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Introduction to a Mono-thematic Issue
on Czech-German Relations

In the first half of the 1990s, Czech-German relations were profoundly politicised by the mass media (especially in the Czech Republic). The media-reality that emerged was often the result of political machinations, thus transforming Czech-German relations into the specifics of the relationship between the Czechs and Sudeten Germans, features of which were often creations of the mass media. This media-reality determined the Czech-German dialogue that should have become the basis for post-war Czech-German conciliation. As a purpose-made media-reality, it could not, and ultimately did not, become the basis for dialogue. It did, however, considerably damage the Czech-Sudeten German relationship that had only just begun forming following the fall of Communism.

This issue attempts to create a certain framework for the main problems of Czech-German relations, including the Czech-Sudeten German relationship, one that differs from the over-represented media-reality by being non-political, non-ideological, authentic, critical, and, insofar as it is possible, non-prejudicial.

The Czech-German dialogue does not seemingly differ from those of other nations with Germany, and may in some cases even be better. It was only quite recently that the European press noted the remarks of the then German Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs Klaus Kinkel on how bad a relationship other European nations have with Germany. The Czechs, however, were not referred to in any such context.

The relationship of Czechs towards Germans is created on two basic, intermingling levels: on the level of the dominant system of collective symbols and stereotypes, and on the level of individual empirical praxis and experience. The system of collective symbols is, in contrast to the scrutinising, keen and flexible individual praxis, considerably persistent, since it is shaped by strong collective experience, which goes beyond the historical everyday life of a nation or a state.

During the 1950s, most Czechs probably had greater personal ties with Germans (mostly from the GDR), through which the majority rationally overcame the trauma of German occupation and war. Around the time of the 1960's, there was a change in stereotyped perceptions of East Germans and attitudes towards them. This was possible to observe in the colloquial Czech of the time, when the term used to refer to them changed from a pejorative to a familiar nickname. Germans from the FRG were simply referred to as Germans or West Germans.

However, at the time of the Soviet occupation of 1968, when non-essential military units of the former GDR formed part of the occupying army in the Czech border region, the system of collective symbols, shaped in part by the Second World War and the German occupation, influenced even the majority of rational people. Wartime stereotypes in values and attitudes persisted in the two decades of communist rule following 1968 (in personal contacts Germans, Hungarians and Poles distanced themselves from the military intervention).

The process of conciliation of Czechs with Germans occurred as naturally as was possible in almost fifty years of a divided Europe. In contacts with mainly Germans from

former East Germany, it transpired as a process of gatherings of individuals and groups during vacations, at work, during student exchanges and in certain social circles and organised association, and in such encounters the negative past was digested and overcome. Nevertheless, this process emerged on the axis which, fifty years after the war, dominated Europe, and could not happen in the manner Czechs (or Sudeten-German groups in Bavaria and Austria) imagined it in their specific ethno-centric self-reflection. In a divided Europe, the process of conciliation could not be conducted according to their conception nor with their participation. In the Czech consciousness, the process, of course, abstractly involved Germans in general and therefore also West Germans and Austrians, and it is this reality which in any mutual dialogue it is necessary to take into consideration. Paradoxically, it follows that on the Bavarian and the Austrian side of the Czech border this process has not been played out, and could not be, since it could only begin in 1989. Unless such factors are taken into account at the outset of dialogue, it will most likely remain unproductive.

The political pressure for mass conciliation, the admission of past guilt and forgiveness which after 1990 flowed from Bavaria neither surprised the Czechs nor did it seem to address them. It did not speak to them because they had already been reconciled and did not feel the need to return to beginning of a difficult and painful process; in short, to replay the same song in a different tone and with a different terminology, and especially not on the instigation from outside and above. Moreover, it did not speak to them because the categories of guilt, pardoning, and pacification were advanced in a language of Catholic doctrine that is socially and politically internalised in neighbouring Bavaria, and which corresponded with the government of the Christian Democrats. These same categories are rather more cultural than doctrinal affairs in the secularised Czech Republic, where social perception, interpretation and political processes operate in an altogether different manner.

Under these circumstances, the moment guilt began to be recognised, compensation claims for property etc. were put forward by organisations for displaced Germans. This was then turned into an aspect of the political interests of the whole of Germany, which consequently impaired the real process of conciliation and began to produce collective symbols associated with a mutually negative past.

These facts are reflected in the individual articles in this issue of the *Czech Sociological Review*: an analysis of Czech-German relations and problems of German identity after its reunification is provided by Jiří Musil and Zdeněk Suda, including formulations of the possible scenarios for development; Miroslav Kunštát's text contributes as a overview of inter-state political relationships based on diplomatic and state actions; Jan Pauer's article is an ethical-legal analysis of Czech-German discourse; Eva Broklová's article is dedicated to the coexistence of Czechs and Germans as bearers of two different political cultures in democratic Czechoslovakia before the Second World War; Ton Nijhuis's article offers reflections on German national interests from the point of view of small nations; Václav Houžvička's and František Zich's sociological analysis of citizens' attitudes is based on their empirical research concerning the inhabitants of the Czech border regions.

The themes of the aforementioned articles seek to approximate a research frame of reference for Czech-German relations and problems, in order to facilitate comparison and analysis towards greater mutual Czech-German understanding. This thematisation crosses

the boundaries of sociology, as does the reality. Insofar as sociology is understood as a relatively narrow discipline, this attempt is interdisciplinary. Further analysis of this topic could become a serious foundation for a realistic dialogue, especially with those Germans, who, on account of the post-war division of Europe, could only begin to participate in this process after the fall of Communism. The experience of the first half of the 1990's shows that cabinet discussions, the creation of private political and governmental commissions, the revocation of a catastrophic past and the emergence of a media-reality that legitimises numerous accusations and claims, do not lead to mutual understanding and respect. The present issue of the *Czech Sociological Review* is an attempt at a different approach to this theme and the corresponding dialogue.

Lubomír Brokl, Guest Editor

Czech-German Relations: A Sociological View[*]

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Abstract: The article is a sociological essay on the various aspects of relations between the Czechs and the Germans. In the first part of the essay the authors stress the significance of Czech-German relations for both partners. It is important not only for the Czechs but also for the Germans. The Czech side should acknowledge, however, important new realities, especially the change in Germany's approach concerning its smaller neighbours, especially in the east. This change is a result of significant structural transformations of German society. The essay aims at sketching three possible basic scenarios of future societal developments in both countries. When building the scenarios for the Czech Republic we considered the main criterion to be its degree of ability to join the European Union. As for Germany, we considered this criterion to be its ability to successfully integrate the so-called 'new lands', i.e. the former German Democratic Republic, into the economic and social system of the Federal Republic. The essay also includes an assessment of the probability of the individual scenarios materialising.
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This text is intended to be a sociological essay dealing with the possible modalities of relations between the Czechs and the Germans. The main part of our paper focuses on the future; nevertheless, due to the fact that these future relations are deeply intertwined with the past, the approach of historical sociology is also applied. This approach should show the roots of the principal difficulties in Czech-German relations as they have developed over time. They became strained especially in the 19th century, under the impact of the German and Czech national movement and deteriorated to a disastrous level in the first half of the 20th century. The political and cultural élites of both societies were burdened by similar impediments. In the first place, they were unwilling to accept their given geopolitical situation and the existing ethnic structure in their neighbourhoods. Furthermore, they refused to take into account the geopolitical shifts that had taken place in Central Europe over the course of modern history and were unable to understand the real meaning of these changes.

The purpose of our essay, however, is not only analytical. Both authors, who have acquired considerable experience of Czech as well as German culture and society, wish also to express their views on the recent developments and, above all, on their future possibilities and risks. Unlike most contemporary studies which treat Czech-German and German-Czech relations chiefly from the perspective of political science and historiography, we seek to interpret these relations sociologically as well. It should be stressed,

however, that even in sociology neither the analyses of interaction between societies living in nation-states nor those of relations between nations are very frequent. In most cases, sociologists either analyse individual national societies or study their non-contextual general social structures and processes. However, in our time, when trans- and international economic and political structures are being formed and when globalisation processes are gaining momentum, political, social and cultural interaction between national societies should indeed become one of the most important concerns of contemporary sociology.

The interaction between national societies is, of course, determined by a combination of several factors. The main role – depending on the size of the individual societies – is played, firstly, by internal developments of the individual societies, secondly, by the wider geopolitical framework of the interacting societies, and finally, also by the nature and history of relations between the societies, including images, stereotypes and even prejudices mutually entertained by each nation.

Thus our essay concentrates – following the above-mentioned pluralistic conception of the factors determining these interactions – on sketching three possible basic scenarios of societal development of the Czech and the German nations, and on the assessment of their respective probabilities. We shall also try to evaluate each of these three scenarios and see what they mean for mutual relations between the Czechs and the Germans. When building the scenarios for the Czech Republic we considered the main criterion to be the degree of its ability to join the European Union. As for Germany, we considered this criterion to be its ability to successfully integrate the so-called 'new lands', i.e. the territories of former East Germany, into the economic and social system of the Federal Republic.

The construction of these scenarios has largely drawn on the findings of a four-year study of contemporary German society which is part of Central European University research programme.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the format of our paper corresponds to its content – it is an essay. This means, among other things, that although the paper made use of a wide range of books, articles, economic analyses and statistical and other data, we have deliberately chosen to merely hint at some of these sources but to avoid, on the whole, the standard detailed reference procedure. The aim is simply to clarify the topical issues and to suggest possible options in the matters of mutual relations available to these two neighbouring societies, and to stress the constructive role sociology may play in the process of their shaping.

False Issues and Wrong Scale of Urgency

The problem of Czech-German relations is important for both partners, despite the differences in their respective territorial and demographic size, power and available resources. Seen from the German point of view, it cannot be assessed separately from the larger issue of Germany's rapports with all nations in its eastern and south-eastern neighbourhood. These relations, virtually throughout modern times, have been a source of tensions and crises that more than once led to a major war. It therefore appears natural that the problem should receive adequate attention from both parties. However, it does not seem at present to be an object of their primary concern. The Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany stated, some time ago, that the Czech-German relationship was

"better than its repute". This may well be true; yet it does not diminish in any way the need for the Czechs and the Germans to thoroughly examine what conditions have to be met if a good and stable rapport is to be established between the two nations.

At first sight, an observer of the contemporary scene might nevertheless gain the impression that the Czech side were more preoccupied with this problem than its German counterpart. The impression is misleading; what on the Czech part could pass for proof of serious interest in the matter of Czech-German relations is actually a partly irksome, partly embarrassed occasional debate in public and in the media on a very particular, albeit in its own right significant, indirectly related topic; that of the consequences for Czech society of the forcible transfer of the German-speaking population from Czechoslovakia to Germany after World War II. This debate, for the most part, has taken place in the absence of the spokesmen of the expellees and their descendants but it has often been stimulated by various statements and demands voiced by these groups. Given the fact that the policy lines of the Federal Republic of Germany concerning Central and Eastern Europe have not yet been determined in detail, there seems to be some room for initiatives and pressures coming from these quarters. German political parties, especially those participating in the governmental coalition, are inclined to respond to such pressures since these could influence their majority in the Federal Parliament. The Czech public, on the other hand, tends to overestimate the weight of the expellees' lobby association on two counts: it overlooks how relatively weak is the membership of this body, called the *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*, when measured by the number of all eligible individuals (those who themselves after 1945 were expelled and their immediate families); it also lacks a clear idea of the real intentions or possible claims which the *Landsmannschaft* might raise against the Czech Republic, or how far the German federal government would be prepared to go to back to such claims.

Despite the sometimes aggressive rhetoric of the *Landsmannschaft*, its actual political goals are difficult to gauge. They range from the simple demand that the Czech Republic formally recognise the act of the transfer and the pertinent legislation (the decrees of President Edvard Beneš dated 1945) as being incompatible with the principles of international law, to calls occasionally voiced at the *Landsmannschaft's* congresses for the return of all expellees and their offspring to their original homes and for their right to opt either for becoming citizens of the Czech Republic or for the annexation of the territory, settled by them, by Germany (a replica of the Munich solution of 1938). Understandably, the Czechs find the statements of the latter kind rather frightening. They fail to see, however, the plain absurdity of such claims. Disregarding the probably poor response of the expellees to such an offer, even if it were made (according to the statistics gathered by the *Landsmannschaft* itself, no more than 3-5 percent of members would like to return to the Czech lands), in the hypothetical case of a public vote on the fate of the Sudeten German territory the Czech population now residing there would have to have its say too, so that the outcome might be easy to predict. Most important of all, however, is the fact that such demands sharply contradict the Federal Republic of Germany's solemn commitment not to seek, under any circumstances, to change the borders as they now exist in Europe.

Greater-German Anachronisms

Thus we have to conclude that the current apprehensions of many Czech circles about an imminent 'German threat' are not justified and have to be rather deplored. What is to be

even more regretted, however, is the circumstance which these apprehensions reveal, namely that Czech thinking in this respect moves in a somewhat unreal world. It can be explained, even excused, by almost a century of traumatic experience; until 1989, Czech society had not been confronted with any other German regime than either totalitarian or hostile to its political and cultural aspirations.[1] Yet in view of the urgent need to rebuild the basis of the Czech-German relations this is not an valid argument. The problem at hand is not, as many Czechs perceive it today, primarily a 'Czech-Sudeten German problem' – no more than the problem of Polish-German relations is the problem of the Oder-Neisse border line. There exists, beyond any doubt, an ethical problem, not only for the Czechs but for all nations and political leaders who participated in, or backed, the widespread post-war transfers of populations, a problem which is connected with their implicit endorsement of the questionable principle of collective guilt. This problem will have to be eventually faced and resolved by everybody concerned. It does not follow, however, that until then the spokesmen of the groups who were the targets of these transfers and now are citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany should be the principal partners in the debate on the relations between Germany and her eastern and south-eastern neighbours.

Continuing the debate under such conditions would mean to implicitly assume the persistence of the situation as it existed in Central and Eastern Europe until the end of World War II and which History has adjudged as intractable. The main cause of its intractability was the goal set by the German national movement, and later adopted by all national movements in this region during the nation-building period, to create ethnically homogenous nation-states in an ethnographic environment that, barring systematic use of force, precluded by definition the achievement of such a goal. The policies of the nations in this region, especially those of Germany and the states situated east and south-east of its borders, were governed by wishful thinking and the deliberate denial of obvious facts rather than by pragmatic considerations. This was hardly a reliable basis of stable relationships. Things came to a head when after a century of unsuccessful attempts at the homogenisation of the ethnic structure of the individual nation-states in the area by more or less conventional means, Hitler's Third Reich resorted to indiscriminate exercise of brute force and eventually to genocide. After a devastating war, the defeat of Nazism and massive 'ethnic cleansing', the objective conditions in the Central European region changed profoundly. By a strange paradox, it looks today as if the German catastrophe had helped materialise, in an unexpected form, the Greater German dream, the pursuit of which had been the very reason of this catastrophe. The German nation-state today is, for all practical purposes, ethnically homogenous. So are the two Slavic nation-states in its eastern neighbourhood whose internal ethnic problems had caused chronic instability in this part of the continent.

The Need to Acknowledge New Realities

The rebirth of Germany as a pluralist federal polity in 1949, followed forty years later by unification with the territory temporarily controlled by the Soviet Union, marked an explicit and irrevocable repudiation of whatever may have then remained of Greater German designs. The circumstance just cited, namely that those who for decades had been

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[1] The Weimar Republic (1919-1933) is an exception. Political orientations of the Federal Republic of Germany after 1948 were interpreted in Prague in a distorted way until the year 1989.

both the object and the moving force of Greater German aspirations, the German-speaking ethnic groups outside the borders of the German nation-state, form today an integral part of the German national body politic, renders this repudiation even more irrevocable. Under these conditions, the current Czech debate on the German question appears to contain an element of anachronism. Czech relations to Germany will have to be based on other foundations than those of uneasy coexistence and subconscious perceptions of possible threat. For the Czechs, it is indispensable to recognise the scope and the depth of the changes which German society has undergone since World War II. Equally, if not more important in this context are the changes in the realm of international power relations in Europe, indeed in the very nature of the economic and political organisation of the old continent.

Germany's 'change of heart' concerning its smaller neighbours, especially in the east, is both anchored in, and reinforced by, critically significant structural transformations of German society. During the last fifty years or so, it has become in essence a civil society, as opposed to military-minded society, i.e. in the connotation given to this term by Herbert Spencer rather than by John Locke. This change is clearly reflected in a shift in the scale of occupational prestige. It is also, above all, a consumer society bestowing social recognition upon achievement in the economic sphere and standard of living. Of the traditional high status of the military hardly any vestige is left, while the prestige of the bureaucracy and the almost proverbial German submissiveness *vis-à-vis* state authority have notably diminished. This is a social climate which is not favourable to imperialism. Moreover, from the point of view of pure demographic strength, Germany seems to be losing much of its dynamism. It could be argued, in a figurative sense but without much exaggeration, that the German national body is slowly shrinking (the same conclusion, of course, can be drawn from the demographic development trends observed in the Czech Republic). Population increases lately recorded – if we disregard the effects of the incorporation of the former GDR – have been due, almost exclusively, to the immigration of German speaking people from Eastern Europe who had not been expelled from their countries in the years 1945-47 and in the form of the naturalisation of migrant workers. Societies manifesting similar signs of evolution are not likely, if we may judge by historical evidence, to resort to policies of expansionist adventures.

However, an even stronger argument about the obsolescence of the image of Germany as a threat to its neighbours in the east and south-east can be made when we consider the ongoing process of European integration. This process has already advanced so far – especially in the economic sphere – that Germany's relapse into an imperialist course – supposing that internal forces promoting such a relapse should prevail, of which there is no evidence at the present – appears well-nigh impossible. It could occur only on the condition of Germany's isolation, conceivable solely at the price of the disintegration of the European Union. It is safe to assume that no German regime would survive the consequences for the standard of living of the German population of such an *Alleingang*. Moreover, it is unlikely that the rest of Europe, not to mention the United States, would passively accept such as development.

These arguments should sound convincing enough to any pragmatic mind, and therefore prove sufficient to dispel the lingering apprehensions of the Czech public. Yet, although indispensable, the recognition alone that the presumed 'German danger' is now contained by various internal, as well as external, forces will not do justice to the nature of the change that actually has come about. The recognition may be granted from a tradi-

tional power-politics perspective, characteristic of the time of national 'sacred egoism', military coalitions and balances. Considering various contributions to the incipient, rather timid debate on foreign policy problems in the Czech Republic – or, for that matter, in any ex-communist nation of the region – the observer has to conclude that the politically engaged strata there do not fully appreciate the consequences of European integration. Their failure has a dual adverse effect. On the one hand, it hinders their proper understanding of the situation in that member country of the European Union which is of key importance to them, i.e. in Germany; on the other hand, it prevents them from correctly assessing and determining the objectives and the priorities of the reconstruction efforts now under way in their respective societies. For these societies must not only overcome, and rid themselves of the unwanted legacy of the communist experiment but also, and above all, adapt to the Europe of the 21st century. In other words, it cannot be emphasised often enough that the post-communist transformation is not a return to *status quo ante* but a vitally necessary movement ahead in view of catching up on another more general transformative process with still longer time horizons which has been unfolding west of the erstwhile Iron Curtain for more than fifty years: the process of regionalisation and European integration.

The Impact of European Integration

The inter-related property of the two transformation processes and the interdependence of their outcome should prompt the circles responsible for the pursuit of social reconstruction in the formerly communist-dominated nations to rethink their goals, reorder their priorities and, if need be, revise their strategy. In this light, too, the future relations of the Czech Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany require reconsideration. There is more at stake in this context than just the form and the context of the mutual contacts between two states. Integration into the European Union involves, for all societies concerned, establishing new perceptions of collective identity. This may be a very slow course, but it ultimately aims at a change in the category of notions which since the awakening of modern national consciousness has been crucial for the Czech-German relationship. A good deal of what has been perceived as the substance of 'Czechness' (*češství*) has always been articulated in a rather negative form, that is in contrast to everything German. Until T. G. Masaryk opened the well-known debate on the meaning of Czech history, a little over a century ago, being Czech for a great majority of his compatriots signified simply 'not being German'. This view survived, and the dramatic confrontations between the two nations experienced in the first half of the 20th century seem to provide it with new justification. In a united Europe, however, the Czechs, among others, will be fellow-citizens of the Germans. This may prove difficult to reconcile with the idea of Czech national identity as conceived of in the traditional terms; it would seem to underscore the need for the Czechs to further explore and develop the approach sketched by Masaryk, which leads to the definition of a nation as a political, rather than as an ethnic, entity.

European identity in itself, to be sure, does not preclude, or necessarily collide with, the collective identities of its individual member nations. As a political unit, the European Union purports to be a federation, not a centralised superstate; as it has been put in a more poetical way, it is to become "a mosaic, not a cocktail". It nevertheless remains true that, when fully developed at a point in a more distant future, Europe will em-

body the model of a political nation. The national consciousness of its constituent collectivities will be subordinate to that of the federal whole.

The Czechs, as we have already suggested, might feel more comfortable in the future European home if they espoused the idea of a nation as a collectivity sharing a certain value system rather than merely language and racial roots. If they make this choice, it will be possible to argue that the contingency of European integration has helped convert the Czechs to Masaryk's views; that it has achieved something which not even Masaryk's triumph in 1918 had been able to accomplish. This point is not of historic interest only. Accepting the political theory of a nation should facilitate for the Czechs the task of finding a basis for good and stable relations with its most important partner-to-be in the European Union, Germany. As for Germany itself, it appears to be moving in the right direction, since in the ongoing debate about the main basis of German citizenship the notion of shared trust in the constitutional order of the Federal Republic (*'Verfassungsloyalität'*) providing such a basis seems to receive maximum support. It remains to be seen how far and in what way the problems and the pressures to which Germany is presently exposed may influence this development. The reunification, by the very fact that it brought together not only two parts of one nation but also two distinct societies, should in principle highlight for the Germans the advantages of the political concept of a nation. It cannot be denied, however, that in practice it has also reinforced certain narrowly nationalistic currents of thought and provided opportunity for their violent manifestations.

Possible Development of Czech-German Relations – Various Scenarios

Regardless of how fast or how slowly the search for an adequate basis of good Czech-German relations may advance in the immediate future, or how successful will be its outcome, the internal development of the two societies unfolding in a shared geopolitical and economic space will, because of its own momentum, participate in shaping these relations. The incorporation by Germany of an ex-communist territory – the former GDR – has initiated within unified Germany an important transformation process which, although *sui generis*, is nonetheless akin to that of the comprehensive reconstruction currently underway in the Czech Republic. Its results, too, will influence the nature and the quality of Germany's rapport with her small south-eastern neighbour. The latter will also be co-determined by factors of longer standing among which the economic ones will play a prominent role. It should be recalled that before World War II Germany was the most important trade partner of what was then Czechoslovakia and – even more significantly – that this country of relatively modest size ranked in ninth place on the German foreign trade list. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, as the economic exchanges of Czechoslovakia with the West rebounded, the German share among them quickly took the lead. The trend has continued ever since, through the disintegration of Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the Czech Republic.

