelled against Czechoslovak broadcasts from London. The later press secretary of the League against Bolshevism, Vilém Nejedlý (1905–?), blames the suffering endured during the Slump on Jewish Czechs: no one had touched any of the 'sleeping' capital in order to help the workers, some of whom were committing suicide in despair, because the capital was owned by Jews; anything 'that had the odour of being owned by Jews' in the First Republic was, Nejedlý rails, 'sacrosanct', and that 'could not be otherwise' under the 'Judaemasonic' Masaryk and Beneš.²³⁸ After all, as Bouchal asserts, for Jews the First Republic was 'nothing but a central European branch of Palestine led by a Jew-lover', and the Occupation 'had at least rescued the [Czechs'] national existence and its Aryan character'.²³⁹ Moravec puts it a little differently: the Czech nation had been 'an economic vassal to Czech, French and British Jews, who had dictated the politics and commandeered "Czech public opinion"; world Jewry had persuaded the Czechs that they were the last bastion of human rights in central Europe'.²⁴⁰ That statement has its basis in the anti-Jewish cliché used, for example, by the journalist Alois Svoboda (1897–1956): 'If we speak of gold, we have to think of the Jew, and if we speak of the Jew, we have to think of gold.'²⁴¹ How much an ordinary grubby Activist knew about the profits Germans derived from Jewish gold confiscated in the Protectorate and then in the business departments of the death camps one cannot know, but they were certainly aware of local confiscations, and so was the readership.

The Activists' employment of clichés served the normal purposes of ideological clichés: to appeal to the prejudices, however minor, of the audience, and to convince the audience by

²³⁶ See Claire E. Nolte, *The Sokol in the Czech Lands to 1914. Training for the Nation*, Basingstoke, New York, 2002, pp. 146, 156–57. In fact, Otto Wolf's family were in the Sokol, for example; the First Republic saw changes even before the *starosta* was removed by death, so the Activists did have some evidence.

²³⁷ Šulc, 'Byl Jan Neruda taky "zrádcem"?', p. 57.

²³⁸ Vilém Nejedlý, 'Židé a nezaměstnanost', in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 77–78 (77).

²³⁹ Bouchal, *Beneš atentátník*, p. 40.

²⁴⁰ Moravec, 'Vorwort zur deutschen Ausgabe' (see note 73), pp. 17–18. It is possible that we have here a reference to G. E. R. Gedye's *Fallen Bastions* (London, 1939), a denunciation of the German treatment of Czechoslovakia.

²⁴¹ Alois Svoboda, 'Zlato je záporom života', in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 27–32 (31).

repetition of what was intended to appear to be a statement of folk wisdom. Sedition fits these clichés (for Czechs the cliché involved sedition of the nation rather than the state in the nineteenth century) from Karel Havlíček and Palacký onwards. Especially after 1933, the Jews had, according to Moravec, deliberately perverted Czech politics in order to destroy the healthy instincts of the nation: 'Jewish capitalist interests hitched themselves to Anglo-French strategic interests and, entirely artificially, and cunningly, escalated Czech hatred of the German nation to a state of unbounded fury.'²⁴² The futile intention of this sentence is to persuade the audience that the intense anti-German sentiments they harbour are unnatural, imposed on them by alien forces. The association of Jews with Freemasonry and Freemasonry with the First Republic political élite is in the end also intended to portray the Jews as having undermined Czechoslovakia, having alienated the politicians from the people and the people's natural political inclinations, 'feelings' — we remember that for Activists, especially for Moravec, feeling is always superior to reason. Moravec also suggests that the Jews who were still living in Prague in June 1942 continued pursuing sedition (this is just after Jews from Theresienstadt had been sent to bury the bodies in Lidice): 'There are actually some Jewish rumour-mongers sneaking about Prague saying that the executions announced in the press do not take place, that the Germans just send the condemned men to do forced labour. They would be mad, they say, to deprive themselves of the hands whose work they need so much.'²⁴³ Moravec uttered these words at the Heydrichiad rally in Brno, where the executions took place in a fairly densely populated area of the city. While speaking of sedition he is, then, sarcastically mocking the Jews: their sedition does not work in the Protectorate. The Jews also indulge in moral sedition (again not new; one will find angry recriminations against the Jews for having invented sexology, for example, in Emanuel Rádl some time before the war). A statement on this by Alois Galus (?-?) constitutes a minor demonstration of most Activists' incomplete education:

Heine, Marx, Lombroso, Freund [*sic*], Weiniger [*sic*], Bergson, Reinach, Meyerson and Einstein, to mention only the most prominent, use most sophisticated interpretation and criticism to break down, deny and drag into the mud all those values and ideals that were sacred to the Christian and on whose ruins spreads the plague of materialism and Jewish spiritual anarchism and nihilism.²⁴⁴

That Jews are a disease themselves, or spread disease or at least poison wells, is also an old cliché of anti-Jewish writing. Jacobi also writes of the Jews' bringing 'decomposition' to the Sokol.²⁴⁵ Lažnovský writes that 'the Jews were an alien toxin in the organism.'²⁴⁶ We learn of the parasitical nature of that toxin from Alois Frait (?-?): 'wherever that eternal parasite the Jew appeared, the host nation sooner or later began to die.'²⁴⁷ For Moravec, the 'Jews were subjugating and decomposing the Aryan race', for their world was without nobility or chivalry, a 'world without heart or love, a world where courage was replaced by cunning,

²⁴² Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 23.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁴⁴ Alois Galus, 'Židovská otázka a její řešení', in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 86–91 (87). In 'Proč padla Francie', Lažnovský dislikes 'the Jew Bergson' for 'thinking only of "creative evolution" instead of building a new age of mankind' (p. 57), but, without attributing the idea to him propagates 'élan vital': 'German "élan vital" had a constructive blood rhythm' (p. 111); thanks to German and Italian 'élan vital', Germany and Italy had become 'the organs of a new history of Europe' (p. 89).

²⁴⁵ Jacobi, *Golem* . . . , p. 93.

²⁴⁶ Lažnovský, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', pp. 167–68.

²⁴⁷ Alois Frait, 'Protokoly sionských mudrců', in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 33–37 (33).

wisdom by shiftiness, and character by calculation and ruthlessness'. They had 'sullied Christian-Aryan culture', for their nature is of a 'creeping night animal that completely kills [*sic*] sick epochs and is capable of tearing large chunks only out of a half-dead organism'.²⁴⁸ As we see, Moravec is not even capable of such caricature as the sewer-minded Rélink. One does not have to seek long to find the other staple clichés of anti-Jewish writing in Czech literature, Jews as good at avoiding fighting, or being incapable of it, Jews having a culture of lies, and particularly German period clichés, for example, Jews as creators of Surrealism and 'degenerate art' altogether. Where the Activists differ obviously is in the solutions to the 'Jewish Question' that they put forward (not that one will not find calls for extermination a long time earlier, say, in the theosophist animal-lover Pavla Moudrá).

Vajtauer demands the separation of the Jews from the rest of society, provides a would-be rational reason for their being deported, a reason associated with the disease topos:

it is no wonder that revulsion at the notion of miscegenation arose amongst the healthy nations of Europe and that the question of a pure, healthy race has become an ideal and practical politics. The European nations wish to build Europe as a community of Aryan nations and to give the Jews the opportunity to set up their own national community somewhere outside Europe. / Racial hygiene, however, has another aspect. It intends to protect humanity from degeneration.²⁴⁹

The New Europe is, in Moravec's view, 'united in a fight against Jewry, that is, against the driving force of capitalism and the disintegrative element of socialism'.²⁵⁰ Oldřich Ducháč (1910-?) expresses a more open desire for violence, is more blatantly lending support to deportations: 'It is, then, not enough to take, confiscate the Jew's money and allow him to continue wreaking havoc, but he must be taught a proper lesson, be forced into tough, hard physical work'.²⁵¹ Even that appeals to the audience's knowledge of the antisemitic stereotype of the Jew avoiding physical work, especially on the land. Tuskány takes the same line, but with that pompous surquedry that attends the writing especially of the slightly better educated Activists:

The nations of Europe have simply seen through the scoundrelly game of the enemy of the world and are grateful to Providence that it permitted them to be participants in the final reckoning with the Jews. Today they are removed from the lives of Aryan nations, isolated as carriers of a sinister infectious disease. Our towns and villages will also be purged and the Jews will be constrained to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows in closed settlements where they will no longer be able to fleece and ruin gullible 'Goyim'.²⁵²

According to Moravec, the Czechs will learn to enjoy the benefits already enjoyed by Germany proper, for 'Because the Jews have been excluded from the German nation, the agents of capitalism have been rendered powerless in Germany'.²⁵³ Moravec welcomes the appointment of Kurt Daluge as Heydrich's replacement as Reichsprotektor with a threat to his countrymen that they might also suffer the fate of the Jews, and the Poles: 'the government of Bohemia and Moravia has now been given complete freedom, also in the choice of means, of how to preserve the Czech nation from a fate that could tomorrow very easily be the same as the fate of the Jews and Poles'.²⁵⁴

²⁴⁸ Moravec, *Tatsachen und Irrtümer*, pp. 26, 27.

²⁴⁹ Vajtauer, *Malé národy v nové Evropě*, p. 61.

²⁵⁰ Moravec, *Tatsachen und Irrtümer*, pp. 73.

²⁵¹ Oldřich Ducháč, 'Už naši předkové varovali ...', in Kříž (ed.), *Co víte o Židech?*, pp. 50-55 (55).

²⁵² Tuskány, 'Tato válka v pravém světle', p. 64.

²⁵³ Moravec, *Tatsachen und Irrtümer*, p. 25.

²⁵⁴ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 136.

Very occasionally Hanuš Richter uses the past tense when characterizing or commenting on Jewry in his *Talmud a Šulchan aruch v nežidovském zrcadle* (The Talmud and *Shulkhan arukh* in a Gentile mirror, 1942), dedicated to Emanuel Moravec. Richter has a brief vituperative introduction to what constitutes a reasonably long selection of quotations from the Babylonian Talmud and a very short selection of quotations from Part IV of the *Shulkhan arukh*; that is followed by an equally vituperative conclusion and then a series of quotations from non-Jewish (for example, Hitler) and Jewish writers from which we are to decide whether or not the spirit of the Talmud lives on. The bibliography and notes are disordered. On the publisher's blurb, we learn that Richter is an Orientalist; on the other hand, he has translated from Lazarus Goldschmidt's 1935 German translation. He claims, however, that Goldschmidt has often deliberately hidden the original meanings in his translation; in the course of the selection of quotations Richter has irregular one-sentence to half-page commentaries, in a few of which he points out Goldschmidt's alleged distortions. We do not trust Richter's assessment of Goldschmidt or his improvements on Goldschmidt, especially when we suddenly encounter the anachronism 'tomatoes' — presumably a version of the German's translation.²⁵⁵ The corrections and commentaries evoke a weaselly man playing at scholar, an opinionated pedant and self-righteous executioner of Jewish culture. His method of selection (and sometimes invention?) is founded on the desire to confirm racial prejudice, to demonstrate that the Jews are by their own laws anti-Christian, anti-Arab, anti-Gentile altogether, and to ridicule Jewish sacred books and the Jews themselves. He contrives to give the impression that a large part of the Talmud is devoted to excretion and copulation. His ridiculing of Jewry often concerns these two functions. I give one simple example: 'It is not rape when someone with an erect penis falls from a roof and lands on his sister-in-law, who is lying on the ground, and his penis penetrates her.'²⁵⁶ Richter's concentration on sexual matters, including a very frequently repeated statement that it is permissible to copulate with women as long as they are over three years and one day old,²⁵⁷ serves to remind his reader that Jews had invented sexology and psychoanalysis and to support sexual antisemitism (that had been lurking in the corners of Czech literature since the 1840s), and thus to lend weight to the notion of *Rassenschande*. On the other hand, he continually chooses passages in which it is said that non-Jews are not human beings, though one may rape or otherwise sleep with them (compare Rélink), and other passages indicating that a good Jew should avoid non-Jews altogether; on the whole, however, Richter is keen on projecting the Jews as having race laws, of being ruthless towards Gentiles, from time to time wanting their annihilation and inflicting barbaric punishments on Jewish and Gentile law-breakers — more or less as if the Jews had provided a model for the regulations and the practice of the Shoah. Hence his statement that every 'decent Czech' should know the Talmud or that all Gentiles should learn about the Jews:²⁵⁸ a major aim of this 'edition' is to demonstrate that Judaism is a religion founded on hatred, the opposite of Christianity. The infrequent pro-Islamic or pro-Arab implications or statements

²⁵⁵ 'rajských jablíček', Hanuš Richter (ed. and trans.), *Talmud a Šulchan aruch v nežidovském zrcadle*, Prague, 1942, p. 86. They appear again, more comfortably, in the sixteenth-century *Schulkhan arukh* as *rajské jablko*, *ibid.*, p. 302. The translation of the Hebrew as 'tomato' is not only Richter's or Goldschmidt's.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74. A less pithy variant of this rule occurs on p. 159, where the man has to pay the woman for publicly violating her.

²⁵⁷ On one occasion it is a matter specifically of Gentile girls, *ibid.*, p. 175.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 229, 375.

simply support Nazi policy and remind the reader that Moslem Czechs were pro-Nazi.²⁵⁹ By reading Richter's version of the Talmud we should learn 'whence comes the depraved upbringing and bloodthirstiness of Jews, and their risible conceit [...] In accordance with the laws of heredity, the Talmud is impressed on the brain even of the reformed Jew'.²⁶⁰

Generally, Richter shows his imagination in quotation rather than commentary. For example, he does not mention *foetor Judaicus* or have Jews smelling of onions and garlic; he simply uses a passage to imply it and let the reader realize that the smell is Talmudic: 'The rabbis teach: garlic contains five qualities! It fills one, warms one and brightens one's face; it multiplies sperm and paralyzes worms in the guts. [...] Therefore one must eat an abundance of garlic on the eve of the Sabbath. Sexual intercourse belongs to the celebration and the joys of the Sabbath. Garlic helps sexual intercourse.'²⁶¹ Richter finds support for one antisemitic cliché that had been particularly frequent since the Great War, that Jews manage to get cushy behind-the-lines postings, did not fight in wars; that is combined with the cliché of Jewish opportunism; the parenthesis is Richter's comment: 'When you go into war, do not go first, but last so that you are amongst the first to return. Perform your Sabbath duty (shirk in the army as much as you can) and not only when others need you. At the end, attach yourself to him on whom the hour of victory smiles.'²⁶² He finds support for the conventions that Jews are exploitative employers and loan sharks, conventions which suit the social, not only the racial, ideology of Nazism.²⁶³ The support Richter finds for Nazi practical antisemitism, including systematic mass murder, is more insidious than the support he finds for old clichés. Democracy is a Jewish invention.²⁶⁴ Rabbi Eliezer is quoted as stating: 'The Christian and everything he owns is without exception the property of the Jew', or his italicized comment in parentheses on an article of the Talmud: 'You should take an ox if you do not receive your money, but the saying goes: take the flour, but also the bran. (*That is: so that your claim for repayment of what a Gentile owes you is completely satisfied, take everything, don't miss anything. Show no mercy.*)'²⁶⁵ In a lengthy comment on Joseph ben Jehuda's 'It is permitted to steal from a Gentile, for he is not your brother', Richter practically suggests the annihilation of Jewry and those who behave like Jews: '*Do you remember the restraints carried out by Jewish lawyers and Jewish usurers? The Talmud! Of course many, indeed very many, 'Aryans' were no different! Infection! They are therefore equally guilty and as infected persons must be cut out [se musí odříznout]!*'²⁶⁶ That does not sound like the result of personal experience, but, at least to the literary critic, Richter's preoccupation with the sexual suggests personal involvement. I do not mean the stock pictures of Jews as sexually depraved (primarily paedophiles) or insatiable.²⁶⁷ The personal appears to lie in his portrayal of beautiful Jewish women regarded as *femmes fatales*. Sometimes this looks harmless, as in the following case: 'Turn your eyes away from an attractive woman. You could easily become trammelled in her net', but sometimes it does not, for example: '[Jewish women] *by making love, and that means, by making love immoderately, weaken their opponents so*

²⁵⁹ For example, *ibid.*, pp. 218, 258, 377.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 378.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 50–51.

²⁶³ For example, *ibid.*, pp. 59, 121, 175, 343.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 184. Compare Lažnovský on Jews and liberation, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', p. 121.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 268, 161.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

²⁶⁷ For example, bestiality, *ibid.*, pp. 75, 217, or raping Gentiles permissible, p. 201.

that they can subsequently destroy them. “When the serpent in Eden copulated with Eve, it infected her with its impurity”, or his comment: ‘[The Book of Esther is] *proof of the power of beautiful femininity, of the clever woman. How many Esthers in history have decided the fate of Aryan men! How many women like her have decided whether a given Aryan nation, indeed the whole of mankind, should survive or not?!*’ Two paragraphs later he promises that he will publish a book called ‘The Jewish Woman and History’, where he will provide portraits of all Jewish women who were or are using their charms in the service of Jewry. He claims that when we read it we shall understand the history of the world differently.²⁶⁸ If all this does not stem from some personal experience, it certainly suggests obsession.

Jewry is not a or the theme of every Activist book. Karel Lažnovský’s (1906–41) *Hovory s dějinami* (Conversations with history, 1940), for example, contains the word Jew only once: in a little attack on Henri Bergson, who appears in the edition of his posthumous essays as ‘the Jew Bergson’.²⁶⁹ Possibly that is because the book has only two aims. First, to glorify the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in the form of a celebration of the social reforms of Fascism, Nazism and the Soviet socialism. Second, to further the cause of ‘chronocracy’, that is a totalitarian politics that takes over history instead of reacting to it, the politics of dictatorship, which is a ‘higher form of government than democracy’; later, he states that ‘dictatorship’ is a word no longer used, that the correct term is ‘total regime’.²⁷⁰ Beneš is not mentioned by name in the book; in the German version, he is, but only in a translator’s parenthesis explaining how ‘Hrad’ (the Castle) was used in Czech political writing. Here, as in the inept propagandistic title of the translation, Beneš is rendered by the disparaging ‘Benesch’. In contemporaneous German pro-regime writings that spelling is clearly reserved only for the president; other men with the same common surname retain the Czech spelling.²⁷¹ Masaryk’s name occurs frequently in Lažnovský’s book, Roosevelt’s once, but no other politician’s name occurs, not even Hitler’s. Lažnovský is attempting to put across his ‘own’ political philosophy, which he expects the ‘young’ (by which he means, men between twenty-four and forty) to help him impose in the Protectorate in order to be active and thus dissipate the ‘depression’ caused by the Munich Agreement, that is by Czech reliance on the sexually decadent French and those egoistic fools, the British.

In other Activists Masaryk and more especially Beneš are closely associated with the Jews, and not just as philo-Semites. ‘Since [Masaryk] had a truly historic influence on the Czech nation,’ writes Chmelař, ‘this nation became a psychological ally of the Jews.’²⁷² Jacobi points back to Masaryk’s influence on Jewish undergraduates before the Great War and to the fact that he had added to the programme of his Realist Party a sentence stating that the party considered the assimilationist Czech-Jewish movement the solution to the ‘Jewish Question’ in the Bohemian Lands. Elsewhere Jacobi writes that the ‘philo-Semitic attitude that [Masaryk] assumed during the ritual-murder trial of Hilsner and the Dreyfus affair and his sympathy with Zionism at the beginning of the century brought about the celebratory welcome he received from North American Jews when he went on a tour of America’.²⁷³ Where Jacobi gives an

²⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 215, 80, 109.

²⁶⁹ Lažnovský, *Ein Tscheche*, p. 32. This translation has a preface by Oskar Ullrich. For ‘Benesch’ see also the German title of the translation of Moravec’s *V úloze moutěnína*.

²⁷⁰ Lažnovský, *Ein Tscheche*, pp. 37, 52.

²⁷¹ See, for example, [Eduard (sic)] Benesch, but Bohuslav V. Beneš in Jacobi, *Golem* . . . , p. 8.

²⁷² Chmelař, ‘Z ghetta do parlamentu’, p. 43.

²⁷³ Jacobi, ‘*Země zaslíbená*’, pp. 29, 23–24.

historically more or less accurate account, whatever his reasons, Bouchal scurrilously perverts history:

Right at the beginning of his public life, Masaryk was a renowned philo-Semite who, without regard for the needs and interests of his own nation, defended the Jews and compromised himself badly by excusing and defending even the most repulsive Jewish crimes. It was no secret that his activities were a reward, an expression of gratitude for his having been given a chair at the University. Jews pushed through this appointment and their words, ‘Now we’ve put a cat among the Czech pigeons’, turned out to be all too accurate.

On the Realist Party Bouchal writes, ‘the Realists slapped the Jews’ back and the Jews the Realists’, simultaneously giving the Realists Judas pieces of silver, for which the Czech nation was betrayed’.²⁷⁴ That foreshadows the post-war words of the nominal leader of the Prague Uprising: ‘I became a member of Masaryk’s Realist Party [. . .]. But that did not mean that I was an orthodox Realist. I had numerous objections. The party was very Jewish. Though I was far from an antisemite, I still had a critical view of the Jews economically and, apart from that, the example of the Vienna press, which was dominated by Semites, discomfited me.’²⁷⁵ The Activists made more of Beneš than Masaryk and the Jews, not on account of historical facts, but because they found it useful for their campaigns against Beneš as the president-in-exile and friend of Britain or, later, of Britain, America and the USSR. These campaigns evidently did much for the ever-increasing popularity of Beneš at home in the Protectorate. Moravec writes that it was the Jews around Beneš who presumed that ordinary Czech people would take in the assassins of Heydrich parachuted into the Protectorate, but that Beneš knew he was sending them to certain death.²⁷⁶ Beneš and his Jews, he writes, could not care less how many Czechs survived the war; ‘they just rabble-rouse from a distance’; ‘Après nous le déluge, says Beneš and Jews repeat it after him. These monsters are determined to carry out any sort of baseness, any sacrifice, as long as it does not hurt their pockets, infringe their comfort.’²⁷⁷ According to Jacobi, just as Masaryk had secured Jewish favour before the Great War, so Beneš was depending on help from world Jewry in this war, and this was guiding his policy in exile.²⁷⁸ Jacobi is more precise than other assailants, but sarcastic: ‘There will be no need for a thorough scholar of racial matters nor for a genealogist to reveal that whole suite of Jewish wives and girlfriends (*viz.* the wives of the finance expert [Eduard] Outrata and the propaganda expert [Hubert] Ripka) in Beneš’s new émigré camp, or to discover the two Semitic parents of the “minister of justice” Jaro Stránský.’²⁷⁹ ‘*Země zaslíbená*’ ends with the words: ‘*For Bohemia and Moravia [. . .], as in 1918, their Golem is called / Beneš and the Czech émigrés.*’²⁸⁰ In the same context Moravec contemns Czech servicemen amongst British troops: ‘Of course Beneš and his Jews have not gone to the front to die for Britain, but they sent there

²⁷⁴ Bouchal, *Beneš atentátník*, p. 25.

²⁷⁵ Pražák, *Politika a revoluce*, p. 23. In an article I wrote in response to a request for a piece in remembrance of the critic Vladimír Macura, I discussed Bouchal’s book and made this comparison between Bouchal and Pražák; the editors censored it out. See ‘Odbouchnutí veřejného (ne)prátele’, *Tvar*, 18, 2005, pp. 16–17. Associating Jews with the Realists was also a topos of (largely Fascist) interwar writing denying that Hanka composed the early nineteenth-century ‘medieval’ manuscripts that certainly were forged.

²⁷⁶ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 128.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 144, 145.

²⁷⁸ Jacobi, ‘*Země zaslíbená*’, pp. 142–43.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

every Czech cripple abroad they could lay their hands on.’²⁸¹ Chmelař writes as a dyed-in-the-wool racist: ‘The second president Dr Edvard Beneš is the prototype of the “white Jew”; in his rampaging against his own nation he is worse than all the Talmud Jews put together.’²⁸² Bouchal states more or less the same: ‘After all, *Jewishness does not always have to be only a matter of blood, but can be determined by character traits.* In his behaviour Beneš was always a typical Jew by nature.’²⁸³ In a Nazi-run society Moravec’s labels for Beneš, ‘national murderer’ or ‘arch-enemy of the Czech nation’ are mild.²⁸⁴

It is unlikely that the Activists’ propagation of Nazi antisemitism had much impact on the Czech-on-the-street. On the whole, it appears that for Czech Gentiles the persecution of the Jews was part of general German infamy, though, as Jeřábek writes, it was greatly helped physically by the antisemitic street violence of Czech Fascists, who were also liable to label anyone they did not like Jews, and many of whom sent their children to German schools. He summarizes their behaviour as follows: ‘March 15 rolled away the boulder under which this vermin had been vegetating and released forces that had hitherto been hiding in the dark.’²⁸⁵ Jeřábek rarely mentions the Jews in his war diary. He does mention the edict whereby they had to wear the Star of David; while he finds this appalling, he sees in it a sign of hope: ‘This medieval arrangement speaks volumes. One is ashamed when one meets a Jew on the street, but on the other hand, there is something encouraging about it: can a system that negates all spiritual and moral progress and that wants to squeeze humanity into a straitjacket of long-relinquished notions, superstitions and prejudices possibly last in the modern world?’²⁸⁶ When he elsewhere lists the ways in which the Czechs are enduring persecution, he does not mention the Jews; he writes of farmers losing their houses and land, workers being sent to Germany proper for forced labour, the shutting down of school buildings so they can be used by the German military, and so forth.²⁸⁷ It is something of a convention to attribute Czech manifestations of antisemitism, largely in the Agrarian press, during the Second Republic to German inspiration and thus understanding Occupation antisemitism more or less as a continuation thereof. That is a dubitable conclusion historically. It normally goes together with a suggestion that antisemitism was not essentially a Czech characteristic. Zeman writes: ‘Of course, in our lands the Jews were not without guilt, for they were always a willing instrument of germanization and therefore antisemitism, which nevertheless did not have deep roots in our lands, now [October 1938] began dangerously to increase.’²⁸⁸ The most complex contemporary portrayal of Gentile Czechs’ attitudes to Jews during the Second Republic and the Occupation is to be found in Emil Sobota. In the Second Republic some doctors and lawyers, and a few businessmen, had behaved badly, wanted the aryanization of their professions because they imagined their profits would grow, as we have seen, and during the Occupation some people were shocked how much property the Jews had to be stolen by the Germans. On the other hand, their brutal treatment awakened sympathies for the Jews ‘that had not existed before’. Sobota also reports antisemitism amongst assimilated Jewish Czechs, who did

²⁸¹ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 181.

²⁸² Chmelař, ‘Z ghetta do parlamentu’, p. 44.

²⁸³ Bouchal, *Beneš atentátník*, p. 25.

²⁸⁴ Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 141.

²⁸⁵ Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, pp. 39–40.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 126–27.

²⁸⁸ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 251.

not like being put in the same basket as non-assimilated Jews, with whom they considered they had nothing in common. Czech antisemitism had diminished since the arrival of the Germans, he maintains, but he is not at all sure that it will not increase again once the war is over. 'That will all depend on how the compensation of Jews is handled. If it takes place within the framework of general social justice, if the old inequalities really remain buried, without regard for who the gravedigger had been, the antisemitism of the sort that existed here long before German National Socialism came, will have disappeared forever. If that does not happen, a more violent antisemitism could arise here than there had ever been, even if this antisemitism could always have a social [socio-economic] basis, never a racial.'²⁸⁹ That view reflects the mood of the Resistance and of Beneš in London that the end of the war must see a social(ist) society; on the other hand, by omitting rich Gentiles from the prediction, Sobota could appear to be regarding economic antisemitism as normal. Jan Weiss's brief portrayal of Czech compassion with the Jews in *Volání o pomoc* probably epitomizes the norm: the Activist Chotek, based to some degree on Lažnovský, has a mother, who is expressly labelled the ideal Czech mother. In the end, this perfect mother is persuaded that one must put one's country before one's son. She does not like Jews, but the sight of rain-soaked Jews, including babies, crushed together in a compound, almost makes her weep.²⁹⁰

Generally speaking, the actual inhumanity of the Shoah did not sink in amongst the Czechs any more than amongst Western Europeans until the 1950s, or even early 1960s, however many records of Auschwitz-Birkenau and other camps were published between 1945 and the final closing of the Iron Curtain in 1948. German brutality towards Jews and Gentiles helped engender the literary and journalistic topos that Germans were not simply inhuman, but actually non-human. Bezdiček devotes some time to this, and Rataj indicates the consequence: 'The identification of Germans with beasts influenced, at the end of the war and in the first months of freedom, [...] the language, the political and legal culture, and the psychology of Czech society.' He also demonstrates how a Czech politician abroad, the foreign minister Jan Masaryk, gradually adopts bestial imagery as the end approaches.²⁹¹ I give only a few examples. In Reicin and Mareš, during their hymn to Jan Masaryk's father, the Germans are 'two-legged wild animals', and elsewhere they talk of the SS as 'black rats', and a soldier they quote describes the Germans altogether as 'repugnant, mangy rats'.²⁹² Concerning the immediate results of the Munich Agreement, Jeřábek writes: 'So the German beast of prey's way was open. And in its tracks walked the Polish and Hungarian jackals.'²⁹³ Veselý-Štainer writes of the 'devastation' wrought by 'German beasts' and Miloslav Nohejl (1896–1974) describes the Occupation as a period of 'animal terror'²⁹⁴ and the Germans as 'bestially stupid and stupidly beastly'.²⁹⁵ In Drda the powerful Czech working class easily overcomes the German brute: 'Martínek is a blacksmith. You can tell that. Within twenty seconds he is kneeling on the gorilla-like German's chest. The long Nordic skull is cracking on the floor-boards.' Faced with victorious Czechs in the Uprising, Germans 'have truly animal horror in their faces',

²⁸⁹ Sobota, *Glossy*, pp. 96–98.

²⁹⁰ Weiss, *Volání o pomoc*, pp. 338–39.

²⁹¹ Rataj, 'Obraz Němce a Německa v protektorátní společnosti a v československém odboji', p. 228.

²⁹² Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, pp. 80, 43, 79.

²⁹³ Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristové*, pp. 25–26.

²⁹⁴ Veselý-Štainer, *Cesta národního odboje*, p. 121.

²⁹⁵ Miloslav Nohejl, *Holýma rukama*, Prague, 1946, pp. 31, 37.

and a captured sniper is a 'great cowardly beast.'²⁹⁶ Březovský takes the brute topos further in order to make an ideological point. First, he describes the Germans: 'Death and hatred were marching towards the heart of the country, iron skeletons with bloodied claws, figures of Death, hyenas gulping blood and with them flocks of vultures spitting iron and fire' and then, in contrast, Soviet soldiers: 'bleeding and punishing, were fighting through to the heart of Bohemia, people, people of a different kind, of a kind this country had not known before. Proud and modest, manly and child-like in their playfulness, loving life and despising death, laughter on their lips and emotion in their eyes, burning with hatred and love simultaneously.'²⁹⁷ Even German children are brutes or brought up to be brutes. Aškenazy has a good, gentle Soviet soldier adopt as his son a German boy he had found firing a cap-pistol at the invading Red Army: 'He has rebellious, nasty, somehow unchild-like eyes. No, they were not the eyes of a child — he was a little animal, ferocious and stupid, just as they brought him up to be.'²⁹⁸ We encounter something similar in Sedlmayerová, who is here presenting a child's-eye view, where it is as if no Czech boys had ever collected tin soldiers, wanted pen-knives, let alone had scraps: 'all Germans know how to fight because from toddlerhood onwards they play nothing but soldiers. It is unheard of for them to play blindman's buff, he, marbles or tip-cat. From the beginning they have guns and swords and their greatest joy is war. [...] a German boy would rather spend his pocket-money on a knife instead of a choux bun or chocolates and in their country everyone would eat dry bread, go without butter or meat, rather than not to be able to afford rifles.'²⁹⁹ Through her character Renata the same author also imagines all this might be a matter of heredity: 'I almost feel that the Germans can't help the fact that they were born of German wombs. That they inherited the terrible characteristics of this cruel race.'³⁰⁰ That again reminds us of Nahodilová's article.

The content of the Klenová novel she discusses comports with contemporaneous notions of Teutonicity, but also with the actual deeds of Hitler's Germans, though Klenová has herself adopted not a form of Nazi, but of Czech racism, as has the fashionable Denemarková, with whom Nahodilová compares her. Habřina writes of the war-time Germans' 'cruelty of violent sadism, a cruelty incomprehensible to the reason, incredible to the heart of twentieth-century man', and, like Klenová, Habřina believes this cruelty has sexual motives: 'all that perversion and unheard-of (but masterly, of course) sadistic criminality, which had its basis in a diseased sexuality.'³⁰¹ 'The nation of Goethe and Schiller placed unrestricted power into the hands of sadists' expresses the same view on the basis of the soon hackneyed consideration of 'two Germanies'. None the less, Jeřábek considers the Germans a 'depraved people'.³⁰² In Hoch's view Germans as a whole demonstrated valour, but hundreds of thousands of them also had a brutality in them 'that could not wait to ravage the defenceless, not only men, but also women, children and old people'. In a German war, he writes, 'a quite extraordinarily large role is played by cold cruelty, perpetrated a long way behind the fronts, savagery carried

²⁹⁶ Drda, *Němá barikáda*, pp. 62, 57, 63.

²⁹⁷ Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, pp. 189–90.

²⁹⁸ Aškenazy, *Květnové hvězdy*, p. 20.

²⁹⁹ Sedlmayerová, *Kačenka*, p. 18.

³⁰⁰ Sedlmayerová, *Dům na zeleném svahu*, p. 203.

³⁰¹ Habřina, *Nadělově a nadnárod*, pp. 11, 59. Nahodilová's Denemarková is not alone. Svatava Antořová (born 1957) devotes a narrative poem to a sadistic German paedophile who kills a young girl in her *Ještě mě nezabíjej!*, Prague, 2005, pp. 65–67.

³⁰² Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, pp. 40, 208.

out calmly, after due consideration, not suddenly, but slowly, continually and in a planned manner as a regular component of warfare. [...] Those who perpetrated it, carried out their work with such pleasure that they were evidently in their element. Thus they had these inhuman proclivities within them, at the bottom of their base nature, and any approaching war had amongst these people a monstrous extra motive, for it promised them abundant gratification.³⁰³ In keeping with the prejudices of the time sadism is openly or between the lines associated with homosexuality; one assumes that Czech writers did not yet know about homosexuals being sent to prison or concentration camps. Habřina is convinced that the association is well founded:

The glorification of Nazi 'comradeship' and manly 'loyalty' often only disguised sexual abnormality. And perhaps since Ancient Roman times there had not been as much homosexuality in Europe as there was in Nazi Germany. The Nazis' animal treatment of women as second-class grew out of the homosexual abnormality of Nazi heroes and, of course, also manifested itself in numerous psychological disorders. The loss of or incapacity for a healthy erotic disposition, by which a man cannot be made for men, led the Germans to the broadest range of perversity: to pederasty; to unheard-of sadism.³⁰⁴

It was, writes Zeman, a disaster for Henlein when, in 1937, his foreign-affairs specialist Rutha was arrested for the sexual abuse of boys; this 'typically German perversion was anyway nothing new in Germany [*sic*] and was rampant particularly in the Hitlerjugend and the Wehrmacht'.³⁰⁵ All the writing about Germans' innate brutality and sexual perversion belongs to the view that Germans are not human.