Yet there is more to the current transformation processes than just various kinds of economic reshaping. Much more. The protracted unsuccessful communist experiment seriously damaged the social fabric in the regions which were its objects. Its slow regeneration and social re-stratification, notably the recreation of the middle class, of autonomous voluntary movements and associations, of independent intellectual élites (Karl Mannheim's *"freischwebende Intelligenz"*), as well as of all other indispensable prerequisites of civil society (here truly in the Lockian sense of the term) – is an important process in its own right. It can be broken down into a number of sub-processes which all run

parallel to that of economic reconstruction. At the same time, the entire realm of industrial civilisation, in the West and in the East alike, is subject to continuous change, the rate of which accelerates, a function of technological progress. It is important to note that every single process which we have mentioned here advances at its own speed and that, furthermore, this speed is also nation- or society-specific, different collectivities developing slower or faster in different key areas. This latter fact is essential in comparing nations and appraising their future relations. Thus it is relevant to the subject of our discussion, i.e. to the nature of Czech-German relations and to their possible evolution in the future.

It is obvious that the internal development of both societies will obey its own dynamic and that their mutual relationship will be influenced also by the situation in which each of them will happen to find itself at a given time. Several patterns of this relationship will ensue, based on the match of every conceivable situation in either of them with every imaginable state of affairs in the other. In this way, we could build independent scenarios for the various combinations. Theoretically, their number might turn out to be very high, but it will be sufficient, for the purpose of our discussion, if we address only those which are the most probable. In this category, as the reader may note, the principal variable determining our choice is the degree to which the one or the other society, respectively, will master what we consider to be its present most serious challenge posed by the process of change: Germany's is the problems connected with its recent reunification, that is with the integration and assimilation of the former GDR, a collectivity which after more than forty years of forcible systematic efforts at restructuring on the Soviet model had hardly anything in common with the West German society except the use of the same written language; the Czech Republic's is the problems connected with the post-communist transformation and with its admission to the European Union.

Three Possible Major Scenarios – Czech Republic

The range of all conceivable variants of the development of post-communist transformation in Central and Eastern Europe in general and in the Czech Republic in particular is too wide to be considered in detail in the context of our examination of possible future Czech-German relations. Even if we elected this demanding approach, we would still be faced with the problem of the choice of suitable indicators necessary to successfully monitor the progress of this transformation. As we have already brought to attention, the indicators at hand are almost exclusively of an economic nature and therefore somewhat one-sided for our purpose. We must look for additional variables which may help us build the most probable scenarios of the phenomenon under scrutiny. What we actually need is to identify specific benchmarks in the projected course of the transformation process, distinct enough to permit us to predict the type and the quality of the relationships between the two states and societies that may prevail at the various stages of this process. Perhaps the most useful point of reference could be found in the degree to which the Czech Republic will prove able to meet the standards for admission to the European Union. The yardsticks of this ability, as we have already seen, are also for the most part economic, but there are significant political measurement criteria as well. In principle, we could imagine three possible outcomes of the transformation process to which Czech society is currently subject and which could bear upon its readiness to enter the European Union, thus also helping shape its rapport with Germany. Conversely, it is possible to foresee three major variants of the outcome of the current reunification and integration

process in Germany which in their turn could in a significant way influence Germany's relations with her neighbours including the Czech Republic. We will deal with the former scenarios first.

The three main alternatives that logically come to mind in this context include: successful completion by the Czech Republic of the post-communist transformation, satisfying the requirements for membership of the European Union; sufficient progress of the path of transformation, so as to allow the country's admission to this body albeit with some qualifications; failure to meet the Union's standards, calling for the temporary bestowal of a special status on the Czech Republic, such as that of an associated member, which would place it somewhere on the periphery of the integrated European community. Any of these possible outcomes will have an important impact upon the quality of Czech-German relationships in the immediate future. However, it is necessary to take into consideration that, aside from the problem of Czech membership of the EU, the transformation process in this country has from the start been influenced by economic and political interaction with other European nations, and that Germany has played a key role in this interaction. Thus the Czech-German relations of today are to a notable extent co-determining the outcome of the transformation, and help shape the form of the very same relationships of tomorrow.

A Closer Look at the Scenarios

Let us now examine the three principal scenarios in more detail:

1. *Czech-German relations with the Czech Republic acquiring full EU membership.* Joining the European Union as a fully-fledged member, with all rights and responsibilities (accepting common currency, participating in the agreements on free movement of capital and labour and unlimited right of settlement for all nationals of all other member countries, unrestricted sale of real estate to these nationals, etc.) would expose the Czech economy to the full impact of intra-Union competition. Among others, it would bind the Czech Republic more closely to the FRG; however, in view of the principle of reciprocity governing the EU statutes, this interdependence would develop on a more or less equal footing. One of the consequences of full Union membership might be politically sensitive for the Czechs, namely the possibility for the former Sudeten German expellees or their descendants to return to Czech territory and take possession, by purchase or otherwise, of the property located there. This might make some Czech circles apprehensive to the point of becoming hesitant about full integration within the EU, although it is unlikely that their view would prevail should the country be confronted with such a choice.

2. *Czech-German relations in the case of the Czech Republic obtaining EU membership with qualifications.* This alternative would imply that the Czech Republic, on becoming part of the EU, would not, or not immediately – assume all rights and responsibilities typical of the majority of members. This would hardly constitute an unprecedented exception; there are several member nations among the fifteen which form today's Union and which do not participate in all its treaties and agreements, for example, that instituting a common European currency (Maastricht) or that abolishing personal document controls at state borders (Schengen), and so on. It is obvious that, as with these nations, the suspension of certain obligations in the case of the Czech Republic could be only temporary. At first sight, such an arrangement might be welcome to those Czech quarters who are anxious about too deep 'German penetration' which immediate full

membership might facilitate, and it could even uphold the illusion of having the best of the two worlds. However, the illusion would not be tenable in the long run; it would also entail the risk of delaying the process of adaptation to EU standards, which is inseparable from the process of post-communist transformation, and of further widening the gap between the economic and societal level of the Czech Republic and that of most of its European partners, above all Germany. In contrast to the first scenario, the relations between the two countries would be 'stratified', that is uneven, based on unequal crucial positions and premises, the Czech partner being at a notable disadvantage. If maintained over an extended period of time, these inequalities would tend to reduce the Czech economy to a second-rank appendage to that of the FRG, supplying the latter chiefly with raw materials and cheap labour. Eventually, this would not mean the best but, on the contrary, the worst of all possible worlds for the Czech Republic.

3. *Czech-German relations under the assumption of the Czech Republic not joining the European Union in the foreseeable future.* This third scenario, by its very nature, would almost certainly bring about the type of relations which in the previous scenario appears only as a serious risk. Remaining on the periphery of an integrated Europe would, of course, put Czech society at a disadvantage *vis-à-vis* all member nations of the EU; however, in no respect this would be more evident and painful than in relation to Germany. It would also render more or less permanent the dangerous development lag which is the legacy of the unsuccessful communist experiment. The consequences might be fatal. The Czech economy could be relegated to the grey zone somewhere between the Second and the Third World, with all the inevitable social and political consequences. It is difficult to imagine that even the most fervent Czech nationalist in the nineteenth century tradition, concerned about the indispensable state sovereignty surrender required from EU members, would wish this to happen or to pay this price for the preservation of the established prerogatives of the nation-state. Yet this is precisely where orthodox nationalism, afraid of opening itself to the world and seeking insulation and protection from foreign influence and competition, would in the end lead.

If we were to assess the probability of these individual scenarios materialising, we would place scenario 2 at the top, with scenario 1 closely following. Scenario 3 appears to us as being the least probable. This brief review of all three clearly reveals the fact that a speedy conclusion of the transformation process and an association with the European Union are two conditions *sine quibus non* for contemporary Czech society if it truly aspires to reintegrate itself in the community of advanced industrial nations of the continent and to reclaim its once quite important share in the international division of labour. It also reveals another fact: namely, that any progress in this direction will bring it closer to its economically and politically most significant neighbour, Germany.

Three Possible Scenarios – Germany

The establishment of a German identity valid both in the old Federal Republic and in the new eastern provinces which in the past formed the GDR, will be a difficult process. "We are the nation" was the slogan of East German demonstrators in autumn 1989. After the fall of the Berlin Wall the slogan was slightly but importantly changed: "We are *one* nation". Many thoughtful German authors, as for example, Ulrich Wickert, in a book called "*Angst vor Deutschland*" ask a question that appears to be relevant here: what kind of a nation? The Germans themselves, whether they lived in the West or in the East during the previous forty years, are not quite sure what their identity is.

Thus many questions are still open. Will a true civil society develop in the east? Will it come into existence simply by extending the notion of a pluralist society, established and stabilised in the Federal Republic, to the new provinces? Or else will a new common identity develop through the fusion of both parts, will it be, above all, an identity encompassing some specific experience of the eastern parts? Will a state develop where the Western model may not be fully adopted by the eastern part, yet where no synthesis of both parts will be achieved either, but instead where two distinct though similar identities as well as two socio-political and cultural orientations are maintained?

The answer to the key question of whether a German identity will develop whose core will be the idea of civil society may be given in the form of three scenarios of the possible future development of Germany.

1. The *first scenario* is pessimistic and also highly improbable in its pure form. Owing to the fact that it is, on occasion, mentioned by some German authors, we will summarise it here in a very concise form. It is based on the idea that the unification of 1990 will prove to be a great misfortune for the whole country, especially for its eastern, but also for its western part, and that it will lead to a phenomenon which can be called 'bleeding white'. In this scenario, the German economy will not be able to absorb the costs of the unification and the reconstruction of the eastern territories, and as a consequence it will begin to weaken and in the end to lose the ability to act as the economic engine of Europe. To this should be added the high social costs and wages in German industry which, together with the burden resulting from the reconstruction of the East-German economy and infrastructure, will lower the competitiveness of Germany in world markets. A well-known representative of German industry Kurt J. Lauk some years ago expressed succinctly his worries in this respect: "Following on reunification, rifts in Germany's social fabric have become visible again. The vision of Germany's role as a partner in the world needs to be defined anew. The Germans are being closely observed from abroad, sometimes mistrustfully. It has once again become difficult to be German... The fear of uncertainty is felt both at home and abroad... No appropriate new political vision has emerged in Germany, either for the country or for the continent." ("Germany in Transition", *Daedalus*, Winter 1994).

It is well worth observing that the newest prognoses about the German economy do not support the most pessimistic views, but the apprehension concerning the long-term development of the German economy on the part of the both native and foreign economists seems to persist.

There exists, however, a more probable sub-variant of the first scenario. It presupposes that, despite the unification within one state, despite the unified legal and institutional framework, Germany will remain divided into two societies. This situation is usually described as 'one state and two societies'. Michael Stürmer, a German historian, wrote that until 1989 Germany was a single nation in two states, whereas nowadays there seem to be two nations in one state. This scenario points to the continuing differences between the mentalities of the two parts of the country, to their mutual alienation and even growing rivalry.

2. The *second scenario* is optimistic. It presupposes the development of a new common identity, which will not only be a West-German version expanded to the East, but which will incorporate also the East-German experience into the new German concept of a civil society. The way towards this new identity will be found when the East Ger-

mans have shaken off the feeling of inferiority and got rid of the impression that they are merely objects of colonisation, and when the West Germans overcome their indifference, arrogance and the inclination to act as omniscient protectors. This scenario is European at the same time. Such a German identity and German civil society will facilitate the cultivation of good relationships towards the new 'open' societies in the east and the assumption of the role of a nation which not only understands its eastern neighbours, but also helps them to integrate into the European Union.

3. The *third scenario* is realistic and the most probable. There are very good reasons to expect that the consistency of a legal, economic, and technical framework within which German society will develop in the nearest future will contribute to the perception of a new, pluralistically formed German identity, the core of which will rest on a democratic political system, on the respect for human rights, cultural plurality and on emphasis upon German humanistic traditions. However, this scenario takes into account that not only the cultural and social, but also some political differences between the original Federal Republic (West Germany) and the provinces of the former GDR will be preserved. It fits also the German political philosophy of federalism. Indeed, the contemporary status of Bavaria *vis-à-vis* other German provinces is of a similar nature.

This scenario further assumes that contemporary German society and its principal political representation have accepted the political consequences of the Second World War, which was caused by the Nazis, to whom Germany had given in without any notable resistance. European co-operation and peace would begin to break down should it be otherwise. The scenario also presupposes that through the common endeavour of the German political representation and German non-governmental associations, on the one hand, and the new democratic states in East-Central Europe and their non-governmental associations, on the other hand, it will be possible to create a sphere of co-operation and good relations in what, until now, has passed for a 'crisis zone'. Seldom in the modern history of Europe, as well as in the history of the relations between Czechs and Germans, has the situation been as hopeful as it is at present.

Non-Quantifiable Essentials

All three scenarios outlined here aim at tracing the most likely course of the development of Czech-German relations not only in the narrowly economic but also in a broader political sense. Yet they are far from able to cover the entire scope of contacts and interactions between the two societies where at present equally, if not even more, penetrating changes are occurring – and have to occur if these relations are to rest on a solid stable basis. Our difficulty is due to the circumstance that even in examining non-economic factors which may shape them, we had to rely on more or less quantitative indicators. This approach obliged us to leave out of our consideration a number of provinces of social life where non-quantifiable socio-psychological syndromes originate. Yet it is in this sphere that the need for change may be the most urgent. It runs against terrible odds, since it challenges collective attitudes and representations which are anchored in idiosyncratic historical experiences of whole generations, if not centuries, and thus impervious to rational argument. Both societies, the Czech as well as the German, suffer from this handicap; however, in our discussion here we have addressed the problem chiefly as it represents itself to the Czech side.

The task now confronting the Czechs is to carry out a fundamental revision of the entrenched images and perceptions associated with the German partner of tomorrow and

has two aspects – a negative and a positive one – and it is hard to decide which of the two is the more formidable. As responsible members of a democratic polity, they must prove able to critically examine and, where necessary, to discard the notions relative to their geopolitical position in Europe and security needs. The gravity of this problem is given by the fact that here we are not dealing merely with emotionally loaded prejudices and stereotypes, but rather with clearly defined long-term policy concepts supported by a certain brand of political theory with a long tradition. Quite concretely, in this context we have to think of the interpretation of Czech history as of a continuous struggle with the German rival over the control of the Moldau-Elbe plateau in Central Europe, offered 150 years ago by František Palacký and since then turned into an almost instinctive element of Czech historical self-perception. It translated, among others, into the foreign policy concept of the First Czechoslovak Republic to which the containment of the German threat was absolutely central. It could not have been different under the international order then prevailing, which recognised no authority above the egoistic will of the nation-state and therefore provided little more than the framework and the rules of the zero-sum game of the powerful. However, in view of a completely different order now in the making on the European continent, this concept, as all similar ethnocentric perspectives entertained by other European nations and societies, has become obsolescent and must be abandoned.

This negative, destructive and cleansing act has at the same time to be complemented by a positive, creative one, which, as we have already suggested, may reveal itself as equally or more challenging: a shift in the perception of collective identity, subordinating national solidarity to that resulting from membership in the integrated European community of peoples. It would be unrealistic to expect that a shift of this magnitude could be effected by Czech society – or any other society, for that matter – in isolation, drawing exclusively on its own resources. The change therefore cannot be completed before its entry. As in the case of the nations already part of the European Union, this crucial socio-psychological transformation process is likely to take full momentum only under the impact of the exposure of the Czech Republic to the forces operating inside the transnational body. However, the search for a new basis of Czech-German relations which must be engaged in here and now will constitute an important preliminary phase of this process.

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Results of a Czech-Slovak Comparison: Actors of Social Transformation and Modernisation

PAVEL MACHONIN

Summary: From a representative survey carried out in the summer 1995 was constructed a typology of the Czech and Slovak populations' attitudes towards social transformation and modernisation. In the Czech Republic those supporting both processes (21%) were people who had gained from the post-1989 changes, whilst those who were opposed to both (11%) comprised people who had lost out during this period. The same was evident in Slovakia, but in this case the opponents (19%) were the more numerous group (as compared with 16% of supporters). The individual types were culturally and socially identified and an explanation of the specificities of the two countries in question was offered.

Czech-German Relations after the Fall of the Iron Curtain

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Abstract: The paper deals with Czech-German relations from 1989-90, i.e., the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the start of democratic reforms in former Czechoslovakia, up until the signing of the Czech-German declaration on mutual relations and their future development in January 1997. In the introduction, relations between these countries before 1989 are outlined, with emphasis on the meaning and practical implementation of the so-called Prague Agreement of 1973.

The period 1989-90 is seen in the light of the new historical chances and hopes that the political changes brought. However, soon after the mood turned more sober, in the period from German unification to the end of the Czechoslovak Federation. Negotiations on the Czechoslovak-German treaty signed in February 1992 clearly showed that relations were only very slowly emerging from their past captivity.

After the birth of the Czech Republic, relations became more intense in the economic sphere, but stagnated politically. The events that arose from the 1938 Munich Agreement, the consequences of German occupation and the post-war transfer of Sudeten Germans, were the subject of debate and controversy at the highest political level.

Negotiations on the Czech-German declaration clarified all aspects of bilateral problems and speeded up the dialogue between both societies. The quality and stability of Czech-German relations are directly linked to the creation of a new, unified and peaceful Europe.

1. A Historical Introduction: A Brief Outline of Relations between West Germany and the former Czechoslovakia before 1989

The basically pragmatic relations between West Germany (the old FRG) and the former Czechoslovakia had already begun to change before 1989 with the start of a number of collaborative projects. In 1967 it was agreed to set up commercial representations with consular powers in both Prague and Frankfurt. This had a rather ambivalent effect as it contributed to a review of the Hallstein doctrine but at the same time reflected the entrenched Czech position which wanted to finally break with this doctrine – in the interests of East Germany (GDR) – by exclusively pressing for full diplomatic relations.

On 13 December 1966, Chancellor Kiesinger's so-called grand coalition of the CDU/CSU/SPD listed the normalisation of relations between Czechoslovakia and West Germany and the elimination of the effects of the Munich Agreement as one of its aims (following on from the so-called peace note of the Federal Government on 24 March that year). Even greater emphasis was put on this by Willy Brandt's social-liberal coalition in its foreign-policy platform announced on 28 October 1969.[1] Paradoxically this took place

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[1]) Europa-Archiv, Folge 7/1966, pp. D 172-D 173. In the so-called peace note, the Federal Government had stated its view that the Munich Agreement (implicitly accepted as having been in

only a few days after the Czechoslovak government took unilateral measures to drastically limit the almost free movement of persons to Germany and other western countries (subject only to normal visa regulations).

The initial rather exploratory negotiations from the period of the Prague Spring, which the former Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Jiří Hájek described in his memoirs,[2] could only be followed up in a completely new, i.e., multilateral framework. These were characterised by the relatively well-defined but unsophisticated standpoints of the then German opposition (CDU/CSU), in commenting on the ratification of the so-called Treaty of Prague between Czechoslovakia and West Germany (dating to the first quarter of 1974 and not, unfortunately, taken into account in Brach's otherwise very worthy 1973 work on the treaty),[3] although the cutting edge of their criticisms was understandably directed at the main figures of the new German *'Ostpolitik'*, Egon Bahr and Willi Brandt. The so-called Heck Statement which represented the views of a minority of the foreign committee of the German *Bundestag*, on 11 June 1974, presented the following picture:[4]

According to it, the Federal Republic of Germany was being *de facto* "forced" by the Soviet Union – by promises of concessions on internal German relations, on Berlin, etc. – to respect the connections between the Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty of 6 May 1970, Article 6 of which states that the 1938 Munich Agreement was forced on Czechoslovakia under the threat of force and an aggressive war (...) and therefore that "all its consequences are invalid", and the Soviet-German treaty of August 1970, based on the so-called 'Bahr Plan' from late May of that year, as well as the even clearer consequences of the German-Soviet communiqué from Oreanda on 18 July 1971. This almost literally adopted into Czechoslovak-German affairs the relevant points of the Bahr Plan agreed between Bahr and Gromyko immediately after the latter's return from Prague, where he went for the signing of the new Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty.

In Oreanda it was clearly stated that "the relevant treaties with the German Democratic Republic, the Polish People's Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic form an indivisible whole" and that "questions arising in negotiations between the Fed-

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force up to 15. 3. 1939) was "torn up" by Hitler himself and had no territorial significance. As it had already stated on several occasions, the Federal Government therefore had no territorial claims to Czechoslovakia. It stressed, *"...dass dies die verantwortliche Darstellung der deutschen Politik ist"*. In its answer to this note in May 1966, the Czechoslovak government insisted on an explicit declaration that the Munich Agreement had been invalid from the outset. C.f. Europa-Archiv, Folge 11/1966, pp. D 287-D 289 and Deutsche Politik 1966, Tätigkeitsbericht der Bundesregierung (17), Bonn 1967, p. XVI and pp. 10-11; Jahresbericht der Bundesregierung 1969 (20), Bonn 1970, pp. 39, 84-85. For a summary see e.g. Müller, A.: *Die Tschechoslowakei auf der Suche nach Sicherheit*, Berlin 1977, pp. 164-220, 361-381. C.f. also Müller, A., Utitz, B.: *Deutschland und die Tschechoslowakei*, Freudenstadt 1972.

[2]) Hájek, J.: *Begegnungen und Zusammenstösse. Erinnerungen des ehemaligen tschechoslowakischen Aussenministers*, Freiburg/Br. pp. 178-181, 210-211; Hájek, J.: *Paměti* (Memoirs), Prague 1997, pp. 278-279. See also Šnejdárek, A.: "Jaké vztahy k NSR?" (What Sort of Relations with Germany?), *Rudé právo*, 17. 4. 1968, or Müller, A.: "Die Haltung der ČSSR gegenüber der BRD während des Prager Demokratisierungsprozesses", *Osteuropa* 4/1969, and many others.

[3]) Břach, R.: *Smlouva o vzájemných vztazích mezi ČSSR a SRN z roku 1973* (The 1973 Treaty on Relations between the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany), Prague 1994.

[4]) Deutscher Bundestag (DBT) – 7 Wahlperiode, Drucksache 7/2270.

eral Republic of Germany and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic which relate to the invalidity of the Munich Agreement must be resolved in a way that is acceptable to both parties."

The 1973 Treaty of Prague did not however just resolve the problem of the Munich Agreement. Its fruits, in the form of humanitarian supplements, were further reinforced by the new demands and commitments arising from the Final Act of the CSCE in 1975. In the draft law relating to the Czechoslovak-German treaty of 20 March 1974, the Federal Government not only described the goal of this treaty as the normalisation of relations between the two countries, but also stressed its essentially regional and inter-bloc aspect – bringing to the forefront the creation of a series of new treaties with the countries of the Warsaw Pact with the renunciation of force and the perspective of progressively reducing tension with a new, real and improved level of relations between the two parts of Germany.[5]

The Federal Government said that the 'highlights' of this agreement (the annulation of Munich) was the "central issue in Czech eyes", even though it had to determinedly resist the counter-arguments of the opposition CDU/CSU. The opposition did not consider the bridging of the nullity problem with the possibility of parallel interpretation *"ex tunc/ex nunc"* as acceptable, because of its multiple meanings, and also due to the then much stronger Sudeten German lobby in German public life. Some of the opposition's other arguments were more blatantly propagandistic, although by no means accurate, caricatures of the well-known fact that "the relationship between the two treaties is one of satellites (...) the treaty with Czechoslovakia is a procedural agreement rooted in the (Oreanda) communiqué, (...) the style of Moscow can be recognised in individual formulations, etc." The conclusion given in the Heck Statement was: "the treaty is nothing more or less than another block in the construction of Soviet policies in Europe"(!).