This notion has an extensive pedigree in Czech culture. When the Revival philologist and historian Pavel Josef Šafařík claimed that Slavs did not have national prejudices or the means to express them, the late Enlightenment scholar Josef Dobrovský responded by quoting the Czech proverb, 'There are people everywhere, but in Chomutov Germans'.³⁰⁶ Notably, the first uprising the former camp inmates encounter in Březovský's *Lidé v květnu*, and much of the action set in Bohemia of Reinhard Jirgl's (born 1953) powerful novel *Die Unvollendeten* (The incomplete, 2003), takes place in and around Chomutov. Jirgl's novel concerns three generations of women expelled to the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany and the difficulties they have, amongst others, of making somewhere outside Bohemia their home. The youngest of the women is sent to a labour camp that becomes a rape camp at night. She also witnesses the beating to death with iron bars of Germans in the Chomutov stadium (this atrocity did, indeed, take place, and the raping of German internees by Czechs and, up to the winter of 1945, by Soviets was common, as we shall see). From an historical point of view, *Die Unvollendeten* constitutes a major example of the appearance of works concerning east German experiences of the expulsions; west German experiences were registered in *belles-lettres* (and official statistics) soon after their authors arrived in a Western zone. I do not know whether or not Jirgl knew the Czech proverb (he knows Czech or had a Czech-speaking informant). Here I am not concerned with statements like President Beneš's labelling of the Nazi regime an 'inhuman killer system', for they are unproblematic.³⁰⁷ The following

³⁰³ Hoch, *Pangermanismus*, pp. 12–13.

³⁰⁴ Habřina, *Nadčlověk a nadnárod*, p. 58.

³⁰⁵ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 34.

³⁰⁶ Josef Dobrovský, 'Geschichte der slawischen Sprache und Literatur ...' [1827], in Dobrovský, *Literární a prozodická bohemika*, ed. by Miroslav Heřman, Prague, 1974, pp. 167–193 (172).

³⁰⁷ Edvard Beneš, speech in Lidice on June 10 1945, in Josef Hladký (ed.), *Lidice. K pátému výročí vyhlazení Lidic, 1942–1947*, Hranice, 1947, pp. 5–18 (11).

portrayal of four Germans being shot is, however, problematic: ‘Four animals sank to the ground. I turned to the comrades: “[...] They are Germans. And we are human beings.”’³⁰⁸ The message of Sedlmayerová’s *Dům na zeleném svahu* is that if one treats Germans as human beings, one will be disabused soon enough (that appears also to be part of the message of Körner’s *Adelheid*). A Communist, who turns out later to be corrupt, declares in Sedlmayerová’s novel — certainly the reader was meant to take his words in earnest, given the message: ‘They will lie and set traps; they will grow and become strong; they will nourish their innate hatred and vengefulness; that is, they will be forever, forever Germans and will never be human beings.’³⁰⁹ K. J. Beneš’s German Communist, Heberlein, states (this is after the war, in Bavaria) that ‘I meet them every day on the street. I know they’re living among us. Vivisectors who made guinea-pigs of the majority of their own nation. [...] what is to be done with such a mass of non-human beings [...]?’ by which he appears to mean just Nazi party-members.³¹⁰ In Drda the position is clear: ‘A human being. Not a Fritz.’ and the German is, he writes a little later, a mere ‘military machine’.³¹¹ Branald appears to be questioning this commonplace in post-war writing. First, we encounter: “[...] we’re people after all, aren’t we?” “Were they people?” “We’re not Germans,” the tobacconist [Pejšák] said proudly [...]. “We’re not German,” he repeated himself, but that is not entirely certain, for so much hatred is stored up in people.’ Second, we encounter, in different interlocutors: ‘[Hlaváč] gave a simple smile: “Yes. Except the Germans said, *we Germans*.” I see, Hlaváč, I see now. That’s the difference [between us], manager, *We people*.’ And the final resolution comes in the same two interlocutors: “We couldn’t do anything else, Hlaváč. They [the Germans] are after all people,” said the elderly gentleman [the manager], unable to stop making an excuse [for their behaviour], grateful to Hlaváč [...]. “Bad, but still people,” answered Hlaváč.”³¹² It was a matter of looking after a wounded German child. President Beneš’s elder brother, Vojta (1878–1951), joined in the commonplace in a broadcast from October 1945, but also goes half-way: ‘the world despises them [Germans] as a nation of base semi-human beings.’³¹³ Koch makes a characteristic comment on the fashion of labelling Germans animals: ‘We thus insult animals.’ His point is that because the Germans are human their deeds are made far worse than if they had been animals; he sees culture to have developed means of killing further than it ever had, and now he is beginning to fear the weapon that will allegedly annihilate any future dictators.³¹⁴

Writing ‘german’ instead of ‘German’ also expresses the notion that the nation was non-human. Bezdíček looks at the phenomenon with special reference to Vladimír Holan’s (1905–80) suddenly openly political poems. Rataj’s claim that that the lower-case initial consonant ‘became the orthographic norm’³¹⁵ is unfounded. Koch is at least as consistent as Holan; he has *germans*, *germany*, *hitler*, *himmler*, *mein kampf*, even *ss*, and always misspells *Führer* as *fürer* (no need, one supposes, to repeat the ‘h’ of *hitler*). Koch refers to his own three months’ imprisonment by the Gestapo in 1941, in Vienna and Brno, when explaining his employment of the lower-case ‘g/n’:

³⁰⁸ Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, p. 148. The ‘we’ denotes Soviet citizens.

³⁰⁹ Sedlmayerová, *Dům na zeleném svahu*, p. 159.

³¹⁰ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivé písmo*, p. 125.

³¹¹ Drda, *Němá barikáda*, pp. 48, 51.

³¹² Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, pp. 17, 43, 131.

³¹³ Vojta Beneš, ‘Být dobrým Čechoslovákem’, in Kuchynka (ed.), *5.–9. květen 1945*, pp. 140–43 (141).

³¹⁴ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 232.

³¹⁵ Rataj, ‘Obraz Němce a Německa v protektorátní společnosti a v československém odboji’, p. 228.

Before this last war, during the Nazi regime, the law allowed the accused to plead not guilty even in Germany. During the war Goethe's nation assumed the right to flog accused people, to drive needles behind their finger-nails and nails into their heads just so that they would admit something that was not even true. From my cell they led out to be beheaded a father and son (now, for the first time, I can spell it with a big letter, when I say they were Germans) because they discovered in the Bible the commandment that one must not kill one's neighbour and they had scruples about bearing arms.³¹⁶

Mussolini and the Slovak nationalist priest, Andrej Hlinka, who died before the war started, but after whom the Fascist Hlinka Guard (equivalent of SA, but on occasions also [Waffen-]SS) was named, retain their initial capital letters. One unexpected large capital letter is for Austria (*Rakousko*), since Koch does not think much of the 'first victim' myth:

Chaplin's *The Great Dictator*, which ridiculed the führer was taken more than coldly in all the territory inhabited by Germans — and it is still not possible to write German with a big G. One can forgive them for not having a sense of humour, but one cannot pass over in silence the fact that they do not comprehend their guilt. Germany and Austria have reached the end of their dream of Nazism and its world rule.³¹⁷

K. J. Beneš indirectly gives the Communist Party line by having an oily former collaborator schoolmaster advocate spelling German/*Němec* with a little 'g/n'.³¹⁸ In fact, most writers did not use the lower-case form, Communist or not, and one finds it strange that a complex, intelligent poet like Holan and a fighter of a man like Koch should stoop to such a petty device.

During the war and, within the realms of possibility, after it, the railwayman's son Karel František Koch fought (often literally) against totalitarianism and its concomitant state petty-mindedness that arose from attempting to level out everything in life now the big questions were 'solved'. Koch,³¹⁹ having been trained at Prague and Vienna, joined the medical faculty of the new Bratislava University in 1919, where he became professor of surgery in 1933; he was an ardent Masarykian from the start; meanwhile he built his own sanatorium, which he surrounded with an arboretum of some 130 species, and as a result remained in debt for the rest of his life. In 1929 he tended R. W. Seton-Watson when he fell sick with rheumatic fever, and thenceforth regarded him as his friend.³²⁰ Later he also tended Andrej Hlinka. In March 1939 he was dismissed from the university for being a Czech and soon began working in the Czechoslovak army-led Resistance group *Obrana národa* (Defence of the nation, ON); Koch was the only member of ON in Slovakia not to be arrested when its members were rounded up in the summer of 1941. He was also active in another group, and founded a third whose members were largely Czechs living in Bratislava, *Justitia*. The headquarters of *Justitia* was a bookshop owned by the first wife of the high-society diplomat Ján Pauliny-Tóth (his second wife, née Viera Hellmuthová, worked for the BBC Czechoslovak service at Bush House for most of her life), though the shop was run by the Czech-born Slovak boxing champion

³¹⁶ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 37.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

³¹⁸ Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, p. 399.

³¹⁹ I derive my knowledge of Koch's life mainly from *Slovenský biografický slovník, III, K-L*, Martin, 1989, p. 135; Jožka Pejskar, *Poslední pocta. Památník na zemřelé československé exulanty v letech 1948–1984*, Zurich, 1985, pp. 39–40; Jan Rychlík, Thomas D. Marzik and Miroslav Bielik (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson and His Relations with the Czechs and Slovaks. Documents, 1906–1951*, 2 vols, Prague and Martin, 1996, vol. 1, p. 38, vol. 2 p. 91; and Zlatica Zudová-Lešková, 'Československý demokratický odboj na Slovensku od leta 1941 do decembra 1943. Odbojové skupiny Flóra a Justícia', *Historie a vojenství*, 4, 1995, pp. 50–78, esp. 68–76.

³²⁰ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 87.

Oldřich Seiler — who had also worked in publishing up to 1941. It was a remarkable headquarters; I take the description of it from Zudová-Lešková's ground-breaking article (p.74):

The Justitia bookshop served the Resistance group that took its name not only for secret meetings, but most of all as a collection point for messages and news from all over Slovakia and the Protectorate. It was here that they were sorted and evaluated. Underground printed matter as well as moneys necessary for the financing of Resistance activities were also collected here, and probably from the beginning of 1943 also weapons. The shop store-room housed a printing press used to produce almost all Aryan personal documents for Jewish Slovak citizens, but also for Czech and French escapees and victims of persecution from all regions of Slovakia, for whom [Justitia] arranged passage and refuge. Within a short time, two members of Justitia who were engravers produced the seals of notaries public from almost the whole of Slovakia. [...] by the beginning of 1943 the group had dozens of members in Bratislava, Central and Eastern Slovakia. It must be emphasized here that the bookshop also fulfilled its official mission very well, in Bratislava was second only to Zigmund Steiner's shop [...]. On top of that, the Justitia shop was the only one in Bratislava to have a licence to import and sell English-language newspapers, which came in from Switzerland.

Daredevil that he was, Koch advertised his books (that he published at his own expense during the war and distributed in the Protectorate) as having been published by Justitia. Especially up to 1944, he helped Jewish Czechs and Slovaks to escape central Europe and in 1944 acted as surgeon to fighters in the Slovak National Uprising. By the end of the war, he was something of a folk hero and briefly served as deputy chairman of the Bratislava national committee. On January 8 1951, not long after the Communist Party take-over, he was arrested for sedition, on June 20 he was sentenced to death, a sentence later commuted to life imprisonment, and released in 1964 (on parole). In 1968, at the age of seventy-eight, he left Czechoslovakia for Canada, where he died in 1981.

Koch's most widely read book was a vademecum for GPs, *Lékař Anonymus. Naše zázraky a omyly* (Dr Anonymous. Our miracles and mistakes, 1942), reviewed as run-of-the-mill in contemporaneous medical journals, even though it contained the following appeal to Czechs to resist the Germans:

Never give in to sickness, just as you never want to give in to any enemy. Firm trust in your own strength to resist [*odboje*] is the best weapon against an invader, and the more intransigent the invader, the stronger the resistance must be. Believing in a happy ending is more important than swallowing pills; unhappiness, faint-heartedness about yourselves is the same as drafting your death announcement.³²¹

Koch's is a philosophy of love in a society in which he sees during and after the war a society of hatred, blood-lust and self-seeking political opportunism. Though it contains no direct appeal to resistance, his most courageous war-time book was *Mrzáci bez světa a svět bez mrzáků* (Cripples without a world and a world without cripples, 1941), the last two chapters of which constitute a gently written tirade against eugenics, in particular, albeit largely implicitly, against the political abuse of eugenics. Here we remember that the Czech and Slovak intelligentsia still largely accepted eugenics as a means of perfecting man,³²² although after the war the

³²¹ K. F. Koch, *Lékař Anonymus. Naše zázraky a omyly*, 3rd edn, Bratislava, 1944, p. 145.

³²² That eugenics as an idea had become more or less a matter of course may be demonstrated by the fact that one will find its acceptance or, indeed, praise not only in, for example, the modernizing doctor and Avant-garde writer Vladimír Ráffel's *Elektrické povídky* (Electric tales, 1927), but also in unlikely works like *Magie v lásce. Tajemství lidské lásky a její okultní síly* (Magic in love. The secret of human love and its occult power, 1931) by the cantankerous self-appointed leader of Czech occultists, Karel Weinfurter, who died shortly after release from Gestapo custody.

Communists wrote of it just as Nazi or Slovak Fascist inhumanity. A telling example of the latter is Aškenazy's tale about Gipsy education (from *Sto ohňů* [A hundred fires, 1952]), a tale intended to demonstrate the Communists' success in educating Gipsies and their generosity in allowing former Slovak Fascists to work for the new regime. A Košice gendarme, who had written an article advocating the sterilization of all Gipsies in 1934, plays a more or less central role in the tale. Aškenazy has to admit that the pre-war and wartime Slovaks had not actually had any sterilization campaign. In fact, the Communists did run such a campaign, sterilizing Gipsy women, in Slovakia and Moravian Silesia, and the policy was not completely abandoned until ten years after the fall of the regime.

Koch was a dyed-in-the-wool humanitarian: he was amongst the first to consider disfigurement, congenital or as a result of trauma, just as great a disability as apody; treating physical disability was for him often largely a matter of treating the psyche of the disabled. Those who advocate eugenic treatment of the physically disabled are perverted by the 'social glasses' they wear, that is by invasive socialism.³²³ To speak of the heritability of disabilities is, Koch maintains, 'impermissible, and harmful pathos that cannot support or justify any social precaution whatsoever', let alone 'any operation on the person's body', which the notion of the 'general sterilization of all physically inferior human beings' suggests. Koch understands that the foolish majority supports eugenics: 'Just as the majority of healthy people sees in a medical prescription a plenary indulgence for sins of self-indulgence, so they advocate, on the basis of the same approach, the castration of the physically inferior.'³²⁴ Any human society has the right to demand its members are healthy, Koch believes, but it is doubtful that anyone has the right to force health on anyone. Even if there were arguments for sterilization in the cases of individual human beings, certainly not in the case of the physically disabled, the spectacles of 'racial hygiene' should certainly not be worn in making such decisions. Those who want to sterilize all physically and mentally disabled claim that the grand gesture has a noble aim, whereas others would say that at the very least sterilization, like euthanasia, infringes the rights of the individual.³²⁵ Koch is also concerned about the wide use of the concept degeneration: 'It is all too often an error to speak of degeneration or corruption, and when it is not an error it is digging out the last resort in obfuscatory terminology'; when botanists suddenly find mottled leaves on a usually monochrome plant, they never dream of calling it degeneration.³²⁶ In short, Koch has no time for Nazi medicine. Europe has become a loveless place³²⁷ and the European moral crisis continues after the war. The Activist Lažnovský writes of the Great Depression: 'Both continents of cultured and civilized Aryans fell into deep crisis. America into economic crisis; Europe passed from economic into moral crisis.'³²⁸ In other words the term 'moral crisis' had become somewhat mechanical, a commonplace of the 1930s and 1940s. President Beneš describes the period as 'an immense world moral and political crisis',³²⁹ while Gollancz saw the moral crisis more in the West, and considered that this crisis was giving the

³²³ K. F. Koch, *Mrzáci bez světa a svět bez mrzáků. Pohled do života tělesně vadného člověka*, Bratislava, 1941, p. 373.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 351, 356.

³²⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 358–59.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 186, 344.

³²⁷ See, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 121, 142, 269; *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 230.

³²⁸ Lažnovský, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', p. 155.

³²⁹ Edvard Beneš, 'Poselství presidenta republiky dr. Edvarda Beneše k Prozatímnímu národnímu shromáždění' [1945], in Osvald (ed.) *Národní shromáždění zahajuje*, pp. 18–33 (20).

extreme left and the extreme right 'a common opportunity', though they had different motives.³³⁰ One could say that Koch is simply using a stock interpretation of the times.³³¹ During the war, however, the following pathos was no doubt refreshing, especially for those used to listening to or reading such as Moravec or Lažnovský:

No generation before ours has ever fallen from such a height of maturity to such profound moral decay. And in the pit into which it fell the lowest point lies in the fact that all respect for life has ceased, that all wonder at the miracle of life, all deference towards the majesty of life, has vanished. The price of everything has risen to dizzying heights except that of the most precious thing, life itself, whose value has fallen to the paltry level of a gambler's chip.³³²

Given his oft-stated belief that every individual is unique and potentially equally valuable to humankind, it hardly surprises us that he is suspicious of physical anthropologists like Jindřich Matiegka. The latter had drawn up statistics to prove that 'the brain of a university professor weighs 1,500 grams, precisely 100 grams more than that of a day-labourer of the same age. I suspect that he had inadequately surveyed [...] the brains of university professors'.³³³ Later, Branald appears to agree with his earthy Balous rather than his Kolda, though there is not much such irony in this, his Uprising novel:

'trust has gone to the dogs. Nothing but window dressing. Corroded, worm-eaten material. The value of human life's gone down and every single human's gone down in quality.' 'That's not true, Balous,' said Kolda stopping in his tracks and he declared firmly, 'you've got things wrong. The steel of faith has just been being tempered. Now it'll be stronger. Everyone'll believe in a better life.'

Certainly, the Stalinist critic Jan Petrmichl was suspicious of the novel — because it showed just one segment of life, taken out of its political context.³³⁴

Though an admirer of Stalin's achievement as a war-leader and indeed as a father to the working class (it was normal amongst the general public at the time in the United Kingdom as well as in Czechoslovakia to hold Stalin in some awe and to regard his economic policy as a model with possibilities), Koch does not appear to have had any trust in the Czechoslovak Communists after the war. He goes further than Short's Tauš in suspecting the fervour with which they took up Masaryk and Beneš's term 'people's democracy', and expresses misgivings about the new use of the term *lid* (again, see Bezdíček):

But I beg of you, who is this *lid* [people]? We who still have a little Greek and do not understand the expression 'people's democratic', are we not the people? May we only like the people? And cannot we be the source of any power? A negative answer is at least the undertone in everything that is proclaimed. The deliberate assertion that the intelligentsia does not want to understand what 'the people' means, although it always drew on the people for art, literature and philosophy, does not stand up at all in this country and must be refuted energetically. I believe that it is necessary to understand Lincoln's words better, that the broad term 'the people' should not be confused with the narrow term 'the mob' [...]. Not infrequently democracy has to fight against the appetite of the mob.³³⁵

³³⁰ Gollancz, *Our Threatened Values*, pp. 7, 22.

³³¹ Koch, *Mrzáci bez světa a svět bez mrzáků*, p. 24.

³³² Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 40.

³³³ Koch, *Mrzáci bez světa a svět bez mrzáků*, p. 40. One has no doubt one's brain is lighter than one's under-molecatcher's.

³³⁴ Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, p. 75. See Jan Petrmichl, *Patnáct let české literatury 1945–1960*, 2nd edn, Prague, 1961, p. 86.

³³⁵ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 219. Březovský reasserts the Party line to which Koch refers in the weak-spined conspiratorial bourgeois Fišar's words: 'the people [*lid*] does not exist. What is the people? Just an empty phrase.' *Železný stop*, p. 315.

Nazism had been a mob politics and the danger is that a new mob politics is taking over Czechoslovakia; the mob as chief force against love/humanity constitutes one of the themes of *Slovo má lidskost*. In 1946 he sees the Czechoslovaks' choice to consist of the 'eternal human choice', that is, 'liberate themselves from the joke of Nature and submit to the will of the mob or return to submission to Nature if they have escaped the influence of the mob. [...] When the mob deceives us, deprives us of freedom, the magic desire for lost freedom lures us back to Nature [...], to being human'.³³⁶ The authorities of post-February 1948 Czechoslovakia could add to Koch's other crimes, *viz.* owning a sanatorium, membership of the 'bourgeois' Resistance, and anglophilia, words like the following:

Oh, how much success was achieved in the past simply by the phrase 'All power comes only from you, the people,!' Nothing but a formula, something straightforward and a delicacy for the soul of the mob, which does not think about it, but when a leader expresses it with due emphasis, every member of the mob becomes grave, bows his head and his face shows gratification. And that is how socialist slogans are handed to the mob, like tasty chocolates, and it is no wonder that many of them get dyspepsia by eating them.³³⁷

Koch would like a new republic, a better republic than the pre-war republic, but sees not only the same party-politicking as before, the same political egotisms, but also the abandonment of anything like the Judaeo-Christian teaching of loving one's neighbour as oneself. The 1941 Resistance (PVVZ) programme for the new republic was drawn up in more political terms, but sought to avoid anything like a one-party state. It looked remarkably like Attlee's programme in post-war Britain, although the aspects of political life it wanted to correct were entirely different. The Resistance's starting point was the same as the Nazis': Czechoslovak democracy had failed and Western democracies had been self-centred. First Republic democracy was 'incomplete and in many respects just formal',³³⁸ and the Second Republic had been a period of 'shame' in which all those who were 'cowardly and venal' poured their poisonous bile on all those who had served the nation honourably, including T. G. Masaryk and Beneš. In the post-war republic the old political parties should not be renewed, nor should former political leaders be reinstated. The government 'would help create new political formations that would be in keeping with the will of the people [*lid*']'. So that menacing phrase is ready in 1941 (when the Communists were still theoretically on Germany's side, for the manifesto was composed before Operation Barbarossa); the employment of it here, given the popularity of the manifesto after liberation, may account for Branald's recurrent sentimentalization of it in *Lazaretní vlak*. The political parties had failed partly because of an 'unfortunate electoral reform' that denied MPs any independence and *de facto* turned them into 'party officials'; the *pětka* system together with the creation of powerful committees responsible to no one and a parliament that was a mere talking-shop and rubber-stamping body, for all decisions were taken by the party leaders. After the war a properly functioning parliamentary system must be set up. That will involve the depoliticization of the civil service. A central European pact should be signed as soon after the war as possible that will guard all central Europe against any future German aggression. Some banks will be nationalized and the rest subject to public scrutiny. The housing market and planning will be under local government control (all war-time conveyances will be declared null and void); farming will be largely co-operative

³³⁶ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, pp. 54–55.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

³³⁸ *Za svobodu*, pp. 30, 44.

and will not be associated with any particular political party; there will be a second land reform to rectify the errors of the First Republic reform, which had *de facto* created a new class of Czech large landowners: all large estates will be put under public control. Strictly equal pay for women will be introduced, and all women will have a right to paid pregnancy and nursing leave. Apart from the central European pact, new Czechoslovak cultural interests should be founded on reciprocity of culture, a greater knowledge of other central European cultures, rather than Western.³³⁹ The manifesto is also concerned lest First Republic corruption return, whereby individual politicians and civil servants could all too easily serve their personal interests rather than the State's. Emil Sobota is also keen for reforms to obviate that. He agrees with the manifesto's starting point, that the end of the Great War had brought political/territorial reform, but no thoroughgoing social reform. It was because of that that democracy on the Continent had largely failed.³⁴⁰

Like Masaryk himself and subsequently the majority of First Republic intellectuals on the left and right, Sobota dislikes large-scale capitalism. Czech intellectuals could normally not expect to inherit any substantial property, and the rich, he maintains, had played a minimal role in Czech life and literature. The rich, capitalists or aristocrats, were 'alien to Czech culture', unlike German.³⁴¹ Sobota associates this with Czech *Volkstümlichkeit* (*lidovost*), which had been for more than a century very much part of Czech national self-perception, national mythology — that Masaryk did much to encourage. In 1940, Sobota writes, alluding, I presume, to Masaryk's use of the term, that 'our error, and our fault, was that we had not realized that we still believed in a people's democratic [*lidově demokratickou*] era'. As one would expect, Sobota is still trammelled in the Revivalist myth that Czechs are natural democrats. Sobota also concurs with the *Za svobodu* manifesto in that the post-war republic should be based on complete social equality and in that farms should at least be co-operatives, though he appears to think that full collectivization would be better.³⁴²

Veselý-Štainer reports the programme of PVVZ rather differently from *Za svobodu*. He submits a brief war-time pamphlet in which it is, for example, stated that one of PVVZ's 'ten commandments' was 'Building a national culture that will hold its own against the most cultured nations of the world' and this will go together with securing the nation's future by 'the closest possible co-operation with Russia'. Veselý-Štainer also correctly states that most of the Resistance wanted a 'national front' rather than the old political parties. He adds that 'anyone today (1947) who wants to break the national front down would be acting against the revolutionary spirit' of the Resistance that had fought throughout the war.³⁴³ (The concept 'revolutionary' here is by no means necessarily associated with Socialism or the Communist Party; 'revolution' was still regarded as a Masarykian concept, as will become clear below from the names given to the Prague Uprising.) Veselý-Štainer further cites a slightly different PVVZ stance on the legal and government organization of the new republic:

We wish to build a Czechoslovak Republic where civil rights are restored and expanded to include the right to work and the right to communal enjoyment of natural resources. The people will be allowed private property, but profiteering property speculation will be restricted.

³³⁹ Ibid., pp. 61, 66–67, 73, 93, 95, 101, 105–06, 111.

³⁴⁰ Sobota, *Glossy*, pp. 103, 108.

³⁴¹ Ibid., p. 64.

³⁴² Ibid., pp. 53, 116, 89.

³⁴³ Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, pp. 131, 127.

The legislature, elected by the people in accordance with free electoral procedures, may not be restricted by the party apparatus. The civil service will be simplified and modernized; it will have to assume a new morality whereby it becomes the executor of the citizenry's will.³⁴⁴

One does not forget that most of the larger Czech parties other than the Agrarians and most members of the (Catholic) People's Party considered themselves socialist before the war, when one reads Koch's portrayal of the socialism he hopes for at the end of the war: 'I should like to prove that socialism need not look like the mob's envy of the select who own more things, but must seek a dignified, equitable social balance and calm co-existence of the strong with the weaker, the talented with the under-average and, finally, of the healthy with the physically less able.'³⁴⁵ In accordance with his custom, he is impugning the Nazi mentality here as much as pronouncing his hope for the future. All the views of the PVVZ, whether expressed in their manifesto or in the documents Veselý-Štainer prints concur with President Beneš's views abroad. I give just one example: 'it will not be possible permanently to guarantee political democracy in the economic and social relations among [= between] nations, and among individuals within each nation. [...] I lay [...] stress on what Anthony Eden has called the "social security" of every member of the nation and in which he sees one of the fundamental war aims of fighting democracy [= democratic combatant nations]. In an orderly and organised society it must be made possible for every member to express himself in accordance with his abilities and decently to maintain himself and his family. As long as this condition is not fulfilled, society will not cease to be undermined by the dissatisfaction of the socially oppressed classes, and political democracy will be in constant danger.'³⁴⁶ That was written before Beneš appeared to be radicalized by his Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty and his acceptance of the Communist-inspired Košice Programme approved by the government on April 5 1945. By the opening of the provisional National Assembly, he is talking of the nationalization of all banks, and insurance companies, as well as of key industries (that last is suggested in *Za svobodu*, too). He is also fully behind the Resistance's and the Communists' by now fulfilled plan of setting up 'national committees', which will 'represent real progress, a realization of what is called in this country "people's" democracy. [...] Our people is ready for this form of state administration.'³⁴⁷ In his introduction to the 1945 publication of the PVVZ *Za svobodu* manifesto, K. J. Beneš notes: 'Indeed, *today's form of the people's, [sic] democratic republic of Czechoslovakia is anticipated in it [the manifesto] to a surprising degree of completeness.*'³⁴⁸ Fierlinger's speech shortly after the opening of the provisional National Assembly makes that clearer than the President's at the opening. On the other hand, this speech also manifests some menacing differences. For example, not all wartime deeds of conveyance will be made null and void; his audience no doubt agreed that to take *Za svobodu's* sensible advice on that would prevent requisitioning, for example, Jewish property. On the other hand, he promises that medium-sized and small industrial enterprises will not be nationalized and that the nationalization of large enterprises and all banks will help private enterprise.³⁴⁹ One presumes

³⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 48.

³⁴⁵ Koch, *Mrzáci bez světa a svět bez mrzáků*, p. 335.

³⁴⁶ Edvard Beneš, *Czechoslovakia's Struggle for Freedom*, reprinted from the *Dalhousie Review*, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1941, p. 15.

³⁴⁷ Beneš, 'Poselství presidenta republiky', in Osvald (ed.), *Národní shromáždění zahajuje*, p. 24. I do not understand why he speaks of 'people's democracy' in such a guarded manner; he had himself used the term towards the end of the war while he was still in London.

³⁴⁸ K. J. Beneš, 'Vznik, účel a význam programu ZA SVOBODU', in ZA SVOBODU, pp. 9–24 (22).

³⁴⁹ Fierlinger, 'První vláda republiky plnila košický program', pp. 61, 68.

the fellow-traveller Fierlinger is consciously pulling the wool over the public's eyes. At the end of Beneš's attempt at a Socialist Realist novel, *Ohnivě písmo*, the main character, Antonín, is, we assume, on the verge of joining the Communist Party — in his eyes it is the only party fulfilling the programme the Resistance had proposed.

The new people's democratic republic imagined new men. The employment of this analogy to monastic ritual (*homo novus*) had been popular when Czechoslovakia was first founded. The then patriot Emanuel Moravec goes to town with it in the Preface to his edition of Masaryk's addresses to the Czechoslovak Army: 'The age of democracy has given us a new man, who has spoken and demanded to be heard in every field of human activity. This new man has given us also a new soldier with new tasks and duties. [...] No one [...] has said so much healthy about the new soldier as president Masaryk.'³⁵⁰ During the Protectorate, Lažnovský enjoys using it. In 'Proč padla Francie', he uses it in a manner that foreshadows Gottwald's infamous 1949 words which I shall quote shortly: 'Only a socioeconomic reform of Europe can create a more favourable historic climate for such a growth of people's [*lidový*, that is, *völkisch*] culture, so that the historic nature (eternity) of nations can be ensured by the new creativity of a new era.' Furthermore, 'The young generation has as its first duty to think its way through to the new Czech view'. In a footnote he explains that the new view is 'positive ideological work' (Nazism). And for Lažnovský the Jews are the refuse out of which the New Europe is being born.³⁵¹ K. J. Beneš then uses a variant of the concept about the Third Republic. In his introduction to *Za svobodu* he writes of the manifesto: 'linking our Masarykian, western European tradition with the modern conception of a socialist society, it shows how, on the basis of this synthesis it is possible to build a new society and a new state on pure Czech national foundations.'³⁵² President Beneš also takes up the concept when in his speech at the opening of the provisional National Assembly he allots the working class their moral duty: 'They must realize that in this country a whole new social morality is being built and [...] we are not only changing institutions, but we will and must also create a new man.'³⁵³ After the Communist take-over employing the concept appears to remain *de rigueur*. In his oft-quoted 'letter' to the first congress of the new Union of Czechoslovak Writers, the new president, Klement Gottwald, informs the writers that their chief task lies 'in active, creative participation in the building of a better morrow for our country, and in the upbringing of a new, socialist man', and that 'we need a whole mighty flow, a whole tempestuous flood-tide of new, ideologically militant, enthusing art. [...] Become engineers of the souls of our people, spokesmen of their desires, their love and hatred, become their socialist awakeners!'³⁵⁴ Josef Štefánek employs the concept with such frequency in his apodictic assessments of what makes apposite literature in the Czechoslovak people's democracy that the word, not the concept, becomes an ingredient of Communist ritual writing. For example, 'workers that are a real [*reálným*] and positive agent in the building of our new life'; 'we have in mind the growth of the new man'; 'The struggle for a new mankind is today a world struggle'; and even 'the struggle of the new man for a

³⁵⁰ Emanuel Moravec, 'Předmluva', in *Projevy presidenta T. G. Masaryka k vojsku*, Prague, 1929, pp. 5–9 (5). When he was appointed to the radicalized Protectorate government in January 1942, he saw that 'new people for new institutions' were needed. Moravec, *O český zítřek*, p. 8.

³⁵¹ Lažnovský, 'Proč padla Francie', pp. 95–96; Lažnovský, 'Proč selhalo sovětské Rusko', p. 169.

³⁵² K. J. Beneš, 'Vznik, účel a význam programu ZA SVOBODU', p. 23.

³⁵³ Beneš, 'Poselství pana presidenta', p. 29.

³⁵⁴ Untitled letter as preface to Oldřich Kryštofek and Jan Noha (eds), *Od slov k činům. Sjezd československých spisovatelů 4.–6. března 1949*, Prague, 1949, pp. 5–6 (6).

new mankind'.³⁵⁵ K. J. Beneš employs the concept with melodramatic banality when Antonín is awakening to the Communist faith: 'an immensely sweet feeling of re-birth poured over him and with it the certainty that the new man and the new world would easily recognize each other.'³⁵⁶ He manages to use two recent Communist jargon terms in his contrast between the new and the old, *byvší* (has-been, but in the political sense, someone excluded from anything but marginal activity in the new society because of his/her social origins or political past) and *ředkvička* (radish, a sham Communist — a term that meant by the 1980s 'a Party member, but a good chap at heart'). Given that the novel was published when violent purges were underway, the passage has a somewhat unsavoury subtext:

These two worlds, the old and the new, these two types of people, has-been and new, live side by side [...]. And they clash. And in some they fuse: on the surface they appear new, but inside they are has-beens. It is a wonder he did not burst into laughter when it occurred to him: if you chop a radish, you will find out what is red under the surface and what has remained white inside.³⁵⁷

Březovský, in equally Socialist Realist mode, satirizes those he regards as cynics in the figure of Bezděk, who muses: 'They preach, moralize, discuss, set out programmes, paint the world of the future classless society, like speaking about tomorrow, about the bright future of humanity and about the new man.'³⁵⁸ In the West 'new' was becoming associated with consumer slavery, appeals to the masses: 'It's new. It's blue. It's Daz' right up to 'New Labour'.

On the whole, those who had been in the Resistance or had fought in Western Allied forces soon became aware that they did not count among the 'new' unless, like K. J. Beneš or Březovský, they took up the Communist cause. According to Václav Havel, the Resistance had not had much public support during the war.³⁵⁹ In the introduction to his jolly tales from the Resistance, *Partizánské historky* (Partisan tales, 1946), the Resistance leader Josef Grňa (1897–1967) writes of the immediate help given by all sorts of ordinary people in the Bohemian–Moravian Uplands — an unusually rebellious and tough region. After the war, according to the popular historian Zdeněk Roučka, President Beneš alone recognized the right of former Resistance workers to have a say in the development of the new republic.³⁶⁰ To a limited degree, this constitutes a repetition of history, members of the 'home Resistance' during the Great War felt generally overlooked by those who made decisions in the First Republic; in the case of 1945 onwards, however, the neglect was planned: Resistance fighters were a nuisance in the not so gradual Communist acquisition of authority. Veselý–Štainer writes that the Resistance was 'invalidated and completely pushed aside, even though the president of the republic and the rest of those in government office had emphasized that the centre of [resistance] work was at home and that the government would finish its work, and

³⁵⁵ Štefánek, *Česká literatura po válce*, pp. 22, 64, 65; see also, for example, pp. 7, 21, 23, 24, 25, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 50, 79.

³⁵⁶ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivé písmo*, p. 377.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

³⁵⁸ Březovský, *Železný strop*, p. 323.

³⁵⁹ Václav Havel, *Prosim stručně. Rozhovor s Karlem Hvizďalou, poznámky, dokumenty, sine loco* [Prague], 2006, p. 47.

³⁶⁰ Zdeněk Roučka, *Skončeno a podepsáno. Drama Pražského povstání*, Pilsen, 2003, unpaginated. Hereafter, therefore, references to Roučka will not appear in the footnotes. The book gives a sound account of the Uprising with many details I have not found in the sparse academic literature. It is an unsurpassable source of gruesome photographs of the results of German and Czech brutality.

terminate its role as leader, as soon as it crossed the frontier'. He had expected that the Resistance fighters would be included in the new government.³⁶¹

The Czech Resistance remains best known for the success of its intelligence activities, which provided London with information on the Germans' Operation Sealion and on the location of their rocket (*Vergeltungswaffe*) factory. Some Resistance organizations were set up during the Second Republic, and were active throughout the war, though most of the sabotage in munitions factories was the work of individuals and groups that did not belong to any organization (there were also several strikes in such factories). Until the last month or so of the war, partisans were active chiefly in Moravia (and the Bohemian-Moravian Uplands); amongst the not so obvious reasons partisans were less active in Bohemia is that the forests were particularly well managed there. Many Resistance groups survived in Prague, however. Czechs did join Slovak partisan units before, during and after the Slovak National Uprising — after Warsaw, the largest mass act of resistance against the Germans during the war. The Gestapo successfully disabled Czech Resistance organizations and small groups to a considerable degree, sometimes by their own detective work and the administration of torture, sometimes with the help of informers or Czech undercover agents or, Veselý-Štainer repeats, simply because tipsy members of groups bragged or blabbed about their membership in pubs. 1941 saw the arrest of large numbers of PVVZ, ON and the co-ordinating body ÚVOD (Ústřední vedení odboje domácího. Central Leadership of Domestic Resistance), in which PVVZ and ON were represented. The particularly successful underground Communist Party repeatedly lost Resistance fighters from their central organization. The Communist Resistance, for example, carried out the 'most dangerous action', blowing up 100,000 litres of petrol in Náchod with explosives sent from Britain.³⁶² After the assassination of Heydrich, the Germans succeeded in killing, but also 'turning' a fair number of Resistance fighters who had been parachuted in from Britain or the USSR.³⁶³ Many of those partisan groups that had been forming before the end of the war were destroyed by the end of 1944,³⁶⁴ at the same time, during that summer partisans were first becoming an effective nuisance to the Germans as the Russian front moved ever closer.³⁶⁵ Also in 1944 the Soviets sent Czech partisans, trained in Kiev, into Moravia and parts of Bohemia, usually with Soviet commissars, but these groups were not at all successful.³⁶⁶

Drda presents an heroic partisan group in the Brdy hills in *Krásná Tortiza*, thereby destroying for sound ideological reasons the emotionally most effective of the stories in *Němá barikáda*: the bold schoolmaster there who had in school expressed his support for the assassination of Heydrich encounters a former pupil who has become a partisan, and this helps persuade him to become a Communist at the end of the war. Antonín's two sons in K. J. Beneš's *Ohnivě písmo* spent some weeks at the end of the war as partisans in the Bohemian Forest, and they, too, are Communist supporters. Only the partisan brothers Ossendorf in Březovský's *Lidé v květnu* and *Železný strop*, whatever their post-war political inclinations, turned out to be far too bourgeois to find a place in the people's democratic state. Drda and Beneš are supporting

³⁶¹ Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, p. 64. He returns to the same matter in a footnote on p. 174.

³⁶² Kural, *Vlastenci proti okupaci*, p. 153.

³⁶³ See *ibid.*, p. 188.

³⁶⁴ For details, see Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, p. 166.

³⁶⁵ Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, p. 69.

³⁶⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 49 and Stanislav Zámečník, *Český odboj a národní povstání v květnu 1945*, Prague, 2006, pp. 43–44.

the Party's partisan enthusiasm and Soviet wisdom as was demanded (the doctrine that the Communists led the Resistance in the war), but Březovský, though our first encounter with the Ossendorfs suggests similar Party enthusiasm, by the second novel considered it necessary to support the Party line concerning the reason why so many genuine partisans had been 'completely pushed aside', as Veselý-Štainer put it. (One might compare them with the two baddies and two goodies who had fought at the Prague barricades in Václav Řezáč's *Nástup* [Falling in, 1951]; one baddie is bourgeois and half-German and the other attempts to fulfil the bourgeois aspiration of becoming rich as 'national manager'.) In his partisan tales, for all their jolliness, Grňa is careful to make a point of how Catholic priests and one Protestant priest and his wife were active in the Resistance. Protestants were particularly reviled in the immediate post-war period because of the ambivalent stand of the Lutheran Church in Germany. Habřina is particularly vehement on that: 'a godless idol became a godhead, an atheist God. And this atheist blasphemously called on God to help his nation [. . .]. German Lutherans, that is, confessors of Christianity, pray with the Führer; blaspheme by means of the Führer; pray for the victory of Nazi arms that are turned not only against the freedom of nations but also against the Christian Cross.'³⁶⁷ Kříčka acknowledges the Catholic Church's role in supporting resistance in his poem 'U zpovědi v Čechách r. 1941' (At confession in 1941 Bohemia): "Reverend father, is it a bad sin / to pray for the death of any one at all?" / The parson looked round, sighed: "In this case, by no means."³⁶⁸

Indeed, a senior churchman led one of the two great public manifestations of resistance that followed the setting up of the Protectorate. The canon of Vyšehrad, Bohumil Stašek, gave a previously well publicized sermon at a wayside cross near Domažlice, which was not far from the frontier with the Reich in its post-Munich boundaries. He had less than a year earlier delivered a patriotic sermon on the reburial in Prague of the national poet Máchá, whose remains had been translated from Litoměřice (Leitmeritz), a town that the Munich Agreement had allotted to Germany. Stašek's August 1939 sermon was attended by around 100,000 people from all over the Protectorate. In the sermon Stašek states that he is aware that this huge congregation had come not only to seek strength and solace, but also to learn how to conduct their 'national life, national [. . .] tasks', and he speaks of Christianity and patriotism as sisters, that is, daughters of the same divine Father. He quotes the legendary words of St Lawrence to encourage them: 'I feared not the persecution of the tyrant, was not frightened by prison and not horrified by extreme torture' and 'I believed that Truth would prevail over falsehood, justice over injustice, love and compassion over violence'.³⁶⁹ Stašek otherwise cites writers of a distinctly nationalist flavour, chiefly the nineteenth-century novelist Alois Jirásek, but also Palacký, František Ladislav Rieger and Viktor Dyk, and he labels the aesthetically unimportant interwar legionary writer Rudolf Medek 'your national poet'. Stašek's main appeal is that the congregation should believe in their nation as they believe in God, but that such faith means hard work; he calls for a Czech 'activism' (in the opposite meaning of the term as it was soon adopted by Moravec and his ilk); at the end of his sermon he calls on the congregation to swear that they will never betray their country and will love their country till

³⁶⁷ Habřina, *Nadčlověk a nadnárod*, p. 19.

³⁶⁸ Kříčka, *Dábel frajtre*, p. 42.

³⁶⁹ Bohumil Stašek, *Kázání na pouti u svatého Vavřínečka*, Prague, 1939, pp. 7, 9, 11. I presume that it is a coincidence that an only slightly altered version of the last quotation was frequently used by Havel when he was president of Czechoslovakia and the 'falsehood' was Communist, not Nazi.

they die, and that they will re-establish their country as a Christian model of honour, glory and affluence. The congregation swore this oath.³⁷⁰ The Gestapo arrested Stašek after this sermon; after prison and other camps he soon ended in Dachau, where he remained till the end of the war. On August 12 1945 he returned to the same spot to deliver another sermon — in which Jirásek reappears, and a different set of nationalist writers; this sermon exhibits full-blooded nationalism. He declares here his support of the Communist-inspired Košice government programme and expresses a view of young people that the Communists would have respected; he wants young people to lead a revival of the nation, not those young people who had enjoyed the Kuratorium, nor those who are now sceptics and negate all natural, socialist and religious ideals, nor those who show no interest in the great changes taking place in liberated Czechoslovakia. His appeal to Czech women to be mothers and to have lots of children is expressed in such a way that we hear the Church rather than nationalism speaking; none the less one is reminded of pre-Great War feminist nationalists when he declares that it was ‘Czech women who in the worst times not only gave the Czech nation children, but also brought them up well. The sort of children who did not become traitors or collaborators’.³⁷¹ The second mass demonstration, also involving about 100,000 people, this time Pragers, took place on the twenty-first anniversary of the founding of Czechoslovakia, October 28 1939; it forms the matter of Drda’s first story in *Němá barikáda*. News of this demonstration led to smaller ones in other parts of the Protectorate. The Prague demonstration drove the Germans to take a harder line on the Czechs when, on November 15, undergraduates started another demonstration at the funeral of one of their fellows who had been killed in the October demonstration, Jan Opletal; on November 17 the Germans shut all Czech universities and polytechnics, executed nine student leaders and sent over 11,000 undergraduates to concentration camps. Opletal achieved hero status after the war largely, but not always at the hands of Communist propagandists,³⁷² but he remains a strong symbolic figure, a representation of revolt against oppression perhaps largely because the student demonstration of November 17 1989 started the ‘Velvet Revolution’. Other victims of the Germans are rarely officially remembered today except in a few cases where they have been decorated posthumously by the president.

The lack of official recognition given the ‘bourgeois’ Resistance in 1945 had a pragmatic reason apart from the political reasons. All over formerly occupied Europe, there was a similar problem. As Gollancz writes, amongst the Resistance in all countries ‘there were many men and women and even children of a large-hearted nobility, of a selfless devotion, and of an almost incredible courage’, but there were also many ‘adventurers, and others who, because they were violent or deceitful by nature, found in these movements a suitable opportunity for activities that were palatable to them’. Even the first group had to employ deceit and violence, and had to have a sense of adventure.³⁷³ These qualities were not usually useful to governments who needed to convert their industry, agriculture and everything else from a war into a peace economy. Otto Wolf’s experience of partisans is telling; he is only mildly excited by

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 25.

³⁷¹ Bohumil Stašek, *Kázání u sv. Vavřince v osvobozeném Chodsku*, Prague, 1945, pp. 25, 23, 29.

³⁷² For Uhlíř, Opletal and the students punished by death or concentration camp were martyrs: ‘all Great Britain, her dominions, America, Africa [*sic*] and the Soviet Union declared November 17, the day of our student martyrs, international students’ day, dedicated to the memory of Czechoslovak students.’ *Z poboy ke svobodě*, p. 15.

³⁷³ Gollancz, *Our Threatened Values*, p. 37.

their appearance in 1945, chiefly because their presence indicated that his family would soon be able to come out of hiding. He neither praises, nor condemns outright their bandit-like behaviour. For example, he reports that on April 7 1945, about 230 partisans had been in Tršice (near where he was hiding) and had 'gone on a terrible rampage', had herded the inhabitants into the cinema and declared who the Fascists were amongst them, for example, and had stolen 33,000 crowns from the post-office.³⁷⁴ On partisans once liberation had come, Grňa has the sarcastic comment that 'partisans' became national managers, but real partisans just got down to their civilian jobs; he also mentions those people who suddenly became 'partisans' after the liberation and now sit about in pubs talking about how their national managership is going and about their heroism.³⁷⁵ Grňa's view on genuine partisans thus has little to do with Gollancz's fears. Václav Černý reckons that the 'timid and soft men of yesterday' now calling for the recognition of their glorious heroism during the war, make for nothing but 'an uninteresting comedy'.³⁷⁶ Veselý-Štainer, however, writes angrily of those 'parasites' who claim their heroism on the basis of a few conversations with genuine partisans and are setting about publicly falsifying history. He has little time for the system whereby many acquire certificates of their partisan activity³⁷⁷ — such certificates were used by some leaders of the new national committees to increase their power and secure accomplices in corruption and torturing.³⁷⁸ Koch describes analogous circumstances concerning the burial of partisans who die fighting in the Slovak National Uprising: 'When partisans went off to fight, no one went with them. When they were ceremonially interred, the whole nation appeared with flowers and decorations. Some die for ideals; others grow fat on them.'³⁷⁹ The role of partisans and 'partisans' as internment camp guards and administrators of the expulsion of Germans was often inglorious. Ursula Hübler, a Reich German clerk, recounts that partisans were the most brutal guards in the internment camps she experienced, and we note the comment concerning those who accompanied a detachment of women internees from Kutná Hora railway station to a camp: 'really ferocious-looking partisans, or whatever they called themselves.'³⁸⁰ Her experience of a young Czech Red Cross woman during the registration and search procedure at the Hyberská (George of Poděbrady) Barracks put the Czech Red Cross on the level of partisans. Having broken open the suitcase Hübler had been allowed to take with her from her flat, the Czech had taken everything useful out of it, from baby food (Hübler has a young son with her) down to nail-scissors and nail-file, the Czech shouts at Hübler, 'You're not human; you're an animal', then throws the rest of the suitcase's contents at her feet and kicks her in the abdomen.³⁸¹ Partisans did take part in the Prague Uprising, Prague men returning from the country (like Kolda in Branald's *Lazaretní vlak*) or country people. Pražák states that only a few had been involved³⁸² — not that I suggest Pražák is an accurate source; nor is Drda, who writes, 'The whole country is aroused by the heroic

³⁷⁴ *Deník Otty Wolfa*, p. 340.

³⁷⁵ Josef Grňa-Vlk, *Partizánské historky*, Brno, 1946, pp. 127–30.

³⁷⁶ Černý, 'Pozdrav mrtvým', p. 12.

³⁷⁷ Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, pp. 247, 251.

³⁷⁸ See, for example, Mareš, *Ze vzpomínek anarchisty*, p. 286.

³⁷⁹ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost* p. 194.

³⁸⁰ Ursula Hübler, *Meine Vertreibung aus Prag. Erinnerungen an den Prager Aufstand 1945 und seine Folgen*, ed. by Juliane Wetzel, Munich, 1991, p. 72.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

³⁸² Albert Pražák, 'Pražské povstání dne pátého května, r. 1945', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5.–9. květen 1945, pp. 90–98 (93).

example of Prague: groups of rural partisans leave the forests and penetrate Prague; towns send lorries with provisions; doctors and fighters start out to help Prague'.³⁸³ Even in much later works, when mass partisan activity formed part of the Communists' sacred mythology of the war, one will find the odd fake partisan, mind you, of the wrong political party. In Körner's *Adelheid* (1967) we read of a Benešite Capt. Brandejs, who claimed to have been a partisan for six years, but turns out Gajda-like to be a drug-store owner or salesman — and the good Communist policeman Hejna comments, 'That's them, all got medals but they're in fact nothing but confirmed alcoholics'.³⁸⁴ *Adelheid* is set in the Sudetenland — where partisans/'partisans' were involved in the expulsion. Staněk informs us of a partisan group in the Adlergebirge named Václavík after the code-name of a distiller, Jan Ptáčník, who led the group; Ptáčník allegedly received orders directly from General Svoboda, the interior minister Václav Nosek, and indeed Fierlinger to inaugurate ethnic cleaning in eastern and north-eastern Bohemia. Allegedly the Václavík group had 4,000–5,000 men and an armoured train. Their violence was justified by 'the will of the partisans' rather than any State authorities.³⁸⁵ Staněk gives accounts of numerous brutal acts committed by partisans or 'partisans' in Bohemia and Moravia after and shortly before the end of the war, from arresting a woman in order later to hand her over to a Soviet soldier to be raped to torturing and killing Czech alleged informers, forcing people to hang themselves, mass killings of German POWs.³⁸⁶

Revenge, not punishment, was the order of the day, and to some degree at least that represented a continuity with the Germans' culture of revenge: in Bohemia, one thinks in particular of the revenge executions largely of middle-class men and women after the assassination of Heydrich. Koch's Dr Anonymus comments on the wartime atmosphere of revenge too: 'He considered revenge the greatest error of the ordinary man, that revenge that in recent times has spread like weeds.' We are to associate that with Koch's general assessment of the war: 'the instinct of hatred is stronger in the world than the longing of love, not only in the individual, but also in groups. At the moment it seems that only hatred and egoism are at home here.'³⁸⁷ After the war, the spirit of revenge that Gollancz epitomized in Field-marshal Montgomery's glee at permanent food cuts for Germans, keeping them at 1,000 calories a day, given that they had given the inmates of Belsen 800 a day. (The American Morgenthau plan was a little more severe though it was soon abandoned [summer 1945], just as in Britain, the Labour government suddenly rationed bread [it had not been rationed in the war] in order to provide bread for the Germans.) The British were to receive 2,800 calories a day, Gollancz adds in parenthesis. It is this vindictiveness that indicates for him the moral crisis facing the Western world. The 'deprecation of mercy and pity', he continues later, 'is becoming [...] a

³⁸³ Jan Drda, 'Povstaň, povstaň, veliké město pražské!' (originally in the newspaper *Práce* [Labour] on May 5 1945), in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 78–86 (83).

³⁸⁴ Vladimír Körner, *Adelheid*, in Körner, *Podzimní novely*, Prague, 1983, pp. 9–101 (53).

³⁸⁵ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, pp. 187–88.

³⁸⁶ For example, *ibid.*, pp. 250, 257, 264–65.

³⁸⁷ Koch, *Lékař Anonymus*, pp. 30, 352. Koch also wisely associates the belligerent spirit with abbreviations and acronyms. In the war, he writes, 'The whole world has fallen sick with a bad attack of abbreviation influenza which threatens to abbreviate not only its joy in life, but also its very life' (p. 67). Abbreviations were once recognized as forms of militarization, in the West (for example WPB for 'waste-paper basket') as in Communist-led societies; the fact that universities have adopted HR (synonym for cannon-fodder) and numerous acronyms even within small departments indicates that they have passively accepted assembly-line teaching, the instrumentalization of the academy and the anonymizing reification of human beings very much along the lines of the Nazi and Communist parties.

positive mania: there is hardly a politician, hardly a newspaper, whether of the study or of the gutter, that doesn't succumb to it'. Gollancz disapproves of all the hangings of Nazis and Quislings, 'lest you give them and Hitler a posthumous victory', for 'a good number of these savage sentences are nothing but naked revenge'.³⁸⁸

In what is the most trenchant and sagacious essay I know concerning the immediately post-war period and its continuing impact today, Tony Judt writes that the Nuremberg Tribunal, by concentrating on trying German Nazis, not Austrian or any other Nazis, let alone non-Nazis involved in German atrocities, constituted a piece of clever political packaging, wherein German guilt was 'distilled into a set of indictments reserved exclusively for [...] a select few'. He continues by noting that the Soviets involved in the trials wanted 'to avoid any discussion of broader moral and judicial questions that might draw attention to the Soviet Union's own practices before and during the war'. 'That the Nuremberg trials served an important exemplary and jurisprudential function is beyond doubt; but the selectivity and apparent hypocrisy with which the Allies pursued the matter contributed to the cynicism of the post-war era while easing the consciences of many non-Germans (and non-Nazis) whose activities might easily have been open to similar charges.'³⁸⁹ If I apply Judt's argument just to the Czechs, I arrive at the view most readers of Czech or German literature about the Uprising or the expulsion of the Germans would come to. As elsewhere, the Czechs made 'a clear and quick distinction' between 'collective violence' and revenge perpetrated by 'German war criminals' and the 'mass, racially motivated purges' and acts of revenge that began during the Uprising and continued for a year after the end of the war. The distinction made between German and Czech brutality was based on two 'moral vocabularies, two sorts of reasoning, two different pasts'. These circumstances, Judt argues, led to the mythology of national 'resistance', wherein was contained the mythopoeic logic, 'If Germans were guilty, then "we" were innocent [...] to be innocent a nation had to have resisted and to have done so in its overwhelming majority, a claim that was perforce made and pedagogically enforced all over Europe, from Italy to Poland, from the Netherlands to Romania'.³⁹⁰ Judt also makes useful comparisons between national self-purification after the war and the Czechs' use of 'lustration', which he considers manifests an 'obsession' with 'retribution, purification, and purge' as a means of hiding 'a dirty little secret', the actual behaviour of the nation during the Communist regime.³⁹¹ The idea of creating a Czech memory institute like the Poles' was not alive when Judt was writing; such an institute can no longer even purge anything, but will just serve public prurience, for it will reveal all manner of intimate details about people's lives, some more or less true, some false, and so feed paparazzo history.³⁹²

It was, however, by no means only the guilty or the cowards or the political manipulators who called for vengeance on rather than punishment of the Germans. As early in the war as July 1940, the Christian Jeřábek writes:

³⁸⁸ Gollancz, *Our Threatened Values*, pp. 7, 23, 49–50.

³⁸⁹ Tony Judt, 'The Past is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe', in István Deák, Jan T. Gross, and Tony Judt (eds), *The Politics of Retribution in Europe. World War II and its Aftermath*, Princeton NJ, 2000, pp. 293–323 (296–97).

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 309.

³⁹² That is one reason for so many professional Czech historians campaigning against such an institution, including a contributor to this special issue, Vít Smetana.

Revenge, that is a word that is losing its ring of baseness today. Revenge, Old Testament revenge is becoming the moral imperative of the age. There are moments when I tell myself that murder will cease being murder when, one day, the people of this country rise for their reckoning. And they will rise, for the land that the Antichrist wanted to strangle on March 15 [1939], has not died.

Two years later, he reports on his and his circle's anger at what Czechs broadcasting from Britain say about the matter: 'We almost go mad with rage when we hear them in London theorizing about the difference between punishment and revenge, about the difference between guilty Germans and Germans who have been led astray.'³⁹³ A poem, allegedly written during the war by a member of a Resistance group, a poem in which resisters are 'avengers', contains the lines: 'For one blow we will give a thousand / and our hearts will be of stone.'³⁹⁴ In January 1943, Sobota exhibits the Czech spirit of revenge in the words that he suggests are the most apt when victory comes. I quote the passage almost *in toto* because it reveals the hatred that had been accruing in normally calm, analytical men:

You will be disarmed to the last rifle because you are defeated. You destroyed towns in Holland, France, Britain, Russia, Poland: so now you will build them, not because your adversaries did not destroy your towns during the war, too, but because you are defeated. Since you have been defeated, the building will happen first in the lands of your victorious adversaries and when you have rebuilt what you had destroyed, you can go home to repair your ruins. You will surrender your factories, your railways, academic institutions, your patents, your mines and your cattle not simply because you must compensate for what you had destroyed or removed elsewhere, but because you are defeated. You will hand over to the victors this or that territory and, if necessary, you will evacuate your inhabitants of those territories. You will agree to the separation of some regions from the Reich, even if they are German[-speaking], not in accordance with some principle or other like self-determination, but because, if you had won the war, you would have annexed great tracts of land in the South and East and evidently also in the North and West. But you are defeated and so your territory will be annexed.³⁹⁵

Zatloukal writes that the whole country is choking with desire for revenge after the razing of Lidice and Ležáky and, similarly to the anonymous poet anthologised by Kuchynka, he declares that there will never be enough blows to strike the face of Germany and that anyway when the bones of the German dead crackle, they will be admitted only through the gates of Hell.³⁹⁶ In the January 1944 'situation report' prepared by the 'bourgeois' Resistance, the resisters tell the London Czechs they should broadcast a great deal about 'people's courts' and the punishment of traitors for 'the people [*lid*] want revenge'. During the last stages of the war, Veselý-Štainer and his Resistance fellows were all too aware of how this revenge would play out once the war ended: 'signs were becoming evident that when the turning point came, a desire for revenge would come, people who have hitherto just been waiting will go on a rampage, will destroy and plunder property. It happened more than once that partisan units were given false information by someone with a personal grudge and the units led punitive expeditions against people who had done nothing to deserve it. It was already clear that when the revolution came, personal scores would be settled and that robbery and destruction would burst out.'³⁹⁷

³⁹³ Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, pp. 92, 214.

³⁹⁴ [Anon.], 'Píseň českých rebelů', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 44–45 (44).

³⁹⁵ Sobota, *Glossy*, p. 128.

³⁹⁶ Zatloukal, 'Na pomník národního žalu' and 'Tvář Germanie', in *Čas válkou okutý*, pp. 44, 38.

³⁹⁷ Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, pp. 124, 233.

When the Uprising did break out in Prague and elsewhere, amongst the first signals was the broadcast from Prague radio, which had newly been won back with great loss of blood: 'Death to the Germans!' On the second day, May 6, it broadcast the once Decadent Miroslav Rutte's (1889–1954) poem 'Národe nezapomeň' (My nation do not forget), which contains the lines: 'the Teutons sowed blood, / now let them reap blood. / My nation, avenge your dead' (cited in Roučka). The journalist and subsequently lecturer in history at Prague University until he was dismissed in 1971, František Červinka (1923–81), describes the people's revenge as follows in the opening of a posthumously published book: 'Victory over fascism was crowned by raging avengers and robbers who, a few years earlier, took various paths to grab the property of deported Jews and now gratified their greed on the property of Germans. The nation's moral scars began to become deeper.'³⁹⁸ Those who undergo military training nowadays are advised that 20 per cent of any population are thugs or potential thugs and that the thugs can come from any class. Červinka suggests a mob, but people who would not be normally counted among a mob contributed greatly to the spirit of revenge during the expulsion of the Germans and, indeed, during the Uprising, especially the last two days (May 8 and 9). At the end of May, the man in charge of the first division of the newly re-formed Czechoslovak Army, General Oldřich Španiel, told officers leading troops to the Postoloprty area, where one of the worst mass murders of departing Germans took place, that he envied them their task and that 'we have to remember that we should be concerned with ensuring that as few Germans as possible cross the frontier, for those who do get across will be our enemies' and that 'the only good German is a dead German'.³⁹⁹ *Belles-lettres* concerning the Uprising and the expulsion abound in the revenge motif. Revenge itself may be more or less synonymous with heroism: The Germans had shot the son of Drda's Babánek during the Heydrichiad; in the Uprising Babánek then shoots dead fifteen Germans, and at the barricade his eyes are 'terrible with their insatiable hatred' — hatred is always positive in post-war Drda.⁴⁰⁰ Řezáč's Jan Pavelka is beaten up by two teenage SS when he is painting over the German part of his boss's shop-sign; Pavelka joins the Uprising and avenges his beating by shooting dead a squad of six German soldiers — a photograph at the end of the story has the caption: 'The air was charged with revenge — we all felt it.'⁴⁰¹ In Pařízek and Jaromír Hořec (born 1921), the Uprising constitutes revenge for the past six years, in Svatá for the past seven years,⁴⁰² and Svatá's Klára glistens rather like the eyes of Drda's Babánek, 'with hatred and a febrile desire for revenge'.⁴⁰³

Two of the writers I have been looking at in this essay write against post-war revenge, Habřina and, most expectedly, Koch, but both have an idea of punishment that comes pretty close to revenge. Thus Habřina writes somewhat optimistically, as we shall see, that it could have been understandable if the Czechs had acted in accordance with 'the old principle, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, if they had been guided by the same laws of nature as their old Teuton neighbour and oppressor, the laws of blood and revenge', but the Czechs

³⁹⁸ František Červinka, *Česká kultura a okupace*, Prague, 2002, p. 5.

³⁹⁹ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, p. 66.

⁴⁰⁰ Drda, *Němá barikáda*, p. 44.

⁴⁰¹ Václav Řezáč, 'Němý', in František Hrubín and Alois Hodek (eds), *Památník Pražského povstání* [1946], 2nd expanded edn, Prague, 1947, pp. 9–10, photograph p.11.

⁴⁰² Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, p.11; Jaromír Hořec, *Květen č. 1* (1946), reprinted in Hořec, *Přísežné svědectví. Pražské básně 1945/1968, Květen č. 1. Květen č. 2*, Prague, 1997, p. 16; Svatá, *Pět dnů*, pp. 24, 65.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

had not acted and would not act thus, for they keep to their 'tradition: the Czech people does not dance a dance of triumph over the monstrous pathological corpse of the Teutonic *Übermensch* and *Übervolk* because it is not in its character; the Czech people is not plagued by the Nazi infection'. On the other hand, he praises the expulsion of the German 'colonists' as 'a unique process for which the centuries have been waiting' and which the National Revivalists 'could not even dream of', but Habřina does not understand this as revenge.⁴⁰⁴ Koch is more thoughtful: 'We cannot demand of the Frenchman, Pole or Czech that now at the happy ending he should heed the command of humanity and fling himself around a German's neck, but we can beg them in the name of humanity not to behave like animals, even if their hearts appear to tell them they have the right, beg them to distinguish between prudent punishment and blind revenge.' On the other hand, he writes of collective punishment: 'Now it is necessary completely to disarm the whole German nation that so consciously followed the path to its own disaster, and to disable those Germans who are hopelessly irredeemable.'⁴⁰⁵ At least, unlike most Czech writers of the time, Koch appears to believe in the re-education of the Germans. He does not mention the scenes that occurred chiefly in the last two days of the Uprising or in its immediate aftermath, but then he seems to have been in Bratislava at the time. Jeřábek stops his account of life in the Protectorate when Soviets and partisans liberate the area of Moravia where he is staying. That is logical enough, but one gains a strong impression at the end that he does not want to hear about any rape and pillage, is only concerned about the well-being of his son, who is not at home during the 'revolutionary' days.

The journalist Jindřich Marek correctly asserts that 'in modern Czech history, the battles by the Prague barricades sixty years ago are certainly the greatest military action of the Czechs for freedom and national independence fought on their own territory'.⁴⁰⁶ On the other hand, there had and has been no other battle in the whole modern age. In Prague, 1848 did not, except for a small group of so-called radical democrats inspired by both socialist ideas and Bakunin, constitute anything like a battle for independence. What is still called the 'massacre' of November 17 1989, though the students incurred no deaths, was not an armed rebellion. So Marek's statement is true, but empty. I quoted it because it actually indicates the uncertainty that accompanies Marek's ill-written, but occasionally useful attempt at a re-mythicization of the Uprising. There is only one serious historical account, Kokoška's, but this pays little attention to Czech emotions at the time or to examining the stories of Czech atrocities, both of which aspects we see reflected in *belles-lettres*, and, for example, he makes no attempt to explain the almost immediate sentimentalization of the Uprising; on the other hand, he gives a thorough, sober account of its development and of immediate Soviet, and some Czechoslovak Communist, problematic reactions to it. The Prague Uprising was a problem at the time and remained a problem, often a carefully forgotten or distorted problem, throughout the Communist period. Even what to call it was a problem. Although the poet František Hrubín's (1910–71) and Alois Hodek's (?–?) literary anthology (see note 401) is all in Czech, it has a second title page in Czech, Russian and English. In Czech and Russian the events between May 5 and 9 are labelled 'uprising' (*povstání/povstanie*), but in English

⁴⁰⁴ Habřina, *Nadčlověk a nadnárod*, pp. 96–97.

⁴⁰⁵ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, pp. 40, 157.

⁴⁰⁶ Jindřich Marek, *Barikáda z kaštanů. Pražské povstání v květnu 1945 a jeho skuteční hrdinové*, Cheb, 2005, p. 12.

'revolution'. That reflects politics, for at the time non-Communists tended to call it 'revolution' after Masaryk's label for 1918, whereas Communists tended to call it 'uprising'. A 'revolution' had to be evidently social as well as military or 'national' and at best for a Communist the Uprising was simply the beginning of a revolution that ended with the takeover of 1948. On the other hand, the norm for May 1945 became the 'national and social/social and national revolution'. The title of the official commemorative volume, which includes assessments of the Uprising both by politicians and by political figures involved in the events, has it both ways: *Pražská květnová revoluce 1945. K prvnímu výročí slavného povstání pražského lidu* (The Prague May revolution of 1945. On the first anniversary of the glorious uprising of the people of Prague). Two authors in Kuchynka's celebratory anthology foreshadow the fate of the labels. Drda calls it a 'revolution', the fighters the 'lid', by which he means the 'common people', but the whole episode he calls a 'national uprising'.⁴⁰⁷ Wenig suggests the same, while forgetting that a great part of Moravia was liberated before the Prague Uprising (Rožnov April 4, Hodonín April 11, Brno April 26, Ostrava April 30), though some towns in the north and south only during it (for example, Olomouc, Přerov and Znojmo, May 7): 'Prague, Pilsen, all Bohemia and Moravia rose [*povstaly*]. [...] There was fighting in our towns and villages. The fiercest fighting was in Prague.'⁴⁰⁸ By the mid-1960s it looked as if an ideological solution had been found, one that would make the Czechs equal to the Slovaks: the Slovak National Uprising becomes the beginning of the Czechoslovak revolution; the Prague Uprising disappears into the 'Czech Uprising', which the future Czech editor of the *Black Book of Communism*, Karel Bartošek, cautiously phrases as follows:

The uprising [*povstání*] was not a socialist revolution [*převrat*], nor was it or could it be [*sic*] a bourgeois democratic revolution [*převrat*]. In the Bohemian Lands, too, the revolution [*revoluce*] against the occupiers and their helpers was a revolution [*revoluce*] of a new type. This people's democratic revolution was antifascist and national; all the forces that took part in it formed its character.⁴⁰⁹

The one more or less substantial encyclopaedia to appear in the Communist period does not even have an entry for the Prague Uprising; one has to look under 'May Uprising of the Czech People', two-thirds of which entry is, however, devoted to the Prague Uprising, which is so called.⁴¹⁰ The same title appears in what was intended to be the standard reference work on the Czech war, but this time the Prague Uprising is called the 'May Uprising of the Czech People in Prague' and of twenty-seven columns on the 'May Uprising' it takes up only eight.⁴¹¹ This label is not quite dead yet: a version of it survives in the title of Stanislav Zámečník's 2006 book (see note 366), 'The Czech Resistance and the National Uprising in May 1945'.

A far greater problem for the politicians was the social composition of the Prague insurgents. That is what lies behind Bartošek's new category, people's democratic revolution.

⁴⁰⁷ Drda, 'Povstaň, povstaň, veliké město pražské!', p. 79.