On the other hand, the "majority" report of the foreign committee, the Friedrich statement, operated with the same "building blocks" of German policy towards Czechoslovakia with a sober matter-of factness, and saw the treaty as a sign of a willingness to "draw a thick line" (*Schlussstrich*) under the unfortunate past.[6] Who could then have guessed that the term '*Schlussstrichkenden*' could become a pejorative political formula? This was one point on which the 1973 Treaty was far from fulfilling expectations and indeed was prevented from doing so by both its content and the possibility of ambiguity – and not only in relation to Munich.

The treaty did not deal with the unresolved questions on property rights, but the Federal Government put out feelers towards the 'thick line' on other occasions (compare, for example, the Federal Government's answer to the so-called *Kleine Anfrage* (little enquiries) of the group of CDU/CSU deputies (which included known activists from organisations of displaced Germans – von Fircks, Czaja, Hupka, Becher sen., Wittmann, Reidl, Pieser), on 18 December 1973: "The Federal Government has always refused to enter into negotiations with the states of Eastern Europe on the claims put forward by

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[5]) DBT – 7, Wahlperiode, Drucksache 7/1832.

[6]) DBT – 7. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 7/2270. The term 'a thick line' came to be used frequently in Czech politics after November 1989, including – but critically – in the oft-cited passage of President Václav Havel's address to the German Federal Parliament on 24 April 1997 (Office of the President of the Republic – Press office, press release 24. 4. 1997).

these states as a result of the Second World War, particularly with respect to reparations and compensation. For this reason the German government avoided putting forward its own property claims towards these states."[7] Not even the Brandt government moved from the position established by the 1954 Settlement Treaty (particularly Part VI, art. 13), since it too applied the narrow interpretation of the overwhelming majority of German international law experts (Tomuschat, Blumenwitz, Kimminich, Mosler, Doehring, etc.) and sought to show that the relevant parts of this treaty could not be used to justify the confiscation of Sudeten German property.[8] The German legal system, on the other hand, applied Part IX, article 1 of this treaty to Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic as well, most recently and spectacularly in the case of the lime-kiln painting by Van Laer from the Lichtenstein collection (despite the German courts' lack of jurisdiction in this case as determined by article 3 of the settlement treaty) and rejects the decisions relating to property law taken during the confiscation.[9]

The inter-bloc politics and ideological limits in relations between the two countries were gradually changed by the increasing strength of the Helsinki process, which later gained new impetus with the new formulation of Soviet internal and later foreign policy in 1985 (i.e. the launching of *perestroika* and its growing momentum, little expected even by those who originally conceived it).

At the same time, the frustration tolerance of the former Czechoslovak regime did not indicate a wholly unchanging symptomatology. President Gustáv Husák's 1978 'excuse' visit to West Germany, which the communist regime pushed through with some difficulty, and its practical consequences (particularly in terms of economic relations), was a visible landmark in the positive pragmatism which held sway amongst certain sections of the Prague political elite, particularly that part represented by the Premier Lubomír Štrougal (further research is needed to determine the concrete motivation). Both sides shared an interest in developing closer relations, and the very pragmatic interests of a number of industrialists and politicians in closer economic relations with Czechoslovakia and other states of Central and Eastern Europe played a significant role in this. (Particularly influential were the chairman of the so-called Eastern Committee, Wolf von Amerongen, Lothar Späth, and representatives of such major companies as BMW, Volkswagen, Siemens, Höchst and Bayer).[10]

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[7]) DBT – 7. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 7/1455. For an overview of Germany's treaties with its eastern neighbours see e.g. Zündorf, B.: *Die Ostverträge*, Munich 1979.

[8]) Blumenwitz, D.: *Der Prager Vertrag. Eine Einführung und Dokumentatiton zum Vertrag vom 11. Dezember 1973 unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Münchner Abkommens und seiner Auswirkung auf Deutschland als Ganzes*, Bonn 1985, particularly p. 79 n. (*"Die Verpflichtungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland aus dem Überleitungsvertrag"*). See also note 15 below.

[9]) Hon, J.: *Právní stanovisko institucí SRN ke konfiskacím 1945 (na základě řešení tzv. případu "Velká vápenka")* [The Legal Standpoint of German Institutions to the 1945 Confiscation (on the basis of the resolution of the so-called "Velká vápenka" case)]. I would like to thank the author for providing access to this unpublished collection.

[10]) Svobodová-Herciková, S.: *Vztahy mezi ČSSR a SRN v letech 1973-1989* (Czechoslovak-German Relations 1973-1989), thesis defended at FSV Charles University Prague 1997, passim. See also Spáčil, D.: *My z Černína. Paměti československého diplomata* (The People from the Černín Palace. Memoirs of a Czechoslovak Diplomat), Prague 1995, esp. pp. 288-292.

Nowadays, the *Ostpolitik* of the Social-Liberal coalition in Germany is seen as having oscillated between the recognition (legitimisation) of the post-1970 regime in Czechoslovakia and the practical expansion of possibilities for eroding it. This was not a linear process, particularly when the publication of Charter 77's founding document brought a new wave of isolationism (represented particularly by Bil'ak's wing of the leadership of the Communist Party Central Committee) and provided welcome political ammunition. The emergence of dissent in Czechoslovakia was however irreversible. Its foreign policy 'think-tank' (the quotes being somewhat ironic here in view of the limited reality) i.e. people like Jiří Hájek, Jiří Dienstbier, Jaroslav Šedivý and Luboš Dobrovský – almost prophetically anticipated the link between the resolution of the German question and that of Europe (explicitly stated in the so-called Prague Declaration of 1985).[11] Although Czech dissidents had a narrower base in society than did their Polish counterparts, the complementary basis of *Ostpolitik* (only changed slightly after the Bonn coalition changed in 1982) and its critical 'internal' reflections made it difficult for the Husák regime to effectively repress them, not even with its apparently all-powerful means of repression.

2. The Democratic Change of 1989 as an Opportunity for a New Type of Relations (i.e. the period between November 1989 and the unification of Germany on 3 October 1989)

The year 1989 brought a whole series of unexpected options which threw both politicians and political theorists off balance.[12] These also affected Czechoslovak-German relations, which were highlighted from the outset by a significant gesture towards the Sudeten Germans by Václav Havel, later President of Czechoslovakia. His various comments on this subject differ in detail and it is not easy to summarise them. The conflict between morality (with its metaphysical demands, which are independent of the time period) and the historical context meant that these were a political gesture rather than a historical reflection accepted by the whole of society. As time passed, the repeated description of these comments as mere "excuses" were substantiated by the perception of Havel's gesture on both sides. Havel's gesture in fact became something of a screen on which old and entirely new (hetero)stereotypes were projected; it was basically a blank cheque.[13]

From the point of view of internal politics, Havel's gesture was particularly daring – both risky and debatable. As the former Czech Prime Minister Petr Pithart noted with hindsight (at a conference in Jihlava in 1995), the leaders of Civic Forum at that time saw Havel's declaration as not only putting his presidential campaign at risk, but as endan-

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[11]) Charter 77 document no. 5/1985. See also Dienstbier, J.: *Snění o Evropě* (Dreaming of Europe), p. 63 nn.

[12]) Břach, R.: *Die Aussenpolitik der Tschechoslowakei zur Zeit der "Regierung der nationalen Verständigung"*, Baden-Baden 1992, esp. pp. 51-71.

[13]) See in particular the quote from Václav Havel's letter to the German President Richard von Weizsäcker in his Christmas speech on 22. 12. 1989 (Bundespräsidialamt, Mitteilungen für die Presse, 22. 12. 1989). The most frequently quoted key sentence is: *"Ich persönlich verurteile die Vertreibung und Aussiedlung der Sudetendeutschen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg und halte sie für unmoralisch."* A relatively faithful translation of the relevant passages of Weizsäcker's speech was published in *Rudé právo* on 4. 1. 1990. Considerable interest was aroused within Czechoslovakia by the opinions Václav Havel expressed on national television in answer to a question from a viewer, interpreted by M. Skarlandtová on 23. 12. 1989. See also *Rudé právo*, 3.1.1990 (transcription from a video cassette).

gering the whole course of development since November 1989.[14] Most commentators now agree that Havel's gesture at the turn of 1990 has not been met by an equivalent echo from the German side.

Parallel with the development and cultivation of the 'symbolic language' of policy came further steps of long-term significance for the everyday lives of people in the country. In December 1989 the two Foreign Ministers, Dienstbier and Genscher, cut the barbed wire in Rozvadov/Waidhaus, and in February 1990 it was decided to set up a joint Czechoslovak-German commission of historians. The agreement to remove visa requirements followed soon after (earlier than with other countries of the EU), although errors on the Czech side meant that the conditions were less favourable and practical than the Germans had proposed. The question of Czechoslovak participation in the preparatory stages of negotiations on the '2+4' Treaty, a question that was often manipulated for political ends, did not receive any clear answer at this time. The nursing of Czechoslovak interests through the '1+3' Treaty (i.e. with different partners than the signatories to the '2+4') left in force those parts of the Settlement Treaty (*Überleitungsvertrag*) that ruled out future property claims on (not only) Czechoslovakia or the Czech Republic. A number of German or Austrian experts in international law (e.g. Tomuschat and Ermacora) have cast doubt on this in both merit and procedural terms.[15]

To sum up, Czechoslovak foreign policy in this period developed *sub specie revelationis*, i.e. from the angle of raising the iron curtain, while German policy towards Czechoslovakia was rather *sub specie unificationis*, i.e. from the point of view of the need to reunite Germany as rapidly and effectively as possible. Even though neither of these policies was free of euphoria, the measure of it was undoubtedly greater on the Czechoslovak side. In view of the future disagreements, however, the question of the responsibility of the major figures should be seen from the point of view of the bases which were laid down. These saw the normalisation of relations not in the spirit of the terminology of that time, i.e. as the reduction of tensions, but rather in a very positive sense. It was a case of establishing normal relations between two sovereign democratic states.

3. From German Unification to the End of the Czechoslovak Federation (October 1990-December 1992)

The signing of the '2+4' Treaty, the unification of Germany and the changed situation throughout Europe as a whole required Germany to conclude a series of new bilateral agreements with its eastern neighbours. Those with Poland and Czechoslovakia were of particular importance. While the basic framework of relations between Germany and

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[14]) Pithart, P.: "O gestech v politice" (On Gestures in Politics). In: *Češi a Němci – ztracené dějiny* (Czechs and Germans – A Lost History), Prague 1995, pp. 67-70.

[15]) Břach, R.: *Die Aussenpolitik der Tschechoslowakei*, pp. 69-70; Ermacora, F.: *Die sudetendeutschen Fragen*, Munich 1992, pp. 188-189; Tomuschat, C.: *Zur Frage des Bestehens von Rechtansprüchen der vertriebenen Sudetendeutschen gegen die Tschechische Republik, gegen Einzelpersonen in der Tschechischen Republik und gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Manuscript Berlin 1995, pp. 66-72 (I would like to thank the Coalition 90/Greens group in the German Federal Parliament for access to this document, on the basis of which an expert judgement was prepared). The official Czechoslovak position on the preparatory talks for the '2+4' treaty is partly explained in the memoirs of Šedivý, J.: *Černínský palác v roce nula* (The Černínský Palace in the Year Dot). Prague 1997, pp. 73-80 and pass.

Poland was defined by two bilateral treaties (that of 14 November 1990 giving definitive recognition to the border along the Oder and Neisse rivers and the basic treaty of 17 June 1991),[16] there was only one treaty between Germany and Czechoslovakia, which was for various reasons not signed until 27 February 1992 and was ratified by both parliaments on the very eve of the Czechoslovak elections in June that year.[17] In comparison with the short Prague Treaty of 1973, many aspects of which reflected the division of the continent (although not in every respect, even the Prague Treaty addressed general 'national' interests which did not necessarily reflect the characteristics of the communist regime), the new treaty represented a new qualitative shift. Even despite the lack of access to primary archival sources, the history of the negotiations has already shown that many of the expectations for this treaty were exaggerated and unrealistic, particularly on the Czechoslovak side. With hindsight the question must be asked as to how far the real and geopolitical viewpoints were taken into account in the decisive year of the negotiations, i.e. 1991. It seems now, several years on, that these were much more important than they appeared in 1992, if quickly compared with the following policies of the conservative coalition in power after 1992.

A comparison of the contents of the two treaties – the 1973 Prague Treaty consists of six articles, while the 1992 Treaty has 35 – shows a definite shift in emphasis. The new treaty establishes the basis for developing a wide range of political (including "Euro-political"), economic, cultural and humanitarian areas, to a degree that would have been virtually unthinkable before 1989. The negotiations were not, however, without their dramatic moments – as indeed in 1973 – although one fundamental difference was that the negotiations of the 1992 Treaty were followed with interest by the free media in Czechoslovakia and became a divisive factor in the electoral campaign there. Bonn's procrastination in signing and ratifying the treaty (which was basically ready as early as summer 1991) seemingly played a role in the poor electoral results of Dienstbier's Civic Movement (OH), which was the natural partner (albeit *sub conditione*) of the governing FDP in Bonn (consider the involvement of Count Otto Lambsdorff in the OH campaign, although the main reasons for the party's failure must be sought primarily in internal politics). The tensions around the ratification of the treaty in Bonn and in Prague meant minor disturbances in the German coalition, but were far more significant in Czechoslovakia. They were a correlated factor in the failure of the constitutional negotiations on the form and substance of an "authentic federation" (Václav Havel),[18] and contributed to the nervous atmosphere of pre-electoral jousting (compare, the reservations of some Slovak politicians as to the continuity formulations of the new treaty).

The most difficult points which Czechoslovak diplomats had to resolve during the negotiations over the new treaty can be summarised as follows.

a) The preamble evaluating the common past, particularly the second paragraph ("is aware of the high number of victims of the reign of violence, war and expulsions, and the great suffering inflicted on many innocent people"), which aroused lively and often

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[16]) *Deutsche Aussenpolitik nach der Einheit 1990-1993*. Eine Dokumentation des Auswärtigen Amtes (hrsg. vom Auswärtigen Amt), Bonn 1993, pp. 670-72.

[17]) Laws of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, no. 521/1992. The Czech and German versions were published in parallel as DBT-12. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 12/2468, pp. 6-16.

[18]) Havel, V.: *Letní přemítání* (Summer Reflections), Praha 1991, pp. 28-34 and pass.

hysterical discussion particularly of the interpretation of the word 'expulsion' and its hypothetical legal consequences.

b) The legal evaluation of the 1938 Munich Agreement, when Czechoslovak demands for a declaration of its invalidity were not pushed through from the very beginning (instead the nullity formulation used in the 1973 Prague Treaty was confirmed – one which was open to two possible interpretations by the German side).

c) The resolution of the property rights issue, which was in fact not achieved (only in an exchange of letters between the foreign ministers of both countries, in which it was stated that the treaty did not deal with questions of property, leaving space for an implication that the question remained 'open', which appeared in the one-sided accompanying resolution of the German *Bundestag*.

d) The form in which the existing state borders of the two countries were confirmed in article 3 of the treaty (some Czech critics maintain that the term *"bestehende Grenze"* in the German text of the treaty contains hidden potential for revisionist claims).

e) The statement of continuity in paragraph 7 of the preamble ("…recognising the fact that the Czechoslovak state has never ceased to exist since its establishment in 1918") which did not meet the Czechoslovak demands (Czechoslovakia originally proposed a more extensive formulation which would have explicitly confirmed the continuity of common borders since 1918. It should still be borne in mind that any such expression of continuity was completely lacking in the 1973 Prague Treaty – the Czechoslovak negotiators had asked for it only in connection with the continuity of the borders.)

Rather less attention was aroused by certain counter-moves by the Czechoslovaks in 1991 concerning many formerly controversial questions and their proposals relating to these (which would be politically unacceptable today). There was no immediate official reaction from Bonn and when it did come it was negative (the Germans only gave a detailed "justification" of their position in 1995). The Czech moves concerned such issues as the simplification of laws and the possibility of former ethnic German citizens of Czechoslovakia settling there (dual citizenship was not ruled out by Czechoslovakia and there was a more extensive interpretation of it than is in force today). They also considered the possibility of these individuals participating in the privatisation process in Czechoslovakia, particularly in the system of coupon privatisation. Prague obviously expected an equivalent gesture from Bonn (including the recognition of the continuity of the Czechoslovak state and its borders, compensation for victims of Nazism, and perhaps some form of rejection of individual property claims on the part of Sudeten Germans – after the model of the earlier resolution of the expropriation of German property in the Soviet occupation zone after 1945).

Despite frequent scepticism, the new treaty was something more than just a "piece of paper" which should be revised (which was in fact the devout hope of many Sudeten Germans and other circles), and in fact offered a solid foundation for the building up of relations between the two countries and for an increasing degree of normality in everyday life on many levels. There are of course many reservations about it, as for example with the indirect formulation (with extensive explanations) of obligations for the future institutionalisation of Czech-German *'jugendwerk'* (youth exchange programme) (in the treaty with Poland this was spelt out) or the necessary means of communication at the non-governmental level, although there was an express recommendation – for example, a

Czech-German forum, analogous to that laid down in the treaty with Poland. It was this 'blank space' which was 'filled in' with more or less success by the Czech-German Declaration in January 1997 (c.f. Articles VII and VIII of the Czech-German Declaration) and by political initiatives around its acceptance.

In 1992 the German side summarised their approach to the treaty negotiations and to Czechoslovak-German relations as a whole in a preamble.[19] As aims they listed the future orientation of relations, the reconciliation of the German and nations of Czechoslovakia, etc. – and once again they stressed its role as a building block in the system "of harmoniously interacting bilateral treaties with other neighbours and partners in Europe, all of whom share the fact that they link bilateral relations with a European perspective. In the commentary to the preamble the German side repeated the main points of the German position as to how legal and historical problems should be addressed without bringing anything new to them. It also dwelt on the position of the ethnic German minority and its development "*in der angestammten Heimat*", even though there was an indirectly expressed regret in relation to Articles 20 and 21 of the treaty that the rights of the German minority could not be negotiated in as extensive a form as in the 1991 German-Polish Treaty. (After the split of the federation the principle of protection for the rights of a minority, as derived from those of individual members of a minority, became more strongly fixed in Czech policy on minorities, i.e. the reverse situation).

The German government *de facto* expressed its satisfaction with the Czechoslovak respect for the double standard in minority questions ("minority" as opposed to "circle of persons"), which meant the constitutional absence of protection for minorities in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany. In many people's view, this is of course only partly counterbalanced by the anti-discriminatory foundations contained in Article 3 of Paragraph III of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany, or the protection of minorities purely on the basis of regional constitutions in areas where there are autochthonous minorities (Frisians, Danes, Sorbians), which do not of course guarantee the rights of minorities throughout Germany.[20] During the negotiations on the new major treaties with Germany, Czech and even more particularly Polish diplomats did not sufficiently well present the legal arguments in favour of country-wide protection of minorities and of an increased understanding of the autochthonous principle, which is obvious in the Polish case – in Brandenburg, Berlin or Upper Rhineland-Westphalia.

In a commentary on the exchange of letters between the foreign ministers, the Federal Government noted a certain lack of reality, that the possibility of German citizens settling in Czechoslovakia in the future was expressed less concretely and less amply than in the treaty with Poland ("the German request that the Czechoslovak government express its readiness to allow settlement even before the expected entry into the European Communities was not met"). This point could have been more amply formulated in the 1997 Czech-German Declaration, although clearly only as an expression of common political will of the two governments, in the 1997 Czech-German Declaration (for the Czechs, this problem was apparently a relatively acceptable point of retreat in the difficult negotia-

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[19]) DBT – 12. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 12/2468.
[20]) Röper, H.: "Minderheitenschutz im Vielvölkerstaat Deutschland". In: Deutschland-Archiv 6/95, p. 625, nn.; Kozel, H.: *Skizze zur rechtlichen Frage der nationalen Minderheiten seit der Reichsgründung 1871 bis zur Gegenwart*, manuscript Bautzen 1995 (in print, I would like to thank the authors for kindly making the manuscript available).

tions). The preamble by the Federal Government and particularly the subsequent resolutions of factions of the CDU/CSU and FDP expanded on the German position on the second announcement of an exchange of letters (i.e. that "Both sides declare that this treaty does not deal with questions of property"), in the sense that it was left open. It was clearly spelt out that during the negotiations the Federal Government had "repeatedly expressed its standpoint that it sees the expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia and the confiscation of German property without compensation as a breach of international law".[21]

At first glance the relations of the separate Czech and Slovak republics of the former federation with various of the German states seemed to develop more smoothly. This period saw a solid body of treaties between the Czech Republic and four of the states, Baden-Württemberg, Upper Rhineland-Westphalia, Bavaria and Saxony.[22] Even in the case of Bavaria pragmatic collaboration prevailed, as the completion of the Ingolstadt-Kralupy oil pipeline in 1996 showed (despite Stoiber's disquieting reference to "Pipeline-Aussage" on the Sudeten German days in 1993 which bordered on a threat, or the almost border-revisionist hints of the Bavarian Minister of Social Affairs, Gebhard Glück on that occasion).[23] In the following years the demands of Bavarian politicians were more moderate, but certain sensitive subjects (such as the Beneš decrees) arose less frequently, being often – understandably – replaced by the resounding dramaturgy of speeches by certain politicians who specialised in this genre. Edmund Stoiber became a virtuoso in this area, expertly shifting the position of Bavarian policy onto a more realistic position, in a hardly imitable smokescreen of would-be 'uncompromising demands'. A number of observers have in fact credited Stoiber with a key role in the search for a new dynamic in Czech German relations.[24]

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After the elections in June 1992, Czechoslovak diplomats concentrated on "a campaign of explanation" of the constitutional decisions which had led to the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. In view of the events in the former Yugoslavia, their German counterparts, led by Genscher's successor, Klaus Kinkel, followed this process with a far from

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[21]) DBT – 12. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 12/2623; see also *Materialien zu Deutschlandfragen* (hrsg. von der Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen), Bonn 1993, pp. 170-173. For the Czech version of the resolution of the Federal Parliament see e.g. *Lidové noviny*, 21. 5. 1992.

[22]) For a summary see e.g. Vadrot, T.: "Die deutsche Aussenpolitik gegenüber der Tschechoslowakei bzw. der Tschechischen Republik seit der deutschen Vereinigung". Master's thesis presented at the University of Trier 1995, pp. 128-135; Götze, A.: "Einseitiges Entgegenkommen schafft keine Versöhnung". Thesis presented at the Berlin Freie Universität, Berlin 1994, pp. 54-59.