⁴⁰⁸ Frank Wenig, 'Bojem a utrpením k svobodě', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 151–60 (158).

⁴⁰⁹ Karel Bartošek, 'České povstání a revoluce', in G. Bareš, K. Bartošek, A. Benčík, J. Doležal, O. Janeček, L. Klimešová, J. Křen, V. Kural, L. Lipták, J. Novotný, B. Pekárek and A. Štvrtecká, *Odboj a revoluce 1938–1945*, Prague, 1965, pp. 421–23 (423).

⁴¹⁰ 'Květnové povstání českého lidu', in Josef Říman et al., *Malá československá encyklopédie, III, I–L*, Prague, 1986, p. 683.

⁴¹¹ Zdeněk Huňáček, Jiří Kozák, Vladislav Kroupa and Jan Stříbrný, *Český antifašismus a odboj. Slovníková příručka*, Prague, 1988, pp. 186–200 (for Prague: 194–98).

Something of the truth of it is to be found in an unexpected place, a hard-line Socialist Realist short-story collection by Marie Majerová (1882–1967):

there it was the little men [*drobný lid*] who took up arms: the cabinet-maker a hidden pistol; the primary-school master designed a defence plan for the district; the milkman put a reel of wire for field telephones on his float instead of churns, and the house-painter came up with hand-grenades in all his pockets and a helmet on his head.⁴¹²

One is reminded of Smetana's statement in his article here, that the British embassy regarded the Czechs as a petty bourgeois nation, but one is also reminded on the one hand of Emanuel Moravec's praise of the 'little Czech man', on the other of Fink's statement in the midst of an attack on Rudolf Beran that in 1938 it was 'the little Czech men who were as "foolish" as to want to lay down their lives for what they called their "beloved country"'.⁴¹³ The statistics for those who died in the Uprising will at least demonstrate that it was the petty bourgeoisie who were at the sharp end of the fighting. Most statistics include not only the numbers of Czechs who fell between May 5 and 9, but also the numbers of Soviet soldiers who fell during the liberation of Prague — which was essentially free by May 8 on account of not only the official German surrender, but also the capitulation negotiated by the Uprising political leaders that came into force on that day. The Soviets did have mopping up to do, for there were many pockets of SS troops in parts of Prague who started fighting again, either because they were not aware of the capitulation or because they were desperate and chose to ignore it. Some statistics include the dead from General Vlasov's Russian Liberation Army (hereafter ROA), which had turned coat and fought for the Pragers against the Germans — which, after the insurgency was over, caused the Czechs major political problems with the Soviets, though one soon arrives at the conclusion that much of Soviet political ire at ROA involvement was a smokescreen for a deeper political disquiet. Figures for the fallen tended to be exaggerated after the war even though official statistics had been published in May 1946; they appear to have been ignored even by the chairman of the Czech National Council that was, as far as anybody could be, in charge of the Uprising; in one of the numerous pieces Pražák wrote on the Uprising we hear that: 'All strata of the Prague population made the Prague Uprising. Everyone contributed his mite with heroic self-sacrifice'; he adds to this that 4,000 Pragers had died and up to 8,000 had been wounded; on May 9, 400 Soviet soldiers had been killed. 'Czech blood mingled with Russian as a symbol of eternal friendship.'⁴¹⁴ Barényiová also exaggerates figures, but from a German point of view; her exaggeration is greater than Pražák's: 100,000 German and 600 Czech deaths in the Uprising.⁴¹⁵ Figures published since 1989 more

⁴¹² Marie Majerová, 'Barikády a předměstí', in *Cesta blesku* [1951], 2nd expanded edn, Prague, 1952, pp. 53–71 (53).

⁴¹³ Fink, *Hnědá bestie*, p. 171.

⁴¹⁴ Albert Pražák, 'Májová revoluce', in Hrubín and Hodek (eds), *Pamětník Pražského povstání*, pp. 7–8 (8). He writes of 'several thousand dead and several thousand wounded' Czechs in Pražák, 'Pražské povstání dne pátého května r. 1945', p.96, and that the Uprising 'was very bloody; around about 1,000 died every day' in Pražák, 'Podstata 5. května', p. 130; he has approximately 400 Soviet deaths and 'the blood of the valiant Red Army mingled with Czech blood to seal eternal brotherhood' in Pražák, 'Pražské květnové povstání roku 1945', p. 11; he has 3,000 for the Czech dead in Pražák, *Politika a revoluce*, p. 129.

⁴¹⁵ Barényi, *Prager Totentanz*, p. 9. She has 'up to 100,000' Germans (for May 5 to 10) in a later novel, Olga Barényi, *Das tote Geleise*, Munich, 1961, pp. 52, 181; that rises to 'over 100,000' in her feuilleton selection, Olga von Barényi, *Nicht wundern, nur ... Ernst, Ironie. Glossen zur Zeit*, Pähl, *sine anno* [1977 according to the Deutsche Bücherei, 1984 according to the Deutsche Bibliothek], p. 42

or less correspond to the official 1946 figures. Sayer, taking the rational end-date May 8, though that would exclude the Red Army, writes that 1,691 Czechs died in the Uprising, but 436 Red Army men.⁴¹⁶ That last figure comes close to the Communist-period figure of 429 Soviets dying in the liberation of Prague.⁴¹⁷ This exaggeration has been corrected. Kokoška (also Roučka) has 1,694 Czechs killed, c. 1,000 (Roučka, almost 1,000) Germans, Red Army c. 20 (according to Roučka c. 30, but only 10 combatants), ROA c. 300.⁴¹⁸ Staněk reports that various figures have been given for the deaths of Germans, soldiers and civilians, during the Uprising, ranging from 380 to 855 or 953, but he considers that the number who came to some sort of violent death was certainly higher.⁴¹⁹ Barényiová's figure is ridiculously high, but if one included Germans killed in internment and otherwise killed during just May, one would certainly come to a far higher figure than Kokoška's. For a German, in the end it was difficult to draw any firm line between the end of the Uprising and the beginning of the expulsion. Barényiová may have based her figure on the estimates for the Uprising and expulsion fatalities. Marek's figures are higher than Kokoška's for the death of Czechs: to 1,693 dead insurgents he adds 263 non-insurgent Czechs killed by German soldiers. Furthermore, he has a figure I have not seen elsewhere: on top of the identified 1,693 there were 708 dead insurgents whose personal details, including nationality, were never established. He has the same figure as Kokoška for the ROA, c. 300.⁴²⁰ Whichever figures one takes as nearest to historical fact, it is evident that the Uprising saw fierce fighting, and there is no doubt at all, given the armaments they were facing, that the Czech insurgents showed enormous courage, especially since the ordinary German soldiers were desperate, knew that the war was lost and the Uprising was a serious hindrance to their being able to surrender to the American army. (When we talk of Germans, we include the 20th Waffen-SS division that was Estonian, the Slovak [Hlinka Guard], Ukrainian, Hungarian and other troops involved in Schörner's *Mitte* army; the military nurses who tended the wounded young SS man Günter Grass in Marienbad were Finnish.⁴²¹ The official 1946 statistics include those Czechs who died from wounds sustained in the Uprising up to March 1946. Here we have 1,961 dead, 1,575 severely wounded and 1,353 walking wounded. More than one-third (460) of the insurgents killed were tradesmen (*řemeslníci a živnostníci*). By adding to them the 365 clerical workers in government offices and private enterprises, and to them *obchodníci* (mainly shopkeepers), one would arrive at a figure (omitting the other candidates, policemen and excise officers) that suggests that the petty bourgeoisie comprised well over half the dead (896). By contrast, 229 urban and 29 agricultural workers died fighting.⁴²² We are not dealing with a social(ist) revolution, which the Soviets and the Communists in Košice would have liked. None the less there were attempts to make the Uprising look like a workers' revolution. The best known failed attempt was the future second Communist president of Czechoslovakia, Antonín Zápotocký's,

⁴¹⁶ Derek Sayer, *The Coasts of Bohemia. A Czech History*, Princeton NJ, Chichester, 1998, p. 235.

⁴¹⁷ Huňáček et al., *Český antifašismus a odboj*, p. 77.

⁴¹⁸ Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, p. 258.

⁴¹⁹ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, p. 197.

⁴²⁰ Marek, *Barikáda z kaštanů*, pp. 13–14.

⁴²¹ For 'Bohemia 1945', Grass's most pertinent comment is that he did not know whether the GI on guard outside his Marienbad military hospital was there to prevent Germans from escaping or protect them from armed Czechs. Günter Grass, *Beim Häuten der Zwiebel*, Göttingen, 2006, p. 186.

⁴²² For the raw statistics on the social background of the dead see Jan Soukup, 'Přehled bojů Pražského povstání ve dnech 5.–9. května 1945', in Javůrková (ed.), *Pražská květnová revoluce*, pp. 16–45 (39). A little later Soukup gives the figure 1,693 for the Czech dead, *ibid.*, p. 42.

statement to a crowd of factory workers on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Uprising that the Communist and left-wing Social Democrat Central Council of Trades-unions (ÚRO) had played the dominant role in the Uprising.⁴²³ Jan Drda had also attempted to turn it into a workers' affair. He writes in May 1945 concerning chiefly factory workers: 'Cleansed now of its German signs, returning to its glorious ancient Czechness in the spirit of the people and in its outer garb, [Prague] raises on its houses the first three-coloured flags of the Republic and the red banners of the working class, who became the first storm-troops of the revolution.'⁴²⁴ Indeed, elsewhere Drda comes close to making it a Communist uprising: 'suddenly, everywhere [...] the comrades' battle-cry rises; dark-blue-uniformed railway workers, dock workers, men in overalls, young and old.' Workers' attitudes are contrasted with the bourgeois': 'At the crossroads an SS man. As if he were shooting at sparrows. Seamstresses rush out onto the pavements and a fat gentleman covers his [Czechoslovak] tricolour [on his lapel], smiling guiltily.'⁴²⁵ In the title story of *Němá barikáda*, the vast majority of the men manning the mute barricade by Troja Bridge are workers. Not long after the Soviet ambassador Valerian Zorin had arrived from Košice in Prague, he condemned the Uprising leaders for having attempted to protect the German army from falling into Soviet captivity.⁴²⁶ So the Uprising became a project to spite the Soviets.

There appears to be no truth whatsoever in the Soviet belief that the Uprising had been a conspiracy — one they saw proven by the invaluable help given the insurgents by the ROA. The Uprising's only military significance probably was that it drew some German troops away from the battle-front in Moravia. There is also nothing to support the minor legend that the whole world was watching developments in the Uprising. Pařízek claims that in 1848 the whole of Europe was talking about the Prague Whitsun Storms and Windischgrätz's bombardment of Prague, but that during the Uprising the whole world was talking about the people (*lid*) of Prague, thanks to the wireless.⁴²⁷ K. J. Beneš reports that Prague Radio had stated during the Uprising that: 'The whole world is looking proudly at our fight.'⁴²⁸ Branald's Communist ex-partisan Kolda ridicules this topos in a telephone conversation with one of the military leaders of the Uprising; here he is implicitly criticizing the Western Allies for not helping the Pragers (the insurgents knew nothing of the demarcation line Smetana writes of in his article; the idea that the Americans and British had left Prague to bleed will later exist in Stalinist propaganda): "[...] You must understand, Kolda, that this is an historic revolution. The whole world is watching us. [...]" "The whole world is watching us," repeated Kolda bitterly, "Unfortunately only watching [...]"⁴²⁹ This conversation centres on the possibility that insurgents might have to shoot into a stranded German hospital-train, since many of the personnel in it were armed and willing to use their weapons. Barényiová's Martin, the good and brave Czech socialist, employs the topos when some undertakers he is accompanying want to kill a girl who returns home after her whole family has committed suicide, in other words the circumstances are analogous to those in Branald (it is May 4): 'Our hands must remain clean. Tomorrow the whole world will be watching us.'⁴³⁰ Given

⁴²³ Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, p. 7.

⁴²⁴ Drda, 'Povstaň, povstaň, veliké město pražské!', p. 78.

⁴²⁵ Drda, *Němá barikáda*, pp. 54, 56.

⁴²⁶ Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, p. 5.

⁴²⁷ Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, p. 61.

⁴²⁸ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, p. 26.

⁴²⁹ Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, p. 139.

⁴³⁰ Barényi, *Prager Totentanz*, p. 27.

Barényiová's subsequent portrayal of Czech behaviour during and after the Uprising, Martin's words acquire a sarcastic meaning in the novel's structure. The whole world did not look: it was a very Czech business. Actually, in Veselý-Štainer's opinion, the exhausted Czechs had expected liberation without having to fight.⁴³¹ That in itself constituted a reason for the Uprising for Pražák; the Czechs did not want to receive freedom 'from foreign hands', and the Uprising had manifested that they still possessed national dignity: 'we showed the world we were capable of fighting for freedom and that the awareness of a duty not to endure any servitude and always to rid ourselves of it by arms as soon as it was possible had not died.' The Uprising had demonstrated that the Czechs had a moral backbone; it had become moral 'capital' for them and would remain throughout history.⁴³² It had also saved Prague, for he is certain that Schörner's army wanted to draw the Soviets into the city and fight their last fight against them in what would have become a fortress in ruins.⁴³³ That does not sit well with Pražák's view that the Uprising could not take place before Germany was more or less defeated on its own territory; only when the Soviets had conquered Berlin could the Czechs rebel.⁴³⁴ His moral, psychological reasons stand more scrutiny than that. Kohout is more or less agreeing with Pražák when he writes that, with the Uprising, the Pragers 'were trying to redress the national shame of the Munich capitulation'.⁴³⁵ Pražák suggests a major political reason for the Uprising that no doubt contributed to the Soviet disapproval of the whole enterprise. Because it had involved all strata of society, it had prevented any party-political quarrelling, indeed any chance of a 'social war', that is, a civil war between 'individual classes'.⁴³⁶ In his memoirs he puts it more mildly, informs the reader that he had considered that the Czechs had first 'to ensure national independence and then gradually socialize the country, that only such a method would not [...] split the nation into proletarians and the rest'.⁴³⁷ The poetaster Vojtěch Šmíd (1875–1966), whose father the Germans had executed, declares in 'Do nové práce' (Down to new work) that the barricades had taught Czech society to create a Czech collective, to live for a new kind of work for a future generation.⁴³⁸ In Pražák's mind this new work, fulfilling the 'centuries old Czech national and social endeavour' to establish a society where there were neither 'masters nor slaves', resulted from the Uprising, which has thus served to allow the Czechs to rectify the social matters that 1918 had failed to rectify.⁴³⁹ I do not see the logic of his statement that the Uprising had facilitated the expulsion of the Germans from Czechoslovakia, unless he is thinking again of the fighting as having proved the value of Czechness (Pražák had always been a misoteutonic nationalist, which may be what encouraged the Resistance workers to appoint him chairman of the National Council): 'The Prague Uprising [...] made the expulsion of the Germans from the country a prerequisite and a necessary correction of the centuries-old mistake of our fathers who prepared such terrible

⁴³¹ Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, p. 233.

⁴³² Pražák, 'Pražské květnové povstání roku 1945', p. 12. Pražák repeats the view that the Czechs needed to show the world that they could fight for their freedom and did not want to receive it cheap with foreign help in 'Májová revoluce', p. 8.

⁴³³ Ibid.

⁴³⁴ Pražák, 'Pražské povstání dne pátého května r. 1945', p. 11.

⁴³⁵ Kohout, *Hvězdná hodina vrahů*, p. 298.

⁴³⁶ Pražák, 'Pražské květnové povstání roku 1945', p. 12.

⁴³⁷ Pražák, *Politika a revoluce*, p. 44.

⁴³⁸ Vojtěch Šmíd, *Básně ze zápisníku*, Prague, 1945, unpaginated.

⁴³⁹ Pražák, 'Pražské povstání dne pátého května r. 1945', p. 97.

disasters for the country by letting Germans colonize land within its frontiers.⁴⁴⁰ General Svoboda does find one military reason for the Uprising; it had eased the task of the Red Army to liberate Prague, for otherwise the Red Army would have had to fight house-to-house as they had in Budapest and Vienna. Svoboda opens his report with a mythicization of the Munich Agreement or March 15 in the manner that I mentioned at the beginning of this essay: 'The war began in Prague and ended in Prague!' Incidentally, the lick-spittle K. J. Beneš has his Antonín repeat this notion when he is still billeted in the Nazi's farmhouse as the Uprising erupts: 'We were the first in line, and now we are last at the front.'⁴⁴¹

In his book on the Uprising Stanislav Kokoška successfully knocks on the head another myth: that the Uprising was the culmination of Czech Resistance activities. This is no simple matter. Resistance groups had been planning an armed Czech rebellion ever since the summer of 1939; military planning for such an uprising took place in London in 1943 and 1944; broadcasts from Moscow and London had later frequently urged rebellion. Furthermore, the underground Communist central committee had been preparing the Czech National Council for some time as had a 'bourgeois-' and army-led underground organization in Prague, the Národní výbor (National Committee, which had nothing whatsoever to do with the Communist-inspired local-government national committees). The official Third Republic line was laid out by President Beneš at the inauguration of the National Assembly:

The political Resistance in the Bohemian Lands and in Slovakia [...] really was a national Resistance, truly popular [*lidový*], spontaneous and, ideologically, democratic. It began with the terrible persecution of our intelligentsia and former members of the army and culminated with the revolt of the broadest possible strata of the people [*lid*] in Prague. Apart from in the [...] Slovak and Prague Uprisings, the military manifestation of the Resistance lay primarily in the extensive partisan movement that performed deeds of true martial heroism.⁴⁴²

In fact the Gestapo had been highly effective against army-led Resistance workers,⁴⁴³ and at the beginning of March 1945 they had arrested 'dozens of officials' from the Prague Communist leadership.⁴⁴⁴ At the end of April and very beginning of May there were German attempts to talk with leading Czech patriots about establishing a new government, a peaceful end to the war and so forth, but the Germans got nowhere.⁴⁴⁵ On May 3 they attempted to secure their position by declaring the city of Prague a field hospital,⁴⁴⁶ a ruse frequently made fun of in the fiction of Arnošt Lustig (born 1926), a middle-brow writer whose dominant theme is the Shoah, but who contributed to the literary demythicizing of the Uprising and its immediate aftermath, especially from the mid-1960s onwards.

The atmosphere necessary to encourage a mass revolt in Prague was stimulated by end-of-war chaos that began to make itself felt by April. While Schörner was preparing for a great last stand against the Red Army in Moravia and Bohemia, the number of escaped POWs on the territory was increasing, as were columns of refugees from the east, mainly German, but also Czech, there was a growth in the number of military hospital trains, but also trains with Jewish concentration and death-camp prisoners and, late in April, groups of and single

⁴⁴⁰ Pražák, 'Pražské květnové povstání roku 1945', p. 12.

⁴⁴¹ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, p. 15.

⁴⁴² Beneš, 'Poselství presidenta republiky', p. 22.

⁴⁴³ See Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, especially pp. 50, 45–46.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.

⁴⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, for example, pp. 78–80.

⁴⁴⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 89 (Roučka has May 4).

concentration-camp prisoners who had either escaped the camps or the trains transporting them from the east (sometimes these trains had been disabled by Allied strafing from the air). According to Kokoška the arrival in Roztoky just outside Prague of a train packed with c. 4,000 starving prisoners from the Litoměřice branch of Flossenbürg had a particularly strong impact on Pragers. Something else that had an emotional impact on virtually all Pragers was the rumour that the Reichsmark was no longer valid in the Protectorate. This rumour arose from the fact that the National Bank had ceased honouring Wehrmacht cheques, for they were no longer covered. Queues formed outside the main banks and the chaos grew to such a degree that the Gestapo arrested the senior management of the National Bank, and the Czech Press Office (ČTK, the national press agency) issued a statement that refusing to accept RM in commercial transactions, that is, while shopping, was an act punishable by law.⁴⁴⁷ In fact, however, the Pragers took no notice of this statement, were convinced not only that the RM was worthless but that this spelled the end of the war. Nohejl convincingly describes something of this atmosphere:

It was a Monday like any other [...] That is, before noon approached, when something historic happened: they started refusing to take German money in Prague trams. Just like that. For those eagerly waiting for the slightest hint of long-anaesthetized freedom, this was at last the first moment of what they had been yearning for. [...] Now German soldiers suddenly complied with the exciting announcement of the Czech conductor, threw away their pfennigs and marks and even in some cases obediently alighted from the tram if they had nothing else to pay with. We saw it with our own eyes [...] Exhausted we had been waiting for such a moment so many years that we could not believe what was happening.⁴⁴⁸

The atmosphere in Prague was generally becoming almost light-hearted. May 4 brought a major impulse, first railwaymen and tramworkers, then shopkeepers and ordinary citizens began blacking or whitening out German place-names, the German parts of notices, street-signs and shop-signs. It was believed that this was carried out on the telegraphic orders of the Protectorate Minister of Transport and Technology, Jindřich Kamenický,⁴⁴⁹ but Kokoška casts doubt on that and suggests that railwaymen had brought the idea with them from the provinces where such overpainting was already taking place.⁴⁵⁰ News of other revolts to the east and north-east of Prague no doubt also inspired the Pragers. The first and most disastrous was that in Přerov on May 1. The day before a national committee had been established, and then on the morning of May 1 a rumour started that the Germans had surrendered to the Allies, whereupon a demonstration took place on the main square: German signs were removed, Czechoslovak flags hung out, German and Hungarian soldiers disarmed, but in the afternoon the German army (Wehrmacht and SS) arrived; thirty-one (Roučka has thirty) Czechs died in fighting and a further twenty-one, selected by the Germans as the chief instigators of the revolt, were executed the following day.⁴⁵¹ The Přerov revolt worried Schörner; he subsequently issued an order commanding his troops to keep an eye out for any likely insurgency and to intervene vigorously where necessary, for the Germans could not

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 104.

⁴⁴⁸ Nohejl, *Holýma nohama*, pp. 7–8.

⁴⁴⁹ See, for example, K. Bartošek, J. Doležal and V. Kural, 'Povstání', in Bareš et al., *Odboj a revoluce 1938–1945*, pp. 411–21 (413), and Detlef Brandes, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat*, vol. 2, Munich, Vienna, 1975, p. 122.

⁴⁵⁰ Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, p. 108.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 106–07.

in present circumstances show any signs of weakness.⁴⁵² Soon the news of the death of Hitler ('defending Berlin') inspired other towns, first Nymburk on May 2, and then Poděbrady, Jičín, Nový Bydžov on the same day; on May 3 insurgency spread to Rakovník, and this spread to Železný Brod, Semily and Nová Paka, in all of which armed partisans as well as ordinary citizens were involved in the fighting. The first sign of uprising in Prague came on May 5, when Prague Radio opened the day's transmission with the words 'Je sechs hodin' (It is sechs o'clock); three hours later the Bartoš underground military committee met and decided the armed uprising should start on May 7; this decision led to a mythic refrain in Uprising ideologized historiography, and in *belles-lettres*, to the refrain that the Uprising had started prematurely. This refrain often arose out of the belief that if the Prague insurgents had waited until May 7, the Soviets would have really been able to liberate the city; in other words, it reflected the major problem the Communist ideologists had with the Uprising.

The Communists dealt with the other major problem, the activity of the Czech National Council, quite easily, though this did take some time because its members had become national heroes before the Uprising was over. Before the Council could feel secure, have a firm sense of leadership, the (Czech) National Committee, who believed that they had been chosen to lead the Uprising, and appeared to know little or nothing about the Council, had to be gagged, and indeed the Council had the Committee leadership detained. The best-connected of those leaders was the publisher Adolf Neubert, but the veteran politician Fráňa Zeminová was also amongst them.⁴⁵³ It took the Council, however, nearly two days to assert its authority, which Prague Radio, once it had been wrested from German hands in the fierce first battle of the Uprising (according to Roučka ninety Czechs lost their lives in this battle), helped by broadcasting its orders and messages. Certainly the Council did not instigate the start of the Uprising; nor did it control all the various groups involved in it, including thugs on the rampage like the group of RGs around the serial murderer of married women, Rypl, in Kohout's *Hvězdná hodina vrahů*, or the wretched men who tried to create an uprising in the suburb of Spořilov, where there was a German garrison; in Nohejl's story of the Spořilov men, they had two rifles at the beginning and only twenty at the end of their attempt, before the Germans marched them off to a block of flats a couple of miles away, whose owners they had thrown into the cellar. This reportage novel, *Holýma rukama*, is important because of the emphasis it lays on these potential insurgents' fear — which disappears once they are arrested and start their forced march to what they all imagined would be execution or worse. Naturally enough, fear was normally barely mentioned in Uprising literature.

Preparations for the setting up of the Czech National Council as a revolutionary committee and as something like a war-cabinet had been taking place for two years before the Uprising erupted. Discussions on who should be its president reached their conclusion only shortly

⁴⁵² Order cited in Zámečník, *Český odboj a národní povstání*, p. 77.

⁴⁵³ Zeminová (1882–1962) was a National Socialist M.P. from 1918 to 1939 and again from 1945 to 1948, and a feminist. In 1945 she published a slim volume, *Masaryk-Osvoboditel (sine loco, sine anno*, probably at her own expense), in which she fervently supports the institution of a people's democracy and sees the country's salvation lying in the hands of Edvard Beneš. She writes, for example: 'After the first war Masaryk said clearly: "Without Dr Beneš we would not have the republic." If Masaryk were still alive, he would have said the same after the second war, in 1945' (p. 8). Zeminová was evidently keen to get across her implicitly anti-Communist message as soon as possible and had therefore written her little book in too great a hurry, for in it we find the surprising phrase, 'Time flies like water' (p. 4). The Communists arrested her in 1949 and later gave her a twenty-year sentence; she spent much of her time confined to bed in prison, so that the authorities had to release her early, when she was seventy-eight years old.

before that eruption. For some time the most favoured candidate had been the Communist Structuralist literary critic Jan Mukařovský; another candidate had been the actor Václav Vydra — though Josef Smrkovský (the Communist senior vice-president of the Council) states in his unpublished memoirs that it was not Vydra, but the opera singer Vilém Zitek.⁴⁵⁴ Smrkovský maintains that it was the poet, translator and Communist journalist Lumír Čivrný who proposed that the literary historian without party affiliation, Albert Pražák, be appointed president.⁴⁵⁵ Although Pražák was a politically out-of-date Czechoslovakist, he was an ideal figurehead, given his wide readership, his social links with much of the Czech Establishment, the moral backbone he had demonstrated, especially in public lectures, during the Occupation and, most of all, his complete lack of political experience. When he was recruited to the post he informed his readers that in their discussions the Council had regarded it particularly significant that he was of ‘proletarian’ stock.⁴⁵⁶ His father had been head gardener on one of the Thurn und Taxis estates. It was no doubt also important that he had a fine record as a misoteutonic and misohungarian nationalist. This nationalism, together with his political inexperience and good manners, made him easily manipulable by Smrkovský. In a 1946 report to the Central Committee, Smrkovský wrote that Pražák had always been amenable to the Communist Party line and that even when he disagreed with it on a certain matter, he had never argued against the Communists.⁴⁵⁷ In an Uprising article, Pražák shows no sign of being aware that he had been little more than a puppet; indeed, he praises the Communists and Social Democrats’ contribution to the Council’s running: ‘The organization was remarkable and that was chiefly thanks to the workers’ parties led by Josef Smrkovský.’⁴⁵⁸ Pražák was convinced that the Council was the legal representative of the Czechoslovak government and would remain so until Beneš arrived back in Prague from Košice, when he expected that the Council would be merged with the government. In fact on May 14, two days before Beneš arrived, but four days after the National Front government had come to Prague, the Council was demoted to becoming the Bohemian Provincial National Committee — to match the Slovak and Moravian Committees that had already been established. When Smrkovský offered Pražák the chairmanship of the Committee, he rejected it, clearly disillusioned, though he maintained that he just wanted to return to academic life. Nevertheless, on May 16 he drove out to meet Beneš in the Bohemian countryside as president of the Czech National Council. When they considered it politically expedient, the Communists occasionally resurrected the Council: for example, when the National Court trial of the Protectorate government ended with no death sentences and the man who had been premier and Minister of the Interior from January 1945 to the Uprising (and deputy premier 1942–45), Richard Bienert, received a sentence of only three years, the Communists ensured that the Council had ‘unanimously’

⁴⁵⁴ Extract from Smrkovský’s memoirs presented as an appendix to Pražák, *Politika a revoluce*, pp. 242–43 (242).

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid. For the membership of the Council and an informed but lively brief account of the Uprising, see Stanislav Kokoška’s ‘Sedm dní na vrcholu moci aneb poznámky na okraji paměti Alberta Pražáka’, in Pražák, *Politika a revoluce*, pp. 191–209 (198–99). Lumír Čivrný’s (1915–2001) verse shows a poet with talent for original images and rhythm, but none for expressing a consistent thought in a poem. He was a verbal sensualist who was perhaps attempting ‘pure poetry’, but even pure poetry has to hold together, if it cannot with an idea, at least with a sound. The Symbolist Březina is the strongest influence, even in a poem on Lenin’s face. See his *Hlavice sloupů. Básně*, Prague, 1938.

⁴⁵⁶ Pražák, *Politika a revoluce*, p. 102.

⁴⁵⁷ Kokoška, ‘Sedm dní na vrcholu moci’, p. 201.

⁴⁵⁸ Pražák, ‘Pražské květnové povstání roku 1945’, p. 9.

condemned the verdicts and summoned a demonstration in Old Town Square. Neither Pražák nor the Council vice-presidents representing the People's Party and the National Socialists appeared at the demonstration.⁴⁵⁹ The Council was resurrected for the last time to express support for the Communist take-over. It would have been too compromising for the party to punish Pražák. They did refuse to permit the publication of a festschrift for him as a warrior scholar, but his own works on Czech and Slovak literature were published throughout high Stalinism, for he was considered a harmless positivist. Almost forty years after his death (1956), he was awarded the Order of T. G. Masaryk (1993).

The political obliteration of the popular National Council began almost immediately the Uprising was over. This contributed vitally to the immediate mythicization of history, whereby the insurgency was largely working-class and often Communist, and where the USSR, not the Council's agreement with the Germans, had liberated Prague. As a Communist, Josef Smrkovský suffered more from Soviet indignation at the Uprising than Pražák. When the latter had refused to become chairman of the Provincial National Committee, Smrkovský took the post, but soon resigned or was dismissed (June 7). In the early days of the Council, formally set up on April 29 and 30 (Pražák not nominated until May 3), Smrkovský and Čivrný with the help of ÚRO had ensured that the Communists would take the lead in all the Council's decisions. Smrkovský's chief mistake according to the Soviets was his having dealings with the ROA and his signing the capitulation agreement with the Germans. Because Gottwald defended him, though blamed the Council for thereby compromising the Uprising and incurring the Soviets' negative reaction,⁴⁶⁰ Smrkovský was given senior Party functions, was a member of the presidium of the Central Committee, chairman of the politically vital National Land Fund and deputy commandant of the People's Militia. In 1949 he became Deputy Minister of Agriculture, but during the purges, in 1951, he was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment. He was, however, released in 1955, rehabilitated in 1963 and rejoined the Central Committee in 1966. In 1968 he rejoined the presidium and became chairman of the National Assembly. When Alexander Dubček fell in April 1969, he lost all his Party and government functions and was expelled from the Party in the purge of 1970. He died four years later. Smrkovský was an ambitious manipulator, something of a brute and something of a charmer.

The vice-president of the Council representing the Social Democrats was Josef Kotrlý, a reader in laws at Prague University before the war. He had also signed the capitulation agreement with the Germans. In the Provincial Committee he was closely involved with the expulsion of the Germans, and advised local national committees in the Sudetenland quickly to organize the expulsions before any peace agreements could interfere.⁴⁶¹ Even though he was involved in such matters, indeed the most important matter for many Czech politicians, Kotrlý was 'unexpectedly' summoned to join the diplomatic service.⁴⁶² He became Czechoslovak consul-general in Canada and remained in that country after the Communist take-over. The fate of the vice-president for the National Socialists on the Czech National Council, Otokar Machotka, was similar to Kotrlý's. Like Pražák, the sociologist Machotka had taught at Bratislava University before the war. During the war he had written a plan for

⁴⁵⁹ Frommer, *National Cleansing*, pp. 285–90.

⁴⁶⁰ Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, pp. 5–6.

⁴⁶¹ See Tomáš Staněk and Adrian von Arburg, 'Organizované divoké odsuny?', Pt 3, p. 339.

⁴⁶² Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, p. 6.

the expulsion that was sent to the government-in-exile in London; here he suggested expelling only Germans under the age of forty-one, that is, a form of ethnic eugenics. In the Provincial National Committee he, together with the expulsion's *eminence grise*, the Communist desk-officer for resettlement on the Committee, Miroslav Kreysa, was given the task of composing the directives for local authorities to ensure swift expulsion with the help of the security services and the Red Army.⁴⁶³ After February 1948, he moved to the United States, where he taught at a minor college until his death in 1970. In February 1946 Machotka, still in favour of the nationalization of major industries, published a slender volume directed against the Communists and Communist intolerant political exclusivity and pleading for his own party, *Socialism českého člověka* (The Czech's socialism), whose chief aim appears to be to create a Czech national mythology that in his view comports with the mythology of Palacký and Masaryk. He endeavours to demonstrate the special Czechness of Bohemian and Moravian Gothic and Baroque and the unCzechness of Marxism. Though he avoids the language associated with the Judaeobolshevism topos of pre-war conservatives and subsequently of the Activists, he clearly has sympathy with it; he argues that Marx's Oriental imagination and radicalism, and his Judaism-inspired messianism have no place in the world of the 'realistically thinking Czech', who prefers orderly change to bloody revolution. The reader might find it extraordinary that Machotka sometimes does employ Activist antisemitic terminology, for example: Marx 'belonged to a nation that for millennia had no home and lived scattered amongst all the nations of the world. He [Marx, though grammatically the Jewish nation could be the subject] lacked the natural basis for national sentiment'. In Machotka's mythology the Czechs are special in that their quintessence is lyricality. In the opening of the little book he writes: 'I am a Czech being. Man or woman, I was nurtured on the aboriginal sweetness of Czech soil and am permeated by the sentiments and thinking of other Czech beings.'⁴⁶⁴ It appears that, like Pražák, Machotka was antisemitic as well as misoteutonic.

The Council's vice-president for the People's Party was Vilém Schaffer, who remained a vice-chairman of the Provincial Committee until 1948; he died in 1986, having completely vanished from public life. The secretary general of the Czech National Council was the representative of ÚRO, Josef Kubát, who helped ensure Communist dominance in decisions taken during the Uprising, with the help of the Council's press secretary, Čivrný. The latter had a glittering career in deputy ministerial posts until 1955, when he became a freelance writer and translator; he later supported reform Communism and was expelled from the Party in 1970 like Smrkovský, but unlike him lived to see the fall of the Berlin Wall. On the face of it, ÚRO was autonomous, though that meant that the organization (or the workers, as they would insist) supported the Communists in the Council. Kubát had originally been a left-wing Social Democrat, but had applied to join the underground Communist Party during the Occupation, even though his main Resistance contacts were with the R3. In the underground ÚRO's manifesto of March 1945, the pre-war non-Communists were made responsible for the collapse of the First Republic, and the Allies, with the exception of the USSR, were said to be pursuing an imperialist war.⁴⁶⁵ Because of his association with the R3, Kubát was a major influence on the military aspect of the Uprising; the Council had a military commission led by Jaromír Nechanský, who had been parachuted into the Protectorate from

⁴⁶³ Staněk and von Arburg, 'Organizované divoké odsuny?', Pt 3, pp. 342, 340.