[23]) *Mitteilungsblatt der Sudetendeutschen Landsmannschaft* 7/1993, pp. 168-182.

[24]) In the debate in the Federal Parliament on the acceptance of the Czech-German declaration on 30 January 1997, the Deputy Leader of the House Antje Vollmer (Coalition 90/Greens) did not hesitate to thank Edmund Stoiber for his personal contribution, *"bei allen Irritationen, die ich manchmal angesichts Ihrer Positionen hatte"* – see DBT – 13. Wahlperiode, Plenarprotokoll 13/154, which contains Edmund Stoiber's speech on the declaration, which is also the typical essence of his realistic outlook and 'radical' statements in favour of the expelled Sudeten Germans and their organisation.

complacent understanding. At the same time they were on their guard against any commentary which could have had a negative effect.[25]

In September 1992 there was an exchange of ratification papers for the new Czechoslovak-German treaty (there were repeated references in the press to the mysterious circumstances surrounding this occasion, which will certainly be the subject of further research in the future). The treaty therefore came into force at the twilight of Czechoslovakia's existence. In diplomatic circles it was taken for granted that Bonn was interested in completing the exchange of ratification papers before it was too late. The destabilising pronouncements of the Slovak Premier Vladimír Mečiar on the signing of a new Slovak-German Treaty after the 1992 elections were rejected outright by Bonn after very brief discussions in the Federal Chancellery.[26] The two separate countries emerging from the Czechoslovak federation were successors to the treaty after 1 January 1993.

4. Czech-German Relations after the End of Czechoslovakia -Functional Normality in Squaring the Circles

Seen from a geo-political point of view and from that of practical politics, both successor states of Czechoslovakia lost importance. The changed geo-political situation called for certain corrections of course on both sides. While relations between the Czech Republic and Germany clearly have a central role, from the beginning of 1992, it was already clear that the interests of Czechs and Germans need not always agree (e.g. in the speech of the Minister of Foreign Relations, later Czech Foreign Minister, Josef Zieleniec in the Foreign Committee of the Czech National Council, and even more so in his explanation of the concept behind Czech foreign policy in the Czech Parliament in spring 1993).[27] While Czech diplomacy officially noted and repeatedly declared that relations between the two countries were progressing well, the possible growth of national and nationalistic components in Bonn's, and later Berlin's foreign policy *"pro futuro"* cannot be ruled out. (Zieleniec has repeatedly spoken of "Germany's return to the logic of its own history", later rephrasing this in speaking to the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies of Czech Parliament on 12 September 1996: "Since reunification, Germany is returning to the logic of its geopolitical position, of its interests, of its outward effect").[28]

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[25]) This development was, however, understandably followed by legal and political historians. See, e.g. Hartmann-Schmidt, Eva: "Eine Scheidung aus der Ratlosigkeit", *Das Parlament* 28/1992, and Altmann, F.-L.: "Tschechische und Slowakische Republik(en). Von der samtenen Revolution zur sanften Scheidung". In Altmann, R.-L. Hoensch, E. (hrsg): *Reformen und Reformer in Osteuropa*, Regensburg 1994. There were also characteristically triumphant reactions from some leading representatives of the Sudeten Germans, as expressed in, for example, the collection by Eibicht, Rolf-J. (hrsg.): *Die Tschechoslowakei. Das Ende einer Fehlkonstruktion. Die sudetendeutsche Frage bleibt offen*, Berg 1992.

[26]) Obrman, J.: "Perspektívy nezávislého Slovenska" (The Prospects of Independent Slovakia). *Medzinárodné otázky* 1-2/1993, p. 85.

[27]) "Zahraniční politika České republiky" (Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic) – *Data*, 4/1993, p. 172nn.

[28]) "Zahraniční politika České republiky" (Foreign Policy of the Czech Republic) – *Data*, 9/1996, p. 27nn. On the discussion which produced the formulation last cited, see also the shorthand record of the relevant meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Czech Parliament.

Official German policy on Czech-German relations is formulated each year in the Annual Report of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs or in a more condensed form (from more detailed reports of the activities of the individual ministries) in the Federal Government's annual report. An analysis of these sources reveals that – unlike other eastern European states – they are limited to a dry description of treaty activities, contacts, etc., often without any global evaluation of the relations such as that which often appears in passages concerning Poland, Hungary and – only seemingly paradoxically – to Slovakia. (In 1993, speaking of Hungary: "the traditionally good German-Hungarian relations have developed greatly in the past year, reaching a point that may be taken as a model, not only for this region" or on Slovakia in the same year: "German-Slovak relations developed well in the first year of the Slovak Republic's existence", and again on Slovakia in 1994: "There were further developments in the support for the German minority (Carpathian Germans) in 1994 and this can be described as exemplary, mainly regarding the co-operation between German and Slovak public offices ". There are no such passages evaluating Czech-German relations, even though on other occasions these have been more highly esteemed.[29]

As has already been said, Germany noted of the split of Czechoslovakia with quiet caution. The reluctant approach of the relevant German politicians towards questions arising out of the past, which often bordered on opportunist jostling, did however contribute – together with many improvised or uncoordinated steps by those involved in Czech foreign policy – to an undeniable worsening of the atmosphere of relations between the two countries (despite the repeated assertions that this was not the case).

On the Czech side, on the other hand, the initial phase of policy on Germany showed a certain perplexity, vagueness and sometimes even apparent passiveness that can only partly be understood or excused. The atmosphere of immobility was sometimes disturbed as with the storm in a teacup over the 'litmus test' – euphemistically speaking – of the so-called semi-official commission for the Sudeten German question, unfortunately announced by Premier Klaus after the ultimatory course of the Sudeten German Whitsuntide in 1993 (see above) or the unfortunate impression of the visit of a Czech parliamentary delegation to Bonn at the end of November 1993. This was marked by a selective, even paranoid, understanding of the comment of the Chair of the German Federal Parliament, Rita Süssmuth, on the need for dialogue with Sudeten Germans and on the need to find a suitable platform for negotiation between Czech and German parliamentarians.

In the troubled state of Czech-German relations at that time, relatively little attention was paid to the overall qualitative improvement of the treaty basis between the two countries, which concealed the less visible but nonetheless meticulous work of the two foreign ministries and the other ministries working with them (although the negotiation of some bilateral treaties from this period was fairly drawn-out). The most important section dates back to the period after the beginning of democratic changes in Central and Eastern Europe. There is no reason to pretend that the demise of Czechoslovakia did not complicate this process, which was in fact repeatedly and authoritatively noted in 1992, (e.g. in

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[29]) *Jahresbericht der Bundesregierung* 1993 (pp. 55-56), 1994 (pp. 61-62), 1995 (p. 65). On the development of Slovak-German relations after 1989 and particularly after the Slovak Republic became independent, see Lukáč, P.: *Súčasná podoba slovensko-nemeckých bilaterálnych vzt'ahov* (Slovak-German Bilateral Relations Today), Bratislava 1996.

the need to renegotiate the succession of the Czech Republic into the treaties between Germany and Czechoslovak Federative Republic).

In the period between November 1989 and the end of October 1997, 51 bilateral treaty documents were signed between Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, not to mention treaties and agreements with individual German states in the framework of their competencies to the *Bundestag* (particularly with Saxony, Bavaria, Baden-Württemburg and Upper Rhineland-Westphalia). This can be compared with the 28 treaty documents signed with Austria during the same period (although a number of important treaties are still under negotiation). It should also be remembered that, for reasons that are well known, the treaty basis between Germany and Czechoslovakia (pre- and post-1989) and the Czech Republic was definitely less than it should have been, even in comparison with other state socialist countries.

The treaty basis between Germany and the Czech Republic consists of almost 100 different documents. Between November 1989 and the end of September 1997, 53 inter-state, inter-governmental and inter-departmental documents were signed, i.e. more than half the total. The most important of these – the Treaty of Good Neighbours and Friendly Collaboration of 27 February 1992 – has been dealt with in detail elsewhere.

Agreements that are of particular significance and direct relevance to the lives of both Czechs and Germans include, for example, the agreement on the removal of visa requirements (27. 2. 1990), the agreement on the establishment of cultural and information centres (2. 2. 1990), the agreements on the setting-up of new border crossing points (the first by an exchange of notes on 18. 4 and 27. 6. 1990), the agreement on support for and mutual protection of investments (2. 10. 1990), an agreement on scientific collaboration (2. 11. 1990), an agreement on collaboration to combat organised crime (13. 9. 1991), a series of agreements relating to the environment (the first of which related to the cleaning of smoke emissions from the four blocks of the Prunéřov 1 power station and was signed on 27. 11. 1992, a general agreement on co-operation in environmental matters on 24.10.1997), an agreement between the respective defence ministries on military collaboration (24. 5. 1993), which was followed by other agreements on aspects of this co-operation, a very important treaty on common state borders, which also clarified the terminology concerning the common borders (3. 1. 1994), a set of treaty documents relating to the change or tightening up of German asylum laws (particularly the agreement on collaboration relating to the results of migration and that on the return of persons on the common state borders, both signed on 3. 11. 1994), the agreement on small-scale border movements (3. 11. 1994), the treaty on mutual assistance of customs services (19. 5. 1995), and a number of agreements relating to transport etc.[30]

The relatively transparent and homogeneous approach of Czech policy towards Germany between 1993 and 1995 was unfortunately not helped by such supportive and co-ordinating bodies as the coalition group of eleven. This was partly due to a lack of continuity in personnel and also to the excessive tendencies of political leaders from the 1992 elections to make themselves more visible. A new impetus was given to Czech-

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[30]) I would like to thank the International Law Deparment of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its former director, JUDr. Jaroslav Horák, for information on the formulation and amendment of the treaty base between Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic and Germany between 1989 and 1997.

German relations by President Havel's speech on 17 February 1995, "Czechs and Germans are on the road to being good neighbours", which was seen by commentators as a successful attempt to "balance the records" and to lay down the fundamentals of the position, not only in the negative sense ("a position from which we cannot move") but primarily by formulating the basic political axioms of relations between the two countries.[31]

This speech, together with subsequent and better co-ordinated moves (such as the so-called Zieleniec plan) gave the 'unresolved' Czech question a much greater prominence on the German scene and underlined its multilateral aspect. His credo of the democratic Germany was not entirely unqualified, and was by no means a blank cheque for some German politicians or the German government, who did not hide a certain irritation. Havel's speech offered a key formulation of past Czech-German relations and of the Czech view of their future – ideas which summed up the views of the majority of Czech politicians. It set clear limits on the repeated revisionist and restorative demands that were from time to time put forward (not only) from the Sudeten German side or its easily recognisable lobby.

Therefore 1995 brought new space for political manoeuvring in order to resolve the outstanding problems. There was also a clear will to negotiate and accept a so-called Czech-German declaration, which was to represent – albeit as a compromise – a certain political and legal 'end' to the unhappy past. Even though this was quite clearly due to the initiative of the earlier rather obscure Czech side, it was eventually accepted by Bonn. Although much has been said of the scepticism of the two leaders – Helmut Kohl and Václav Klaus – towards this document, it came to be seen that the *'Chefsache'* could not stay in a drawer in the Chancellery for ever. An important role in the new political space created by Havel's and Zieleniec's 1995 initiatives was played by the German media and by a number of politicians, who took up this cause, whether from personal motivations or (particularly in the case of a number of opposition politicians) for purely pragmatic-instrumental reasons. Among the most obvious were the then German President Richard von Weizsäcker, the new President Roman Herzog, the Vice-Chair of the *Bundestag*, Antje Vollmer, the deputy leader of the SPD faction in Parliament, Günther Verheugen, the former Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. The German government was repeatedly forced to comment in Parliament on the state of Czech-German relations, for example, in the Foreign Affairs Committee on December 1993 or in the house itself, most markedly and controversially in Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel's reaction to Havel's speech on 17 March 1995. This statement by the German government on Czech-German relations can serve as a valuable example.[32]

It was made (symbolically?) exactly one month after Havel's speech. According to some sources, the work on this statement was done at the last minute, showing that the announced systems of consultation with the opposition could not be fully functional. There were also differences in detail from the version which journalists received in advance, something which is not exactly common in Bonn.

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[31]) Czech Press Office (ČTK), 17. 2. 1995; the speech is printed in the original and in the official translation in: *Rozhovory o sousedství. Cyklus projevů přednesených v Karolinu v roce 1995* (Speaking of Neighbours. A Cycle of Lectures at the Karolinum in 1995), Prague 1997, pp. 33-54.
[32]) DBT – 13. Wahlperiode, Plenarprotokoll 13/28; Czech translation (unfortunately without the following discussion) in e.g. *Lidové noviny*, 21. 3. 1995.

This was evident both from the quality, tone and political resonance of the government statement and from the reaction of the opposition, for whom this difficult text represented a golden chance to inflict a blow (SPD, Greens, not to speak of the PDS). There were also clear signs of dissatisfaction and criticism of the Chancellor and government from deputies from the governing coalition such as Karl Lamers (CDU) and Ulrich Irmer (FDP).

Almost two-thirds of the text can be considered as a contribution to the success of the Federal Government in the development of Czech-German relations (the Czechoslovak-German treaty, German assistance for the Czech application for EU membership, economic co-operation, collaboration in the ROB of the United Nations, etc.).

From the Czech point of view, the most interesting and also most difficult passages were those which 'analyse' (if this can be said of such a superficial text) the historical projections into the nature of current relations. The statement announced an attempt to break out of the vicious circle of mutual wrong-doing but does not make any concrete contribution towards doing so. It sees Václav Havel's speech as an outstretched hand which should be taken, but also expresses clear disappointment at "certain passages", which are clearly those parts of Havel's speech in which his earlier statements on the wrong done by Czechs to the Sudeten Germans are set in a wider historical context in which the wreck of the "unique history of the coexistence of Czechs and Germans" can be assessed from a neutral standpoint.

As a "counterweight" to Havel's speech Kinkel cites the joint statement by Czech and German bishops, a text with undeniably honourable intentions, but which did not respect the primarily historical and political criteria, but rather pastoral or morally and pastorally theological ones. They saw the reconciliation of the two nations as a primarily spiritual process rather than a political one.[33] It was clearly not by chance that Kinkel – in what was partly conscious and determined politicising – chose this text: it weighs up Czech and German guilt as if on medical scales which give an unambiguous result, i.e. the degree of guilt and not the bishops' position on the causal and historical connections.

The statement of the Federal cabinet therefore included an indirectly critical but clearly understandable linking of the compensation of Czech victims of Nazism (the Federal Government apparently intended to treat this case the same as other comparable ones) and a more conciliatory attitude to Sudeten Germans on the part of the Czechs. The latter was, however, closer to unspecified discussions with them – in connection with the findings of the Czech Constitutional Court on 8 March 1995 in the Dreithaler case – "with a clear expression of distance" from the principles of collective guilt and from Czech amnesty law (no. 115/1946).[34] One sentence did however stand out: "We must

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[33] The statement by Czech and German bishops on the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War had been signed in Münster one week earlier (9 March 1995) by the chairmen of the Czech and German Conferences of Bishops, the Archbishop of Prague, Miloslav Cardinal Vlk, and Bishop of Mainz, Karl Lehmann. The full text was published in e.g. *Český deník* on 21. 3. 1995. See also Cardinal Vlk's lecture at the Karolinum, "Stavět mosty důvěry" (Building Bridges of Trust), 16. 6. 1995, in: *Rozhovory o sousedství*, pp. 130-131.

[34] The finding of the Constitutional Court on 8 March 1995 on the planned annulment of the presidential decree no. 108/2/1945, published no. 55/1995 Sb. This also reconfirmed the legality and legitimacy of the post-war confiscation without compensation and that these were in accor-

respect the decision of an independent court. We do however call on the Czech government to ensure that this decision does not arouse new unrest." Many saw this as a veiled agreement with the traditional Sudeten German claim that anyone agreeing with the so-called Beneš decrees (Kinkel spoke of the "Benesch"-Dekrete, a spelling which was in some circles seen as highly significant) agreed also with the ethnic cleansing of the former Yugoslavia and is capable of accepting similar occurrences in the future. This rather less than diplomatically expressed concern that the Czech Republic should not become 'a Central European Serbia' was linked with a somewhat curious and ironic reference to Václav Havel's statement that it is necessary for the time of monologues to give way to "real dialogue" (not by accident is this in quotes in Kinkel's text).

When the Federal Government spoke on Czech-German relations in Parliament (in the so-called *Aktuelle Stunde*) almost one year later (31 January 1996), the tone was rather different.[35] The crux of their answer was their trust that the Czech-German Declaration would soon be completed, while references to the legal system of the neighbouring country were surprisingly reduced to a minimum ("...For this reason it would not be helpful to ask the Czech Republic to annul legal acts that are more that fifty years old"). Part of this statement can already be considered as a summary of the admittedly partial results of the negotiations with their Czech counterparts on the Czech-German Declaration. For a regular reader of the shorthand records of the Federal Parliament however, it was not surprising that some passages of Kinkel's speech were taken almost word for word from the government statement of almost a year earlier. Even if some people asked how far such details showed the importance that the Federal Government placed (or did not place) on relations with the Czech Republic, the very fact that the subject of Czech-German relations was again raised, and this time in a European context, indicated a certain qualitative shift.

Many German politicians saw ever more clearly that the Czech Republic was the last of Germany's neighbours with which considerable work was still necessary if a veil was to be drawn over the past and a degree of reconciliation achieved. (The Vice-Chair of the Federal Parliament, Dr. Antje Vollmer, said on 31 January 1996, "The Federal Chancellor (...) is responsible for the fact that the final stone in German policy on the East has not yet been laid and with it the last remaining question in German foreign policy solved.")

Dialogue at the governmental and non-governmental level, which had been going on in many, often chaotic and uncoordinated forms since 1990, was complemented by a cycle of lectures "Speaking of Neighbours" at the Prague Karolinum (1995), in which prominent Czech and German politicians and other public figures offered many highly stimulating ideas. The cycle was opened by Václav Havel with the speech already referred to and continued with Kurt Biedenkopf, Miloslav Cardinal Vlk, Josef Zieleniec, Antje Vollmer and Richard von Weizsäcker.[36]

The quality of the dialogue and the actual process of negotiating the Czech-German Declaration (held back largely by the Bavarian CSU) was very badly affected by com-

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dance with international law. The legal opinion contained in this is also in virtual accordance with the official Polish legal position on this question.

[35]) DBT – 13. Wahlperiode, Plenarprotokoll 1382.

[36]) See note 30.

ments by Klaus Kinkel on the validity of the Potsdam Agreement, comments that were unfortunately timed, from the Czech point of view tactless, and for many observers poor tactics. After his controversial meeting with Josef Zieleniec at Petersberg and particularly in his reaction to the latter's press conference in the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 16 January 1996, Kinkel once again said in an interview with the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* – in accordance with the earlier and already traditional German legal position (and so in accordance with both the majority of German legal analysts and with the Federal Government) that the Potsdam Agreement was merely a political statement which had no legal bearing on the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans.[37]

This was a clear case of German policy seeking to shift the blame for the delays with the negotiations on the declaration on to the shoulders of the Czech side. In view of the subsequent feverish Czech discussions on the subject of Germany and Potsdam, this was a very unfortunate attempt, which threw considerable doubt on the meaning of the declaration itself and on the viability of the path to achieving it.[38] If, however, it was a case of a revisionist experiment by the German side, as some people suspected, then the rapidly following pronouncements placed Germany alongside the governments of the victorious powers which were present at Potsdam. This was clearly confirmed by the fixing of the negotiations in international law.[39]

Even though this discussion was prior to the Czech parliamentary elections, it was clear that the Czech Social Democrats (ČSSD) in particular, would not agree with a declaration which would obscure the constants of the Czech position in international law on the basis of Potsdam. In this respect the ČSSD played a similar role in the Czech Republic as did the CSU in Germany: despite being in opposition, it joined in a more or less functional co-ordination with official Czech diplomats in setting the limits beyond which the country would not go. Thanks to this, the declaration was not an issue in the electoral

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[37]) "C. G.: Kinkel wehrt sich gegen die Vorwürfe aus Prag". *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18. 1. 1996. For an adequate interpretation it is necessary to start from the German text (one important point is the correct distinction between subjunctive and indicative sentences – the incriminating sentence is neither in direct speech nor in the so-called subjunctive of other opinions), not from the inexact translation from the Czech Press Office. See also the news service of the German agency DPA on 21. 1. 1996, noting this passage from the editorial interpretation of FAZ. An article in the well-informed Bonn daily, *General-Anzeiger* on 24 January 1996, comments that Kinkel did in fact say the relevant sentence off the record. The Federal Government confirmed its position on Potsdam in its answer to a question by Ulla Jepke of PDS on 22. 4. 1996. See DBT – 13. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 13/4280.

[38]) On the German interpretation of Potsdam see, e.g. Faust, F.: *Das Potsdamer Abkommen und seine völkerrechtliche Bedeutung*, 4th ed., p. 75 nn.; Meissner, B., Veiter, T.: "Das Potsdamer Abkommen und die Deutschlandfrage, Part 2: Berliner Deklaration und die Sonderfragen", in: *Völkerrechtliche Abhandlungen*, vol. 4/II, 1987; Ermacora, F.: *Die sudetendeutschen Fragen*, München 1992, pp. 51-55, 111-114; Tomuschat, C.: *Zur Frage des Bestehens von Rechtansprüchen der vertriebenen Sudetendeutschen* (see note 15), pp. 46-54.

[39]) A statement by the US government, for example, said, "The decisions made at Potsdam by the Governments of the United States, United Kingdom and the then-Soviet Union in July/August of 1945 were soundly based in international law. The conference conclusions have been endorsed many times since in various multilateral and bilateral contexts. (...) The conclusions of Potsdam are historical fact and the United States is confident that no country wishes to call them into question." See USA Embassy in Prague, Press guidance, 7. 2. 1996.

campaign and in the eyes of the German SPD, "The Czech Social Democrats acted as could be expected in view of their European responsibilities, even though this may have lost them those few percent of votes by which they fell short of a victory" (G. Verheugen).[40]

This phase of the dialogue, too, came to a conclusion with the signing and acceptance of the joint Czech-German Declaration of Mutual Relations and their Future Development. The declaration was signed by Premier Václav Klaus and Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Prague on 21 January 1997. The German Federal Parliament accepted it on 30 January, the lower house of the Czech Parliament followed suit on 15 February after a dramatic debate, and the Czech Senate voted to accept it on 5 March. The consent of both parliaments underlined the political will of the governments expressed in the declaration, even though from a purely formal point of view it was not necessary (the idea was to show the broadest possible support for the content of the declaration among the relevant political forces, particularly the parliamentary political parties in both countries).

The negotiations leading up to the declaration were neither short nor straightforward and it was not just a case of "breaking through the elevated semantics of squaring the circle" (B. Kohler),[41] but rather of working out a text which above all would be historically correct and acceptable to both sides (Roman Herzog at a press conference in Dresden on 30 October 1995). Whether the text, so determinedly prepared at the cost of many difficult compromises, will be a real force will be shown not by the first months or years after its acceptance but primarily by the way it works out in the long term.[42] An analogous form of declaration (the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations) brought a difficult chapter in modern German-Danish relations to a close in 1955, and forty years later both states were able to express full satisfaction with this document.

The basic aim of both governments was the same: to rid Czech-German relations of the chronic tensions of the past and to show a political will to break totally with that past. While the protocols from the declaration negotiations will not be available to historians for many years, it is clear even from the bits and pieces of news that did appear that the starting positions in July 1995 were very different. The German side was not prepared to write a "political and legal full stop" (even if it was not binding in international law) unless the Czechs were willing to reconsider the events relating to the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia. The more explicit these Czech reflections and self-criticism were, the more concrete and politically binding the "political and legal full stop" could be from the point of view of Bonn, as it would necessarily become something of a precedent – e.g. in relations with Poland. If we consider the difference between the Czech and German legal position on questions of property (both at the outset and in the

[40]) DBT – 13. Wahlperiode, Plenarprotokoll 13/154.

[41]) Kohler, B.: "Höhere Semantik bei der Quadratur des Kreises: Bonn und Prag immer noch uneins". *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 3. 1. 1996.

[42]) The text of the Czech-German declaration was published by the Czech Press Agency on 20 December 1996; for the German text see "Auswärtiges Amt informiert", *Mitteilung für die Presse* Nr. 1175/96 on the same date. For the definitive German version (with more exact information on the sums to be contributed to set up the Fund for the Future) with the text of the letters of the foreign ministers signed at the same time as the declaration see DBT – 13. Wahlperiode, Drucksache 13/6787.

longer term), it was necessary to find a formulation appropriate for unifying both sides. This also applied to the other articles, although in a lesser degree.

Article IV of the declaration was undoubtedly the key passage. It explicitly expressed the will of both parties that "they will not burden their relations with political and legal questions arising out of the past", while (as shown above) "each side will be bound by its own system of laws and respect that the other side has different opinions". It was no accident that the Czechs stressed this most (Václav Klaus and Josef Zieleniec in Parliament on 15 February 1997), while the Germans tended to see it in more relative terms (particularly Helmut Kohl after signing the declaration on 21 January 1997, with his highly criticised words on the fact that the property issue was left open). However, whether we are assessing the declaration as such, or the German discussions on it, it is possible to agree with the sober judgement of the conservative legal specialist, Ulrich Fastenrath, who considers it doubtful that the Federal Government will play false in this respect and so strain its relations with the Czech Republic. He added that "It will hardly be possible to deny the indirect legal effects of the joint declaration on the rights to property and compensation (i.e. of Sudeten Germans)".[43]

For both German and Czech media, including specialists in the subject, the main focus of interest was understandably the historical sections of the declaration (articles 2 and 3). In their "recognition of guilt" the German side, for the first time, officially recognised a causal connection between the events of 1938/39 and those of 1945/46. This made it possible for the Czech side to undertake a relatively serious self-criticism on the question of the removal and expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, formulated in such a way that it was finally acceptable to virtually the whole spectrum of German politics, including the CSU. Nevertheless, the German negotiators did not succeed in obtaining a Czech recognition that the transfer of Czechoslovak Germans as such was illegal. Even the chosen terminology, taken from chapter XIII of the protocol of the Potsdam Conference and distinguishing between organised transfer/removal and forced expulsion. There was not even any doubt cast on the post-war Czechoslovak and allied legislation in this respect, as there was a certain distance from the way in which certain norms were met. It was the German public, however, which could hardly believe the Sudeten German organisations' rejection of the declaration in view of the Czechs' official self-criticism, and Chancellor Kohl was certainly aware of this in the final stages of work on the declaration at the coalition level. Kohl gave much greater space and emphasis to the Czech self-image in his government statement on 30 January 1997 than to the "legal and political full stop" of article IV, which was mentioned virtually in passing.[44]

The 'reconciliatory geometry' of the declaration is evident in the close interconnection of all its articles. The expected practical consequences of this statement could not be dismissed – the establishment of the Czech-German Future Fund (article 7) and the Czech-German discussion forum (article 8). These articles, in their formulation, are similar to a binding international treaty, though in fact they only refer to one. Their formulation also made it easier for the Kohl government to postpone the discussion of the concrete form of their action on the Czech victims of Nazism and on the formation and

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[43]) Fastenrath, U.: "Was die Gemeinsame Erklärung rechtlich bedeutet". *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29. 1. 1997.
[44]) DBT – 13. Wahlperiode, Plenarprotokoll 13/154.

functioning of the discussion forum until a later (although not late) date. Both govern-
ments were able postpone at least part of the complex agenda and place it in a binding
political framework.

As with other serious foreign-political events, the final decision on the Czech-
German Declaration rested with the Federal Chancellor. The earlier term *'Chefsache'*,
often used in this connection, represented a clear delimitation of the boundaries within
which the German negotiators moved (particularly the Deputy Foreign Minister, Peter
Hartmann, but also the Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel). They must have been more lim-
ited in certain practical questions, more subject to the retrospective mechanisms of con-
sultation and approbation, than were their Czech counterparts. The fact that the
'Chefsache' was referred to as a matter of course in connection with Czech-German rela-
tions aroused criticism and some signs of concern as to the constitutional clarity of the
contemporary practice of the Chancellor, who used his right to have the final word to
monopolise the whole field of foreign policy (and not only foreign policy). Richard von
Weizsäcker wrote in his memoirs of his doubts about the "neo-democratic" manner which
the Chancellor adopted and used in the case of Czech-German relations.[45]

His position was however far from simple. Internal stresses on coalitions are a fact
of everyday life in Bonn, even if the majority of controversial subjects take place between
the CDU/CSU on the one hand and the FDP on the other. In the case of the Czech-
German declaration, the stumbling block was the position of the Bavarian CSU, which
wanted to meet the demands of its Sudeten German voters as far as possible. This was
dependent not only on the resistance from Munich, but also on the heavy pressure which
Chancellor Kohl exerted on the CSU and particularly on the Bavarian Premier Edmund
Stoiber. It was not, therefore, Kinkel, but rather Kohl and Stoiber who could sign the text
of the declaration on behalf of the German side and thus give imprimatur. This could not,
of course, happen without lively debate within Germany and without considerable pres-
sure from the coalition, from the various states (not only Bavaria, but also Saxony), and
from outside the political sphere etc.[46]

The stance of the Sudeten Germans was certainly very important for Bonn (both
the government and Parliament repeatedly declared their intention to protect their inter-
ests), but Bonn's need for a comprehensive policy towards its eastern neighbours and to
limit mutual Czech-German irritation was even greater. In addition, Sudeten Germans
were not united in their position on the subject. Their various groupings were obviously
unprepared for the possibility of a declaration as such and their reactions were impro-
vised. The ability to communicate (even among themselves) was clearly lacking. Sudeten
Germans did however know that they were playing for time, but they did not realise that
the catalogue of their demands could not be left without revisions until the Czech Repub-
lic's planned entry into the European Union. The generally rigid position was character-

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[45] Weizsäcker, R. von: *Vier Zeiten*. München 1997, p. 389. The increase of the Federal Chancel-
lor's influence in foreign policy over the long term has also aroused the interest of foreign ana-
lysts, see, e.g. Paterson, W. E., "The Chancellor and Foreign Policy". In: Padgett, S. (ed.),
Adenauer to Kohl, The Development of the German Chancellorship, London 1994, esp. pp. 136-
139, 151-156.

[46] A solid overview of the issues, events and positions linked with the Czech-German declaration
has been given by Handl, V.: "Czech German Declaration on Reconciliation". *German Politics*,
Vol. 6, No. 2 (August 1997), pp. 150-167.

istic not only of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft*, but also of the leadership of the Ackermann and Seliger community. The Sudeten leaders were increasingly less able to communicate with German politicians and German society as a whole (although this could not be said of individual Sudeten Germans). It was as if they felt overly protected by the old official 'protection' of the state of Bavaria (1954). It may be because of this that the signing of the declaration aroused a sense of being abandoned or even spurned.[47] It should be borne in mind that the leadership of the CSU was ultimately driven by the need for practical collaboration with the Czechs and by a will not to block the European perspective in Czech-German neighbourly relations. From the CSU's point of view, the ultimately more or less satisfactory formulation of the fate of the Sudeten Germans (article 3 of the declaration) and the planned official participation of the latter in the discussion forum (article 8) allowed the CSU to rather elegantly amputate their unrealistic demands.

The declaration, whether as a carefully formulated legal and political full stop to the past or as a colon before the future, provided a definite hope for long-term healing on both sides in various dynamic relations. This expectation was appropriately included in the official foreign attitude to the declaration and that of the international organisations. On the day it was signed, the European Union called the declaration a "decisive and historical step in the formation of good relations and partnership between a member state of the EU and an associate partner."[48] The government of the USA issued a statement on 22 January which not only welcomed the declaration but also added an "interpretational" paragraph which was in total accordance with the Czech view of the significance and priorities of the declaration, seeing it as first and foremost a step into the future, thanks to the declaration by both governments that their relations would not be held back by political and legal questions arising out of the past.[49] The declaration was warmly welcomed by the British Minister for Foreign Affairs, Malcolm Rifkind, his French counterpart, Hervé de Charette, and the Hungarian and Polish Presidents, Arpád Göncz and Alexander Kwasniewski. Kwasniewski ranked the declaration with the bilateral agreements between Hungary and Romania and Poland and Ukraine, as part of a complex of documents which contributed to the improvement of the situation in "this part of Europe".[50] The Austrian government also commented with satisfaction "that both parties will not be held back by

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[47]) A resume of these feelings is given in an article by the well-known Sudeten German activist and publicist, Rudolf Hilf, in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10. 2. 1997: "There was no lack of praise or protest. The praise was of course self-praise. Those who had planned and engineered the whole affair basked in it: the Czech Foreign Ministry and the Prague Castle, together with their counterparts on the German side, the German Foreign Ministry, the politicians from the CDU and FDP, the Deputy Chair of the Federal Parliament, Antje Vollmer and the social democratic opposition. In the end the CDU and CSU lined up with the decision of the Federal Chancellor, even if not everyone had a clear conscience as far as the Sudeten Germans were concerned, as decisions relating to them and made without whom can only be seen as undemocratic." See Hilf, R.: "Deklarace chtěných a nechtěných nedorozumění" (A Declaration of Intentional and Unintentional Misunderstandings), *Nová Přítomnost* 3/1997, p. 26-27.

[48]) EU (Presse 14-G), No. 5328/97, 21. 1. 1997.

[49]) U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesman. Statement by Nicholas Burns, Spokesman: Signing of the Czech-German Declaration, 22. 1. 1997.

[50]) Czech Press Office, 21. 1. 1997.

political and legal questions arising out of the past".[51] According to the General Secretary of the Council of Europe, Daniel Tarschys, the declaration should be "a stimulus for those who have not yet managed to throw off the chains of history and return to the society of democratic European nations."[52]

The successful 'internal' acceptance of the Czech-German declaration (not just the consent of the respective governments and parliaments) and its application in a series of practical steps will undoubtedly be a positive signal for the world, both as far as the Czech Republic is concerned (especially as Czech public opinion has shown pronounced swings as shown by, for example, the survey by IVVM in spring 1996 which was influenced by a passionate debate on the nature and validity of the Potsdam Agreement, but, after the declaration was accepted, public opinion was to some degree stabilised) and to a lesser degree of the united Germany and its not always unquestioned credibility (by Margaret Thatcher among others). It opened a much greater space for fulfilling serious 'European tasks' facing both countries. The quality of their relation as neighbours is still one of these and is an obligation *par excellence*.

5. Conclusions

1. German policy towards the former Czechoslovakia and later the Czech Republic has always been a segment of its policy towards the countries of Central and East-central Europe. There are only a few subjects that are 'specifically Czech', which have their roots in the past and have until recently been monopolised by certain 'disadvantaged' groups, i.e. some Sudeten Germans, their organisations and their sometimes under, sometimes over-estimated but never ignorable lobby. Since 1989, this specific Czech issue has fortunately become ever more integrated into the wider political and historical context, as is shown by the text of the 1997 Czech-German Declaration and by an analysis of the main currents of the German media.

2. The specifics of bilateral relations have limits in German policy towards the region east of its borders and in Germany's undeniable attempt to bring stability to this region by anchoring it in traditional western integration structures. The place of the Czech Republic in German integration policies cannot be seen as a 'special case'. The progress of transformation in the Czech Republic in relation to the whole region provides no reason for it (and in any case this possible 'reason' disappeared when 1997 was relatively unsuccessful in economic terms and unstable politically). There is rather a certain possibility for the German side to create a 'negative feature' in connection with a possible future realisation or articulation of certain unresolved or unresolvable questions from the past. However, the German government is hardly interested in this. Even Chancellor Kohl's rather lukewarm enthusiasm (like that of Premier Klaus) for the Czech-German Declaration can be interpreted in this light, with respect to a certain paradoxical potential possibility of opening a Pandora's box by closing it (which would be a scenario of undoubted horror). Without the initiative of President Havel and Foreign Minister Josef Zieleniec, on the Czech side the declaration might never have seen the light of day. German policy in the near future will show whether the negative features of Czech-German relations need only be tranquillised or whether they call for other more effective therapy. Kohl's chosen term of *"Zwischenstation"* to describe the declaration (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 7. 1.

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[51]) Austrian Embassy in Prague, Press Department, 21. 1. 1997.

[52]) Council of Europe, press release 22. 1. 1997.

1997) or Zieleniec's "colon" (at a speech at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 20. 12. 1996) show clearly that the tranquilliser must be followed by concrete practical political moves, if possible in close succession, which will help keep Czech-German relations within the common integrational aims of the region as a whole.

3. From the point of view of the value hierarchy of the Bonn republic and united Germany, Czech-German bilateral issues and the way they are perceived in Germany are somewhat different to the way that the other Central European states are viewed. This is due to the foreign policy implications of certain features of Czech politics and political culture since 1992. Namely:

a) The way in which political parties have made positive (ČSSD) or negative (ODS) use of the constitutive elements and concepts of the Bonn republic (social welfare, a social market economy, the idea of a Christian tradition, human rights and property in the legal philosophy of the basic laws of Federal Germany) was never seen in Germany as a contribution to the continuing discussion on the reform of Germany from within. Rather it was a strange and impertinent echo, either of intentional transformational or post-transformational post-communist demagogy, or of an ideological tangle of quotes from the insular surroundings of the English-speaking world, i.e. at best as a 'Czech transformational convulsion', logically associated with an idea of isolationism within the region and a lack of transparency and trustworthiness in Czech attempts at integration.

The references to 'Europe' by some Czech politicians had a greater effect on the way in which the Czech Republic was perceived on the German political scene than did – indirectly and negatively – the historical evergreen of Czech-German relations (as with, for example, the repeated media references to the Czech Republic as *"Musterknabe"* [star pupil], with definitely pejorative implications).

b) If Christian tradition plays an important role in German political culture and its scale of values (secularisation in Germany had and still has rather different features to that in the Czech Republic!), then the Czech policy towards the church has visible effects. It is no accident that Sudeten German circles follow it closely as a sign of the so-called European maturity of the Czech Republic. This is very important for Chancellor Kohl and the conservative CDU and CSU (*ad illustrandum*: Kohl is a loyal member of the Mainz bisphoric of Karl Lehmann, who is among other things Miloslav Cardinal Vlk's deputy as Chair of the Council of the Conference of European Bishops).

In summary, German policy towards the Czech Republic is the result of a complex regional approach, primarily as a sub-chapter of German integrational policy. The bilateral specifics have a wider register than is generally acknowledged. The number of such features (as above) mean that openly discussed issues – like the Sudeten German question – are generally seen in a different context within German politics than is admitted on the Czech side. The strength of this factor in German policy towards the Czech Republic is thus in objective connection to factors that, although they have not yet been bilaterally articulated, have long been in effect. These include Czech policy on Europe and the specific features of its *'Sonderweg'* (special path), Czech relations to traditional and conservative values (such as Christianity and the church), minority policies consistently derived from the individual rights of each citizens (in the concrete form therefore slightly below the optimum level recommended by the Council of Europe), and so forth. Czech foreign policy in the face of fundamental European decisions on integration should show a greater respect and awareness that the bilateral relations with all its neighbours, the em-

phasis of its policies on integration and its post-transformation political culture as a whole project themselves significantly into Czech-German relations and reinforce (or in some cases weaken) their new 'post-1989' quality.

Translated by April Retter

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Moral Political Dissent in German-Czech Relations*

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Abstract: Since 1989, the German-Czech relationship has been burdened by the problem of a just assessment of World War II and the following forced transfer of the Sudeten Germans. Why are democrats on both sides, who acknowledge the same values and principles, unable to reach an agreement about crucial events in the past? The political and legal differences imply a moral dissent which is not being discussed systematically. The article tries to investigate the deficits of the moral arguments on both sides.
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1. Problems with the Recognition Controversy

When in 1989/1990 Václav Havel publicly expressed a moral apology for the expulsion of Germans from post-war Czechoslovakia, he hardly suspected that the very foundations of *détente* policy – which had been interpreted by East Europeans as a German step towards reconciliation, based on their acknowledgement of the political status quo resulting from World War II – could ever be questioned. German unification was seen as the *sine qua non* of peaceful European integration and was consequently welcomed with something approaching euphoria. It was not only because of the East German and Czech (Czechoslovakian) revolutions of November 1989 that Václav Havel selected Munich and Berlin as the destinations for his first foreign trips. His apology was intended as a gesture which would contribute to overcoming the burdens of the past and reflected the policy later advocated by the Czech government, i.e. making a clean break with the past, at least on a political and legal level.

If the only reactions to Havel's apology had been the amiable reply of then German Federal President Weizsäcker and the prompt signing of a new friendship treaty between the two neighbours, many of the tensions which later arose would have been avoided. But the Sudeten Germans, the audience which Havel was in fact addressing, were – at least as far as their strongest public voice, the *Sudetendeutsche Landsmanschaft* (SL), was concerned – incapable of a similarly generous gesture. Instead, Havel's words were interpreted as a Czech "admission of guilt", which must be followed by practical steps

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towards the legal and material compensation of the Sudeten Germans. The SL demanded compensation amounting to hundreds of billions of German marks and their spokesperson declared that they would not be "bought off" with a mere moral apology. The Sudeten German organisation, vigorously supported by its patron, the Bavarian government, issued threats in the event of the Czech government not entering into a 'dialogue' with the 'Sudeten Germans'. For example, co-operation in constructing a oil pipeline from Ingolstadt, which was intended to reduce the one-sided dependence of the Czech Republic on Soviet, later Russian, crude oil imports, was linked to Czech willingness to begin negotiations. Moreover, the Czechs were reminded of their dependence on German support for their bid to join the EU. The Sudeten Germans also called for the annulment of the so-called Beneš decrees, i.e. for the legal revision of the Czech internal policy regarding 'expulsion' (*Vertreibung*). The SL continues to insist on its "right to a homeland", even though such a right is neither upheld by current German jurisprudence, nor by international law, and despite the fact that it is unclear what legal rights and consequences would result from such a right. When, eventually, doubts were cast on the very integrity of a moral apology to the victims of violence and compulsory expulsion, on grounds that moral condemnation was only convincing if it was followed by appropriate legal measures, one might have easily been left with the impression that these arguments could not have originated in a country where no Nazi judges have ever been convicted, and where up until now the courts have turned down every individual legal claim filed by foreign victims of Nazis terror or of forced labour. And all this occurred while German pensions were still being paid to SS veterans who are citizens of countries other than Germany.

Although the Bonn government signed a new friendship treaty with the Czech Republic in 1993, the treaty expressly left open the question of eventual material claims arising as a result of the expropriation of the Sudeten Germans' property. This was the consequence of German law, according to which the Federal Government of Germany becomes responsible for fulfilling the compensation claims of its citizens, if it publicly renounces the private legal claims of its citizens against any second country. This well-known provision of German law – which some lawyers have interpreted to mean that 'only' the level of compensation paid thus far to German citizens by the German government might be open to re-negotiation – and the potentially incalculable financial risks which it opened up were the cause of the Federal Government's cautious position. Although this is in essence a non-political legal ruling which would also apply to the Czech government under the conditions of the rule of law, it has been perceived by the Czech public as a indication that in the future the German government could, if a favourable situation arose, again open negotiations on this issue. Czech politicians and the Czech public lost sight of the fact that the German Federal Government had good reasons for preventing renewed bilateral negotiations on the issue of individual compensation claims. Such Czech-German negotiations would have meant that the question of war reparations to the countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe would come up at the international negotiating table, as provided in the London treaty on debts of 1953. In view of the enormous number of war victims and the enormity of material losses in this region, the German government, as the legal successor to the German Reich, would have then faced costs far exceeding other financial risks calculated in this context. Ex-Foreign Minister Kinkel's soothing words to the associations of displaced Germans (*Vertriebenenverbände*) to the effect that "the time is not yet ripe for your claims", the often hasty, morally motivated demands of several German politicians calling for the cancella-

tion of the Beneš decrees, and the active demands of the SL for restitution and compensation, which no representative of German politics contradicted, all served to cause agitation in Prague and in the border regions.

The Czech government's trust in the German interpretation of the legal situation was hardly strengthened by the fact that the Federal Government explicitly refused, from the point of view of international rights, to acknowledge the Potsdam Agreement of 1945; it declared, on the one hand, the Munich Agreement to be "legally binding", but, on the other, refused to accept the analogous argument in relation to Potsdam. Likewise, the trust of the Czech side was not reinforced by the fact that the Federal Government and German Constitutional Court confirmed the validity of compulsory expropriation in the former GDR at the end of the war but refused to acknowledge compulsory expropriation in post-war Czechoslovakia as a valid and irreversible outcome of World War II. Suspicions grew that the international legality of the transfer (Potsdam) might first be negated and then – on the basis of 'Czech guilt' – doubts cast on the internal legal basis (the Beneš decrees). This would have opened the way for Sudeten German demands. An avalanche of Sudeten German restitution lawsuits at a time when the legal system was in danger of collapsing would have blocked the process of privatisation and contributed to tension in the country. In connection with Bonn's demand that the SL be involved in bilateral talks with the Prague government, the Czech side was left with the impression that the now sovereign Germany was systematically attempting to revise the outcome of World War II. Thanks to the special treatment of Poland, the Czech Republic increasingly perceived its position as that of the 'weakest link' within the former East European community. The simultaneous division of Czechoslovakia and reunification of Germany, together with Austria's entry into the European Community, revived old, historically well-founded fears of a new and powerful Greater Germany in Prague. The word injustice (*Unrecht*) itself, which German politicians of all persuasions use in connection with expulsion, suddenly took on a double meaning: besides meaning injustice in the moral sense, it might also mean – without any legal basis whatsoever.