⁴⁶⁴ Otokar Machotka, *Socialism českého člověka*, Prague, 1946, pp. 11, 3.

⁴⁶⁵ Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, pp. 39, 11–12, 18, 43.

Britain. Although among those selected by the Communists for dismissal from the army after the Uprising to placate the Soviets, Nechanský took up various military political positions. He also became an American agent and recently it has been discovered that at the same time he was working as an informer for Reicin's notorious counter-intelligence service.⁴⁶⁶ He soon became a victim of the Party power-struggle, was arrested and executed for treason in 1951. Kubát and the Communists wanted Veselý-Štainer to run military operations during the Uprising, but he was in Moravia when it started, and so the legionary Karel Kutlvašr was appointed commander. Kutlvašr was pensioned off after the Communist take-over and was arrested as early as December 1948; he was sentenced to life imprisonment, amnestied in 1960 and died soon afterwards (1961). In fact, then, the Communists rid themselves in the 1960s of virtually all the more or less liberal men involved in the leadership of the Uprising. This no doubt aided them in the enforcement of collective amnesia.

Judt's view, however, that ordinary citizens' voluntary amnesia was also involved has much to say for it: 'In Eastern Europe a war of national liberation from Germans became the overture and starting point to a domestic revolution that forced inhabitants of the region to describe the wartime years in a way that made no sense and could only be achieved by collective amnesia.'⁴⁶⁷ In the Czech case 'war time' included the Uprising and the expulsion of the Germans. Since 1989 a considerable literature has built up on the expulsion and on the Shoah and the (non-)restitution of Jewish property after the war, but no scholarly book has been published, as far as I know, on ordinary Czech violence against ordinary Czechs from 1939 to 1948, apart from specialist studies on the Czech Fascists and Activists. In his memoirs Pražák does not mention the immediate consequences of the Uprising; elsewhere, one does find the odd expressions of horror at Czech brutality in May and June or even later in some memoirs published after the Changes, for example those of the Abbot of Břevnov.⁴⁶⁸ In *belles-lettres*, however, German and Czech, one will find indications of the extent of brutality that the Uprising, and especially its immediate aftermath, brought with it. Sometimes one will find it in denials and excuses in writers like K. J. Beneš or Aškenazy, sometimes more openly in writers like Škvorecký and Durych. I make no attempt to cover all the literature (I take only fiction, for Bezdíček has much on the verse here). It is mainly in *belles-lettres* that one will get an idea of why it was that when the British SOE officer Harold Perkins arrived in Prague on May 9, his two major impressions were, first, how little war damage the city had suffered compared to other formerly German-occupied cities he had seen and, second, that the Czechs' behaviour was just such as he had been fighting a war against.⁴⁶⁹ In Czech they called it *gestapáctví* or *gestapismus*. That bred an atmosphere of fear which Schallner suggests explains why so very few liberal Czechs reacted to it by deed or in the press before the end of 1945,

⁴⁶⁶ See Jan Gazdík and Luděk Navara, 'Generál Píka je na pamětníku s komunistickými agenty', *Lidové noviny*, July 7 2005. I am grateful to Derek Paton for sending me this article and for being my self-sacrificing book agent in Prague without whom I could not have laid my hands on much of the material I have used here. From this point onwards, my essay contains most of the paper I delivered at the conference in abbreviated form.

⁴⁶⁷ Judt, 'The Past is Another Country', p. 303.

⁴⁶⁸ See, for example, Norbert Heilikopp, 'Witnesses to Socialist Culture. Two Versions of the Czech Experience', *Central Europe*, 4, 2006, 1, pp. 43–64.

⁴⁶⁹ See Vít Smetana, 'Mise plukovníka Perkinse v kontextu britské politiky vůči Československu a pomoci jeho odbojovému hnutí na sklonku 2. světové války', *Historie a vojenství*, 3, 2001, pp. 692–736.

but chiefly during 1947; he further suggests that this fear became simply a continuation of the fear of the Germans during the Occupation.⁴⁷⁰

Amnesia was greatly supported by sentimentalization, particularly in verse concerning the Uprising. Some of this sentimentalization left no mark, for example Julie Kaulová's (?–?) particularly sickly *Revoluce* (1945), where the Uprising becomes little more than the singing of little girls in the garden and of jolly men going into the city to fight: some superficial vernal ritual. Jaroslav Seifert's (1901–86) *Barikáda z rozkvetlých kaštanů* (Barricade made of burgeoning [horse-]chestnut trees) is by far the most anthologized of Uprising poems, indeed has probably grown into part of the Czechs' national self-definition. In the twenty-first century the formerly underground writer Ivo Vodseďálek (born 1931) finds it necessary to glorify the perfection of the poem, Seifert's wisdom in using *kaštan* instead of the technically correct *maďal* for the tree.⁴⁷¹ The poem tells of three fighters at the barricade, but is so dominated by the spring vision of chestnut blossom that the reader or reciter nearly forgets the corpses. The point of the poem is that the young blossom dies and that only the dead trunks remain in the street when the Uprising is long over. The immediate meaning consists then of a picture of those young Pragers, vernal in their youth, dying together with the blossom on the unnaturally felled trees: a sentimental poem about death in the spring of youth. It would be impish overinterpretation to suggest that the dead tree-trunks represent the death of ideals or the shambles of immediately post-war Prague. Flowers on coffins originally served the purpose of concealing the stench of rotting flesh, but the reader doubts Seifert has thought of that. In its literary context the poem constitutes a variant on a cliché associated predominantly with the arrival of the Red Army in Prague, the sight or smell of lilacs (or that smell mingling with the smell of diesel emitted by the tanks); and that arrival is almost always sentimentalized by writers. For some that embodied genuine joy at liberation, for some joy that their Slav socialist brothers had come. On the other hand, the abundance of lilac in May Prague was a fact, and so one will find mention of it in writers who are far from expressing any socialist persuasion: Barényiová's *Prager Totentanz* abounds in lilac. It appears mechanical, however, when Svatá associates lilacs and chestnuts with red-starred Soviet tanks in her Uprising novel — otherwise she pays little attention to the liberation.⁴⁷² An equally common cliché, one that also possibly served amnesia, but that usually has a heroizing function is 'with our/their bare hands' (*holýma rukama* and occasional variants, *holé pěsti* [bare fists/hands] or *prázdnýma rukama* [with empty hands]). Naturally, however heroic the majority of little-men fighters indeed

⁴⁷⁰ Dieter Schallner, 'Obraz Němců a Německa v letech 1945 až 1947. Vznik soudobého stereotypu Němce a Německa', in Křen and Broklová (eds), *Obraz Němců*, pp. 236–52 (251).

⁴⁷¹ Ivo Vodseďálek, *Felixir života*, Brno, 2000, p. 96. Marek takes the title of his book on the Prague Uprising from Seifert's poem (see note 406).

⁴⁷² Svatá, *Pět dnů*, p. 155. For examples of lilacs, see Hořec, *Květen č.1*, pp. 19, 33; Drda, *Němá barikáda*, p. 45; Drda, 'V hodině dvanácté', in Kuchynka (ed.), *5.–9. květen 1945*, pp. 74–77 (76) — here stuffing lilacs in the barrels of Soviet tanks' guns; in what is, as far as I know, the first anthology of Uprising poems, Josef Vopařil (ed.), *Ozvěny barikád. 25 básní z revolučních dnů*, Prague, 1945 (hereafter Vopařil), where the editor declares in his brief introduction that in May during the Occupation, 'the scent of lilacs and roses mingles with the smell of blood, rivers of which were shed in the great prison of Europe', p. 7; in Seifert's 'Praze' (To Prague), Vopařil, p. 15; in Antonín Spálenka's (1908–82) 'Praha barikád' (Prague of the barricades), Vopařil, p. 50; in Ivan Blatný's (1919–90) 'Květen 1945' (May 1945), Vopařil, p. 60; Spálenka's 'Vůně a dým' (Scent and smoke), in Kuchynka (ed.), *5.–9. květen 1945*, pp. 46–47 (46); Arnošt Lustig, *Nikoho neponižíš* (Thou shalt humiliate no one, 1963), renamed *Neslušné sny* (Indecent dreams; Prague, 1995), pp. 89, 91–92; Arnošt Lustig, *Deštivé poledne. Povídky* (A rainy noon. Short stories; Prague 2002), p. 236; Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, p. 201.

were, the cliché usually serves the purpose of formalizing history. Originally the term echoed the plight of the Abyssinians facing Mussolini, but since the phrase is a cliché of its own accord, not just one that was and since then has been particularly associated with the Uprising, one will find it in works about the war, but about different episodes.⁴⁷³ None the less those employing it after the war cannot but have had the Uprising at the back of their minds. So on the German army's entry into Prague on March 15 1939, Zeman writes that most Pragers had simply turned away or disappeared from the streets, for they had nothing to defend themselves with except their 'bare hands' and 'angry spittle'.⁴⁷⁴ Also on 1939, but, more appropriately, on the October 28 demonstration, Drda employs 'with empty hands' and 'bare fingers'.⁴⁷⁵ When K. J. Beneš describes the first post-war government and Beneš as having to make a completely new beginning 'with their bare hands', he is indicating that the 'revolution' is continuing.⁴⁷⁶ Sedlmayerová makes an ideological error when she has her heroine's father not join the Uprising because, he states, it would be useless to join it just with his bare hands, but she soon corrects that in a later work, when the bare hands refers to the Pragers' bravery before German troops.⁴⁷⁷

On the very day that the Uprising erupted, the Communists and ÚRO decided that an armed uprising should take place after a general strike had been declared on May 7; this fact led to a topos of literary and journalistic writing that I have mentioned, namely that the Uprising had started prematurely; some writers stated this more exactly, *viz.* two days early. In fact fighting broke out at noon on May 5 in the Vinohrady district of central Prague, and half an hour later the Prague police began their battle for the Prague Radio building, also in Vinohrady, a battle that the Czechs had won just before 6 p.m. A large part of Kohout's *Hvězdná hodina vrahů* concerns this battle. In the meantime, at 2 o'clock, the Czech National Council had its first meeting with Pražák at its head, but it was not until 9 o'clock that Prague Radio announced its composition and its role as the political leadership of the Uprising. That same evening the ROA sent its first reconnaissance vehicle to the outskirts of the city. By that night the insurgents had the major part of the city under their control, but the Germans held the government and army central areas of the Lesser Town, the Castle district (Hradčany) and Dejvice, apart from smaller pockets like Pražáčka, particularly the school, the besieging of which plays a large role in Pařízek's book, the Zelená liška school in Spořilov — the circumstances of which are described in Nohejl's *Holýma rukama*, the Wilson Station (now

⁴⁷³ Apparently it was employed by the Soviets too. An official allegedly informed Krychtlák that the USSR would enter the war only when the victorious forces were tiring, and the Soviets would take all Europe 'with their bare hands', *Bolševici, Beneš a my*, p. 29.

⁴⁷⁴ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 379.

⁴⁷⁵ Drda, *Němá barikáda*, p. 2.

⁴⁷⁶ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, p. 303.

⁴⁷⁷ Sedlmayerová, *Kačenka*, p. 169, but *Dům na zeleném svahu*, p. 153. For examples of the insurgents' fighting with their bare hands, see Marie Pujmanová (1893–1958), 'Květnová revoluce' (The May revolution), in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 48–51 (49); Drda, *Němá barikáda*, p. 52 and 'Povstaň, povstaň, veliké město pražské', p. 79; Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, pp. 50, 123, 139; Nohejl, *Holýma rukama*, pp. 3, 20, 23, 24, 28, 32, 33, 41; Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, p. 41; Hrubín, 'Pražský máj' (The Prague May), in Vopařil, pp. 37, 41; Hořec, *Květen č. 1*, p. 23; Svatá, *Pět dnů*, p. 96; Pražák, 'Pražské povstání dne pátého května r.1945', p. 97; Kuchynka's (?) commentary on selection of poems about 1938–45, 'Utřpení a štěstí národa v poesii', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 98–103 (101); Ladislav Khas's (1905–76), 'Čestná revoluce' (An honest revolution), in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 143–46 (144); František Buriánek (1917–95), 'Květnová revoluce v české slovesné kultuře' (The May revolution in Czech literary culture), in Javůrková (ed.), *Pražská květnová revoluce*, pp. 101–02 (101); Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, p. 134.

Main Station), the Faculty of Laws (SS headquarters) and the barracks in Vršovice and Karlín. All night and into the following morning the Pragers built barricades, from the city centre to outlying suburbs; Svata's *Pět dnů* centres on the building of a barricade and its subsequent functioning; a German tank is disabled by a disposable bazooka (*Panzerfaust*), and, quite naturally, the heroism of many young people using such bazookas makes for a common theme of Uprising *belles-lettres*. Early in the morning of May 6, Prague Radio first called the ROA to come to the Pragers' aid and by 4 p.m. the first detachments were moving into the city; at 6 p.m. the first negotiations of the Prague military in the Bartolomějská Street police headquarters began with the ROA (by this time the Czech National Council had also taken up residence there). The next day (May 7), German armoured troops moved into Prague from the countryside and tanks began practising a trick frequently mentioned in literature, that is, driving Czechs captured on the way before them as human shields. In the morning the Czech National Council broadcast a statement declaring that the ROA was fighting on its own initiative and that no agreement with them had been entered into. That evening the ROA began leaving Prague, hoping to reach the American lines, though some continued to fight into the evening of May 8. The fighting was particularly fierce on May 7 and 8, but just before midnight on May 8 the Czech National Council and the German command agreed (negotiations in Prague had started over twelve hours before and the capitulation of Prague had been signed eight hours before) that hostilities should cease. The Red Army reached the outskirts of Prague at 4 a.m. on May 9. One particularly hard-fought battle of the Uprising was for Masaryk Station, not far from Wilson Station, which the Germans captured at 10 a.m. on May 8, but the insurgents won it back at 2 a.m. on May 9.

The defence, loss and regaining of Masaryk Station makes the subject of Branald's *Lazaretní vlak*, where the author captures with an effectively cool narration the Germans' shooting at the wall of fifty-eight insurgents and, indeed, some non-insurgents. As in Svata, the Soviet liberation plays only a tiny role, though at one point Red Army tanks are referred to as 'ours'.⁴⁷⁸ Probably the most memorable character in this novel is the gruff, golden-hearted Dr Vošáhlík, who appears to work wonders with the wounded. When everything is over it is in connexion with him that Branald first mentions Jews. Normally, though Škvorecký and Barényiová are exceptions, Uprising novels do not mention even the Jewish returnees from the camps, some of whom were strong enough to join the insurgents, like the POWs (Soviet, Dutch, French, even British) who joined. Vošáhlík determines to go straight to Theresienstadt to help out there. The fact that he or Branald is concerned chiefly with the notorious Little Fortress, where many Czechs and others had been tortured to death or simply executed, and barely at all with the Ghetto, is true to life. The Germans had succeeded in creating (some would say 'exploiting', not 'creating') a general indifference to, or alienation from, the Jews' fate amongst run-of-the-mill Gentile Czechs. I am wary of suggesting that Branald's own attitude to the Jews is evident here. On the other hand, by the time he wrote the novel, he certainly knew that immediately after the Uprising Theresienstadt was turned into an internment camp for Germans; the following is Branald's adaptation of a Czech National Council report:

Tormented by hunger and corporal punishment [*sic*], so-called political criminals lie on the black floors or filthy palliasses next to each other, those sick with typhus next to the uninfected. The [Red Cross] delegation found in the large hospital, which had no medicines, a great number of

⁴⁷⁸ Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, p. 277.

sick, delirious and dying without food and lying in their own filth. There are so many lice there that the German personnel who are meant to tend the prisoners wear hoods and overalls over their clothes, tightly fastened at the neck. They are now refusing to care for the sick and are running away. The worst sight is the courtyard, where the wretched men are so tightly packed that each has only thirty-six [square] centimetres' floor-space. It is here that there is the highest percentage of typhus and typhoid. We started immediately separating the sick from the well, giving injections and blood transfusions, but this is not enough. There is a catastrophic lack of doctors there and of orderlies and medicine. The situation is even worse in the Jewish ghetto. The Health and Social Committee of the National Council is working hand in hand with the International Red Cross, but without help from the transport authorities, it cannot radically improve the terrible situation in Theresienstadt.⁴⁷⁹

Branald is attempting documentary writing of a sort here at the end of his novel, perhaps to support the verisimilitude of the foregoing narration, but one doubts he knew how close to reality he was in mentioning the Jews just in passing. H. G. Adler has the following to say about the arrival in Theresienstadt of Czech doctors like Vošahlík: 'On May 4 [...] officials of the Czech Red Cross and a group of Czech doctors were allowed in; they concerned themselves chiefly with the prisoners from the "Little Fortress"; in many cases, they behaved towards Jews, however, even when it was not a matter of Czechoslovaks, in anything but a friendly manner and sometimes not even with any decency.'⁴⁸⁰

Lazaretní vlak is politically cosy, which cannot be said of Škvorecký's *Zbábělci*, the first novel published in Czechoslovakia at least to mention aspects of the Uprising that had been excluded from literature and other writing. The novel is grossly overlaid with the post-pubertal narrator Danny's antedormnial musings about Irena, whom he would fain love, and with his infantile joy in jazz (a form of music officially disapproved of at the time of publication), but one would like to think that these function as smoke-screens. The novel only tangentially concerns the Prague Uprising; it describes the Náchod version of that Uprising. Danny and his friends hoped for liberation by the Americans or British (and some British POWs do fight the Germans here), as did most middle-class Pragers, as Březovský from time to time suggests, though in what he imagines to be a satirical manner. Indeed the Prague Uprising had been encouraged by rumours that American troops were approaching Prague, something frequently repeated in Uprising literature. Svatá writes ambiguously that the rumours 'proved false'.⁴⁸¹ More politically daring than that is the treatment of the ROA: the Communists among the Náchod insurgents are attacking Vlasov's men and the non-Communists are keen on stopping them doing so. Škvorecký is here alluding to the bravery the ROA had shown in defending Prague from the Germans and to the Soviet condemnation of Prague leaders for having accepted their help. Škvorecký breaks another literary silence in describing Czech cruelty to SS soldiers taken prisoner on May 9, killed on May 10; had it taken place earlier, the satire directed at 'bourgeois' patriotic non-insurgency would not have worked. The narrator Danny tries to find an excuse for this cruelty when he sees the corpses of two Czech brothers, emasculated, their noses cut off and their eyes gouged out.⁴⁸² That such brutality was frequently perpetrated by the SS is borne out by photographs, especially in Roučka, and it is a motif of Uprising literature; for example, Pařízek describes Czech corpses in a similar

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 291–92.

⁴⁸⁰ H. G. Adler, *Theresienstadt 1941–1945. Das Antlitz einer Zwangsgemeinschaft. Geschichte, Soziologie, Psychologie*, Tübingen, 1955, pp. 211–12.

⁴⁸¹ Svatá, *Pět dnů*, p. 4.

⁴⁸² Josef Škvorecký, *Zbábělci*, Prague, 1958, p. 312.

state.⁴⁸³ Danny by no means approves of the Czechs' behaviour. They beat the SS men until they are bleeding wrecks and then lead them out into the yard and shoot them in the back of the head. There are plenty of onlookers, some swearing at the Germans, some just watching.⁴⁸⁴ The point here is that Czech violence was perpetrated publicly, not in secret like the German.

Czech brutality towards the defeated Germans, whether soldiers or civilians, Nazis or not, is epitomized in literature (in German from the 1950s, in Czech from the late 1960s, normally only in émigré writers) by portrayals of 'living torches'. Of only literary historical interest, though experiencing such sights could have inspired some cruelty during the expulsion, is Reicin and Mareš's account of living torches of a different nature: 'Sokolovo thundering with cannon-fire, Sokolovo in flames, in which living torches of girls, women and old ladies flicker together with the shadows of smoke-blackened soldiers.'⁴⁸⁵ Staněk points out that the common view that only members of the Gestapo (or informers, Nazi judges or SS men) suffered living-torch murder is not true. Apparently some Germans (possibly SS) after being tortured (red-hot wires driven behind finger-nails, genitals beaten), but while still alive, were wrapped in cellulose film and burnt alive. In Bystřice pod Pernštejnem a German interpreter who owned a valuable stamp collection was hung on a tree, dowsed in petrol and burned alive.⁴⁸⁶ That comes close to the conventional Czech living-torch murder, wherein, however, the victim was normally hung upside-down on a lamp-post, usually by both legs, sometimes by one. Probably the earliest literary representation of the convention is to be found in the Bohemian-German expellee Josef Mühlberger's (1903–85) autobiographical short story *Der Galgen im Weinberg* (Gallows in the vineyard, 1951). It takes place in the yard of Pankrác prison in Prague:

They strung one of us up head down because they had had enough of their customary torturing. So hanging by the feet, a fire under his head, only a tame little fire so that it went slowly, and we all around him so that we could watch, and the crying —. That will remain in the golden city [of Prague] forever, remain in the world forever, the whimpering, the frying skull, the eyes oozing from their sockets and then the whimpering died away.⁴⁸⁷

Mühlberger makes a link with the death of John Huss and with the Thirty Years' War. One notes that the Pankrác Czechs do not use petrol or paraffin in this case. As Branald led us to think of H. G. Adler, so once more we think of Adler when reading Mühlberger's episodes set in Theresienstadt. The narrator's son finds a copy of Mörike's *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag* (Mozart on the way to Prague) left by the German guards in their plundering of Jews' property. During one of the regular friskings a Czech finds the book, tears it up, hits the boy and then tramples him to death. Other Germans were beaten or trampled to death there by Czechs for being too slow at their work. H. G. Adler writes:

Bohemian Germans and Reich German refugees were delivered to the 'Little Fortress'. Undoubtedly there were amongst them some who were guilty of many things during the Occupation, but the majority, among them children and adolescents, were imprisoned only because they were

⁴⁸³ Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, p. 119.

⁴⁸⁴ Škvorecký, *Zbabělci*, pp. 318–19.

⁴⁸⁵ Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, p. 87.

⁴⁸⁶ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, pp. 197, 130, 250.

⁴⁸⁷ Josef Mühlberger, *Der Galgen im Weinberg*, reprinted in Mühlberger, *Der Galgen im Weinberg. Erzählungen*, Munich, Eßlingen, 1960, pp. 155–74 (160).

Germans. Only because they were Germans ...? The clause sounds frighteningly familiar; one just had to change 'German' to 'Jewish'. The rags that Germans had to wear were daubed with swastikas.⁴⁸⁸ They had miserable rations and were ill-treated; they had no better a time of it than had been usual in German concentration camps. The sole difference lay in the fact that the SS-run systematic murder was absent; now merciless revenge was at work. The camp was under Czech administration, but this administration did not stop Russians from raping women prisoners. Let it be said to the credit of the Theresienstadt Jews that they never assaulted these prisoners, who were sent into the town [ghetto] to sweep the streets and do other menial jobs, but also to tend those sick with typhoid, although both Russians and Czechs urged the Jews to do so.⁴⁸⁹

Barényiová is haunted by the sight of living torches, but perhaps more by Czech insurgents making room in a hospital for their wounded on May 9 by clearing out sick German children and immuring them in an air-raid shelter on Charles Square. The good Communist Martin is informed: 'This German brood, the kids from the children's hospital, are to be walled up. In that bunker over there.' In *Nicht wundern, nur . . .* (Not wondering, but . . .) Barényiová goes into more detail, for this is reportage, not fiction, and she may well be exaggerating the numbers: 'Howling and bellowing thousands of Czechs, predominantly young women, were jostling around the air-raid shelter and eagerly watching the children, perhaps 300 of them, being stuffed into it. One of the last children, a little girl, had to be carried, for her legs had been badly burnt in an air-raid in the Reich, and this child was carrying a doll and smiling at the Czechs.' Only one of the Czech women, who was at an advanced stage of pregnancy, had objected, knelt on the ground and beseeched the rest: "These children are innocent [. . .] and we are after all Masaryk's nation —, we are humanists." The humanist nation of Masaryk rushed forward and finally she received a "coup de grâce", that is, a kick in the belly.⁴⁹⁰ As bad as living-torch murder is the scene where a young SS man first has an ear sheared off and then little lumps of meat cut out of his body, which Czechs jostle to get hold of so they can have a taste; he is kept conscious as long as possible by having water or vinegar poured over him. In the howling mêlée one of the Czech women's child is trampled to death.⁴⁹¹ The first of Barényiová's living torches is an elderly woman, the second a soldier:

For a while, no one [in the crowd] can see anything. Then the rope tautens and above the onlookers' heads hang two legs in darned black stockings, old fashioned white bloomers with red embroidery and a blue skirt that is billowing like a half-open umbrella.

'Higher,' bawls the crowd. 'We want to see everything, not just her bloomers and her backside!'

'They've first got to prepare the old woman with paraffin and petrol,' those standing nearest call out.

This matter is attended to by an elegant, delightful-looking woman. She gracefully sprinkles the old lady's steel-grey hair, then her black blouse, skirt and stockings with liquid from a shiny tin.

⁴⁸⁸ The French, we remember, painted swastikas on the foreheads of informers and collaborators (and, as in the Czech case, collaborators included prostitutes who had serviced German punters). In Bohemia the swastikas were normally daubed (with house paint or tar) over the whole face. Not only German internees' or expelled's clothes had swastikas painted on them, but also their suitcases. All Germans soon had to wear arm-bands with 'N' (*Němec*, German) on them, as Jews had had to wear the Star of David.

⁴⁸⁹ Adler, *Theresienstadt 1941-1945*, pp. 214-15.

⁴⁹⁰ Barényi, *Prager Totentanz*, p. 262; scene briefly mentioned, Barényi, *Das tote Geleise*, p. 304; von Barényi, *Nicht wundern, nur . . .*, pp. 59-60. This woman was the wife of the publisher Vladislav Coufal, who was tried as a collaborator in 1946 and sentenced to two years in prison with hard labour and three months of it 'on a hard bed'; the sentence was, however, later quashed. See Michal Bauer, *Ideologie a paměť. Literatura a instituce na přelomu 40. a 50. let*, Jinočany, 2003, pp. 36-37.

⁴⁹¹ Barényiová, *Prager Totentanz*, pp. 225-27.

‘Vinegar on her head, quick, the old woman has stopped whimpering, the brute has fainted. Isn’t there a doctor here? A doctor should always be there for such things, otherwise Germans die prematurely.’

Finally, the old lady is burning. But all one heard was one gurgling scream.

‘That’s not it,’ protested the crowd. ‘She’d had it even before the roasting began!’

‘She was too old for us to have any fun!’

‘Yes, we need something young!’

The second burning — this time it was a German soldier — lasted over an hour and the crowd was thoroughly satisfied. The soldier begged and cursed, called out for his mother; he wept and pleaded and laughed a gruesome, desperate laugh. Shortly before he died, he started singing [that is, like John Huss].

When a woman tries to calm her sobbing child by telling it that the people hanging on the lamp-posts are not human beings, an elderly man reacts by asking whether Czechs are human beings if they allow such things to happen. The woman angrily calls him a ‘degenerate capitalist’ and he replies that they are Masaryk’s nation; someone in the crowd declares him an ‘enemy of the people’ and calls on the others to string him up. He tells them the Germans had executed both his sons and a daughter-in-law, but then he has a heart attack and dies.⁴⁹² That is typical of Barényiová’s tendency to melodrama, but the point is well enough made. Barényiová’s Frau Blümelein, who had spent the war in Theresienstadt, witnesses the conversion of the SS man into canapé-size meat and in his eyes she sees the same expression as she had seen in the eyes of fellow-Jews being beaten to death there. Arnošt Lustig, who had spent most of the war in Theresienstadt and Auschwitz and had begun mentioning the dark side of the Uprising in the 1960s, then especially in his fiction and essays from the 1980s onwards (he had defected soon after the Warsaw Pact intervention), returns again and again to living torches and to other forms of Czech brutality. While Barényiová is appalled to see a culture she had admired suddenly becoming barbaric, Lustig is disgusted that the Czechs can be as brutal to Germans as the Germans had been to Jews. One of his narrators remembers it as follows:

When Prague had risen and it was all over, [I saw them] throwing Germans out of upstairs windows or forcing them to jump, sometimes whole families who had moved to Prague and then not had time to escape. [...] They beat Germans, children, women, old people just as, before, some Germans had beaten us [Jews]. Something was being settled, but it was not pleasant. They were punishing without court hearing just as, before, they had punished us. They hung them by the legs on lamp-posts, poured petrol all over them and then set light to their hair. [...] I saw some women lifting their skirts and urinating on the heads of these suspended Germans. People started doing a ring-dance around these burnt corpses. It was horrifying.⁴⁹³

Unlike Barényiová, who blames all classes, but particularly the bourgeoisie, Lustig puts the blame for such episodes on the working class, those who benefited or had had the opportunity to benefit most from the Occupation:

I have heard that during the Prague Uprising, when the brave were defending the barricades and the less brave attaching themselves to those barricades when it was all over so that they could obtain a certificate, and the vast majority, the prudent, indifferent and cowardly ones, who for the sake of overtime pay, larger rations of meat and sugar and fat had, during the war, worked on the conveyor-belts producing thousands of millions of rounds of ammunition as well as tanks and

⁴⁹² Ibid., pp. 253–55. She later grossly (I assume) exaggerates the number of such living torches, writes that there were hundreds of them between May 5 and 9. See von Barényi, *Nicht wundern, nur ...*, p. 42.

⁴⁹³ Arnošt Lustig, *Propast*, 1996, pp. 74–75.

locomotives and bayonets for the Nazi war machine, and, after the shooting was over, compensated for their war-time lack of courage by yelling revolutionary slogans and driving the remnants of the German population, beating them, all the way to Wenceslas Square, then making them tear up [= put back in place] the cobbles, and they beat and killed anyone speaking German [...] in order to make up for what they lacked in real patriotism, and [I have heard] that it was at this time that amongst the injured German women, Bohumil Hrabal found his wife, Pipsinka, a sixteen-year-old girl dressed in a tattered Hitlerjugend [=? Bund Deutscher Mädels] uniform, lying bleeding on the pavement.⁴⁹⁴

According to Roučka, the Czechs began beating to death disarmed German soldiers on the first day of the Uprising. From a literary historical point of view, Kohout's exploitation of the human-torch motif in *Hvězdná hodina vrahů* is more complex than Barényiová's or Lustig's. A German Kriminalrat recently become a born-again Czech, particularly in one sentimental monologue, expresses Kohout's own haematic and linguistic nationalism. He has changed his name from Buback back to Bubák, too. He has finally caught up with the serial killer Ryp, who had become a particularly violent RG, but Ryp gets him first and makes a living torch of him. This is still fairly early on in the Uprising. What the novel actually does, then, is to claim that a psychopath had established the Czech institution of living torches.

Another major motif of literature concerned with the Uprising and the expulsion is the German sniper, a motif that soon becomes inseparable from that of the Werwolf/Wehrwolf. Writers normally exploit it to convey the notion that German sniping was wanton, arbitrary, not that Germans did not fire at entirely innocent crowds or that their sniping often became a matter of despair rather than an expression of the determination to defeat the enemy. The sniper motif comports with the centuries-old Czech topos of the sly Teuton that I considered above. In his pedestrian journalistic manner Pařízek associates sniping with general German gun-ownership at the time of the Uprising (Germans in Bohemia, unlike Czechs, were permitted to keep firearms in their homes; even the gentle Hübler's husband had a pistol).

Sniper fire! How many good Czechs persisted without an inkling of the fact that they were victims of devious murderers! How many courageous fighters died while searching German flats or checking out and clearing attics and rooftops! [...] From time to time the sharp crack of a shot rang out from behind the locked doors of a German flat. Sometimes more than one. Depending on how big the family was that had decided on suicide.⁴⁹⁵

In the official 1946 commemorative volume, in what is otherwise a generally factual account of the Uprising, we receive the somewhat hysterical information that German civilians in Prague had been supplied with a great deal of arms and ammunition, and

From windows, roofs and balconies at first sight kindly sixty-year-old grandmothers were shooting; invalids with one or both legs missing were shooting; twelve-year-old members of the Hitlerjugend and German schoolgirls were shooting. For months before the revolution the whole German population of every age and sex underwent firearms training and there were great arsenals of infantry weapons, ammunition, even hand-grenades in German flats. On this day [May 6] the chief task was clearing such blocks, and the snipers and their families were concentrated in improvised prison camps, in cinemas, in the function rooms of public houses, in schools and so forth. In this way [the insurgents] acquired weapons and ammunition for the coming battle.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁴ Arnošt Lustig and František Cinger, *3 X 18 (portréty a postřehy)*, Prague, 2002, p. 273.

⁴⁹⁵ Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, p. 41.

⁴⁹⁶ Soukup, 'Přehled bojů Pražského povstání ve dnech 5.–9. května 1945', p. 28.

Březovský has a 'Slit-eyed Red Army woman' who is directing the traffic shot by a German sniper on May 9.⁴⁹⁷ This is intended to be particularly shocking, not so much because she is a member of the glorious Red Army, but because she is a policewoman on point duty; on top of that, for the *parteitreu* author, the incident typifies the hostility between the peaceful Slavs and the devious Germans. In *Prager Totentanz* Barényiová presents us with an unusual 'German' woman sniper, the beautiful Italian circus artiste Rosita Bella. She is an animal-lover (like Barényiová) and she takes to sniping on May 9 in revenge for the Czech insurgents having killed all the circus animals. (They had also tortured or killed, or both, all her colleagues.) She takes up position in the spire of the Týn church and when her ammunition runs out, she throws herself down onto Old Town Square. Barényiová draws her as an entirely admirable human being. Women normally help male German snipers in Czech literature. Thus a Wehrmacht officer is helped in his sniping by his mother and they are dealt with by a Soviet officer in Aškenazy's *Květnové hvězdy*. A parallel case, which Bezdíček points out, occurs in Drda's *Němá barikáda*. Here an elderly mother tries to protect her physician son, who is sniping from their flat and has just killed a Czech child. On May 8 the tenants of the block where Svatá's Uprising novel is set discover that an elderly Prague German, Kurt Kelch (*sic*), had been sniping and was responsible for several deaths, most important that of a girl from the block, but also those of, for example, two Czechs who were escorting a captured SS officer down the street. Svatá suggests that Kelch is homosexual by the way he kept his flat clean and tidy by himself 'and how thoroughly! Like a woman!'.⁴⁹⁸ We know from her pre-war writing that she despised homosexuals and, anyway, as we have seen, homosexuality and Nazism went together for many Czechs.⁴⁹⁹ Kurt Kelch is a very caricature of a Nazi: 'Furious hatred distorted Kelch's thin, fanatical face.' During and immediately after the war, fanatical was synonymous with Nazi, because fanaticism was considered a virtue by the Nazis and thus by the Activists.⁵⁰⁰ The eponymous heroine's father in Körner's *Adelheid* is hiding in the woods near their old family house and he has a habit of sniping at Czechs, at one point kills a railwayman, for reasons we do not learn. He also kills the good policeman and comes close to stabbing to death the main male character in the novel. Family loyalty is at play here, for Adelheid tries to save her brother from being discovered by the Czechs. She is by no means as nasty as the mothers in Aškenazy and Drda. A similar German who murders for no apparent reason appears in Věra Sládková's (born 1927) *Kouzelníkův návrat* (A magician's return, 1982); the German takes in his lorry a Czech schoolmaster and his wife to their new place of work in the Sudetenland, where they want to help build a new society; the lorry breaks down; the German finds a place to sleep for them in a nearby inn, then murders the master the next morning — apparently just because he is part of the programme of removing Germans from their homes and land. Sládková's book constitutes a fine example of an author paying tribute to the mechanical misotheutonium fostered by the Normalization regime.