In the Czech Republic, this suspicion was not only prevalent among nationalists and communists, but gradually pervaded democratic political groups as well. Increasing mistrust in the long-term aims of German politics among the Czech public was, in itself, the really disturbing development. In view of the fact that the Bonn government actually neither intended to unilaterally revise the post-war order in Europe, nor aimed to launch an offensive on the compensation question – which would have been absurd, not only from the German point of view – leads one to ask why their real intentions were so difficult to decipher and how such an impression could ever arise in the Czech Republic. The whole situation is all the more puzzling if one recalls that the Federal Republic is a reliable partner and supporter of Czech integration into the West.

Czech politics reacted by 'consolidating' its own legal and political positions, with the intention of warding off what were presumed to be Bonn's attempts at revision. The first step was the Czech Parliament's background report on the German-Czech Treaty of 1992. The second step, of much greater significance than this political statement by Parliament, was the decision of the Constitutional Court of the Czech Republic (1995) upholding the "legality" and "legitimacy" of the so-called Beneš decrees and confirming their legal validity, at the same time it denied their present-day applicability. The Czech government subsequently requested the opinions of the former Allied powers on the issue

of the validity and international legal status of the Potsdam Agreement in 1996 and received replies from those countries, ambassadors which met with Prague's expectations.

The Czech government also contributed to the clouding of Czech-German relations. One must merely recall the obvious discrepancy between the Czech offer of dual nationality for Sudeten Germans made in 1990/91 and the current rejection of a dialogue with representatives of the SL. In the meantime, the Prague government offered to enter into a dialogue after the traditional Whitsuntide meeting of the SL in 1993, despite sharp and demanding tones voiced there, and retracted this offer three days later, arguing that the speeches of SL representatives had rendered dialogue impossible. All of this was little help in clarifying Czech policy. The fact that the Speaker of the Czech Parliament, Milan Uhde, rejected a inter-parliamentary dialogue during a visit to Bonn in the same year contributed to producing the most significant shortcoming of the Joint Declaration on Conciliation later agreed upon – its insufficient political legitimacy. It was this lack of dialogue, which became strikingly obvious in existing political, legal, and normative evaluations of the Czech-German common past, which finally led to the Czech idea of a Joint Declaration of Reconciliation. Two years of secret diplomacy and hard work on the part of the Deputy Foreign Ministers of both countries were necessary before in 1997 this platform for "international understanding" was created in the form of a rational text which contributed to improving mutual relationships. Czech hopes for a legal end to the demands for compensation went unfulfilled, for well-known reasons. The German Federal Government acknowledged what had been common knowledge before the declaration, namely, that the past would not be a hindrance on the Czech Republic's path into the EU and NATO. Finally, despite the convergence of standpoints, considerable differences remained with respect to the respective historical, political and normative assessments of the two countries' common past. These differences manifested themselves in statements on the "divergent legal views" of both sides, and in legitimate criticism from the Czech Jewish community regarding the inadequate recognition of the effects of the Holocaust on Czech Jews in the declaration. Furthermore, no agreement was reached on appointments to positions in the German-Czech Future Fund or on the definition of the fund's future tasks. Disagreements were also manifested in another, scandalous case i.e. the initial blockage of payments from this fund to the last surviving victims of Nazi terror in the Czech Republic, where it was decided that their legitimate compensation claims, in contrast to the claims of SL members, were not to be transferred to succeeding generations.

There are a number of factors underlying the ongoing difficulties which plague the process of Czech-German rapprochement. Of course, nationalistic and ethno-nationalistic stances exist on both sides of the Bavarian-Bohemian forest right up to the present day, but these positions represent a political, rather than an intellectual challenge. At the core of the communication problems on both sides are neither fear of renewed property losses in the former Sudeten German regions, nor a real or supposed repression of history in the Czech Republic, nor the complex muddle of political, material, legal and moral aspects which complicate the clarification of opposing standpoints. The key to the problem lies rather in the fact that democratic politicians on both sides differ substantially in their moral and normative assessments of World War II and its consequences. At the centre of this issue is the question why politicians, journalists, historians and representatives of the generation of first-hand witnesses who have the will to understand and who all appeal to the same laws and norms fail to reach a consensus in their assessment of the main historical processes. One of the most difficult questions in this context refers to the evaluation

of individual guilt and responsibility for large-scale crimes committed collectively during this 'total war' under conditions of total dictatorship, during which almost all remaining civil and private autonomy was suspended, and, along with it, the prerequisites for the perception and assessment of individual responsibility [Schwan 1997: 14ff]. Reflecting this dilemma are concepts requiring clarification, such as collective responsibilities, collective guilt or the collective liability of citizens; these concepts are juxtaposed with arguments connected with the issue of appropriate punishment for the crimes committed during World War II. Discussions of these issues always imply moral judgements on one's own actions or the actions of others, but such judgements rarely become the subject of systematic consideration. The difficult moral discourse on the war, transfer and expulsion is not only complicated by the collision of contradictory positions from earlier conflicts, divergent experiences of suffering, and the divergent memories of those who experienced the war and post-war period first-hand; it is also burdened with attempts to link historical and contemporary moral horizons.

2. Differences in German-Czech Moral Discourse

It is not surprising that, within the current German-Czech dialogue advocates of the same values and principles arrive at different interpretations regarding the sphere of their applicability, interpretations which are sometimes directly opposed. For example, despite their similar political ideals and close personal relationship, the former German Federal President, Richard von Weizsäcker, and Václav Havel, when evaluating key points of German-Czech history, come to different conclusions. This was stressed by von Weizsäcker in his Prague speech at Charles University in December 1995: "Expulsion is a serious injustice (...) The expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia was the result of the capitulation of democracies in the face of dictatorship in Munich in1938 and a result of the forced occupation of your country in March 1939 (...) However none of this means that expulsion and the expropriation decrees of 1945 and their cruel implementation become in any way acceptable. They were immoral, because they assumed the collective guilt of an entire group of people; guilt, however, like innocence, is always individual, never collective. The decrees were not legal acts, but were acts of war after the fact (...) That is why this year's decision by the Brno High Court alarmed us to such an extent, because it was based, fifty years later, on an alleged collective responsibility and because it legitimates, on the basis of criminal law, earlier acts of injustice."[1]

Václav Havel, who underlined the Czech decision to forego claims against Germany for the injustices suffered by Czechs during World War II, rejected all demands for compensation for "post-war resettlement" on the part of the *Vertriebenenverbände*, as well as calls for a revision of the Beneš decrees: "We too have attempted to give an account of our share of the responsibility for the offences which happened after the war, but we also haven't the slightest intention of turning back history and repealing (...) our legal acts, which were long ago legitimately adopted by Parliament."[2]

The diverging assessments of central issues in German-Czech relations in these two speeches are obvious. Although on the German side, some self-critical voices do acknowledge the relationship between cause and effect, several influential spokespersons call for an unconditional moral condemnation of expulsion (P. Glotz). The moral assess-

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[1]) *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 3 January 1996.
[2]) *Lidové noviny* 18. 2. 1995, extract in *Prager Zeitung* 23. 2. 1995.

ment thus is as follows: the terrible 'injustice' suffered by the Czechs at the hands of the Germans was followed by the 'injustice' of 'transfer'. In this view, the wild, pogrom-like expulsions, the 'transfer decisions' reached in Potsdam and the Beneš decrees form a unit, because they are all reflections of a mistaken principle, that of collective guilt. In keeping with this line of thought, superficial comparisons, equating the Holocaust = expulsion = present-day ethnic cleansing are often put forward [Glotz 1995].

The Czech side considered such equations inadequate and therefore insisted on a more rigorous relationship between cause and effect in the joint German-Czech declarations. The then Czech Prime Minister, Václav Klaus, referred to this point repeatedly and emphatically. He thus criticised the March 1995 joint declaration of German and Czech bishops because it constructed a "symmetry" with respect to the question of the guilt of both nations and lacked adequate recognition of chronology and causality: "We are not talking here of autonomous, mutually unconnected cases of failure and guilt" [Klaus 1997: 373]. The Czech historian Václav Kural expressed the same thought thus: "The initiative and the primary guilt for the catastrophic change does not rest with the Czech side" [Handl and Kural 1994: 18]. That this emphasis on the causality of historical events was not exaggerated is demonstrated by the numerous attempts, above all on the part of the Sudeten Germans, to extract the problem of transfer from an international context and to completely disregard the relationship between cause and effect. This position was taken by of one of the most active spokespersons for Sudeten German demands, R. Hilf: "Who started it is perhaps as interesting a question as which came first, the chicken or the egg" [Hilf 1996: 34]. This relatively widespread opinion provoked an ironic observation by the well-known television commentator F. Küppersbusch: "If the Czechs had not expelled the Sudeten Germans in 1945, Hitler would not have occupied Czechoslovakia in 1939. Right?"[3]

From the moral point of view – as can often be heard on the Czech side – it is argued that many of those displaced experienced 'injustice, but' – but these measures can only be understood within the specific historical context and were necessary and legitimate. The 'transfer' allegedly took place in agreement with the Allies. In his speeches, Václav Havel, repeatedly mentioned and condemned the moral repugnance of revenge as a motive in connection with forced resettlement and expulsion. However, he also speaks of the "legitimate" decision of Parliament when referring to the expropriation and expulsion decrees. On the cause and effect relationship he says: "We can entertain various opinions regarding the post-war transfer – and my critical standpoint is well-known – however, we may never separate it from the historical context and all those horrors which preceded and led to it ... The transfer (*odsun*) no doubt represented the end of co-existence within a collective state. But the deadly blow which caused this was something else: the fatal failure of the majority of our inhabitants of German descent who gave priority to dictatorship, confrontation and violence – which Hitler's National Socialism embodied – over democracy, dialogue and tolerance, and who, by claiming a right to their homeland, in fact renounced their homeland."[4]

The former Czech Foreign Minister, Jiří Dienstbier, speaks of the application of the idea of collective guilt in post-war Czechoslovakia and also uses the term ethnic cleans-

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[3]) ARD, 2. 6. 1996.

[4]) *Lidové noviny* 18. 2. 1995.

ing in this context, but at the same time rejects any discussion of a possible repeal of the decrees.[5]

Obviously, the question of motives is not irrelevant in making moral judgements, nor is the question of who started things; in fact, such issues have a high priority in the moral assessment of actions. It would seem that Kant's analogy is clearly valid, according to which the standards used to gauge conduct between two nations should be the same as those used for relations between two private individuals. The Czech standpoint insists on the difference between the activity of one person (or a nation or ethnic group) who acts with criminal intent and another who becomes involved in crime as a victim and then acts unjustly. In his polemic attack on Tolstoy's pacifism, T. G. Masaryk insisted on the fundamental difference between the assailant and the victim. The first is situated, in his opinion, "in a wholly different mental condition than the one who defends himself". It is exactly this difference which morally justifies the use of violence by the victim and leads to condemnation of violence perpetrated by the aggressor [Ludwig 1937: 100].

Both these lines of argument are incomplete. The equation frequently found in the speeches of German politicians – i.e. that one 'injustice' was followed by another – obliterates too many moral differences. In this equation, many people were in fact 'more equal' than others. Thus it is only proper that the text of the Czech-German Declaration, as a product of laborious negotiation, states that the brutal Nazi regime laid the groundwork for later expulsion and forced eviction.[6] Nevertheless, this statement fails to do justice to the special character of the occupying regime during this period of 'total war' and the implementation of Nazi *Umvolkungspolitik* ('repopulation policy').

Two aspects of the Czech position are noteworthy: first, the gap between legal justification and moral condemnation and second, the way in which this position illustrates the limits of the Kantian analogy between personal and collective action. In contrast to the deeds of individuals, it is impossible in the case of collectively perpetrated reprisals to determine unambiguously whether an injustice was committed as a result of the exaggerated reactions of traumatised victims, or whether planned crimes were committed deliberately by groups; in the latter case, perpetrators would not be able to claim extenuating circumstances in individual court proceedings. In cases of group violence, it is impossible to unambiguously determine the aggressor and victim.

Furthermore, it is striking that the – in my opinion – legitimate rejection of one-sided Sudeten German claims to property restitution via revision of the so-called Beneš decrees led to a morally problematic defence of their 'legality' and 'legitimacy'. They were 'legal' in the sense that they were in a legal form. And they were 'legitimate', in the sense that they were passed by a parliament legitimated by a sovereign people. Were they also 'legitimate' in a moral sense? Václav Havel's clear condemnation of the revenge motive demonstrates that this was not the case. Nonetheless, it is obvious that the justification of these Czech measures at the end of World War II, as quoted in Havel's speech above, remains confined to the level of reasons of state, which – in my opinion – does not stand up to moral judgement. This position results from the fact that, to date, the Czech side has failed to conduct an assessment of the normative and legal implications of its historical actions and legal acts in the years 1945/46 from the perspective of today's gen-

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[5]) Interview in *Svobodné slovo* 10. 2. 1996, *Práce* 26. 2. 1996.
[6]) Compare article 2 of the declaration. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 11. 12. 1996.

erally accepted human rights and moral standards. Must one today defend the forced transfer as a legal act in order to maintain trust in the legal system? Would it not be more appropriate to acknowledge the legally binding character of the decrees and at the same time morally distance ourselves from them and clearly state that, from the perspective of today's legal standards, the decrees are not – despite the clauses with exceptions for German anti-fascists – compatible with the human rights guaranteed in the Czech constitution? The classification of past legal acts, treaties or agreements, which are today considered illegitimate, as legally binding by no means necessarily implies – as demonstrated by the legal handling of the Munich Agreement of 1938 in the Federal Republic – a chain of further revisionist legal steps (for instance, restitution etc.). Such a position avoids the formula of 'legal validity' – as employed in the decision of the Czech Constitutional Court – and its negative consequences for today's jurisprudence.

Every retrospective discussion about values is simultaneously an attempt to reach a moral self-understanding with respect to the past. Does an understanding of the historical context mean the legitimisation of past actions? Is it at all possible to generalise conclusions? The question remains: how can war, expulsion, transfer and their perpetrators be fairly judged from today's perspective?

It is a striking phenomenon that one significant point that was clearly seen by the protagonists at the time is hardly recognised on both sides of the current German-Czech discussions, at least on the level of official policy. Curiously, it is precisely the sole dimension of the historic conflict that could provide something like a partial justification for the decision to implement expulsion (which is expressed in the phrase 'historically understandable'): this was the character of World War II. This was not a war against states, but against peoples, ethnic groups (M. Walzer). World War II was not a classic national war of revision, but rather a war of conquest and a race war, which obliterated every law, convention and norm recognised at the time, and exceeded in its consequences all of the known dimensions of mass crime up to that period.[7]

With regard to the German-Czech dialogue and given the singular quality of this racist war of extermination, one must acknowledge that the very concept of peaceful co-existence of both peoples in a common state after the end of World War II was rather utopian. Taking into account the fact that in this 'total war' all moral boundaries fell, taking into account the systematic elimination of the democratic elites, the extraordinary and long-lasting suffering of the civilian population, and also the far-reaching institutional and legal vacuum after the fall of the occupying regime, it was hardly possible to prevent acts of revenge in the form of expulsions and the decisions regarding forced transfer. This singular conflict formation, in which the terror regime of the protectorate manifested itself as an expression of genuine Greater German hegemonic goals, led the Czech side to collectively accuse all Germans and especially Sudeten Germans. The Sudeten Germans were held chiefly responsible for the destruction of the Czech democracy and the subjection of the Czechs to Nazi dictatorship. All Sudeten Germans, including those who were not obvious lackeys of the Nazi regime and even those who opposed it, were affected by the post-war policies and the ensuing violence to the same extent as the Nazi perpetrators. The political regulation of radicalised nationalist conflict is never

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[7]) The German historian Klaus Hildebrandt in a discussion in ZDF: *Hitler eine Bilanz* von Guido Knopp 10. 12. 1995. Cf. also his volume: *Deutsche Aussenpolitik von Bismarck bis Hitler*. Stuttgart 1995, p. 892.

an easy task and such conflicts can reach a stage of escalation which precludes any kind of compromise; in this case, the situation was severely exacerbated by a biologically charged definition of the nation. Moreover, there was no visible anti-Hitler opposition in Germany. German soldiers fought with extreme brutality up to the very end of the war and in spite of the futility of their actions. As a result, the original concept of distinguishing between the German people and Hitler's Germany was abandoned in the final phase of the war by the Western Allies, and all the more readily by those peoples who suffered directly at the hands of the Nazis.

Hannah Arendt commented on this as follows: "Whether someone was a Nazi or anti-Nazi in Germany will only ever be determined by someone who can look into the human heart, into which, as everyone knows, human vision cannot penetrate. (...) Thus, even the most extreme slogan that this war has evoked on our side – that the only good German is a 'dead German' – has a basis in reality; we can only know that someone was truly opposed to the Nazis after they hanged him. We have no other proof." [Arendt 1976: 35]

This led Arendt to the question of how one could face "being confronted with a people for whom the line that divides criminals from normal people, the guilty from the innocent, was so effectively erased, that tomorrow no one in Germany will know whether he is speaking to a secret hero or a former mass-murderer. Neither a definition of who is considered responsible nor the arrest of 'war criminals' can save us from this situation." [Ibid.: 36ff]

At the end of World War II, the practical impossibility of methodically ascertaining – a million times over – the guilt (or share of guilt) of individuals was self-evident; therefore, a substitute was found in moral generalisations.

The thesis of collective guilt rests on the assumption that a person can be accused purely on the basis of membership in a defined group. This assumption is in such fundamental opposition to Western-liberal legal tenets that defending it would lead to a fundamental reassessment of the entire legal system. On the other hand, although the legal system rejects the notion of collectives which act as a unit, history in fact shows that they exist. There were real and effective divisions within national and ethnic collectives, which resulted, internally, in compulsory homogeneity and, seen from the outside, camouflaged all existing individual differences and internal forms of differentiation. The near-complete identity of nation and regime in Nazi Germany, the active collaboration of the German civilian population with the aims and methods of Nazi policy and with the Nazi war of extermination until its bitter end, in effect left the occupied nations no choice but to make political-moral generalisations based on national categories. This dilemma cannot be solved in retrospect. The conflicts of radicalised groups, which are enacted along the distinctions of 'primordial' traits (i.e. either immutable traits such as sex or skin colour or very stable identities such as nationality/ethnicity, native language, religion) create divisions that rule out compromise and produce in the generations involved irreversible ruptures, which the protagonists cannot repair on their own. Conflicts of this kind are often caught up in spiral of increasing tension, are immune to the usual forms of conflict regulation and often end in bloodshed.[8] In extreme situations, any acknowledgement

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[8]) Claus Offe referred to the special role of the conflicts of primordial groups in his lecture "Homogeneity and Democracy" in Bremen on Jan 1, 1996.

of differentiations in the ranks of the opponents is swept away. Recognising that such conflicts, once they have reached a certain level of violence and loss of moral boundaries, to a certain extent resemble natural catastrophes in their dynamics and seeming inevitability can hardly be equated with nationalist partisanship in favour of one conflict party or the other. This recognition depends instead on one's insight into the depth and the consequences of the breach in modern civilisation which Nazi barbarism effected, and is as important for assessing such processes as the rejection and exposure of nationalist arguments.

Those who prepared and carried out population transfer measures in the specific historical context of World War II did not, and did not want to, commit 'genocide' against the Germans, as a significant portion of the Sudeten Germans still believes today. To label population transfer as genocide is to place the motives and moral grounds of those large-scale criminals who planned and carried out genocide on a par with those who attempted to stabilise peace in a ruined region charged with hatred. That such a comparison is not new is illustrated by correspondence between Herbert Marcus and Martin Heidegger in August 1947 and January 1948. Questioned about the reason for his silence about the Holocaust and his support for the Nazi cause in the 1930's, Heidegger equated the behaviour of the Allies with Hitler's Germany, replying that one need only exchange the word 'East Germans' for 'Jews'; the only difference, he noted, was that the Nazis tried to cover up their bloody crimes, while the Allies acted openly. Marcuse replied that the logic of Heidegger's arguments implied that extermination camps such as Buchenwald or Auschwitz should be preserved for 'East Germans' and only then would accounts be settled, and he continues: "If the difference between humanity and inhumanity is reduced to this omission, then this is the fault, within world history, of the Nazi system..." [Farías 1989: 374]

This dispute also points up a fundamental moral distinction. There is an essential difference between the loss of property, which is very painful to the individual, and the loss of life or health, which cannot be remedied whatsoever.

The core of the problem in the discourse taking place within the democratic spectrum on both sides rests, in my opinion, on the fact that German policy and discussion, besides pursuing the legitimate goal of pointing out the actual hardships of its civilian population during and after the war, is generally concerned with applying today's moral and legal standards to the conflict constellations which arose in the immediate post-war period. The question which is overlooked in this perspective is whether a realistic alternative to collective punishment existed, given the civilisatory breach caused by the Nazis' racist war of extermination and their occupation and *Umvolkungspolitik*. This question is not answered by distancing oneself from nationalism and lumping together what were obviously war crimes, violent acts of revenge against German civilians at the end of the war, and the decision to implement transfer – which was intended not only as punishment, but also aimed at curbing violence and securing future peace – under the term expulsion and declaring it to be an indisputable injustice. The minimal requirement for moral plausibility in consideration of the special dimensions of Nazi crimes in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe would be that German politics would neither permit legal claims or one-sided revisionist measures against the countries it had formerly invaded, nor give the impression that it intended to lay such claims. Since in fact neither the majority of Germans – including the large majority of Sudeten Germans long since integrated into Federal Germany – nor the majority of the political parties have any interests

in this direction, negotiations to date have suffered under a specific deformation, reflecting the constellation of power in the Bonn coalition and the particular weight of the CSU until September 1998, rather than the general state of consciousness in Germany.

What stands out on the Czech side (at least in the key official statements of politicians and the Constitutional Court), is that by insisting on the relationship between cause and effect and by references to the decisions reached by the victorious Allies, the Czech side neglects the assessment of two important points: first, its own share in the realisation of the transfer measures and second, the actions and laws of the post-war period on the basis of current moral and legal standards proclaimed in the modern Czech constitution.

The readiness to take up such a task, as I have pointed out above, constitutes the essential moral difference between a state which recognises that it is prepared, in an extreme situation, to override norms that it otherwise upholds and a state that will not do so.

This is precisely the point at which a democratic country must prove its interest in not allowing its appropriation of tradition to follow the motto 'my country, right or wrong'. Hannah Arendt, who so compellingly analysed the culpability of the Germans in "total collaboration" with the Nazi regime, remarked in a different context that no state could survive co-operation with a totalitarian state undamaged. The same applies to the state of a population living for a long period under the occupation of a terrorist regime. Referring to this phenomenon is neither tantamount to moralising about history, nor is this a cheap vilification of the actors of that period. On the contrary – only by acknowledging the difficult decisions and dilemmas which politicians and ordinary people faced and how they sometimes failed or suffered the loss of democratic substance, can we find evidence for the renewal of democratic traditions. For all moral judgements about historic processes which are reached today reflect the values and norms which should guide the contemporary political community. To re-fight the moral battles of times past would be absurd. A democrat can be distinguished from a nationalist precisely because he expects, in retrospect, high moral standards not only of his rivals, but also of himself. The recognition that a democratic state, to the extent that it employs the means of an aggressor, loses, in the same measure, its democratic substance, is quite compatible with a fair treatment of the partial failure of one's own democratic elites.