⁴⁹⁷ Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, p. 199.

⁴⁹⁸ Svatá, *Pět dnů*, p. 52.

⁴⁹⁹ See Mark Cornwall on the Rutha scandal and its impact (I mentioned it in connexion with Adolf Zeman) on Czech, Nazi and Sudeten German attitudes to homosexuality and the homoerotic in Cornwall, 'Heinrich Rutha and the Unraveling of a Homosexual Scandal in 1930s Czechoslovakia', *GLQ*, 8, 2002, 3, pp. 319–47. His book *Struggle for Youth. The Bohemian World of Heinz Rutha*, is forthcoming (Cambridge MA, 2009).

⁵⁰⁰ Svatá, *Pět dnů*, p. 49. For 'fanatical', see my quotation from Vajtauer at note 71.

The Wehrwolf (modelled on 'Wehrmacht' [defence force], so 'defence wolf', but also on 'Werwolf', 'werewolf') is an essential element of Czech 1945–46 mythology. Because the term occurs in documents from the times, Czech writers and, indeed, historians even of the highest calibre, assume that such an organization of lone or small-group SS or Nazis fighting in the forests after Germany's unconditional surrender were extensively active in Bohemia and Moravia. No one doubts that such desperate lone fighters or groups of fighters did exist, often men attempting to fight their way home or to presumed sanctuary in western Germany, that arms caches were found and that some murders behind the Allied lines were committed by 'Werwölfe' (for example, the murder of the lord-mayor of Aix-la-Chapelle), but that such an organization was effectively fighting in Bohemia and Moravia is not supported by any evidence.⁵⁰¹ Staněk and von Arburg, however, write of the 'activities of werewolves'.⁵⁰² Suspected contact with Werwölfe was a ground for torture. For example, apparently with the full knowledge of Col. Prášil of the new Czechoslovak Army and with members of Reicin's counter-intelligence service in attendance, 'several boys [...] aged between thirteen and fifteen' were tortured for such contact: 'their testicles were crushed; they had to drink boiling water; they were beaten with sticks on the soles of their feet, which they also ironed with a red-hot iron . . . they were strung up . . . red-hot needles were driven into their bodies.' This happened at Kálek near Chomutov in the autumn of 1945.⁵⁰³ Like so much in the immediately post-war years, such events look back to German brutality and forward to post-February 1948 brutality, when, for example, right into the 1960s, testicle-crushing was known by the police as 'tomato purée'. A similar case took place in Liberec. Here a large detachment of RGs (1,300 men), whose activities spread over the Jablonec and Frýdlant areas as well, was led by 'Lt-Col.' Rudolf Rokos, a man with a criminal background who claimed to be a doctor of laws. Rokos set up his own prison in Jablonecká Street in Liberec. Here he tortured Germans suspected of contacts with the Werwölfe. His victims were 'struck and beaten with sticks and knouts . . . and dining forks were driven behind their finger-nails, to secure, as Rokos declared, confessions of the deeds they were accused of'. Three of his 'suspects' died as a consequence of this torture. In this case Rokos and his aide Hložek were arrested in August 1945 and held in custody at the Liberec Regional Court. 'Partisans' objected to the treatment of the RG men and although they were sent on to Pankrác prison, by October it was decided to cease criminal proceedings against them.⁵⁰⁴ According to Staněk, Capt. Karel Vaš of the OBZ was responsible for a large number of atrocities in the Sudetenland. He had been an NKVD agent for several years and had sent many groups into the borderlands 'to liquidate groups of Wehrwölfe'.⁵⁰⁵ No one doubts that the Communist Party was deeply involved in such atrocities. The Party exploited this in two different ways. First, they could gain credit with ordinary Czechs for being in the forefront of punishing Germans and saving Czechs from potential German attacks in the future. Second, the behaviour of Czechs in the borderlands both gave the Party a hold over a large number of people (they could easily be blackmailed

⁵⁰¹ See Bryant, *Prague in Black*, p. 240.

⁵⁰² Tomáš Staněk and Adrian von Arburg, 'Organizované divoké odsuny?', Pt 1, *Soudobé dějiny*, 3–4, 2005, pp. 465–533 (473).

⁵⁰³ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, p. 133.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 161–62.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29. Apparently the search for Wehrwölfe was a constant theme of the 1945–46 Czech press; see *ibid.*, p. 69. A Freikorps (Adolf) Hitler does appear to have existed for a brief time; see *ibid.*, p. 70 and Marek, *Barikáda z kaštanů*, p. 76.

if they did not toe the line) and provided excellent candidates for future Communist law-enforcement. Barényiová makes fun of the Czech preoccupation with Werwölfe. According to her, Prague Radio had dreamed up the idea ('Junge Wehrwölfe') as people to be killed like members of the Hitlerjugend.⁵⁰⁶ Later, she makes fun of Drda for his elderly woman helping in sniping at Czechs by labelling her an 'alte Wehrwölfin'; she also writes that Drda had 'collaborated busily with the Germans'.⁵⁰⁷ Since she labels *Němá barikáda* a novel, she somewhat undermines this last statement, though, for all I know, he had been a collaborator: he was certainly a loyal servant of Stalinism later. The journalist de Zayas quotes a broadcast by the politician Hubert Ripka (whom Barényiová, like the Nazis, despised) from August 20 1945: 'one should understand the feelings of our people, who are being consistently attacked by Werewolf organizations, and whose property is still being destroyed.'⁵⁰⁸ In Branald's *Lazaretní vlak*, Wehrwolf groups are efficient at acquiring intelligence for the German army about the Czechs at the end of the war. Adolf Zeman writes of 1938–39 Bohemian Germans as 'future Werewolves' and also their children as 'the future Hitlerjugend, future gougers-out of eyes and Werewolves'.⁵⁰⁹ Sedlmayerová introduces a factory-owner, Milch: 'He died during the revolution. His wife thinks he died of a stroke, but it is said that our people killed him, when they discovered he was hiding Wehrwölfe in his garden.'⁵¹⁰ Elsewhere she has some young Czech hooligans (RG?) who are looking for booty in the borderlands town where the novel is set, trying to frighten the honourable settlers by stating: 'You've got Wehrwölfe in your backyard, but still you sleep easy in your beds.'⁵¹¹ K. J. Beneš associates, to some degree accurately, the 'Werewolves' directly with the SS.⁵¹² Körner has the 'Werewolves' as an organization with its own code signs, transmitted by being carved in wood in forests.⁵¹³ At the climax of his werewolf novel, the Czechoslovak Army surrounds a group and machine-guns them all down; the children who escaped the bullets by ducking behind a wall are subsequently shot in the head at close range. Even Kohout still has 'werewolves'.⁵¹⁴ Pritchard informs us that thousands of young people were interned in the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany under suspicion of being Wehrwölfe, but that they belonged only to a 'supposed Nazi underground movement'.⁵¹⁵ There is no doubt the Soviets used the real existence of small groups of

⁵⁰⁶ Barényi, *Prager Totentanz*, p. 170.

⁵⁰⁷ Barényi, *Das tote Geleise*, pp. 216–17.

⁵⁰⁸ Alfred M. de Zayas, *Nemesis at Potsdam. The Anglo-Americans and the Expulsion of the Germans. Background, Execution, Consequences*, London, Henley, Boston MA, 1977, p. 98.

⁵⁰⁹ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, pp. 337, 381.

⁵¹⁰ Sedlmayerová, *Dům na zeleném svahu*, p. 66.

⁵¹¹ Sedlmayerová, *Překročný práh*, p. 101.

⁵¹² K. J. Beneš, *Olnivé písmo*, pp. 32, 91, 112, 282.

⁵¹³ Körner, *Zánik samoty Berhof*, for the Werewolf myth, see esp. pp. 125, 138, 140, 159.

⁵¹⁴ Kohout, *Hvězdná hodina vrahů*, p. 294.

⁵¹⁵ Gareth Pritchard, 'Young People and Youth Movements in the Soviet Zone of Occupied Germany', in Pynsent (ed.), *The Phoney Peace*, pp. 149–61 (149). Perry Biddiscombe in *Werwolf! The History of the National Socialist Guerrilla Movement 1944–1946* (Toronto, Buffalo NY, 1998), assesses in detail how the 'orthodox' view, that there was no German guerilla/partisan movement at the end of the war, is grossly exaggerated. It is, he tells us true, that Goebbels called anyone who offered any act of resistance behind the enemy lines or on the territory of pre-1918 Germany a *Werwolf/Wehrwolf*. The Soviets and the politicians of their satellite states 'contrived to worry about the organization well into the 1950s, whereas the Western Allies were convinced all German organized partisan activity had ceased by the summer of 1945' (p. 51). Martin Bormann had ordered Werwolf activity to cease on May 1 1945 (p. 133).

Werwölfe/Wehrwölfe as a weapon for killing, using as slave labour, or brainwashing young Germans in the Soviet zone. The Werwolf organization served as a bogeyman that gave additional justification to the expulsion and to any Czech violence that might take place. It supported the Czech nationalist notion of Germans as unreformable Nazis, too.

Czech *belles-lettres* of the 1945–89 period may contain virtually nothing about Czech violence against innocent Czechs, but Michal Mareš's 1947 articles in Peroutka's *Dnešek* provide much information about it. Soon, however, even Peroutka became frightened of publishing any more of them. Mareš was expelled from the Communist Party largely because of them. He describes criminals taking over national committees and torturing their political opponents and those who they considered might become their opponents. The torturers were Czech and Slovak, men and women. Barényiová does have something on Czech violence against Czechs, the nastiest Czech being the RG Alena who claims to have killed 111 Germans, but is in the end killed by another RG who has some decency; the good RG is a rare occurrence in literature except in particularly *parteitreu* writing, but Staněk does give a few instances of RGs intervening to prevent atrocities though they were among the main perpetrators of atrocities (particularly during the expulsion). Pařízek was himself an RG and has nothing but praise for their units during the Uprising. Associated with Czech violence against Czechs are portrayals of Gestapo agents becoming agents of the StB (State Security) or people's judges. We find three examples of that in Barényiová's *Prager Totentanz* (four if one includes a police secretary), and three in her novel set in 1950s Munich, *Der tote Briefkasten* (The dead-letter box, 1960). The topos arises again in Nahodilová's *Denemarková*. Staněk reports little concerning violence against Czechs. In Blatná a group of Czechs was interned accused of collaboration; three died under torture; soon the rest were declared innocent and released.⁵¹⁶ In the Moravian capital, in the Kounic/Kaunitz halls of residence that had been the main site of Gestapo torture and execution during the war, housed both German and Czech would-be collaborators, the interrogators (one of them, Jan Pavelek, later became governor of the notorious Communist-period prison, Mírov), used methods like extracting finger-nails, driving red-hot iron spikes through feet, quite apart from beating, frequently to death. Other internees had to dispose of the corpses. The man ultimately responsible for this

⁵¹⁵ *Continued*

The SS version of the Werwolf (werewolf) organization was founded in September 1944, and led by General Hans Prätzmann. The name of the organization was taken from Hermann Löns's novel concerning partisans on the Lüneberger Heide during the Thirty Years' War, *Der Wehrwolf* (1910). This novel was reprinted in the autumn of 1944 at the chancellery's command. None the less, the spelling *Werwolf* was used by the Nazis, Biddiscombe suggests, because of Peter von Heydebreck's 1920s Bund Wehrwolf, which had been 'a competitor to the NSDAP' (p. 14). Apart from the SS Werwolf there was a Hitlerjugend Werwolf, and smaller groups like the Edelweiss-Piraten. There was an élite Werwolf training school in Slovakia (pp. 96, 106), but also some training camps in the Sudetenland and the Protectorate under the overall command of K. H. Frank (p. 228). None the less, some Werwolf groups in Bohemia were lying in wait for American arms drops, for they, as other groups, expected soon to be fighting with the Americans against the USSR (p. 52). Because of the military situation, the Werwolf organization had not been active behind the lines in the Bohemian Lands; on the other hand, German partisans, Werwolf or not, certainly existed in the (former) Sudetenland immediately after the war until the Czechs wiped out 'much of the core of the movement' in autumn 1945 (p. 53). There is another aspect to the matter. In the period and before 'werewolf' (*vlkodlak*) was used by Fink to mean Germans altogether, though especially Nazis (see *Hnědá bestie*, esp. pp. 69, 14, 15, 45, 224, 226) and Arnošt Procházka (1869–1925) called his book-form review of a war novel by Louis Dumur *Němečtí vlkodlaci* (German werewolves, 1921).

⁵¹⁶ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, p. 215.

was one František Czech, who had declared himself German during the war and apparently served in the Wehrmacht, but had then become an official local assistant to the NKVD.⁵¹⁷

If one includes internment, which one must, the expulsion of Germans from Bohemia and Moravia began more or less concurrently with the Uprising, and finished in the spring of 1946.⁵¹⁸ In their series of three articles (*Soudobé dějiny* [Contemporary history], 2005–06) Staněk and von Arburg have demonstrated that the conventional division of the expulsion into the illicit (*divoký, wilde*) and the organized (post-Potsdam, that is, after the Allied injunction that it must be ‘orderly and humane’) makes no sense. The expulsion had been declared policy and many details were worked out during the war, and the Provincial Committee and ministries had begun further working out details of its organization immediately after liberation. The leadership of the new Czechoslovak Army was ultimately responsible for all the atrocities that took place. The idea of expelling at least half the Germans was first written down by Beneš in a plan to be put before the French government in mid-September 1938 – that is, before the Munich Agreement was signed. German Socialists and Jewish Germans were to remain.⁵¹⁹ In 1941 the PVVZ wanted something similar, and in 1942 Emil Sobota suggests an expulsion of all Sudeten Germans, while admitting that it would leave many economic gaps to be filled and that it would be unfair towards those Germans who had demonstrated themselves to be ‘honourable democrats’ between 1935 and 1938. He also understands expulsion as a means of ensuring that Czechoslovakia becomes a true nation state, which will permit Czechoslovaks to regain their dignity.⁵²⁰ In 1943, President Beneš accepted a detailed plan, a plan which was fulfilled though not in the impossibly short time he and his military advisers foresaw. 2,846,000 Germans were to be expelled in the first week of peace, a further 381,000 in the subsequent week; a campaign of terror was to be launched to encourage the Germans to go. In 1944 the military worked this terror campaign out in more detail, but were aware it would be unrealizable if the Western Allies liberated the country.⁵²¹ Certainly some deception was involved when Beneš persuaded the Americans and British to agree in principle to the expulsions in 1943. He had made sure the expulsions were carried out as expeditiously as possible so that at the Potsdam conference the Allies were faced with something like a *fait accompli*; methods of expulsion did not change until late in the autumn, the beginning of winter. Řezáč makes much of Soviet help in expelling the Germans (*Nástup*) and K. J. Beneš gives us the Stalinist distortion when he writes of ‘the Moscow diplomacy that pushed through the resettlement [*přesídlení* = *Umsiedlung*] of our Germans and the important extension of our border with Poland’.⁵²² In fact, whereas the Americans and British had agreed in principle in May, Stalin did not finally agree until December 1943.⁵²³ The next year things looked a little different to Klement Gottwald in Moscow. He surprised the National Socialist Jaroslav Stránský that actually the West had rejected the expulsion, but that the Red

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 241, 243.

⁵¹⁸ The most reliable account of the expulsion in English so far is to be found in essays contained in P. Ther and A. Siljak (eds), *Redrawing Nations. Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe*, Lanham MD, 2001.

⁵¹⁹ Detlef Brandes, ‘Edvard Beneš und die Pläne Vertreibung/Aussiedlung der Deutschen und Ungarn 1938–1945’, in Zand and Holý (eds), *Transfer*, pp. 11–28 (11). See also Staněk and von Arburg, ‘Organizované divoké odsuny?’, Pt 1, p. 480.

⁵²⁰ Sobota, *Glossy*, pp. 111, 114.

⁵²¹ Staněk and von Arburg, ‘Organizované divoké odsuny?’, Pt 1, pp. 486–87.

⁵²² K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, p. 382.

⁵²³ See, for example, Brandes, ‘Edvard Beneš und die Pläne Vertreibung/Aussiedlung’, p. 21.

Army could help the Czechoslovaks. When Stránský asked him how they would be able to 'construct the guilt' of German farmers, Gottwald answered: 'There will be no need to spend time fussing about that.'⁵²⁴ Certainly the West had no idea that the expulsion was to start immediately the war ended, before an Allied discussion of the matter, but the Soviets had offered their support for an immediate beginning.⁵²⁵ Czech politicians from Václav Kopecký to Jan Masaryk, were in favour. Prokop Drtina, who was to become a politician particularly loathed by the Communists, said in a speech delivered at a National Socialist gathering on May 17 1945: 'My opinion is that in our new republic, it should not be permitted to speak German, except for the three words "Heim ins Reich!" In order to achieve that, however, we must begin expelling Germans from our lands immediately, right away, using all means; we must not stop or hesitate at anything.'⁵²⁶

Drtina's view is in keeping with Edvard Beneš's or the politician considered more liberal (and pro-Western) than Beneš, Hubert Ripka's, who had said in a lecture delivered in London on October 8 1944: 'most Germans must be evicted from Czechoslovakia forever. For most Germans agreed with Henleinism, Nazism and pangermanism, and most of them have committed offences against the security and unity of the Republic.'⁵²⁷ Between May 1945 and the spring of 1946 between 2,790,000 and 3,192,000, depending on which statistics one goes by, had been expelled, and a further 80,000 left voluntarily or on leaving extended internment over the next year. In the May 1947 census c. 160,000 Germans remained in Czechoslovakia.⁵²⁸ Once re-colonization was over, not only with Czech workers and farm-hands, let alone Communist Party activists, but also with Slovaks, Hungarians, Gipsies and eventually Greeks, the population of the area was only 75 per cent of its pre-war figure.⁵²⁹ Generally speaking, Czech intellectuals appear to have favoured the expulsion. For example, the Party-official hero of Řezáč's *Nástup* believes that it 'corresponds to their [the Germans'] guilt and the meaning of our history and our revolution'.⁵³⁰ Like Albert Pražák, Habřina sees the expulsion as something the Czechs had been awaiting for centuries, and if it did not take place that would involve 'not understanding the voice of history'.⁵³¹ Given that aggression is in German blood, Jeřábek believes that not even German Social Democrats and the 'antifascists' should be spared from expulsion (the vast majority of them in the end were not spared): 'Not a single one of those German antifascists who now swear loyalty to democracy can guarantee that his son or grandson will not one day wear an SS uniform, that he will not join the ranks of some new Gestapo, that he will not shoot and sadistically torture Czechs in some new Kounic halls of residence, that he will not burn to the ground some new Lidice and Ležáky.'⁵³² The profoundly Christian František Mareš (1884–1960), poet and dramatist, and principal of the Pilsen commercial academy, shares Jeřábek's view, sees expulsion as the only answer; he,

⁵²⁴ Staněk and von Arburg, 'Organizované divoké odsuny?', Pt 1, p. 491.

⁵²⁵ Ibid., p. 477.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., pp. 501–02.

⁵²⁷ Hubert Ripka, 'Nové řešení německé otázky v ČSR', in Ripka, *ČSR v nové Evropě*, London, 1945, pp. 54–70 (60).

⁵²⁸ I take the figures from Zdeněk Radvanovský, 'The Transfer of Czechoslovakia's Germans and Its Impact on the Border Region after the Second World War', in Mark Cornwall and R. J. W. Evans (eds), *Czechoslovakia in a Nationalist and Fascist Europe 1918–1948*, Oxford, 2007, pp. 217–29 (224–25).

⁵²⁹ Figures from ibid., p. 227.

⁵³⁰ Řezáč, *Nástup*, p. 305.

⁵³¹ Habřina, *Nadčlověk a nadnárod*, p. 97.

⁵³² Jeřábek, *V zajetí Antikristově*, p. 267.

however, will not trust the German when he is beyond the border: 'We will not have the Germans here in this country any more — they wanted to drive us out, the land's true sons, daughters, heirs, for whom nothing in the world is dearer. They must leave so that they can no longer threaten us, at least in our home country. If they started trying it from abroad, it will be up to you, our young people, to save your country.'⁵³³ Still in the 1980s the expulsion was nothing more than 'the transfer of Henlein's adherents'.⁵³⁴ All this does not mean that in the 1940s there were not Czech writers who had misgivings about the expulsion. K. F. Koch, while not averse to the expulsion, asks his readers to think about what it means, what it should remind them of, and also to try not to throw out the gold crown with the mouth-water. Once, he writes, foreigners were greatly valued in Czechoslovakia, but present misotautonism resembles Nazi thinking too much. He is concerned that the Czechs are using for Germans the same vehicles as the Germans had used for Jews:

We, too, used to have boxes in the theatre reserved for foreigners; now we boast railway wagons with the notice: '8 horses or 40 men.' Furthermore, Czechoslovaks believe that they have a nation state, and forget that these minorities had themselves become an instrument of criminal behaviour with which they had dug their own graves. No one will speak about them for a long time, since they have removed their own rights. We can only report our president's words: 'It is painful for me to state that the pre-war system for the protection of minorities lies in ruins.'⁵³⁵

For Koch, then, there is little reason for the Czechoslovaks to be self-satisfied, complacent about the expulsion. Sedlmayerová's *Dům na zeleném svahu* by the end has the firm message that the expulsion is just, that every good Czech and Communist is a misotautonist. In this novel an ironic character gives a view on the expulsion that Sedlmayerová herself (as Masarykian bourgeoisie — albeit on hard times) had evidently toyed with — though in a novel where such a large number of bourgeois residual values (*přežitky*) is defeated in the end, this view vanishes also: the loss of four million citizens goes together with the loss to the Soviets of Subcarpathian Ruthenia; he feels that the expulsion was an emergency solution that had been thrust on the Czechs by the Germans themselves. The expulsion has meant the Czechs adopting methods that are entirely alien to them. 'Our programme was Masaryk's "higher form of Switzerland", a land where several nations live together in concord, but a land that does not stand to one side in a state of neutrality, where the progress of mankind is fought for. This conception has been destroyed [by the expulsion].'⁵³⁶ A sense of the permanent loss of Masarykian ideals certainly attended 1945. Communists pretended they had great respect for the 'Masaryk tradition'; liberals more or less consciously deluded themselves that Masarykian 'democracy' could be naturally fused with Soviet-style socialism to make a largely capitalist democracy with Communists in the most important government positions.

While, I repeat, there was no entirely clear break between the Uprising and expulsion, a major change did take place on May 9. Before liberation, both Germans and Czechs manifested considerable brutality to each other; now the vast majority of the brutality was on the Czech side, with considerable help from the new armed community in Bohemia, the Soviets. Churchill, no doubt still remembering that the Czechoslovaks were the only large armed force that had helped him in his campaign of intervention in Russia at the end of the Great

⁵³³ František Mareš, '15.III.1939', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 7–8 (8).

⁵³⁴ Věra Sládková, *Kouzelníkův návrat*, Prague, 1982, p. 83.

⁵³⁵ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, p. 207.

⁵³⁶ Sedlmayerová, *Dům na zeleném svahu*, p. 17.

War (though a fair number of British troops were involved, and militarily successful, this was in Murmansk and Archangel and the soldiers were war-worn, no longer officially front-line troops), remembering that, Churchill had been very keen on liberating Prague, but, as we learn from Smetana, was prevented as much by Eisenhower as by the Soviets.⁵³⁷ Even after all the raping that had gone on in Moravia and after all the rumours of Soviet brutishness that had long spread amongst the middle classes, the Red Army's liberation was welcome, its soldierly grime glorified, its victories and huge loss of life recognized, and heroized. The huge trains the Red Army brought with it, including at least one (the photograph is, or was, well known) camel, and the mass of women soldiers left the Pragers stunned. Though not in the vanguard of the liberators, the Czechoslovak corps of the Red Army also entered Prague as the first local Allied troops to get to the capital. The Soviet victory parade took place several days before Czechoslovak, British and American troops drove through the city, and the Czechoslovak RAF men arrived in Prague three months later. The day after the liberation, May 10, the new National Front government arrived in Prague, led by the prime minister Fierlinger (who had been the Czechoslovak ambassador to Moscow) and the Communist deputy prime minister Gottwald, who would address the nation on May 11, five days before Edvard Beneš would address the nation. Sovietization was quickly, yet for most imperceptibly, beginning. Writing in 1943, Reicin had called Soviet soldiers Czechoslovakia's 'national avengers'.⁵³⁸

Much of Bezdíček's article here concerns the advent and hyperbolic glorification of the Red Army in Czech verse. Fiction saw plenty of it, too, mostly a year or more later than verse. The glorification often approaches hagiography, for example, in Marie Majerová's (1882–1967) short story 'Barikády na Bořislavce' (Barricades at Bořislavka), where much of Soviet soldiers' behaviour is intended to rectify contemporary stereotypes. These men do not steal watches, but because they so love children, they give them 'chocolate, sweets, watches, fabric for clothes' — it is improbable that the Communist Majerová wants her reader to consider this a distribution of booty. Many Soviet soldiers refuse the alcohol Czech women offer them, saying that they drink only water, never touch alcoholic drinks. To laud their military prowess, she lauds the 'katyushka' (*Stalinorgel*) rocket-launcher that had so successfully made 'Germans flee in wild panic'. Where Škvorecký made the multiethnic nature of the Red Army exotic in *Zbabělci*, Majerová makes it a model of socialist internationalism and discipline when pockets of Waffen-SS made themselves heard near Prague Castle: 'German fire clatters from the slopes of Sřešovice. Our first defenders fell into rank quietly, disciplined: a platoon of soldiers from various republics, various races of the [Soviet] Union.'⁵³⁹ The point is that an American or British liberation would not have bred writing of this sort from major authors (like Majerová) or minor. Writing like this was demanded or authors imagined it was demanded. Sentimentalizing monumentality formed part of the lining of the Iron Curtain. Even in a novel where the liberation constitutes a minor episode at the end we may find a degree of sentimentality, such as when Soviet tanks are called 'ours' (*naší*) in Branald, where the employment of the word suggests some permanent union between Pragers and Soviets, or indeed some undercover panslavism.⁵⁴⁰ Like Majerová, Branald celebrates Soviet victories

⁵³⁷ On Churchill and the liberation of Prague see Kokoška, *Praha v květnu 1945*, pp. 58–59, 60–62, 190.

⁵³⁸ Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, p. 59.

⁵³⁹ Marie Majerová, 'Barikády na Bořislavce', in Hrubín and Hodek (eds), *Pamětník Pražského povstání 1945*, pp. 47–48 (47).

⁵⁴⁰ Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, p. 277.

in a manner that actually drowns Prague in among those victories — mind you, since the whole novel has concerned Czech courage, the reader will perhaps not be persuaded that the Soviets and not the Pragers themselves had liberated their city:

The city is singing and dancing a Cossack dance. And the tanks start off again, are stopped again. The city calls out the glorious names, Stalingrad, Kharkov, Kiev, Moscow and asks *Kak že v Berlíně* [a version of Russian: How was it in Berlin] and is satisfied by an eloquent gesture indicating a plateau, something razed to the ground. / It is a wonder that the people do not weep, because that is what, that is the very thing that, they wanted to hear and have been looking forward to for six long years.⁵⁴¹

The Russian language becomes an infantile panslav motif in writing about the Liberation. Now high on his Party roost, Drda writes in the title story of an infamous collection: ‘The Czechs take deep draughts of the Russian language; their heads and hearts are full of its beautiful, sonorous, expansive words that have the fragrance of faraway places, and yet are so close, and that are as beautifully colourful as a painted Easter egg.’⁵⁴² Drda goes on to associate the ‘expansiveness’ of the language with the Russians’ big hearts: no one in the world has as big a heart as a Russian. War and victory in the war, and their liberation of Czechoslovakia, had, then, been an act of Slav magnanimity. In this story, having a multiethnic group of Soviet soldiers stationed in one’s village meant that most of the men became convinced Communists and the lucky one(s) could go on a trip to Georgia to see how miraculous a Stalinist collective farm is. A group of Soviet officers in K. J. Beneš’s Uprising novel have some of the same stock characteristics as Drda’s men. The setting is, however, the Alcron Hotel, at the time the most luxurious in Prague, the hotel where Lord Runciman had stayed. These ‘high-ranking officers [...] smoke long, fat *papirosy*, laugh loudly with an expansive, child-like merry laugh, and the whole breadth of their chests glistens, iridesces with medals’.⁵⁴³ The trouble with descriptions like Drda’s and Beneš’s is that, by the time these works appeared, in the 1950s, they looked more like caricature than admiration of a triumphant army, at least to the reasonably educated reader. Direct propaganda was more honest writing than this; in Drda the inhabitants of a small town (probably Příbram) are given words that pervert genuine gratitude into a Party-line statement: ‘We swear that we shall be worthy of this liberation, for which fraternal Soviet blood was spilt. We swear eternal friendship with our liberator, the fraternal Soviet people.’⁵⁴⁴ Even more honest, one of the most genuine-looking expressions of gratitude is a poem by Renata Horalová (1911–?), in which the persona longs to be carried away by a Soviet soldier to love him in his distant home; there he would sleep on the guelder roses of her breasts.⁵⁴⁵

The Red Army and the NKVD were both involved in the expulsions. The NKVD was, naturally, involved in a large number of enterprises in Prague and elsewhere, too, tracing

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., p. 279.

⁵⁴² Drda, *Krásná Tortíza*, p. 11.

⁵⁴³ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivě písmo*, p. 377.

⁵⁴⁴ Drda, *Krásná Tortíza*, p. 65.

⁵⁴⁵ Renata Horalová, ‘Šla bych ...’, in Horalová, *Květen české země*, Teplice-Šanov, 1945, pp. 16–17 (16). Before this collection, Horalová had published another verse work where she promulgated the sexualization of Czech patriotism, and a lively collection of short stories, some or perhaps all taken from her family history. She was no poet, but was an unusual phenomenon, blending Czech nationalist Ruralism with Modernist sexual rebellion, whereby a true Czech woman should have sexual intercourse only in fields, for her vagina is a furrow waiting for Czech seed. After *Květen české země* she disappeared from Czech literary history.

Russian exiles (who had been favoured by the Germans, especially at the middle stage of the war), helping set up especially Reicin's intelligence service, advising the defence minister Svoboda and so forth. Michal Mareš had an extended brush with them immediately after the war, and even though the NKVD appears to have taken him off to the Baltic for one part of his interrogation, he was treated decently, and soon it became clear that it had all been a case of mistaken identity. It had, however, taught him at least something about the horrific conditions in internment camps for Germans in Moravia, knowledge he would be able to exploit in his articles for Peroutka's *Dnešek* in 1947. In Prague, at least according to repeated assertions in Barényiová's *Prager Totentanz*, the NKVD, with the OBZ, had its headquarters in the former Gestapo headquarters, Petschek House. In 1945, there was another 'facility' apparently in Nový Bydžov, where anyone the NKVD was particularly interested in was provisionally interned.⁵⁴⁶ The NKVD indulged in more openly violent activities, too. Thirty or so people were marched out of Mladá Boleslav into a field and shot by a woman in Red Army uniform, who was by all reports a member of the NKVD.⁵⁴⁷ Some particularly brutal Czechs at least claimed to be NKVD auxiliaries, and probably were for some time.

It was chiefly ordinary Soviet soldiers who helped in the expulsions, but it appears that actually the Czechs on the spot were ordered by their authorities to bribe Soviets with 'gifts' to ensure their help.⁵⁴⁸ That suggests that at least major parts of the Soviet liberation army were not enthusiastic about doing the Czechs' dirty work for them. On the other hand, on May 25 the commander of the Ukrainian 'Front', Ivan Petrov, issued orders to all units of his 'front' that they should help Czechoslovak forces 'cleanse the territory of the remaining German forces and undesirables'. At the end of June, a Czechoslovak government delegation received an undertaking from Stalin that the Red Army would neither take part in nor prevent the expulsions. Staněk quotes from the text of the agreement the passage which stated that slave labour constituted preferable treatment of expellees to concentration camps. None the less, Ludvík Svoboda claimed that the Soviets had put pressure on the Czechs to 'liquidate islands of indigenous Germans like the Jihlava and Svitavy areas'. Soviet soldiers were involved in mass murders as well. It is not clear whether it was serving soldiers or POWs who joined Czech 'partisans' of the Niva group, who on May 13 made up a task force that pursued a group of alleged members of the SS in Fojmava; they killed thirty people, 'armed Nazis' and 'a few civilians'. Soviet soldiers were involved in the expulsion of Reich Germans, that is, Germans who had come to the Bohemian Lands after September 30 1938, and otherwise sometimes took over the duties of confiscating German property, house searches and guarding expellees. One-third of the Czech partisan group Nikolaj were Russians and the whole group searched the forests in the Jilemnice region for Wehrmacht men; it appears that once they had discovered them, if they were not already disarmed, they shot them in cold blood.⁵⁴⁹

A November 1945 article by F. A. Voigt in his monthly magazine *The Nineteenth Century and After*, entitled 'Orderly and Humane' after the Potsdam conference guidelines for expulsions given by the Allies to the Poles and Czechoslovaks, presents a grim picture of the suffering of the Sudetenländer of Bodenbach (Podmokly) at the hands of Soviets and,

⁵⁴⁶ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, p. 180.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁵⁴⁸ Tomáš Staněk and Adrian von Arburg, 'Organizované divoké odsuny?', Pt 2, *Soudobé dějiny*, 1–2, 2006, pp. 13–49 (34).

⁵⁴⁹ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, pp. 14, 26, 19, 224, 15–16, 175.

later, Czechs; the matter of Sudetenland Czechs' suffering under the Red Army is rarely mentioned.

When [Bodenbach] was occupied by the Russians, there was a reign of terror, of looting, and of outrage to women. The Czechs suffered as well as the Germans. [When the new Czech authorities took over], [...] Germans were expelled or sent to concentration camps regardless of their past allegiance. They were robbed and otherwise maltreated — even women and old men were whipped by Czechs on the slightest provocation. The N.S.B. [Národní svaz brannosti = National Defence League], mostly young men who, even in appearance, resembled the SS, used whips and rifle-butts indiscriminately. They continued the looting begun by the Russians; some people were killed for concealing valuables. The deportees were allowed to take a small amount of luggage, but this was usually stolen *en route* by Czech soldiers who 'controlled' the roads. There are four concentration camps in the neighbourhood and the screaming of maltreated people can be heard by those who reside near by.⁵⁵⁰

This account is by no means exaggerated, reports what most Czechs had to wait till the 1990s to hear. The Soviets established a POW camp in Německý Brod (soon to be renamed Havlíčkův Brod). By December 1945 (last Soviet departure from Czechoslovakia), ninety-one of the prisoners were dead; eighty-two of them had died (been killed) by the end of August. Here, as usual, deaths while trying to escape were recorded (twelve). Thirty-six men died in a smaller Soviet POW camp in Polná. Soviet raping took place not only during the invasion and immediately afterwards, but also in Czech internment camps, for example, that in Roudnice.⁵⁵¹ Hübler describes this raping in the two camps she was in near Hradec Králové. In this case the German women soon organized themselves; a group of women who did not have children turned themselves into rape volunteers when the Soviets came into the camp late at night and wanted women. None the less the women were as a whole treated less roughly by Soviets than by Czechs (again, especially 'partisans'). Barényiová reports Soviet soldiers penetrating the General Hospital in Prague and raping several hundred women there.⁵⁵² Prague women, however, German or Czech, did not suffer as much as the women of Berlin or Vienna. In the first few weeks after the capture of Berlin, Judt writes, c. 90,000 women sought medical attention after being raped; in Vienna, during the first three weeks after the arrival of Soviet soldiers, the Western Allies recorded 87,000 Soviet rapes.⁵⁵³ I mentioned above the all too credible portrayal of Soviet, followed shortly by Czech 'partisan' rape in Durych's *Boží duha*. With mass raping came mass venereal disease in Czechoslovakia, too.

Most of the raping and killing after the end of the war was carried out by Czechoslovaks in authority ('government' or those who with their weapons looked 'government') rather than by Soviet soldiers or intelligence officers. Staněk reports instances where the Red Army did their best to stop the nefarious brutality of the Czechoslovak Army and the gendarmes in Chomutov, which led, for example, to the Czechs not believing a German physician's insistence that he had not been in the SS (accusing him of having removed the tattoo himself), beating his genitals with a stick until they fell off. Any of the 'suspect' Germans who survived all the beatings and other tortures were taken off to be shot and then tossed onto a dungheap.⁵⁵⁴ The Soviet intervention, like that of one member of the local national

⁵⁵⁰ Cited in de Zayas, *Nemesis at Potsdam*, p. 106.

⁵⁵¹ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, pp. 195, 270, 205.

⁵⁵² Olga Barényi, *Das tote Geleise*, Munich, 1961, p. 99.

⁵⁵³ Judt, 'The Past is Another Country', p. 224.

⁵⁵⁴ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, p. 130.

committee, evidently had no impact. Indeed, one will find Czech literature that is not propagandistic, and not written with Party dictates in mind, that relates the kindness of Red Army men. A particularly evident example of that appears in F. R. Kraus (1903–67), in his account of his liberation from Blechhammer (previously he had been in Theresienstadt, Auschwitz-Birkenau and Gleiwitz) and then of Soviet soldiers' treatment of him as he made his way home to Prague *via* Katowice and Budapest.⁵⁵⁵ I suspect that Sedlmayerová's consistent demonstration of Soviet soldiers' generous treatment of Sudeten Germans in *Překročený práh* is a trifle overcooked, but it is not inedible.

In his book on Czech ill-treatment of Germans during the expulsion and in his three-part article demonstrating that the expulsions were organized from the centre from the very beginning (May 1945), Staněk with von Arburg also points out that Edvard Beneš was something of a rabble-rouser, that he must be held almost as responsible for the atrocities as General Svoboda. The Minister of the Interior, Václav Nosek, reported that, while he was still in London, Beneš had expected mass anti-German violence in the liberated Czechoslovakia; at one point Beneš had been considering not returning to Prague until three months after the war, that is until after 'the people [*lid*] had made their final reckoning with the collaborators and Germans'.⁵⁵⁶ In a proclamation of the Košice government broadcast by London and Moscow on April 17 1945 the following words appeared:

Let your elemental hatred of the German thugs burst forth from your hearts. Recall all the horrific torment of six years' German occupation, and remember that now the moment has come for retribution for the bloody executions of Heydrich, Daluge [Heydrich's successor] and Frank, for the deaths of those executed and tortured to death, for the suffering of prisoners, for the humiliation of the enslaved, for the tears and grief of so many unhappy families in our nation. Go and settle accounts with the Germans for all their atrocities and have no mercy on the German murderers. Have no pity in settling accounts with traitors to the nation and the republic either!⁵⁵⁷

In a speech delivered in Brno on May 12, Beneš was particularly rabble-rousing: 'Now we shall get down to work straight away. (*Applause*). My programme is — and I make no bones about it — to liquidate entirely [*vylikvidovat*, Beneš's neologism suggesting extermination] the German question in the republic.' On leaving Brno, he declared: 'It is clear to you and all of us that the liquidation [*likvidace*] of the Germans will be complete.'⁵⁵⁸ In the same speech he employed the essential cliché, that by virtue of this war the Germans had ceased to be human beings, that they had become 'a single great human monster'.⁵⁵⁹ By the time Beneš gave his speech in Prague, in Old Town Square, his phrase had gained broader application: 'to *vylikvidovat* particularly uncompromisingly the Germans in the Bohemian Lands and the Hungarians in Slovakia.'⁵⁶⁰ Like H. G. Adler on seeing Czech treatment of Germans in Theresienstadt, we hear too much Hitler or Moravec in Beneš here. It would have taken far less than this to drive the thugs of the R.G, the new Czechoslovak Army, let alone the would-be partisan death-squads to violence against the Germans; on the other hand, such statements from the country's leader could be taken as orders allowing free rein to any thug, including officers, for

⁵⁵⁵ František Kraus, *Plyn, plyn . . . pak oheň* [1945], 2nd edn, Havlíčkův Brod, 1946, p. 84. František R. Kraus, *A přived' zpět naše roztroušené*, Prague, 1946, passim.

⁵⁵⁶ Quoted in Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, p. 98.

⁵⁵⁷ Quoted in Staněk and von Arburg, 'Organizované divoké odsuny?', Pt 1, p. 492.

⁵⁵⁸ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 499.

⁵⁵⁹ Quoted in Brandes, 'Edvard Beneš und die Pläne zur Vertreibung/Aussiedlung', p. 23.

⁵⁶⁰ Quoted in Staněk and von Arburg, 'Organizované divoké odsuny?', Pt 1, p. 499.

Beneš was, after all, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The Germans and, more than they, the Czech Activists had continually attacked Beneš with so much force and venom that in May 1945 his words were respected by the majority without question. How aware he was that such words were accelerating the revolutionary chaos that the Communists needed, preparing the country for the speedy loss of its semblance of democracy, no one can fully know.

Because Czechoslovakia had acquired the reputation of a civilized country before the war and the Czechs that of a nation that had ingrained democratic principles, the stories of internment camps, atrocities (especially two of the worst, the Brno march and the Ústí massacre) that penetrated the British press at the time, the British at home appear to have been intensely shocked at Czech inhumanity. Victor Gollancz and F. A. Voigt were by no means lone voices. Things were incomparably worse in Bohemia than they were in France or Belgium or the Netherlands. Poland was another matter, for the Poles had a civil war. The figures recently produced by a German-Czech commission give a slightly brighter picture of the expulsions than one had twenty or thirty years ago. In May and June 1945 c. 5,500 Germans committed suicide in the Bohemian Lands; 6,000 Germans were murdered, and a further 18–30,000 died in internment, labour and concentration camps.⁵⁶¹ Still, these figures are high enough. The potential impact of the 1945–46 atrocities and the incipient investigation of many of them was virtually nil thanks to the Victorious February of 1948. Some sensitive information about the atrocities or from investigations were used in the intra-Party conflict that erupted after the take-over and came to its climax with the trials and executions of the early 1950s. Such information was also employed against adversaries of the regime and as a means of persuading perpetrators to work for State Security (StB). Indeed, often people who had been investigated for brutal actions in 1945–46 suddenly became after February 1948 victims of the political manoeuvring of the National Socialists and other ‘bourgeois’ parties.⁵⁶²

The worst of the atrocities is today commonly known as the ‘Brno death march’, that is, the eviction of c. 20,000 Germans from Brno mainly on the night of May 30–31 1945. It is estimated that the Czechs caused the death of c. 1,700 German men, women and children on the march south to Austria; the Austrian authorities turned the now DPs back into Czechoslovakia, but the Czechoslovak border guards would not re-admit them, and so they were gathered in a field in no man’s land (guarded by a small group of Romanian liberation troops). Most victims died of exhaustion or disease. In 1995, the formerly dissident writer, Ludvík Vaculík (born 1926), led a group of Czech citizens in bringing a charge of genocide against the Brno police.⁵⁶³ A poem of Zatloukal’s is extremely rare in immediately post-war literature in that it celebrates the ‘Brno death march’; Zatloukal gave it the title ‘Pozdrav novému Brnu’ (Greetings to the new Brno). The poem contains jingoistic wordings that echo the pathological imagery of Activist antisemites: ‘May / that washes Brno for us on a pure day, / washes away the scabies of centuries / and the blood of the Occupation’ and ‘Czech History stamped / and with her voice thundered, “Germans out!”’ The poem ends with a hideous mixed metaphor: ‘The German Club was razed like an ulcer, / evil times were dying in its red walls / and Germanic arrogance was being poured away with the slops. // On that happy day.’⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶¹ Jiří Pešek, ‘Vertreibung und Transfer 1938–1949 im Spiegel der tschechischen Geschichtswissenschaft seit 1989’, in Zand and Holý (eds), *Transfer*, pp. 29–42 (32).

⁵⁶² Staněk, *Poválečné ‘excesy’*, pp. 109, 164.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 235–40. See also Gollancz, *Our Threatened Values*, pp. 96–97.

⁵⁶⁴ Zatloukal, *Čas válkou okutý*, pp. 71–72.

The massacring of German men, women and children in central Ústí nad Labem after an explosion in a munitions dump in a suburb is perhaps better known. As far as I know, this is the second most notorious Czech atrocity; it differs from the Brno incident in that, first, it appears largely not to have been organized and, second, it was more conventionally brutal; for example, women, babies in prams being thrown over Edvard Beneš Bridge into the Elbe. Somewhere between 100 and 200 Germans were murdered.⁵⁶⁵ The Ústí mass murdering was one of the few atrocities to be treated in *belles-lettres* of the Communist period, in Jaroslav Putík's (born 1923) *Smrtebná neděle* (Passion Sunday, 1967), even though only as an episode; the novel is a bold attack not only on the atrocity (of July 31 1945), but also on the whole mythology of Sudetenland recolonization, and Stalinism altogether. The Ústí massacre was said to be a reaction to the work of Werwölfe who had allegedly blown up the dump, though that appears to have been accidental, and even Biddiscombe asserts that there is no clear evidence that the Werwolf organization was involved.⁵⁶⁶ Biddiscombe's account of those involved in the killing is vivid, but not entirely credible: 'Off-duty Czechoslovak soldiers [...] had already begun to amuse themselves by beating up hapless Germans, and now, in the company of black-uniformed Czechoslovak security forces and occasional Red Army troopers, they unleashed a full reign of terror. [...] Czechoslovak marauders — armed with iron bars and pick handles — beat the German workers senseless and then tossed their bodies into the Elbe.'⁵⁶⁷ In fact, the Red Army actually managed to restrain the Czech units. De Zayas gives an unreasonably high number of deaths in Ústí, between 1,000 and 2,700, the upper number of which he lowers to 2,500 in the second version of his book.⁵⁶⁸ Biddiscombe and Naimark make the point that the Czechoslovak government used the Ústí massacre as an excuse for stepping up the speed and extent of the expulsions, particularly from the Ústí region.⁵⁶⁹ Who began the massacre and where the rumour that the explosion (which killed twenty-eight Czechs and Germans) was the result of German sabotage came from, is not known. A report for the British Ambassador in Prague, Philip Nichols, confirms the old Western military view that 20 per cent of any society are (potential) thugs:

Two British women who were present in Usti at the time [...] added] that the acts in question were probably the result of a spontaneous outburst by Czech hooligans. The mass of the Czechoslovak population, they say, was deeply ashamed of this outburst the following day. It is this kind of behaviour which increases the determination of the American troops in Prague to insist on 'fair play even for Germans', and this attitude, in its turn, causes friction with the Czechoslovaks, who charge the Americans with German sympathies. The Americans are reported to be collecting a dossier of Czechoslovak excesses with photographs.⁵⁷⁰

The worse atrocity of Postoloprty (end of May, beginning of June, 1945) has earned only one literary work, Karel Steigerwald's (born 1945) play *Porta Apostolorum* (not published in book form, performed 2006, available on www.perzekuce.cz); as a text read this

⁵⁶⁵ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, pp. 151–53.

⁵⁶⁶ Biddiscombe, *Werwolf!*, p. 238.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁸ De Zayas, *Nemesis at Potsdam*, p. 97. Alfred-Maurice de Zayas, *A Terrible Revenge. The Ethnic Cleansing of the East European Germans* [1993], New York, Basingstoke, 2006, p. 91. Naimark has 2,700 as the upper limit, Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred. Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, Cambridge MA, 2001, p. 116.

⁵⁶⁹ Biddiscombe, *Werwolf!*, p. 239; Naimark, *Fires of Hatred*, p. 116.

⁵⁷⁰ Quoted in de Zayas, *A Terrible Revenge*, p. 91.

unimaginative work fails completely to evoke anything of the horrors of the Postoloprty shootings. Staněk reports the words of a former member of the Czechoslovak Army Corps in the USSR who had had a command function during the mass executions of Postoloprty: 'If such executions had been carried out on [Germans] every day, that would not recompense what they had done to us and others.' Another officer stated: 'I did not consider it something wrong, for I had seen what atrocities the Germans committed in Russia.' Reicin's OBZ and some RGs were primarily responsible for all the shooting, and these soldiers included a large number of men from Subcarpathian Ukraine and Czechs from Volhynia. When drunk, other ranks would rape German women and girls; this was at night, when most of the murdering was going on. Before they were shot, the victims had often suffered torture and beating — these were chiefly males aged between thirteen or fourteen and sixty-five.⁵⁷¹ One of the main commanders, Lt Jan Čubka (who was demobbed in 1946, one of the very few to be punished for mass murder at all), claimed that the orders for mass murders came directly from Reicin.⁵⁷² There were mass graves in which the remains of 758 men and five women were found, but Staněk is convinced that the actual number of murdered Germans in Postoloprty was closer to 800.⁵⁷³ The majority of the ringleaders of the Postoloprty atrocities were Communist Party members or sympathizers.

Another episode with a literary association took place in Náchod, and is adumbrated in Škvorecký's *Zbabělci*. In the courtyard of the Náchod brewery, SS and some civilians were gathered by Czechs and Red Army soldiers. Here, a large number of people, larger than in the novel, stood watching the brutal torturing and execution of the Germans. In this case the Communist chairman of the municipal national committee criticized the behaviour of these avengers, and later other citizens lodged complaints about the massacre, but no one actually tried to stop it. The Náchod incident was unusual because amongst the onlookers were Jewish women who had been liberated from the Žakše concentration camp. Náchod onlookers behaved better a year later, on May 8 1946, when some Germans had been summoned to have their arm-bands checked. These Germans were savagely beaten together with some Czechs who had objected to this brutishness.⁵⁷⁴ For the third time, now I look briefly at the atrocities of Chomutov, perpetrated by the RG and a new Czechoslovak Army unit. Several thousand Germans were assembled before the decisions were taken on who was to be tortured and killed. The assembly took place at the stadium (*Tumplatz*), where in Jirgl's novel the reader witnesses the beatings to death with iron rods. More interesting for this essay's account of the progress through the Occupation towards 'socialism' is Březovský's Stalinist account of events in Chomutov. Březovský makes fun of the Germans of Chomutov fleeing Czech brutality and turns their flight into a misoteutonic vision of the resurrection of Bohemia, or Czechoslovakia, from an apocalypse:

Everyone was rushing out of the town to the main road leading to the border, in a desperate headlong flight as if from flood waters that had breached a dam. Weeping and lamenting over sagging, badly damaged wagons, stuffed full of baggage, feather-beds, carpets and people, the tears of children who had lost their parents, the desperate calling of parents who had lost their children, all surged out onto the streets and out of the town like a turbid river, towards the west, towards the cold dark mountains, black as the future of the country to which these people belonged.

⁵⁷¹ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, pp. 107, 119, 120–21.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 122.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 186, 95–96.

Pressing themselves against the wall in the house's darkened corridor, [the three main characters] Ondřej, František and Ludvík, incapable of speaking, moving and, perhaps, of being astonished, observed this avalanche of materialized misfortune, horror and fear, filth and cowardice. They observed blood-marked horsemen [in other words, the Apocalypse] on roaring, creaking motors leaving the land that was rising in flowers out of their bloody tracks.⁵⁷⁵

One of the three believes this sight embodies Truth prevailing (the Protectorate implicitly a lie, as the Monarchy had been a lie for Great War legionary writers): 'Ludvík had a sensation of spellbinding amazement at the strength of Good and Truth.'⁵⁷⁶ Although the reader will here see Masaryk's motto, earlier in the novel, Březovský had written of 'the great socialist Truth', almost in the same breath as alluding to Americans bombing socialist Czechoslovakia with the Colorado beetle.⁵⁷⁷

Czech raping of Germans, sometimes raping to death, is well documented by Tomáš Staněk⁵⁷⁸ and first entered *belles-lettres* in Durych's *Boží duha*, which also contains a forced concubinage episode, a state that forms the theme of Körner's *Adelheid*. Much of the raping and the torturing took place in the internment camps, most of which provided food and hygiene at a level not far above those of German concentration camps. That is what makes Sedlmayerová's description of a camp in *Dům na zeleném svahu* so repulsive to any reader: the camp here has beautifully tended lawns, flowers, curtains in the windows, good solid food rations and so forth. The heroine and her husband also take German slave labour for granted, like the former RAF officer, the main male character in Körner's *Adelheid*. In the same author's *Zánik samoty Berhof* one comes across something more daring: the police beating a priest till he bleeds profusely. The expulsion of German Roman Catholic priests, especially since the Church had done so much to help anti-Nazis, became a complex problem. Hrabovec's brief account points out that German priests (and those in monastic orders) felt themselves to be in double peril — from Communists for their occupation and from the rest for their nationality, that is, from the atheists who desired a social and cultural purging, and the 'bourgeois' parties who were keener on national purging. Furthermore, the 'ranks of the priesthood had been decimated by execution, imprisonment and internment in concentration camps, and [were] totally unprepared for the problems of the post-war era'.⁵⁷⁹ The nationalist

⁵⁷⁵ Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, pp. 69–70.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8. Masaryk's motto 'Veritas vincit' soon became a commonplace of Czech patriotic writing, and so was frequently to be found in literary and documentary works published in or about 1945 or about the Occupation. Indeed, so much of a cliché was it that Moravec used it, where the falsehood represents the Allies: 'We believe in the common sense of the Czech people, who will prevail over the enemy's lie', and as follows: 'The truth of the National Socialist revolution will prevail over Judaeocapitalism and Communist falsehood', *O český zítřek*, pp. 266–67, 122. It is almost amusing that Moravec uses it just as the PVVZ resistors used it in their programme: *Za svobodu*, pp. 52, 59. See also Veselý-Štainer, *Cestou národního odboje*, pp. 9, 36, 39, 48, 114; Pařízek, *A lid povstal*, pp. 29, 30; Habřina, *Nadlověk a nadnárod*, p. 95; Sobota, *Glossy*, p. 44ff; Horalová, 'Na pochodu' in *Květen české země*, pp. 5–6 (5); Marie Pujmanová, 'Květnová revoluce', in Kuchynka (ed.), 5–9. *květen 1945*, pp. 48–51 (51); Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, p. 176; Arnošt Lustig, 'Modrý den', in *Neslušné sny* [previously published as *Nikoho neponížíš*, Prague, 1963], Prague, 1995, pp. 5–112 (103) — a cynical Nazi judge speaking about the Czechs; one notices that in one of her feuilletons Barényiová mocks the Czechs' preoccupation with 'Veritas vincit', Olga von Barényi, 'Siegt die Wahrheit', in *Nicht wundern*, pp. 40–43; Kohout, *Hvězdná hodina vrahů*, p. 152; Reicin and Mareš, *Sokolovo*, p. 6 (twice); Roedl in his poem on the Heydrichiad, 'Leto 1942', in *Roční doby*, unpaginated.

⁵⁷⁸ Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, for example, pp. 190, 242, 264, 273, 280.

⁵⁷⁹ Emilia Hrabovec, 'The Catholic Church and Deportations of Ethnic Germans from the Czech Lands', in Alfred J. Rieber (ed.), *Forced Migration in Central and Eastern Europe, 1939–1950*, London, Portland OR, 2000, pp. 64–82 (66).

Canon Bohumil Stašek wrote in *Lidová demokracie* (People's Democracy) in June 1945 that the commandment 'love thy neighbour as thyself' did not apply to Germans,⁵⁸⁰ and many young Czech clergy enthusiastically endorsed the application of anti-German repression to their German brethren, even though more mature Czech clergy did try to help them. After some dallying, the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior decided in November 1945 that German clergy would be interned and expelled like their co-nationals and under the same terms.⁵⁸¹ The Ministry of Education and Culture decided on November 2 that henceforth priests would be allowed to celebrate the Mass in low voices on the occasion of burials in the internment camps. At Christmas further restrictions were listed and, as a treat, the internees would not have to do forced labour on Christmas Eve afternoon or on Christmas Day. Priests could celebrate Mass — and hereafter every Sunday. At no Mass, however, were sermons permitted.⁵⁸² Körner appears to be following the Party line when he has the local priest in *Adelheid* appear to be in league with the German sniper. The final alleviation for German clergy came in May 1946. Previously they had been allowed to take fifty kilograms of baggage out of the country like all other expellees; now they were allowed 100.⁵⁸³ The increase was to allow for vestments, chalices, scholarly manuscripts and other objects needed for their job.

If one does not count small local newspapers in towns where there were concentration or labour camps, Czech Catholic papers were among the first to complain about the treatment of Germans. Hrabovec quotes the following from the Olomouc academic theologian and former political prisoner Antonín Kleveta's article in the Catholic weekly, *Rozséváč* (The sower, October 31 1945):

And what would happen if during the so-called ' [humane] and orderly implementation' of this severe law, the brutality and vengefulness of some individuals found its way into the mix ... physical as well as psychological torture, looting and various other indecencies, things which even the Czech press in the border zone admits are going on ...? Who among the internees might risk lodging a complaint? [...] The assorted and grievous abuses about which rumours are circulating here are, there can be no doubt, faithful copies of methods favoured by the Gestapo. [...] It was honourable to suffer innocently for justice under the bestial Nazi order. It would, however, be a desecration of our suffering were our national honour to be sullied by the crimes of some to be found among us.⁵⁸⁴

Words she quotes from an article in the weekly *Katolík* from February 2 1946 foreshadow H. G. Adler's words on the Czech treatment of Germans in post-war Theresienstadt: 'Whatever and however else you may be, you are a Jew, and that's [that]. It's the same here: whatever and however else you may be, you are a German, and that's [that].'⁵⁸⁵ Přemysl Pitter, the man who rescued German children from internment camps, wrote: 'Once again today many innocent people are suffering. That is worse [than during the Occupation] for our nation because this time it is members of our nation who are committing the wrongs, the violence, the lawlessness. By imitating what the SS used to do we bring ourselves down to their level.'⁵⁸⁶ Ivo Hais (1918–96) is stronger, more detailed in his criticism, in a piece written for the anti-socialist *Obzory* (Horizons) in October 1945, for example:

⁵⁸⁰ Quoted *ibid.*

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 70–71.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 73–74.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁵⁸⁴ Quoted *ibid.*, pp. 76–77.

⁵⁸⁵ Quoted *ibid.*, p. 76.

⁵⁸⁶ Quoted in Schallner, 'Obraz Němců a Německa v letech 1945 až 1947', p. 244.

I wonder whether we could justify ourselves if someone said to us that the Czechs as a whole are responsible for the wrongdoings and cruelty that took place not only during the revolution, but also in subsequent months.

I am sure it is possible to excuse on the grounds of revolutionary fervour the fact that in the streets of Prague on May 9 we roasted alive individuals hung up by one leg from a lamp-post and bludgeoned to death a few people going about clearing away barricades (amongst them there might have been some Czechs whose identity cards were not in order). It would also be possible to excuse on account of the continuing revolutionary spirit the fact that in June some German women were killed on the streets of Prague by bullets fired by members of the erstwhile RG who were meant to be escorting them from one assembly point to another [...]

If I wished to follow the German example and excuse myself by saying that I knew nothing of these things, I should be lying exactly like them.⁵⁸⁷

In the May 23 1947 issue of the short-lived *Cíl* (Goal), a trades-union friend of Josef Kubát, Jiří Veltruský (1919–94), who had also been active in the Czech National Council during the Uprising, but not in the praesidium, and a member of the Prague Linguistic Circle, an *Assistant* of Jan Mukařovský, also published a strongly worded piece on the Czechs' behaviour. Veltruský defected and worked as an American trades-union official in Paris, while still writing Structuralist studies, chiefly on drama. He implicitly makes the point I continue to make, that it is difficult to draw a clear line between the Uprising and the expulsions:

We observed how human rats, who had hitherto quaked with fear, sprang from their holes upon the defeated enemy, taking dastardly revenge for their own cowardice. We also saw the uniformed and non-uniformed rabble impudently don the red arm-band of the Revolutionary Guard and then invade dwellings which had long since been vacated, to plunder them of whatever they still contained. A veritable Eldorado for these elements opened up when the victorious fighters rested on their laurels, while the arm-bands of the Revolutionary Guard were handed out to all who applied. Thus arose the Robber Guards, the scum of humanity, who infiltrated the heroes of the Uprising. Then came the enlistments ordered by General Kutvašr, which in a few days expanded the Revolutionary Guard tenfold; the number of partisans, who could almost be counted on the fingers [of one hand] during the Occupation, was thus multiplied. Finally came the rush to the promised land — into the border areas. A number of real freedom-fighters yielded to the impulse; *this was the inevitable result of the general demoralization [= moral paralysis] provoked by this orgy of the hyenas.*⁵⁸⁸

If Adolf Zeman is anything to go by, politically-minded Czechs disliked Jaksch's criticism of their behaviour towards the Germans intensely and so would have had little time for such as Ivo Hais. The Social Democrat Jaksch was anyway discredited in the eyes of Beneš and Co., because he had been against the expulsions. Zeman writes:

Apparently in as early as 1941 Jaksch came up with a programme that was in fact a repetition of Henlein's Carlsbad demands. In the name of 'Sudeten German Social Democracy' [...] Jaksch continues in exile where Henlein left off. [...] hardly had Nazism collapsed than Mr Jaksch in London started working against the Czechoslovak Republic, being horrified at the inhuman treatment by the Czechoslovak government and people of the wretched, innocent Sudeten Germans. He is taking under his wing the savage Sudetenländer [*sudet'áky*] who once used their truncheons to smash in the heads of his Social Democrats, too.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁷ Quoted *ibid.*, p. 245. Also quoted by Wenzel Jaksch, *Europe's Road to Potsdam*, rev'd trans. from the German by Kurt Glaser, London, 1963, p. 447.

⁵⁸⁸ Quoted *ibid.*, pp. 421–22.

⁵⁸⁹ Zeman, *Československá Golgota*, p. 78

Few Czech perpetrators of atrocities against Germans were apprehended as a result of pre-1948 investigations, and even fewer indicted, and a minimal number punished. As Judt writes, 'a clear and quick distinction was made' between two types of mass violence, the German and the vindictive anti-German that was organized by the new authorities led by their elected president.⁵⁹⁰ That distinction was considered a moral distinction that should be enshrined in law. Thus followed the infamous impunity act, Statute no. 115/46. 'Whereas an amnesty would have merely protected the perpetrators from punishment,' writes Frommer, 'the proposed bill [tabled December 20 1945] essentially declared that no crimes had ever been committed.'⁵⁹¹ The statute was to cover acts committed against Germans, Hungarians, traitors and collaborators from the Second Republic up to the inauguration of the provisional National Assembly on October 28 1945 — the date was doubly symbolic: first, it marked the twenty-seventh anniversary of the establishment of the republic; second, it confirmed the illegality of the Occupation and the legal and legislative beginning of the people's democracy. The law covered everything from theft to murder and rape, as long as the deed evidently had a 'national' intention. The act was passed by the Assembly on May 8 1946, the anniversary of the German capitulation in Prague. Staněk gives many examples where quite horrible crimes were left unpunished because the police or other authorities or, sometimes, the accused invoked the law.⁵⁹² That does not mean that acts that were blatantly derived from a psychopathological condition were overlooked. One such case was the security desk-officer of a local government, Ferdinand Svoboda. He enjoyed inspecting the local prison. In June and July 1945 inspection entailed ordering German female prisoners to strip and lie down in a row on the floor, whereupon he beat them with a horse whip until they bled. On other occasions, while beating them, he forced the German women to commit 'deviant lascivious acts and unbelievable perversions'. Svoboda was sentenced to five years.⁵⁹³ The impunity act prevented future embarrassment for potentially useful men and women (who regarded violence as their patriotic duty) and removed potential stains from Communists and their sympathisers, men and women who would be particularly useful in the security services.

They would be far more useful than Czech victims of concentration camps. Although some future Communist leaders were in the camps, and although Communists had earned considerable credit for usually maintaining Party discipline in the camps, returnees were often regarded with suspicion. One might think the scene a crass caricature, but the returnee Jan Horák's treatment by his RG concierge in Barényiová's *Das tote Geleise* is not far off the mark, represents fairly realistically the line-toer view on camp returnees: the concierge demands a coupon from the national committee from Horák so that he can have his own flat back. 'You,' she says to him, 'did not fight for freedom. You were imprisoned and there in the concentration camp you had peace. But we . . . well, you've seen the streets yourself. Believe me, it was no joke killing thousands and thousands of German barbarians with our bare hands [*sic*]! And anyway, the Russians, I mean the Soviets, the Red Army [. . .] will need flats.' Horák answers, thus typifying the suspect 'bourgeois' Resistance man: 'You are absolutely right! I was in a concentration camp, no fighting there, just one delight chasing another. And the fact that my parents kicked the bucket out of nothing but fear for me did not help the people [*Volk = lid*]

⁵⁹⁰ Judt, 'The Past is Another Country', p. 298.

⁵⁹¹ Frommer, *National Cleansing*, p. 114.

⁵⁹² Staněk, *Poválečné 'excesy'*, for example, pp. 92–93, 95, 97, 112, 169, 200, 203, 278, 286, 322.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

either. And it makes no difference that my wife was executed in Pankrác prison, does it?' The concierge answers by informing him that her son is an RG; her husband had killed fourteen Germans in the Uprising and she herself eleven — 'And I can prove that any time. I've got it in writing, a certificate from the National Committee'.⁵⁹⁴ A repeated message of Březovský's *Železný strop* is that his or her having been in a German camp or prison tells one nothing about a person's character. His *Lidé v květnu*, like K. J. Beneš's *Ohnivé písmo*, begins with a group of men who have escaped from a concentration/labour camp at the end of the war. In Březovský's case the three are by no means of the same political quality — but, later, that goes for partisans, too. He is writing in a period when it is a civic virtue to suspect people. K. J. Beneš's picture of a transit camp in Bavaria for former inmates of concentration camps run for the Americans by a committee (*komitét*) of ex-prisoners who are now firmly left-wing; the first committee 'stole a great deal of cigarettes and then beat it; it subsequently came to light that they were members of the Vlajka organization, hardened criminals, and not political prisoners at all'.⁵⁹⁵ By contrast one does frequently encounter Communist returnees in novels concerning 1945, for example, the German Communist Palme in Řezáč's *Nástup*, Jirma in Sedlmayerová's *Překročný práh*, the worker returnees in Březovský's *Lidé v květnu* — where we also have camp survivors out on the streets of Prague welcoming the Red Army on May 9: 'many were still in striped clothes, barefoot, gaunt, shaven heads and they were eagerly imbibing the beauties of the city that was getting ready to meet those who were bringing it freedom'.⁵⁹⁶ This picture is unconvincing; the narrator intends this to be a new sight, but in fact former concentration-camp prisoners began arriving in Prague in April 1945. Perhaps melodramatic and yet truer to life on the camps and the memory of the victims is Ivo Fleischmann's (1921–97) 'Příchod' (Arrival) concerning the ghosts of the Shoah; we note that the Germans are vampires here, an inversion of an antisemitic cliché: 'bird of death – bird that sank heavily / onto the city [Prague] from which it drank for six years / [...] / Only the yellow stars are no longer here. / But from the ghettos' windows there comes a calling: / We are the murdered / we are no one's! / We are the death which you will hardly be able to relate'.⁵⁹⁷ The returning concentration-camp victims Hořec describes in 'Soud' (Judgement) are not Jews; here Hořec appears to be attempting some *neue Sachlichkeit* in verse: 'Today they have been coming back from concentration camps. / All death and gangrene'.⁵⁹⁸ In *Železný strop* Březovský questions the right or expectation of returnees from the camps to any special sympathy. This is not the realism of a Fleischmann or Hořec, but the Party line; he criticizes 'that sentimentality with which some people cared for those who returned literally naked from concentration camps'.⁵⁹⁹ One may, however, at any time sentimentalize the Soviets. So in Aškenazy's 'Smrt majora Kubína' (Death of Major Kubín, in *Sto ohňů*), in order to create a metaphor for the Soviet generosity that was a period motif, has a Red Army officer tend a Czech major who is dying on his way home from a concentration camp; the two men had been on opposite sides in the Russian Civil War.

⁵⁹⁴ Barényi, *Das tote Geleise*, pp. 9–10.

⁵⁹⁵ K. J. Beneš, *Ohnivé písmo*, p. 101. The sentence is important in that Vlajka members were political prisoners, too; in Communist jargon, however, one could only be a political prisoner if one was of the left. It is similar today, when in Czech 'political prisoner' normally means 'against the Communist régime', imprisoned for sedition and so forth.

⁵⁹⁶ Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, p. 198.

⁵⁹⁷ Ivo Fleischmann, 'Příchod', in Vopařil, pp. 47–48. The last line indicates the banality of Adorno.

⁵⁹⁸ Hořec, *Květen č. 1*, p. 29.

⁵⁹⁹ Březovský, *Železný strop*, p. 394.