From the point of view of an ongoing development of legal standards and the creation of a higher level of justice for the present and the future, only one conclusion can be reached: There are no just transfers, even if they could be carried out by 'humanitarian means', and even if we can acknowledge that they appeared to be justified to the democratic politicians responsible, in view of the exceptional conditions caused by World War II. President Masaryk also foresaw this long before the monstrous scale of population resettlement during World War II and of forced expulsion resulting from post-war retribution became reality: "The pan-Germans often proposed that significant national minorities be relocated; the example of Zionism and emigration would seem to suggest such a remedy. It is more than doubtful, however, whether it is possible to carry out such an enterprise fairly and without force." [Masaryk 1976: 52]

Masaryk appears to have known that legitimate considerations such as, for example, ensuring peace with the lowest long-term financial and organisational costs, consideration of internal political factors etc., influenced the political decision-making of the political actors who had to make such difficult decisions (and thereby often, of necessity, circumvented the persons who were immediately involved) as much as considerations of

justice. For precisely this reason, decisions which are justified but which reflect interests other than the welfare of those directly affected are not necessarily just for the affected parties. Today, such gaps between conflicting interests are limited by the international commitment to upholding human rights and by increasing pressure to democratically legitimate such decisions.

In Czech politics, the handling of laws pertaining to expropriation, expulsion and amnesty was marked by a defensive position taken up against a threatening avalanche of Sudeten German demands for revision. The many expropriations and transfers of property in former Czechoslovakia between 1938 and 1989 (aryanisation, the nationalisation of large industries by the people's democracy, forced expropriation of property of Germans and Hungarians and of Czech collaborators with the Nazis, total collectivisation under the communists) would have justified a clear discussion by the reinstated people's sovereign after 1989 – i.e., to reject all restitution of property after such a long period. Since this decision was not reached and only communist expropriations after 1948 were declared illegitimate, new legal problems emerged. These manifested themselves, for example, in the fact that Jewish property is not restituted to private individuals, which many Czech politicians consider scandalous because in these cases the return of property is denied due to fear of creating legal precedents that could unleash an avalanche of restitution claims.

The political and moral handling of the decrees is, however, another matter. One of the main pillars of the decrees is an overturning of a basic principle of criminal law – the presumption of innocence. Instead, the accused is charged with proving his innocence. If an analogy comparable to this process in both extent and character is to be found anywhere, it is in the so-called *Spruchkammer* proceedings, which operated during the post-war de-Nazification process in West Germany. These proceedings had a legal basis and their aim was to free Germany from National Socialism. Millions of members of the NSDAP, as well as party officials and functionaries, were divided into five categories according to the seriousness of their complicity. These categories ranged from chief culprits, through party members, down to those acquitted of responsibility.

The advocates of these proceedings countered criticism of the inversion of the assumption of innocence with the argument that Nazi crimes were so evident that there existed a basic (*prima facie*) proof against National Socialism. Anyone who participated in the Nazi regime as a party-member or functionary fell under the likely assumption that he had actively supported National Socialism. While this procedure followed legal form, its initiators were aware that it was a case of combining criminal justice with a political purge. The proceedings focused not on the motivations of and concrete proofs against the accused, but on the deliberate discrimination of a political force that had to suffer the consequences of its self-made fiasco [Friedrich 1994: 137ff]. Here it would be appropriate to ask to what extent the transfer decrees should be primarily regarded not as an instrument of political retaliation through ethnic cleansing in an exceptional situation – in which, as a result of a criminal war and Nazi population policies and the biological radicalisation of pre-existing ethnic conflicts, peaceful co-existence seemed impossible after the war – but rather as a valid, though no longer applicable, element of a democratic legal order based on human rights, as claimed in the Czech Constitutional Court's decision.

It also seems worthwhile to consider the following point: overturning the legal principle of the assumption of innocence is one matter when applied to political movements, which one aims to disband for good reasons, and quite another when applied to an

entire ethnic group. While political groups (parties, movements), despite pressure to adapt under totalitarian conditions, imply the capacity of their members to make a political choice, this is not the case with nationality or ethnicity. The argumentation laid out by the Czech Constitutional Court is hardly adequate for satisfying one's sense of justice: The abandonment of the assumption of innocence for Germans is legitimated with the argument that a German state no longer existed at the end of the war so that the specific status of an individual could only be determined on the basis of national identity. In the very next sentence, the court goes on to construct a correspondence between ethnic group and political convictions, based on the assumption that citizenship in the German Reich implied the obligation to be loyal to the regime [*Constitutional...* 1995: 91]. In view of recent Czech experiences in an authoritarian state, one might expect Czech citizens to realise that, under the conditions found in a totalitarian state, it is impossible to reach a conclusion about individual behaviour or collective persuasion merely on the basis of an individual's citizenship status. The forays into history found in the Constitutional Court's decision focus on justifying the "legality" and "legitimacy" of the laws on expropriation and forced transfer and hardly send positive signals to the innocent people affected by these measures. Nor do they radiate the spirit of humanist ideals and human rights so often cited in the political culture of the Czech Republic. It is possible to agree with the Constitutional Court that the decrees were not a wanton act with respect to their legal form, and that they were sufficiently legitimated after the fact by Parliament, but it is difficult to agree that they represent a sanction that served to "secure the functions and the spirit of human rights and freedoms" [Ibid.: 96].

These differentiations are not merely verbal skirmishes. Law is not identical to justice, but the two cannot be at odds with each other for long in a democratic state.

The arguments presented here reflect only a small segment of German-Czech relations and, within that segment, deal only with certain aspects of the mutual assessment of the most extreme period of German-Czech history.

The moral dissent described here, if it is to be productive, must be linked on both sides to the understanding that the more rigorous one side is in its moral assessment of the behaviour of the other party, the more demanding the opposing party will be in the moral standards it applies to its behaviour and the responsibility for its consequences.

<div align="right">*Translated by Jiří Sirotek, Ondřej Formánek, John Comer*</div>

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Opinions of German Activist Parties in Czechoslovakia 1918-1938

A contribution to the question of Czech-German coexistence
in inter-war Czechoslovakia

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Abstract: Sudeten German activism was formed through co-operation within the system of Czechoslovak democracy. Three Sudeten German parties were engaged in activist politics, despite the fact that many of their expressed convictions contained elements of the anti-democratic thought that was to become the root of National Socialism. The activist political parties, as represented by their leading politicians, accepted the democratic system as the basis of their existence, but the anti-democratic thinking that permeated their views, proved impossible to reconcile with the Czechoslovak notion of democracy. In 1935, among Sudeten Germans there was a tide of feeling of appurtenance to the German nation and widespread dissatisfaction resulting from the impact of the global economic crisis on those regions of Czechoslovakia settled by Germans. This paved the way for Henlein's nationalist party and later Hitler.

The question of the attitudes of Germans in the First Czechoslovak Republic and the development of their status from the time of the Munich Agreement up until their transfer (in the German view expulsion [*Ausseidlung*] or banishment [*Vertreibung*]) has played a sensitive political role in Czech-German relations up until the present day. The call for conciliation, which is not something historically new (it first arose during the time of the Second Czechoslovak Republic [Rataj 1998]), is something that continues to agitate mutual relations.

As far as the First Republic is concerned, the continuing historical-political argument on the issue can be expressed by the question as to how far Czech Germans (as German inhabitants of the Czech lands were known[1]) were prepared – as a result of their status in the state, which they considered to be bad – to participate in the breaking up of the Czechoslovak state. To put it another way, we may ask what kind of society or rather community was demanded by the Germans, who did not become a part of the open Czech society as characterised by K. Popper, and whose constant demand was for isolation from the Czechs.[2]

Masaryk's "Successful political system (…) assumes the consent of the citizens to the main way of political deportment" [Masaryk 1994: 334]. This "consent" is nothing less than a fundamental democratic consensus, the positive attitudes of the citizens to-

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[1]) *Deutschböhmer, Deutschmährer, Deutschschleisier.*

[2]) Seminar held by Sir Karl Popper at the Prague College of the Central European University. Similar demands for isolation were also put forward by Germans in South Tyrol, which was incorporated into Italy after the First World War.

wards the political system and its components as expressed by a political culture enabling the functioning of democratic societies.

The rejection of the overwhelming majority (90%) of the Sudeten Germans of democratic Czechoslovakia after the impact of the global economic depression on these inhabitants itself contains the assumption that the bonds of the German national minority to democratic values were not very strong. There had been no departure from democracy or any inclination towards extremist anti-parliamentarian parties in any of the older democracies with long traditions of parliamentarism. Yet this occurred in Germany and Austria [Berg-Schlosser 1987: 251]. My previous analyses of the functioning of the political system of inter-war Czechoslovakia and particularly the comparison of the Czechoslovak and German political systems [Broklová 1992, 1994a, 1994b, 1995] also legitimise the thesis that, from the point of view of Czech-German coexistence, it was a question of the coexistence of two communities with disparate political cultures and a strong national cleaving tendency founded on the discrepancy of the principles of citizenship and nation. *The cleavage of civil versus national* in Czech-German coexistence also concentrated within itself other, classical Rokkanov cleavages to various extents; the centre versus the periphery, religious versus secular, and town versus country. These basic cleavages and also other discrepancies brought about by them were consensually soluble by the internal resources of the democratic political system of the Czechoslovak Republic. In the small state that was Czechoslovakia, however, the solubility of these cleavages in the context of a democratic system depended on the existence of external democratic environments. The undemocratic inter-war development of the neighbouring countries, however, and the strengthening revisionist policies of a number of them, in particular Germany, directly aspired to this cleaving.

While the problems of the different political cultures of the Czechs and Germans and their circumstances were nothing foreign to the contemporaries of inter-war Czechoslovakia (Josef Holeček [1919], Karel Kramář [Vencovský 1992], Emanuel Rádl [1933, 1935, 1993], T. G. Masaryk [1994 and others], Edvard Beneš [1932], Kamil Krofta [Krofta a Sobota 1937], Emanuel Chalupný [1935] and others), this area of research was quite neglected in later historiographic works, and Czech-German relations were interpreted only as nationalist antipathies. In the study of Czech-German relations, scant attention has been afforded to political culture, the research of which can best answer the question raised above.

The problem of the coexistence of Czechs and Germans calls directly for such kind of analysis: In the period of successful consolidation of the democratic system after the parliamentary elections of 1925, when the majority of German voters (69%) voted for German political parties that had established links with Czechoslovak parties in the first half of the 20th century, German nationalists declared – in a democratic state in which members of all nationalities were considered citizens – that: "We will never recognise the Czechs as masters. We will never consider ourselves slaves in this state." [*Národní...* 1928: 356]. Four years later, as many as 71% of German voters gave their votes to German activist parties. In 1935, two years after Hitler's rise to power in Germany and National Socialist activities among 'Czech Germans', 60% of German voters enabled Henlein's Sudeten German Party, operating in the spirit of National Socialism, to become the most powerful German party. This raises the question of whether German voters' attitudes towards democracy and value orientations met the requirements for acceptance into a democratic society? What led the policies of the activist parties to pay lip-service to

their participation in the legislative, and executive powers? And why did the majority of the German population yield to an ideology emanating and disseminated from Germany?

Political culture expresses the value orientation of the population and its attitudes towards the political system with all its institutions. It is related to the subjective dimension of politics. What then was the political culture of the Sudeten Germans, as they (not entirely truthfully) called themselves? Their rejection of democracy is part of a wider trend, characteristic of the period in which it appeared, during which democracy in Czechoslovakia had reached its zenith. Political culture, according to the majority of analyses, is a decisive factor in the orientation, character and quality of a political system. It was also a significant factor in the development of Czechoslovak democracy. The attempts of democratic politicians, particularly the founder of the state, President T. G. Masaryk, were directed towards building firm foundations for the coexistence of Czechs and Germans in a democratic state. Due to unfavourable developments abroad, in particular the German foreign policy aimed at altering the post-war status quo, in the given twenty-year period these attempts met with failure. The limited time was too short for fundamental changes to occur in the value attitudes towards democracy of both the majority of German politicians and the German population.

The 'marriage of reason', as the period of activist politics in Czechoslovakia is often termed, particularly in the initial period, was analogous to the attitude of the German Weimar politicians – labelled 'Republicans by reason' – towards the Republic. The Germans, including the activists, changed little in their emerging negative position towards the Czechoslovak state, as determined by their political culture (in particular, anti-democratic thinking). The Czechs, who had founded a democratic state, held onto their conception because of their political culture. However, it was the anti-democratic thinking found in the sources driving the activities of the activist parties, which became part of Nazi ideology.

From the large quantity of source material studied, two statements most aptly characterise the substantive Czech and German attitudes towards democracy: one from a German at the turn of the 1920's , and one from a Czech at the end of the following decade. On July 25th, 1919, Professor Robert Mayr-Harting, a leading Christian-Socialist politician, wrote to a Prague German newspaper an article entitled "The First Step". The article was intended to provide a stimulus to Czech government circles to establish contact with the Germans. In it the author interprets their view of the promise of equal rights for the Germans: "But what do they mean by this? It appears, again and again (...) only the equal rights of individual citizens (...) and now there are not to be equal rights of nationalities, but only of citizens with different languages? On this foundation, peace between Germans and Czechs can never, ever be established. Therefore, to put it briefly: The Germans want to be loyal citizens of this state, but only at the price of recognition of our nationality as equal within the state. As equals among equals, they request political, national and cultural self-administration. As domiciled citizens on land they have long since held, they request full political freedom in their historical areas of inhabitancy. And with this, everything has been said." [*Lebensbilder...* 1981: 269-270.]

According to Ralf Dahrendorf, the citizen, as a social result of modernisation, expressing the historic transformation of feudal society with its patrimonial order into a modern society, had not yet superseded the subject in German society. The recipient of social rights and responsibilities in the German Weimar constitution was not the citizen

(as in the majority of democratic institutions) but the German (with ethnic bonds). While the citizen did not suffer from the idea of having second class people around him , the very concept of the *Herrenvolk* gave rise to the idea that other races were inferior. In the German system, the citizen had a deeply disturbing and destructive effect [Dahrendorf 1968: 73,83,84]. This very aspect of a person, a citizen with natural rights, is prominent in the speech (the second of our two compared statements) given by the President, Dr. E. Beneš, on January 15th, 1938 to Czech students at Academic House in Prague. It was headed "The strength of our democracy springs from the strongest national traditions" [*Venkov* 16. 1. 1938: 1]: "Be very critical and wary of everything that comes to you in today's disrupted world from left and right as Messianic theories or Messianic solutions to the troubles of today. Beware of blind admiration, but also be wary of blind judgement and criticism."

"The spiritual foundation of our democracy is based then on one philosophical and ethical principle: the subject of political life here is man, the individual in his humanity, and not party, class nor even just nation, that is to say no collective (...) I have always stood against that basically materialistic sociological theory that creates from various social collectives independent social organisms, set above and prioritised before the individual. Therefore, I am also against all so-called totalitarianism in societal activities, economics or politics today."

Each statement expresses a different political culture: the first a standpoint derived from the collective principle, regarded in expert literature as anti-democratic. The second corresponds to the classic concept of democracy as a historical configuration derived from the principle of citizenship, from natural human rights. Each of these standpoints advocated by representatives of different nations, Czechs and Germans, who lived side by side in a state that was regarded a historical-geographical (the Kingdom of Lands of the Czech Crown) and economic unit with one of the oldest borders in Europe, and which was respected also by the British representatives at the peace conference of 1919.

In a period of two decades, at the start of which Mayr-Harting's article appeared, and at the end of which Beneš's speech was given, in policy statements from German activist parties aimed at party development – where some influence of democracy might be expected, for example, in the party press, we find proof that, while a certain change occurred in the practical forms of political coexistence of Czechs and Germans in the most propitious period, there was no change (and there could not be, because it concerned deep roots) in political culture on the German side during this short period. This political culture was distinguished mainly by anti-democratic thinking, which incorporated a negative value orientation and attitude towards democracy. Under the Habsburg monarchy, this political culture was historically reinforced by the fact that there were fewer Germans than Slavs in the state.

This is not to presume that differences in world-view need necessarily be a cause of conflict between those who advocate them, or that such views should make their coexistence impossible. They are, however, a form in which conflicts may occur in troubled times. For opposing or enemy forces they can be appealed to and misused. The foreign enemy in Nazi Germany, attempting to dismantle the Czechoslovak state, in which varied political cultures were represented, had the ground prepared. The conciliation between Czechs and Germans that arose in Czechoslovakia in the short period of European stability was not an expression of change in either German political culture or the activist part

of the German political spectrum. Agreement to co-operate was reached only in the legislative body and in the government coalitions, without the parties foregoing their opinions on society.

There is no room here for an analysis of the anti-democratic ideas that developed in (not only) the German environment from the end of the 19th century. On the basis of documentation of the activities of the German political parties subscribing to activism in the First Czechoslovak Republic, I will try to characterise the anti-democratic thinking and also partially outline the anti-democratic thinking that was the outlet for anti-democratic values and attitudes. I think it useful to at least name the basic terms, which have of course a wider context: the people/nation, solidarity, nation, organism, decision, new policy, new freedom, National Socialism (*Volk, Gemeinschaft, Nation, Organismus, Entscheidung, die neue Politik, die neue Freiheit, der nationale Sozialismus*), and to refer to the basic work of Kurt Sontheimer [1983]. The wider circumstances will be interpreted on the basis of an analysis of party texts and statements.

Among both activist and negativist Germans, the anti-democratic political culture with anti-democratic concepts remained the same, connected to a deeper level – that of a political score [Rohe 1990], and derived from traditions associated with the population's way of thinking and living in previous centuries. The documents of three activist political parties of the period will be examined to see how they accord with or diverge from the Czech democratic context of the day.

Social Democracy in the Czechoslovak Republic

The ethnic concept of nation (as opposed to the Western concept of the political nation that emerged in the anti-feudal revolution) and democracy

Josef Seliger, leader the German Social Democratic Party that was established after the struggle for self-determination had been lost, had been carried on the wave of pan-German patriotism at the outset of the First World War. On August 6th, 1914, an article by Seliger appeared in the newspaper *Freiheit*. The article titled *Das Einige Deutschland* (The United Germany) was in line with the war aims of Germany. After the declaration of the Czechoslovak State, Seliger insisted on the right of self-determination of the Sudeten Germans, despite the fact that U.S. President Wilson had not called for self-determination for national minorities, but for the suppressed nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Bolsheviks had also requested the right of self-determination for the nations suppressed by Czarist Russia. In the name of a provincial government, on November 4th, 1918, Seliger attempted to reach an agreement with the Czechs on the ethnic division of the Czech lands. Due to the incompatibility of legal opinions, the hearings were dismissed. The representatives of the German Social Democrats, among them Josef Seliger representing the district administrator R. Lodgman, participated in the secessional movement of the German population. This was mainly concerned with an attempt to participate in the elections for the parliament of the German-Austrian Republic (the Austrian lands after the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian empire), although the politicians there had not reckoned with elections on Czechoslovak soil. The ideas that the Social Democrats proposed in their programme were in contradiction not only with the ideas for building a democratic Czechoslovak state, but also with contemporary opinions on how the state should be conceived. According to this programme, the Czechoslovak Republic was a

creation of entente imperialism[3] and the aim of the party was to overthrow the counter-revolutionary nature of this state. *The aim of the Social Democrats was the victory of Socialism; democracy and parliamentarism was for them the protection of the bourgeoisie against the dictatorship of the proletariat. [Sozialdemokrat* 18. 10. 1935: 1]

The Czechoslovak state as a bourgeois, i.e. a formal democracy. The priority of supporting parliamentary democracy in the face of National Socialism

Despite its proclaimed programme and initial negative attitude, the party eventually developed a positive position towards the Czechoslovak state, which for them represented, in the mid-1930's, a "bourgeois, i.e. formal democracy", which the Social Democratic Party originally had in its manifesto before the First World War and which was to become the basis of the changeover to social democracy [*Lebensbilder...* 1981, 2: 194]. In national affairs, this party was less radical than the non-Marxist parties. Some German politicians considered it indifferent to nations [*Sudetendeutschtum...* 1936: 36-37]. Its isolation from the other parties was regarded as a weakening of a unified German policy.

After the parliamentary elections of 1929, the German Social Democrats entered the Udržal government. Their leading politician, Dr. Ludwig Czech, became Minister of Social Affairs. In further governments he served as Minister for Public Works and Minister for Public Health and Physical Education up to April 11th, 1938 (he handed in his resignation on March 25th, i.e. six months before the end of the First Republic).

In 1935, the share of votes of the German Social Democratic Party fell to the benefit of Henlein's Sudeten German Party, though less dramatically than that of the other activist parties. Their support fell by almost half, from 6.9% to 3.6%. Henlein characteristically opened the election campaign "as a Saar plebiscite, a plebiscite of appurtenance towards either this state or Germany" [*Sozialdemokrat* 4. 12. 1935]. In the spirit of National Socialism he worked on the political sentiment of the German population and used its nationalism as the most significant element. The anti-democratic thinking of the time was not rational in its reactions, but leant on concepts such as *Volk, nation, solidarity* and so forth, which, like the entire German political language and thinking, acquired a magical content. And there led the easiest path to influencing the electorate.

Henlein's party, in the gradual pursuit of German voters, heavily emphasised and repeated in party literature the thesis that the Germans had seen an economic rise "in neighbouring Germany since Hitler came to power in 1933" [*Náčrt...* 1996: 17]. This does not correspond to developments in Germany, where the crisis had already passed its deepest point before Hitler, during the time of Chancellor Brüning, nor do contemporary newspaper reports (the *Sozialdemokrat*) confirm that the German population, suffering an economic crisis in the Czechoslovak Republic, could see affluence across the border in Hitler's Germany.

A certain hesitation by the Social Democrats with regard to their relationship with democracy is evident in the argument that occurred in the fall of that year as to whether dictatorship of the proletariat or mere democracy was a better basis for the realisation of socialism. The solution was influenced by the standpoint of the Communist *Internationale*, which gave priority to the maintenance of bourgeois democracy rather than National

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[3]) That is, the result of the will of the Allied powers at the Versailles peace conference.

Socialism. Also in this respect, a declaration of German Social Democracy in the Czechoslovak Republic was approved.

The aim of the party was therefore to "maintain this state as the last democratic bastion in fascisised Europe, to maintain it as a democratic state for the workers until the fascist twilight of the Gods". The defence of democracy (including Czechoslovak democracy) became the interest of all European proletariats [*Sozialdemokrat* 18. 10. 1935: 1]. The defence of freedom within a democratic republic was for the Social Democrats the defence of the freedom of the working class to the extent that it was possible in the republic. Therefore, they defended democracy against neighbouring and internal fascism. They considered it the fulfilment of their role in the particular political situation.

The attitudes adopted by the German Social Democrats in the mid-1930's are best observed in the resolutions of their conference in the autumn of 1935. They declared support for democracy as a better system than fascism in the name of freedom and peace.