Yet another mode of reacting to concentration camps is to portray a victim determined to punish the Germans (and fight for his/her country's liberty). Branald's narrator describes, melodramatically, such a victim: 'Of course, they had to give old Salakvarda a rifle. / He had had a hell of a life; he had returned from a concentration camp a complete wreck and the men from the Northern [= Masaryk] Station were solidary enough to respect a great thirst [that is, for action, vengeance].'⁶⁰⁰ Barényiová presents an analogous episode as criticism of the Communists' moral grime in *Das tote Geleise*, where the women of Lidice attend retribution trials and the subsequent executions. The Party had arranged that they should always attend the trials (in Barényiová's example it is the trial of an innocent — Benjamin Frommer has ascertained that the majority of people's court and national court trials was fair). The Lidice women returned from concentration camp are actually victims again, but privileged victims. In Barényiová's version they had not contracted VD from SS rapists, but from Red Army rapists who had come upon them in a forest as they were making their way back to Bohemia.⁶⁰¹

Talk of Gipsy returnees was very limited in Czech *belles-lettres* before the fall of the Communist regime, let alone talk of the camps for Gipsies on Czech soil and with Czech guards. Barényiová has a lively group of them in *Prager Totentanz*, where the local national committee and RGs intern them, though not out of anti-Gipsy feeling, but because they do not know what to do with them. They also do not know what to do with the once rich Jewish returnee, Elvira Blümelein, whom they eventually intern with the Gipsies and who uses one of the Gipsies' clothes to escape the liberated Czechoslovakia that she now recognizes to be an amoral site primarily of brutality. A less picturesque example is K. J. Beneš's brief mention in the Bavarian transit camp.⁶⁰² Sládková's Gipsy in *Kouzelníkův návrat* is far more clearly a victim of German brutality than Barényiová's or Beneš's: Lola Bilová, who has returned from Ravensbrück, has lost all her hair, had her genitals cut out and her thighs have been deformed by experiments with viruses. The man she is in love with is sexually repelled by her. Here, then, are the beginnings of a serious novel about the Gipsies' experience of the Shoah.

Legend has it that a British officer in the vanguard of the liberation of Belsen immediately sent a patrol out to secure lipstick, not food, and that this lipstick saved more lives than food might have done. It returned to the skeletal women something of their feminine dignity. One of the first things Barényiová's Elvira does on reaching Prague from Theresienstadt is to have her hair done. This episode has a sting in the tail: 'Her sparse hair has been freshly dyed platinum blond; yesterday she had to wait until there were no customers in the hairdresser's shop, and afterwards had to confirm in writing for the boss that he served her although he knew she was Jewish.'⁶⁰³ This little Czech man had then thought he might be punished

⁶⁰⁰ Branald, *Lazaretní vlak*, p. 53.

⁶⁰¹ Frommer informs us that seven Lidice women were in the Pankrác prison and amongst the 6,300 spectators when K. H. Frank was hanged, *National Cleansing*, p. 236. There is room for a book or at least a long article on the audiences for hangings in 1945–47 Prague. Sometimes schools or individual forms were encouraged to attend a good hanging instead of having classes. The fellow-travelling clergyman deputy lord-mayor of Prague, Alois Tylínek, who was amongst the crowd of spectators at the hanging of the Nazi deputy lord-mayor Josef Pfitzner, writes, 'Before the execution of the Prague despot Pfitzner I had the opportunity to look into his eyes. [...] I felt that Truth was prevailing, that he had seen that pride comes before a fall.' (Tylínek, 'Hlas bojující Prahy', p. 76). Barbarism had evidently overcome some Czech clergy during 1945, as Emilia Hrabovec suggests.

⁶⁰² K. J. Beneš, *Olnivé písmo*, p. 57.

⁶⁰³ Barényiová, *Prager Totentanz*, p. 68.

by the new regime for not serving Jews during the Occupation, was unprepared for the antisemitism that followed the war. This Party-led anti-Semitism is embodied in the portrayal of the father of two Jewish partisans in Březovský's *Železný strop*, Ossendorf. The suggestion is that no decent Jew could possibly survive the camps: 'The well-known local factory-owner, the Jew Ossendorf, returned from concentration camp. Of itself a strange thing.' A mob looks as if it might lynch him, but the valiant Communists save him from the mob so that he can have a decent trial and be decently hanged. In this trial, the truth comes out; amongst other things, Ossendorf had betrayed an heroic Gentile. Jews cannot be trusted, in particular bourgeois capitalist Jews:

Immediately after his return he was arrested. It emerged that he had been an informer the whole time up to the moment he was deported. A zealous informer. On Jews and Gentiles, it was all the same to him. He even informed on a family with whom he had previously been friends. He informed on the elementary-school master Žáček for supporting Jewish families in the region shortly after Žáček had offered to help him, old Ossendorf. Žáček did not return; he perished. And not only Žáček. Ossendorf had an innumerable list of people on his conscience and all these cases came to light, for they were carefully accounted for in the Gestapo archive. Apparently he did it out of fear. Out of crazed fear. Perhaps he had gone crazy; he confessed, said he had wanted to preserve his family and property.⁶⁰⁴

Quite apart from presenting a Marxist-Leninist stereotypical picture of the bourgeois, Březovský exploits stereotypical antisemitic attributes, Jewish perfidy, lust for property/money, cowardice, callousness, family exclusivity, a lack of love for any outside the immediate family (Jewish lovelessness).

Like Fleischmann, Habřina is more reasonable than Adorno — and Habřina had spent much of the war in Mauthausen. He writes of concentration camps and *belles-lettres*:

The books that have hitherto appeared about concentration-camp life have virtually all been reportage: they are superficial and do not express the whole tragedy of concentration camps, for in the end a merely descriptive and so to say statistical, even if documentary, counting-up of the horrors without the X-ray of human [*životní*] analysis is just tiring. It will take time, then art and scholarship will have their say. [...] In the meantime there is no saying.⁶⁰⁵

A hard-line Communist perverts Habřina's (and Fleischmann's) view; of the concentration camp accounts of the 1940s we learn:

They entirely lack the correct political approach, and from this flows their superficial understanding of fascism. In most cases all they consist of is a listing of facts, narrowly personal memories, a record of undigested emotions and unclassified impressions. We miss in them any registering of the social and subjective psychological foundations on which the Nazis' crimes grew; we miss in them any registering of the single front of the people's [*lidu*] fight for freedom, fight against enslavement by the fascism into which German imperialism crystallized. [...] On the whole [...], this literature very soon died for our readers. Abundant documentary material is stored in it; that is one prerequisite for the emergence of a work in which the given material from life might be captured in a truly artistic manner, that is, a work that would simultaneously have a socially instructive impact.⁶⁰⁶

For Habřina camp inmates are human beings, for Štefánek and his ilk, mechanical political pawns.

⁶⁰⁴ Březovský, *Železný strop*, p. 235.

⁶⁰⁵ Habřina, *Nadčlověk a nadnárod*, p. 50.

⁶⁰⁶ Štefánek, *Česká literatura po válce*, pp. 48–49.

Earlier in this essay I gave examples of Activist antisemitism, wrote something about pre-Occupation antisemitism and suggested that the Activist version did not put down deep roots, simply because it reeked of Germanness, not because the antisemitic emotions and self-justification were unacceptable. Activist and German antisemitism did perhaps diminish Czech antisemitism slightly during the war as Sobota suggested, but he also suggested that it might burst out in a vicious form once the war was over and Jewish Czechs started returning. It did not take long either for the Jews to reassume their position in Czech national mythology as a powerful force for germanization. That survives today, with the long pre-Nazi notion of a Jewish plutocracy intact. It might surprise some to find evidence of it in the Introduction to a book of essays on antisemitism (I leave the weird style as it is):

in our historical conditions it [antisemitism] was often linked with a hatred of germanization, for members of the middle and upper strata of Jewry were in no small part in the nationally inflamed nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century perceived in the Czech or Czech-German environment, and normally quite justifiably at least up to 1918, but often up to the end of the 1930s, to be active germanizers.⁶⁰⁷

It is not just that the very notion of germanization (or gallicization or polonization) is problematic, but we witness here this notion being used as a weapon of 'historical' economic envy. In the end, deep-seated anti-Jewish feeling is once more re-ideologized as patriotism. Since the immediately post-war years were a period of heightened nationalism, one can, however, understand that the experience of the Jews appeared then to be irrelevant, especially after six years' occupation, that is, officially imposed germanization, particularly of schooling. To see pre-war Jews as germanizers, as Žáček does, reflects that nationalism, and possibly also education under a Communist regime in which the mass murder of Jews was understood as comparable not only with that of Soviets, but also with, say, the lives lost in air-raids on Portsmouth. The Activists' assessment of Jewish plutocrats was not essentially different from the Communists', and soon after the end of the war Stalin adopted the notion of Jewish world conspiracy just like the Nazis, and Czechoslovak Communist leaders found that easy to accept and so did much to get rid of Judaeobolsheviks in the early 1950s show-trials.

I begin by looking at the Party line on Jews and then at how that line was toed in literature. The Party provided a guide to what to think of Jews and antisemitism with the Minister of Information Václav Kopecký's *Antisemitismus poslední zbraní nacismu* (Antisemitism, Nazism's last weapon, November 1945 as a booklet, an abridged version of an essay published in the Moscow *Československé listy* [Czechoslovak mail] on July 14 1944). In the same year it was also published as the last piece, dated July 15 1944, in a collection of essays previously published by Communists in that paper. Here Kopecký's title is actually the title of only the first section of the booklet.⁶⁰⁸ The changes are minor, but in the first sentence of the following somewhat aggressive, possibly frightening statement, the booklet has 'citizen', but *Za nové Československo* (For the new Czechoslovakia) has 'émigré':

Every citizen/émigré of Jewish extraction will be investigated equally strictly concerning how he behaved nationally in the past, what his attitude to German and Hungarian nationalism was,

⁶⁰⁷ Rudolf Žáček, 'Úvodní slovo', in Mečislav Borák (ed.), *Poválečná justice a národní podoby antisemitismu. Postih provinění vůči Židům před soudy a komisemi ONV v českých zemích v letech 1945–1948 a v některých zemích střední Evropy (Sborník příspěvků)*, Prague, Opava, 2002, pp. 9–11 (10–11).

⁶⁰⁸ 'V řadách čs. osvobodovacího hnutí nesmí být místa pro antisemitické tendence' [Antisemitic tendencies must have no place in the ranks of the Czechoslovak liberation movement], in G. B. [= Gustav Bareš?], *Za nové Československo. Sborník článků, projevů a dokumentů*, Prague, 1945, pp. 214–23.

what his attitude to the Czech nation and the other Slav nations of Czechoslovakia was. Just as strict an enquiry will be conducted into how he behaved towards his own Jewish co-religionists in the Second Republic as during the German occupation, what he did with his property, what transactions he undertook, possibly in association with Germans, and so forth. How he behaved in the past socially and politically will also be investigated. Indeed, Czechoslovak citizens of Jewish extraction [in both versions of the text] will be subject to the same criteria as other Czechoslovak citizens.⁶⁰⁹

For the Party, Kopecký is insisting that Jews' individual status will be exactly the same as other citizens', that all Czechoslovaks are to be vetted and on occasion purged, but it is evident that here we are dealing only with a propertied class of Jew. At one point it appears that Jewish is a religious category, but for the rest of the time it is racial (extraction, origin). The passage also describes measures that only a highly bureaucratized totalitarian state could take — unless it was a matter of the few thousand Jews (by Nazi definition) left. In fact, the main thrust of Kopecký's essay is that Jewish plutocrats have no place in the people's democracy, and, actually, only those who suffered at home, not those who emigrated in time, would be welcome. The following constitutes just that political mean-mindedness that one associates with radical socialism:

Defeating antisemitism [...] does not mean, for example, ensuring return to the liberated republic for the Jewish super-rich [*velkoboháčům*] like Petschek, Weinmann, Rothschild, Gutman [*sic*] etc., so that they can repossess their former property and continue their blood-sucking. On no account! The Jewish super-rich who like Petschek, Weinmann, Rothschild, Gutmann [*sic*] etc., succeeded in escaping the country before the critical period of the republic's defensive struggle, who were able to abandon their property, hand it over voluntarily [*sic*] to the Germans, who were able to forsake their Czechoslovak citizenship and assume foreign citizenship, such Jewish super-rich panickers may never return to the republic! And their former property will never be returned to them, and no intervention by the mightiest foreign officials will ever help them in that.⁶¹⁰

Here socialist politics shrouds chiefly economic antisemitism (the vampire few) and nationalism (dealing with Germans and cowardice verging on treason).

Kopecký's essay does have another facet, one that comports with national mythology: mass antisemitism had barely existed amongst the Czechs in the nineteenth century, and the doughty Masaryk had destroyed Czech antisemitism forever (though exiled Polish forces had infected the Czech military in Britain with some antisemitism, which, however, a fine Czechoslovak general had dealt with successfully). Masaryk had, indeed, more or less prevented the Czechs from becoming 'fascist' single-handedly, and Czechs had seen the Jews' lot during the war to be similar to their own:

T. G. Masaryk's pedagogical endeavours and his passionate decisiveness in the fight against antisemitism will remain to his glory. How differently would our nation have fared under the pressure of fascism, how long ago would it have been undermined during the Hitlerite campaign of subjugation, if antisemitism had taken root in this country. Our nation [...] did not sully its honour with the vice of antisemitism even during the five [*sic*] years of Hitler's rule. [...] The Czech nation saw a component of its own tragic martyrdom [*sic*] in the tragic fate of its Jewish population.⁶¹¹

⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

Kopecký had a soft spot for Masaryk, but he publicly dissociated himself from Masaryk's actions and politics from the Russian Civil War onwards — though he appears unaware of both Masaryk's abhorrence of the Czech 'martyr complex' and of the views of his own contemporaries in the Party who rejected the notion of Czech martyrs in the war.

The writer who endeavoured most fully to portray Jews in accordance with the Party line was Březovský, predominantly in *Železný strop*, though that line is palpable in its precursor, *Lidé v květnu*. In the town where the three main characters (escapees from a camp) live, before the war the chief employer was the Jewish owner of a textile factory, Feuerstein, and 'wages went down by twenty heller'.⁶¹² Although this statement makes for a stock Socialist Realist indication of workers' suffering in the Great Depression, it also makes for a more generally stock image of the plutocrat exploiter. The next Jew we encounter earns greater characterization. He owns a sugar refinery that has been aryanized and is imprisoned in the same camp as the three main characters. In the camp he receives a beating from a guard because he has a 'von' before his name on top of being a 'Saujude'; von Radnitzky is incapable of fitting in, which is intended to indicate that he is socially alien to the politically conscious other inmates: 'he *vouvoit* everyone even though everyone *tutoit* him and with gentle sarcasm and a certain gratification called him Count.' True to 'race', he is a coward, and so when selected for execution (his life is actually saved by one of the three heroes), 'he knelt, shouted, pleaded and lamented'. Originally von Radnitzky had been a 'German'; by that Březovský means that he had been registered as a German in the 1930 census, in other words, until spring 1946, would have been expelled with other Germans, even though in theory the racially persecuted had never been subject to expulsion. Indeed, Březovský may be defending expulsion (as Kopecký's criteria could), since before von Radnitzky was deported 'he had nothing against the Nazis and even in the camp he was willing to praise their strength and he was always full of admiration and bitterness that they had not recognized him as the loyal fellow he was, but had treated him so inconsiderately'. That is evidently intended by Březovský as political satire. In the camp, too, Radnitzky had not been aiming simply to survive like the rest, but also to regain his old status. He is then completely unprepared for the new socialist Czechoslovakia, is labelled by the one bourgeois of the three escapees, 'A greedy creep, a tight-fisted miser!' He eventually realizes that there is no point in going back to Prague, that the new regime will take away his refinery, and so he hangs himself.⁶¹³ The narrator does not comment on his suicide, but it is intended to indicate, first, his abiding cowardice and, second, the fact that rich Jews will not be welcome in the new society (as Kopecký had stated), for they will be incapable of fitting in.

The Party line comes through most clearly in Březovský's portrayal of the Ossendorf brothers, Erik and Gustav, sons of the Gestapo informer, who first appear as partisans in Chomutov in *Lidé v květnu*, but of whom we learn most in the sequel. In *Lidé v květnu* there is no indication that they are Jews (the surname is not typical). They had evidently gone home to their rather grand house, felt that they had nothing in common with the plush atmosphere of their home any longer, that is, had acquired decent socialist taste during the war. On the other hand, Erik and Gustav become social outcasts not because of their 'class', but because their father had been an informer. Erik soon emigrates to Palestine, something greatly encouraged by the Czechs (it might be facetious to associate that with T. G. Masaryk's support for

⁶¹² Březovský, *Lidé v květnu*, p. 18.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 136, 34, 79, 137–39, 141.

Zionism). Gustav is more persistent in demonstrating that he belongs to the people's democracy, persists in trying to find a job even though everyone ostracizes him, eventually becomes a forestry worker, but because he is cursed with a double political original sin, being a Jew and a scion of the bourgeoisie, finds no way into the hearts of the other workers and so shoots himself. The sins of the father have thus been visited on both pariah sons. When Erik and Gustav did not want to live in their informer father's house, they had gone to the communal boarding house for refugees, but here too they encountered only coldness from the Czechs, Communist or not. Gustav is aware that the men of his family had perpetrated the moral crime of cosmopolitanism and, probably, Existentialist lonerdom:

I'm living here, working in the forest, amongst people whom I repel; they don't dare address me; the local children are afraid of me; I'm alone, completely alone. [...] I realized back there [when he was a partisan in the mountains] that I was no one, that I belonged nowhere. That, to be sure, I did speak Czech, but I spoke German, English and French equally well. Am I Czech? German? Am I French or English? That was father's upbringing. The feeling that I didn't belong anywhere. I can't live like this.

Březovský provides one of the three returnee heroes, Ondřej, and so us, with a paraphrase of the official Party view on Gustav's statement about himself. Kraus, the local Party secretary, had said that

He must keep an eye on him [Gustav], a close eye sometimes; they cannot expect the son of an executed informer and capitalist to be a friend of this regime. It is a bit strange that he has not left the country. [...] Apparently Ondřej sees in Gustav Ossendorf a good friend, a brave partisan, an honest, slightly complicated man. Perhaps he is right. But let him now look at it from his, Kraus's, point of view. What can he see? Around here the name Ossendorf is equivalent to 'capitalist, exploiter, extortionist' and, on top of all that, 'informer'.

Apart from ideologized concealment of antisemitism, Březovský is here making clear that the Party is antimeritocratic; heredity matters. A little later, Kraus maintains that the Party condemns any form of racism: 'And it will not bother anyone who is innocent.' The young Ossendorf's lot may be difficult, but the Party is worried about the lot of the whole nation, not of an individual. Ondřej has the last word on Gustav, after the suicide: 'You must belong somewhere. Like anybody else be from somewhere. And usually that's not for nothing. Usually it takes experience and thinking. I don't know whether Gustav was capable of that.'⁶¹⁴ In other words, one must be politically conscious in order to be a true Czech.

Březovský's final exemplification of the Jew is the sceptic, or cynic, the bohemian wastrel, also of bourgeois background. I have suggested Březovský's Arnošt Krammer could be compared with Řezáč's Püchler (the younger) from *Nástup* and *Bitva*; in fact, Krammer could be based on Řezáč's factory-owner's nephew and toned down slightly in keeping with the time of publication. Březovský has Krammer himself describe the Party's view on people like him: 'The Communists know exactly where they are. For them I am a reactionary, a decadent, a man without a country. A *déraciné*, you see. [...] Because I can't persuade the Communists of the opposite I have to leave. I'd go to Palestine except for the fact I'm essentially an antisemite.' Krammer is to a large degree based on the writer Egon Hostovský, but where the latter defected while he was serving in a Czechoslovak embassy, Březovský has Krammer caught by the police trying to cross the border out of the country illegally. Březovský changes the story in order to associate Hostovský/Krammer with the criminal types who are escaping with him.

⁶¹⁴ Březovský, *Železný strop*, pp. 423–24, 446–47, 540.

The bourgeois member of the escapee threesome of Březovský's two-volume novel, Ludvík Janeba, has enjoyed Krammer's pre-war novels, but since re-reading them after the war he has changed his mind. His experience of life had led him to recognize all Krammer's superficial psychologizing, the falseness of many passages. Krammer's novels suffered far too much from improbability, literary contriving. In other words, Krammer constitutes the type that literary ideologues like Štefánek, Ladislav Štoll and, later, Petrmichl rejected as manifesting decadent, bourgeois art. When Ludvík meets him in person in 1946, he recognizes him immediately from pre-war published photographs of his 'young, almost boyish, conspicuously Jewish face'. Krammer is not all bad for Březovský, for, even if he is not a Communist, he despises all those politicians who had returned from the West to take up their jobs in liberated Czechoslovakia; Krammer thinks of them as 'the Anglo-American clique of swindlers'. Březovský takes little trouble concealing the fact that Krammer is Hostovský. He writes of Krammer's 1947 novel as 'Hledání' (Seeking); Hostovský's 1947 novel was *Cizinec hledá byt* (A foreigner seeking somewhere to live).⁶¹⁵

From the very beginning of Řezáč's incomplete trilogy, Viktor Püchler is an outsider, something like the Jew as eternal wanderer, and his subjective view on the war tacitly denies Communist ideologization: 'He regarded himself as someone returning home after the long, interminable, nonsensical madness of the war. But he never had been really at home here. He had just sometimes driven out here. And now it occurred to him that he had never been truly at home anywhere, that he had felt like a visitor everywhere.' One is reminded here perhaps more of Gustav Ossendorf than of Krammer, although Püchler now wishes to become a diplomat like Krammer. Řezáč (the narrator) mocks the young Püchler for being a Masarykian (as a rich member of the bourgeoisie, naturally anti-Communist; his uncle had perished in a death camp): 'In the nation the traditions of Masarykian democratism have survived the Hitlerite occupation and one can only assume that they will constitute the most reliable defence against attempts at Bolshevization.'⁶¹⁶ Where Krammer has been corrupted mainly by America, in Püchler's case it is Britain (he will smoke only British cigarettes, for example); he had been a flying-officer in the RAF, like the hero of Körner's *Adelheid*, and had been infected with degenerate, large-scale capitalist ways of thinking in Britain — and anyway he is, or has suddenly become, a Jewish industrialist, a type Kopecký wrote did not belong in a people's democracy. Řezáč has Püchler think like a cosmopolitan (he finds Prague constricting) and have little regard for his native land, which instead of 'great art' produces only 'miserable rehashes and imitations'. Řezáč appears to be demonstrating the truth of Kopecký in that in *Bitva* he represents antisemitism only in a Škoda director, never in a Communist; he appears unaware that he has himself exploited antisemitic stereotypes.

Czech post-war antisemitism may not have resulted in any major pogroms like that in the Polish town of Kielce, though Slovakia saw its pogroms and Schikorra writes that between 1945 and 1947 there was anti-Jewish violence, some of it amounting to pogroms in thirty-one towns in the Bohemian Lands.⁶¹⁷ In other words, at least to some extent, Březovský's novelized interpretation of Kopecký actually reflects something of the mood of the people in the Third

⁶¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 459–60, 376–77, 379, 381.

⁶¹⁶ Řezáč, *Bitva*, pp. 8, 16, 19.

⁶¹⁷ Christa Schikorra, 'Návrat do nově se ustavující společnosti. Židovské reemigrantky v Československu v letech 1945–1948', in Jaroslava Milotová and Eva Lorencová [eds], *Terezínské studie a dokumenty 2004*, Prague, 2004, pp. 243–70 (247).

Republic. Throughout the war, K. F. Koch referred to Jewish physicians, psychiatrists, authors in his books, appeared to believe that his readers would welcome this little bit of normality. After the war, he is shocked when he sees in the Bratislava streets, 'a year and a half after the liberation of Auschwitz', inscriptions like the following: 'Partisans, beat the Jews!' or 'Drive the Jews out to Palestine!'. This, Koch writes, 'is not antisemitism, but something far worse — the robber's anxiety that he might have to return Jewish property'. Koch also mentions here that those Slovaks who had risked their lives hiding Jews during the war are now viewed only with contempt.⁶¹⁸ We read of Poles being ashamed at having hidden Jews in Jan T. Gross's account of the Kielce pogrom, *Fear*.⁶¹⁹ When what remains of the Wolf family is liberated from their hiding-place, Otto's sister Felicitas sets out on a bicycle to inspect the family flat in Olomouc, but Soviet soldiers set upon her, steal the bicycle and her watch and 'she was glad that they were satisfied just with theft' — in other words she had expected rape. She had set out on a bicycle because the local coach would not take her. The local coach owner-driver Dočkal had refused her a ticket with the words, 'We don't take Jews', and shut the door in her face.⁶²⁰ Jews returning from concentration camps were often faced with being treated as Germans. Twenty-five per cent of Jewish Czechs who survived had declared German their language of everyday intercourse in the 1930 census — and this census was normally what counted when expulsion was considered. The fact that Jews were excluded from expulsion because they had been persecuted under German race laws did not immediately have a great impact, and Jews asking for certificates of reliability 'encountered a strongly antisemitic attitude, particularly from low-ranking officials', but in mid-September 1946 the Ministry of the Interior had uttered a directive whereby Jews were automatically treated as victims of the Germans. Schikorra relates the story of Editha B., who, on her way to Prague from a camp, had had to fight off the attempts of Soviet soldiers to rape her, had found a repatriation coach going to Prague, gone to her pre-war flat, found a Czech family in it, apparently said nothing, just felt more lost, and eventually walked to Romania to find her sister — who was also uninterested in her. Schikorra also tells of one Flora B., who soon realized that she could get a job only if she denied her Jewishness and that she had been a prisoner in Auschwitz. The Slovak Helena K. had returned from Ravensbrück; at the railway station in Prague families were waiting who were to look after returnees; all Gentile Slovak girls were soon taken up, but the Jewish were left standing on the platform. A young Jewish Slovak has the following welcome in Prešov: 'When did you return? So Hitler didn't kill you?' and even, 'It's a pity Hitler didn't kill you'.⁶²¹

In Denemarková's trendy novel about a Jewish returnee brother and sister, *Peníze od Hitlera* (*Money from Hitler*, 2006), the new national committee's requisitioning of all their property so that chiefly Communists can secure generous living quarters, and their unwillingness to return their spoils when it turns out that the children had survived, by all accounts reflects frequent events in 1945 Bohemia. The brother is starved to death on returning; the sister (main character) escapes and survives to have her property or its value in cash returned under

⁶¹⁸ Koch, *Slovo má lidskost*, pp. 131–32.

⁶¹⁹ See Jan T. Gross, *Fear. Anti-semitism in Poland after Auschwitz*, Princeton NJ, Oxford, 2006, pp. ix–x. Czechs hiding Jews during the war is a motif of Edvard Valenta's *Jdi za zeleným světlem* [1956], 3rd edn, Prague, 1958; see, for commentary on the motif, pp. 334–35. The motif appears again in, for example, Jiří Fried's *Časová tíseň* (1961).

⁶²⁰ *Deník Otty Wolfá*, p. 358.

⁶²¹ Schikorra, 'Návrat do nově se ustavující společnosti', pp. 247, 249, 254–55, 261, 252, 257.

post-socialism. This novel is probably intended to portray the Czechs' first experience of civilization since 1938; on the other hand, rural Czechs have remained as primitively selfish as they had been encouraged to be by the Communists in 1945. The reader is finally left with a work written to please the Czech intelligentsia: a work of self-righteous national sentimentalization. The novel won the 2006 Magnesia Litera Prize for fiction, which is meant to be the equivalent of the Booker Prize.⁶²² The initial circumstances Denemarková describes remind one of the third 1947 report by Michal Mareš concerning the ill-treatment of returning Jewish Czechs.⁶²³ Soon after the Jewish owner of a textile factory, Josef Nettl, dies, the Occupation comes, but his wife and two daughters have taken it on; they, however, put the factory in the hands of a Gentile family friend, Lehraus. The Nettls are all deported, and eventually the Gestapo arrest the patriotic Lehraus; he spends a long time in prison, returns with broken health to find the factory in the hands of its former aryanizer, now 'national manager', a collaborator who has since taken the name Bohumil Žižka (*sic*) and is a 'freshly baked revolutionary'. Nettl's two daughters, Poláková and Jelínková, the latter with a little son born in the camp and named Tomáš after Masaryk, return at the end of June 1945:

No one welcomed them; no one had a kind word for them. For the heiresses of a factory with 160 employees have returned [...] When these two women returned they were certainly not expecting a triumphal arch or even flowers. No, but they were met by shouts: 'Look, the Jewesses! They've come back, and brought a bastard with them. Now you can see how they suffered, when we had that hard life here! A child born in a concentration camp! Who's ever seen anything like that?'

The authorities leave Žižka in the Nettls' house and put them in some living quarters in the factory grounds. Žižka cuts off the water there and, later, when Jelínková is expecting another child, cuts off the telephone, while at the same time offering their quarters to the urban district as a nursery. When Jelínek, a worker, returns with two other workers to the town, expecting to get his job in the factory back, they are turned down. The workers all agree with the factory returning to the Nettls, and so Žižka and his accomplices call them all 'white Jews', and Žižka has the backing of the Communist press. Just as the Germans had dug out a Jewish grandparent if they wanted a certain building, so now the Communists had invented a story whereby the ever decent old Josef Nettl had been a social nuisance (*asociál*) as well as a capitalist; Žižka had had himself paid reparations for war-time damage to the factory. He closely resembles the national committee and RG members of Denemarková's novel, but also Elvira Blümelein's boyfriend, Dr Braun, in Barényiová's *Prager Totentanz*: he had 'looked after' much of Elvira's wealth during the war, but now, in 1945, she finds he has simply taken it all over, initially under the Germans and now he is making sure his ownership is secure by behaving like a good Czech revolutionary.

Barényiová also suggests that in May 1945 Czech antisemitism returned to its pre-1939 form, where Jewishness was more or less synonymous with Germanness. At the same time, however, she portrays this antisemitism as just part of the post-war ruffian culture she considers Czechs possessed by. She has a female RG shout: 'The Jews want to play important again! And they were always Germans, those filthy pigs!'⁶²⁴ A similar female figure pronounces a similar view against a background of mass antisemitism; Barényiová appears annoyed by the Jews' calm, too:

⁶²² Articles and letters in the weekly *Literární noviny* demonstrate that Czech intellectuals, like irrelevant British students of Czech literature, consider the standard of Magnesia Litera very low indeed.

⁶²³ Michal Mareš, 'Jiný diktátůrek: ze Žamberka' [July 10 1947], in *Ze vzpomínek anarchisty*, pp. 322–29.

⁶²⁴ Barényi, *Prager Totentanz*, p. 72.

[...] 'What do you say, brother? That I'm an antisemite? I'm not and never have been, you idiot, but I am a patriotic Czech woman, and are these filthy Jews German Jews or not? Have you already forgotten that the Jews did everything to make our Prague German? Who built the German theatre in Prague and who supported it with money? Just Jews, and without them there'd be no German theatre in Prague! Out with the German Jews, they're no better than the Germans themselves!'

Most people there agree with her. The crowd is nettled most of all by the fact that the Jews are sitting by the window in the café, calmly playing cards. They threaten them with raised fists and curse them in a deafening roar. The Jews only smile. Nothing will happen to them, for they are concentration-camp survivors.⁶²⁵

That is soon after the Uprising. Amongst the thousands of pages Arnošt Lustig devoted to the Shoah, in a small proportion of them associated also with the Uprising, one does find a suggestion that the inner circle of the Czech National Council was antisemitic during the Uprising itself: 'As a senior functionary of the revolution put it, the ordinary people will find a way of dealing with some of those bearded men with side-locks and they will set them limits, allocate them suitable duties.'⁶²⁶ I have demonstrated that Pražák and Machotka were antisemites; what such men have in store for the Jews and what the Prager in the street would do with them is, I believe, no clearer to the reader than the author. What is important here is that, not for the first time (see *Dita Saxova*, 1962), Lustig makes at least something of post-war Czech antisemitism, which, still today, rarely pops up in *belles-lettres*.

It does pop up in the first few years after the war, in a prose piece satirizing the vulgar Czech petty bourgeoisie, here embodied in an as yet unnationalized fur-coat maker or worker; he begins by cursing the Communists, but soon comes to the Jews, and to praise for the Germans: 'Drive a bloke to ruin and then demand he pretend to be blissfully happy — well, I'm sorry, but that's plain lousy. Just like us, idiot Slavs, and the Jews laugh at us [reference to Jewish furrier tradition]. That's where the Germans were in a different league: they knocked the Jews down a peg or two!'⁶²⁷ Hanč is not making a political statement, just presenting the callous, amoral world as he experiences it, a world where the unthinking mob will always make a considerable contribution to social norms by its ready acceptance of violence.

Not just another set of essays on Czech-German relations, this special issue of *Central Europe* concerns violence above all else, Czech Activist versions of Nazi propaganda,⁶²⁸ the rather late (early if you are Soviet) Prague Uprising, the violent continuities of Czech nationalism, the violence inherent in lyrical Sovietophilia, in the portraits of bravery/mythology of glory; and the mental violence of State-imposed ideologization of history, of language, and, indeed, of self. The Second World War, including for Czechs the expulsion of the Germans, created the zenith of national collectivism and hence near-obliteration of the individual self.⁶²⁹ Nationalists, Fascists, Nazis, Communists all guided/forced so-called idealists as well as the

⁶²⁵ Barényi, *Das tote Geleise*, p. 107.

⁶²⁶ Arnošt Lustig, *Porgess*, a brief novel included in a collection of three short works, one each by Lustig, Škvorecký and Milan Kundera published in post-1989 euphoria (émigré veneration) as *Velká trojka* [The great triumvirate], Prague, 1991, p. 21.

⁶²⁷ Hanč, *Události*, p. 68.

⁶²⁸ If one reads Jeffrey Herf's study of German war-time antisemitic propaganda, *The Jewish Enemy* (2006), one soon sees how unoriginal Moravec, Lažnovský and the rest were in their contributions.

⁶²⁹ Indeed, the whole of this special issue could be said to lend support to Amartya Sen's statements 'Violence is fomented by the imposition of singular and belligerent identities on gullible people, championed by proficient artisans of terror' and 'The illusion of destiny exacts a remarkably heavy price'. *Identity & Violence. The Illusion of Destiny* [2006], London, 2007, pp. 2, 17. See also pp. 45, 92–94, 175, 179.

mob back to Fichteanism: collectivist nationalism will cure the world of Western-inspired egoism, and so the individual will be blessedly lost in the heaven of an ideal *lid/Volk* that by force of Nature will crush all opposition. It was not possible fully to discuss the war, the Uprising, let alone the expulsions while the Communist Party held sway in Czechoslovakia. Since 1989 predominantly historians (their work often popularized by television) have been bringing the realities of the Czech war and the Czech (the Slovak were minor in comparison) expulsions to the public's notice. A nation, however artificial intellectuals may consider it to be or fear that others consider it thus, needs to have a reasonably clear and accurate picture of itself in an age of 'democracy', based, it seems, on self-analysis, and a morbid interest in genealogy and heredity. Not just Communist-Party-imposed or popularly self-imposed amnesia gave the 'history' of the Bohemian Lands its shape for the second half of the twentieth century, but also Western support to the idea of the Czechs as a nation of sufferers as well as 'plucky Czechs'. Václav Havel still embodies the Central European democratic intellectual for most Westerners, and a complex mythology of 'Czech humour': Czechs are not cruel; others are cruel to Czechs. This special issue of *Central Europe* concerns a horrid time for the Czechs, and both the war and liberation made it horrid.