The differences between two political cultures, and the demand for equal rights of nationalities

Of all the German activist parties, the German Social Democrats understood best the differences between the two political cultures: "Czechoslovak democracy and German totalitarianism mix like fire and water." They perceived the absurdity of an ideology founded on the doctrine of race, a pagan cult, nationalist ideas and a class ideology standing in contrast to the real political life of society in Czechoslovakia, which was founded on a share in government [*Sozialdemokrat* 3. 12. 1935: 1]. They did not, however, understand the antipathy of the cultures enough to amend their *demand for the equality of nations* within the Czechoslovak Republic. This was formally sufficiently close to their class ideology, which also concerned *not the freedom of the individual (the citizen) but the liberation of a collective (a class)*.

War and peace

Other articles published in the newspaper *Sozialdemokrat*, such as *'Die Mission unseres Staates'*, indicate the ability of the Social Democrat publicists to differentiate between various doctrines: Beneš's peace policy speech was for them proof that, for the Czechoslovak president, the purpose of all history was continual progress towards humanity. "The struggle for peace is a struggle for democracy, a struggle against crisis." In contrast to this, anti-democratic doctrines explained *war as an expression of the dynamism of society, as an element of the expansion of life, as a struggle against the stagnation of life*. They also placed in the forefront the old concept of the *Herrenvolk* and the *Herrenrasse*, the concept of the pure race and racism. Accordingly, mankind was divided into *inferior and superior nations*. Superior nations were accorded greater rights and war was seen as the natural instrument for achieving the greater rights of the nation and the state. In Europe at that time, certain doctrines viewed war in this way, especially those of authoritarian regimes. Dr. Beneš also took a stand on this issue stating that there exists no pure race, no *Herrenvolk* nor *Herrenrasse*. The headline used by the *Sozialdemokrat* for the above-mentioned article was an expression of Social Democracy's understanding of Czechoslovakia's message in the given situation [*Sozialdemokrat* 24. 11. 1935: 1], which, however, the other Sudeten Germans did not follow.

The organic concept of democracy. The constitution of nationalities as subjects of constitutional law. Mechanical concepts.

While understanding the sense of the stability of voters being shared between political parties and the necessity for both German and Czech democrats to attempt to maintain nationalist peace between Czechs and Germans [Ibid.: 5], Wenzel Jaksch reiterated the organic concept of democracy. The fundamental principle of this concept was the demand for the *"constitution of nationalities as [equal] subjects of constitutional law (...) Instead of the mechanical concept* (as anti-democratic thought termed the majority principle in democracy), *which aspires to the equal rights of all citizens"* [Krofta a Sobota 1937: 47-48. Not italicised in the original]. According to Jaksch, this theory was formulated in old Austria in the interest of the German nationals, who did not form a majority in the country, but played a privileged role due to prerogatives in administration.

In Jaksch's speech, and even more so in the writings of the Social Democratic press of the period, perceptible signs of loyal attitudes towards Czechoslovak democracy can be found. But there is still an apparent attempt to adapt the concept of democracy to anti-democratic thinking (mechanical and organic concepts), which was to a certain extent shared by the Social Democrats. It is an attempt in quite a pure form to infiltrate the collective into democracy as a subject, in this case the nation instead of the citizen, and thus to solve the problem of the 'mechanical' majority in democracy, which the German nation felt threatened by under the Habsburg monarchy as it did in Czechoslovakia. This collectivism and the criticism of liberal democracy as "mechanical and quantitative" [Mussolini 1935: 82], was at the beginning of the century intrinsic to socialism, also as a corporate principle, in consequence leading towards fascism and National Socialism. It was part of the anti-democratic trends of 20th century Europe, whether right-wing totalitarianism (Nazism) or left wing (Communism) [Talmon 1965: 1-13].

The Swiss model. The civic principle and the national principle

The appeal to Switzerland and the spirit of the Swiss constitution in the case of the Teplice plan of action of the Social Democrats represented a misunderstanding of the Swiss state and the Swiss constitution [Broklová 1994b], and was justifiably perceived as evidence of the nationalism of the German Social Democrats. It is extraordinary with what tenacity the 'Swiss model' continually appeared in contemporary publications that claimed to be expert, without the verification of basic facts. In the case of Switzerland there was no successful solution to the coexistence of a number of nationalities, as Jaksch stated, but rather a political agreement between cantons. The language question was solved by giving equal rights to the languages. The nation was Swiss (already at a time when Czech politicians took it as a model), followed by the citizenship of individual cantons, not individual nations. The boundaries of nationality cut across the cantons. All Swiss citizens (and not collectives) enjoy equal political rights.

Jaksch judged that "the Germans have little prospects of such important questions being addressed from the point of view of their interests. Therefore, it will not be possible to abandon the future coexistence of Czechs and Germans to the *mere mechanical application of democratic precepts...*" [author's italics]. He sees the solution as a historical task: "Much depends on whether the Czech nation succeeds in rising above the pre-war situation of the 'national' enemy, the German, and to think and behave as a nation state." [Krofta a Sobota 1937: 54].

Here Jaksch has neglected the concentrated efforts of the Czech democratic politicians, particularly T. G. Masaryk, to include the Germans in the executive, even when they did not have the necessary share of the vote after the parliamentary elections of May 1935, and the attempt to make them fellow citizens in the open Czechoslovak democratic society [Broklová 1998]. His way of thinking rendered him incapable of appreciating this fact.

Bund der Landwirte (The Agricultural Union)

Self-determination and proportional representation in the executive and administration

Like the Social Democrats, this German party also called for self-determination in 1920. At variance with them, the party also called for proportional representation in the Czech government and public service, for a revision of laws and for self-administration of the municipalities in individual administrative regions.

The opposition of the BdL to "the method of government and administration here". The priority of the ethnic collective above the freedom of the individual

In the German parliamentary club, its first chairman, Franz Krepek, who had a good relationship with President Masaryk, succeeded in gaining allies for the idea of an active policy. The Member of Parliament for the *Bund der Landwirte*, Slavist Franz Spina, was convinced that the Czechs would never give up the border regions they had acquired through the victorious powers.[4] He avowed himself to the new state with the firm intention of winning, by collaboration, a place for the German minority on the political scene. Nevertheless, he expressed opposition to "the method of government and administration here". The German agricultural representatives demanded for individual Germans and for the entire German population such status in the state, according to democratic principles, as they required to maintain their life [Scholz 1928: 18]. The peace pact, however, offerred states the protection of members of minorities as state citizens and not of minorities as collectives. The prioritising of the ethnic collective above the freedom of the individual in a democratic society, which was manifest in all of the German activists, is part of anti-democratic thinking and is to be found in all the policy documents of this party too.

Appurtenance to the German nation

The appurtenance to the German nation felt also by Franz Spina was natural, although at the time it was an impediment to incorporation into the Czechoslovak political nation: "We really feel like citizens of a great sixty million-strong nation, since we are joined to these people by language and culture, which is a requisite for integration and a characteristic part of human civilisation..." [Scholz 1928: 18].

The United Parliamentary Club. Political parties

The very existence of the United Parliamentary Club, of which Franz Spina was vice-chairman, was, in the initial period of the state, an expression of the will of German politicians not to recognise the representation of the German people by political parties. It was an attempt by German politicians at the unified representation of the German popu-

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[4] The border regions of the Czech Lands belonged to the Czech Kingdom. From the 13th century onwards they were settled by German colonists on the invitation of Czech kings.

lation. The lack of faith in parliamentary representation was so marked that the dominant opinion among the German farmers was that the BdL, negotiating with the government (at the end of 1919), represented not all the farmers, but only those who were organised in the Union [*Deutscher...* 24. 12. 1919 according to *Sozialdemokrat* 3. 1. 1920: 1]. K. Henlein presented an analogous opinion fifteen years later, when he voiced the thesis that Czech farmers had different interests to those of the German farmers.

The right to self-determination of nations within the state

On November 18, 1925, in a newly-elected Parliament, F. Spina called for the right to self-determination of nations within the state. However, several months later, on the basis of his activist thinking, he was prepared to show his loyalty to the state as a future minister. It is difficult to reconcile both principles, because, if the Germans were not to accept Masaryk's proposal of self-determination within Czechoslovakia, the realisation of the right of self-determination would mean the break-up of the state. Temporarily, however, the willingness to share in the executive contributed to the stability of the democratic regime.

Share in Government

From 1926 until the spring of 1938, German politicians shared in government and executive power. The internal politics of the state thus gained a new firm footing, with both economic and political stability. President Masaryk referred to the creation of the Czech-German coalition as a historic moment. The Germans regarded their entry into the government as an opportunity to make joint decisions on their own fate and improve their lot. Spina was the author of the opinion that the Germans should attune themselves to the Czechoslovak state.

The arguments of the negativists[5]

Spina evidently achieved his greatest successes in his promotion of activist politics. He himself regarded negativism as sterile in principle, but sometimes employed the arguments of the negativists to bring activism to the Czechs. The main obstacle to a settlement between the Czechs and Germans Spina saw in the "pernicious, petty and, precisely because of its pettiness, exasperating, *pin-pricking* policy" [Scholz 1928: 179]. The activist parties and their representatives in government were soon confronted with the most difficult problems of internal politics. With the outbreak of the world economic crisis a period of dangerous developments began. Poverty and unemployment, particularly in the German areas with its predominant secondary export industry, led to tremors in internal politics. The activist parties were also affected. Spina tried to ensure that activism did not collapse under the weight of these problems.

Konrad Henlein's Movement. The nation as the agent of history. National solidarity

In October 1933 Konrad Henlein's *Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront* was formed as a new collective political party, though it's name gave the appearance of it not being a party but a political movement. The fact that Henlein named his party a 'movement' was exactly in accordance with anti-democratic thinking and that of Hitler. Like most conservative ideologists of the time, Hitler saw the nation as the *agent of history*. The nation

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[5]) The German negativist parties rejected any kind of co-operation with Czechoslovak political parties.

rather than the state was the basis in anti-democratic thought. The state was only the external organisation of the nation. The life will of the nation in its political form was concentrated in a movement, a party. Hitler preferred the term movement, since he wanted to distinguish his party from the 'systemic parties' (i.e. parties connected to a democratic system) of the German Weimar Republic [Sontheimer 1983: 137-138]. Likewise Henlein. Only in 1935 was the *Sudetendeutsch Heimatfront* (SHF) renamed as a party, so that it could participate in parliamentary elections. Unlike other politicians of his leaning, Franz Spina rejected the new party. He rightly feared that the party would find itself under Hitler's thumb and foresaw catastrophic developments for Germany and the Sudeten Germans. He was driven by the idea that he had to do something to save the democratic traditions of the Sudeten Germans. In 1935, after unsuccessful negotiations between the *Bund der Landwirte* and the SHF, during the pre-election campaign the SHF declared itself as the only party that could solve the problem of the second liberation of the peasantry. It also asserted that: "The problem of the peasant can only be solved by national solidarity." [*Deutsche...* 2. 4. 1935: 2]. And that, in the Czechoslovak state, Germans could not settle the interests of individual groups, since they did not have power in their hands. It was not German national solidarity that contributed chiefly and decisively to finding solutions, but rather the Czech parties. According to the SHF, analogous difficulties did not occur to the same extent in a purely national (not multinational) state. The main political course of action offered by anti-democratic thought had been formulated. Now it was only a matter of whether the electorate would accept it.

As opposed to *national solidarity (Volksgemeinschaft)*, which was the aim of Henlein's party, the *Bund der Landwirte* emphasised that "in every nation the only basis on which national solidarity can be built" is the peasant estate, which firmly maintains the independence of its political formation. Both parties, then, were interested in the realisation of *"Sudeten German national solidarity"*. This very fact is significant from the point of view of the function of political culture in the defection of activist voters and later also politicians to the platform of Henlein's party. The German agrarian newspaper had already distinguished this, when it wrote that the SHF's former allies from the *Bund der Landswirte* could, for this reason, join with them and now fight against the BdL by the foulest means [Ibid.: 3].

The united Sudeten German front

On April 5th, 1935 the slogan "Peasant beware!" appeared in the German agrarian newspaper. The author warned against the belief "that a golden age will begin for (...) Sudeten Germans with the realisation of the united Sudeten German front." Despite all the fervent and fiery phrases, recognition of the actual conditions should remain decisive for the tactics of the Sudeten Germans [*Deutsche...* 5. 4. 1935: 3].

Priorities: The peasant and the German. The German and the peasant

On May 19th, 1935 an election proclamation was published, which defended the *Bund der Landwirte* with an emphasis on the peasant class: "The freedom of the peasant is the freedom of the nation (*Volk*), the freedom of the homeland." The modest promises of the BdL stand in contrast to Henlein's promise that he would do everything that needed to be done. Elsewhere is quoted Spina's opinion, which corresponds with Masaryk's idea at the beginning of the state, that the same nationalist clashes would be carried over into clashes between classes and social groups: "the national problem is first

and foremost social and economic! This means: First and foremost you are a peasant, a worker, a businessman, an employee, etc., and only then a German. Konrad Henlein, on the other hand, says: "You are first and foremost a German and you must try to remain a German! Only then are you a peasant, a worker, a businessman, an employee, etc." [*Deutsche...* 19. 5. 1935: 1]. This quotation can be regarded as evidence of Spina's real policy, which applied German agrarian activism. Interests could be represented in a democratic concept in Parliament and in government. Henlein's party, however, which eventually enticed the BdL voters over to its side, wanted in its anti-democratic thinking to represent the nation as a whole.

The populist collectivist programme

Attempts at an active policy representing the interests of the peasant class, however, found fewer and fewer adherents. Compared to 1925, when the German agrarian party held 24 seats in Parliament, their number fell to five after the elections in 1935. The other activist parties fared no better. From this time on these parties were regarded as cleavage parties. They did not have a programme that could stand up against the populist collectivist programme of Henlein's Sudeten German Party, which proclaimed their demands aloud in terms that were closer to their way of thinking.

The end of activism

On March 16th, 1938 it was decided at a meeting of the BdL leadership in Prague that the party would leave the headquarters of the German activist parties. Minister Spina, who shortly thereafter tendered his resignation, was rebuked for not representing the national interests of the Sudeten Germans with sufficient energy.

"The organic coexistence of equal persons and nations"

A contribution from BdL representative G. Hacker to a publication issued by K. Krofta and E. Sobota in 1937 [Krofta and Sobota 1937], is noteworthy with regard to the use of terminology. It dealt with German farmers and the nationality question. Democracy defined as the "organic coexistence of equal persons and nations, responsibly led by their men, the best of their time" [Ibid.: 18] does not reflect the formal principles of the structure of this arrangement of society. It is a fabricated definition: no division of power (the totalitarian state in Friedrich Georg Jünger's theory rejected the division of power [Sontheimer 1983: 209]) – no sovereignty of the people, nothing of the principle of appointment by elections, but the application of some sort of leadership principle (even though Hans Kelsen considered the absence of a leadership class as a positive sign of democracy [Ibid.: 221]. The opportunist use of the term democracy is evident at a time when even dictators declared themselves for democracy (Mussolini). The emphasis on organic coexistence is reminiscent of the concept of the organic (*das Organische*) in anti-democratic thinking. The equal coexistence of people and nations is brought together by the application of democratic principles in society and between states. The coexistence of equal people and nations, by which Hacker defines democracy, pushes the meaning of democracy towards National Socialism. In his logic the equality of nations is slipped into the definition. According to National Socialism, all the resources of the state serve the nation *(Volk), the individual is transient (impermanent), while the nation remains, and the idea of humanity is at base an excuse for weak nations* [Ibid.: 138].

The question of nationality

Hacker considered the question of nationality the most pressing problem of Czechoslovak democracy [Krofta and Sobota 1937: 19]. According to Hacker, placing emphasis on the connection between the Sudeten Germans and one of the largest European nations, "our state shows its abuse of this problem in excessive dependence on political situations abroad". Some Czech circles live "under the influence of a *fallacious idea of the German peril* [authors italics] – which they themselves helped to create step by step - as if it were really to happen one day" [Ibid.: 22]. This dismissal of the German peril is contradicted by certain realities of the time: on May 2nd, 1935 the German Ministry of War completed a study titled *"Schulung"* (education), which deals with a plan of attack against the Czechoslovak Republic. On June 24th, 1937 the German war ministry published a directive for united war preparations, in which the possibility of a preventative war against Czechoslovakia was also discussed [Ibid.: 22].

The closed German society in the Czechoslovak state

The preservation of living space for a numerically weaker nation [Ibid.: 20] (by which is meant the German minority in Czechoslovakia) was in reality the constantly repeated demand for a closed German society within the Czechoslovak state, to which the Czechs would not have access. This measure was not compatible with the open democracy of Czechoslovakia.

The equal rights of nations and citizens. Collective rights

The interpretation of equality in a democracy as the equal right to hold official offices according to nationality, etc., is a formal assent to democracy. It is, however, a misinterpretation of the democratic principle of equal rights as equal opportunities for all citizens, not collectives, and the principle of proportional elections, which was to ensure a significant political current in the population's participation in the legislative bodies.[6]

The opinion that democracy would be led out of the crisis by the application of the principle of practical equal rights of nations, within Czechoslovakia of course, and not between states, was a result of the traditional German emphasis on collective rights (in the 19th century H. Treitschke[7] had called for equal rights for the working class).

The postulation that Czechoslovakia should be an example of a *perfect democracy* [Ibid.: 21] is reminiscent of the idealistic demands of the critics of the German Weimar Republic (*Besserwisser*) on democracy, which could not be fulfilled and which led to its demise.

The unification of the European nations. The end of the nation state

According to Hacker, "our state has a vocation (...) to (...) lead the path to the unification of the European nations." This call, too, for a regionalised, unified Europe belongs to the tradition of anti-democratic ideas about the arrangement of the continent, which was to ensure the hegemony of the German nation. It was an idea that the era of the nation state was gone, that a new era must be hoped for, in which the nations would create the foundation of a new European state system (a system of states) [Ibid.: 21].

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[6]) Proportionality as a desirable political principle of representation was laid down by Victor Considérant in 1846.

[7]) Heinrich Treitschke 1834-1896, German publicist and historian.

The national party

"The Farmers' Union is no less national than any other national party" and "it does not, one way or another, put regional interests before those of the nation." [Ibid.: 23]. This portion of Hacker's contribution is a defence of the *Bund der Landwirte*, because, in the anti-democratic concept of the nation, parties and classes *represented a factor acting against the unity of the nation*. Characteristic for the anti-democratic movement, however, was the emphasis on peasant interests.

The German Christian-Social People's Party

The German

The Christian Socialists felt the struggle for self-determination to be an unimaginably painful part of their political existence [*Lebensbilder*... 1981, 4: 268]. When it became evident to them that their attempts were in vain, Mayr-Harting formulated conditions for the loyalty of the Germans to the Czechoslovak state, which were previously referred to. His *German* is not the citizen of modern history, but merely part of a nation. As such, he requests the recognition of the German nation as equal within the state, i.e. a right for a collective. Mayr-Harting's *domiciled citizen*, whose characteristic is his residence on the land, and not a claim for civil rights, requests "political freedom in all his historic areas of inhabitancy..." [*Lebensbilder*... 1976, 4: 269-270]. From other demands it is evident that these areas were to be closed to the penetration of Czech elements (as with the penetration of Italians to South Tyrol).

In contrast to the other political parties, anti-Semitism (against Jewish hegemony) was characteristic of this party's programme. The party also persisted in anti-Czech attitudes and their aim was to gain national self-administration. Here again the aforementioned Swiss model and canton system is repeated. It should also not be neglected that autonomy was for the German National Socialists a step towards self-determination, as declared later particularly by Hitler.

A new stage can be noted in the development of the Christian Socialists in connection with the emergence of Henlein's movement and subsequent party. At the same time, the party felt threatened by Henlein's slogan *'positive christianity'* and wanted to settle the score with Henlein's party. In the fall of 1935 the Christian Socialists declined to cooperate with the German nationalist parties in the new parliament. They expressed a wish to remain independent and did not want to sacrifice their claim to totality. The persecution of the Catholics in Germany, dating from the fall of the *Zentrum* Catholic party, evidently played a role in this policy. Because of this, the Christian Socialists' co-operation with Henlein was unsustainable in terms of both internal and foreign policy.

The rights of democracy

In 1934, we can see Mayr-Harting's critical attitude to democracy in the Czechoslovak Republic. He judged that it was a situation close to a dictatorship of parties, to an illusory democracy (*Scheindemokratie*): "democracy without discussion, a democracy that is no longer a democracy. (...) Therefore, we must fight for a true democracy, because only that offers us the security necessary for the achievement of our aims. Let it be said clearly once and for all: We are dependent only on ourselves" [Mayr-Harting 1934: 13]. Once again an attitude not dissimilar to that of the critics of parliamentary democracy in Weimar Germany.

The text of Mayr-Harting's 1934 pamphlet "The Path and the Goals of Sudeten German Politics" (*Weg und Ziele der Sudetendeutschen Politik*) offers a great deal of evidence of anti-democratic thinking, which was obviously in contradiction with his declared attempts at democracy. Here there is also a proposal for the simplification of the party system by means of *supporting the class notion in the interest of uniting the nation* (which is divided by political parties). By class is meant class according to profession and not a one-sided representation of interests [Ibid.: 18]. Mayr-Harting does not demand the dissolution of parties, which he regards as part of the construction of authoritarian systems, but his demand is still anti-democratic. It was precisely on this that authoritarian and fascist regimes were founded. In a democracy, the founding principle of a political party is political and not class based. Integration must take place within a universally political, open principle. The demand for the representation of classes is an attempt to slip the pre-modernisation situation into conditions in which it acts anti-democratically. Politics in this concept is not understood as a conflict of interests, but as a tight collaboration between existing parties (in the simplified system) in the nationalist respect. According to the Christian Socialists, "It is on any account the only possible path to the *political unification of the Sudeten Germans*" [authors italics.] [Ibid.: 19]. Unification was to be carried out by the Christian Socialists. In reality this anti-democratic idea paved the way first for Henlein and then for Hitler.

A mixture of principles emerging from the Czech constitution and the precepts of Christian Socialism forms Hilgenreiner's "Policies of the German Christian Socialist People's Party of the Czechoslovak Republic." *Freedom and rights* are demanded for collectives. Like the other critics of democracy in the inter-war period, they demand *true* democracy and *true* democrats. "The renewal of the class order is a social aim" is the content of a Papal Bull of May 15th, 1931. The encyclical is directed against an "unnatural, violent estate in society: (...) members of the social organism group [themselves] together in the form of the ranks to which they belong, not according to whether they belong to one side or another of the labour market, but rather according to their social profession. Because just as local (neighbouring) appurtenance entices people into a community, membership of the same profession makes it possible to amalgamate classes according to profession or class-occupational corporations." [Hilgenreiner 1935: 21-22.] This demand is directed against the structure of modern society and its impact on the political system is an expression of anti-democratic thinking. It suits down to the ground the Christian-Socialist notions of society: the individual of the liberal labour market has to be firmly placed within the class hierarchy. This demand consequently turns against the class parties if they are not only economic, but also want to act in politics. "It must be the whole nation. Only parties that include the whole nation, all classes, only national parties (*Volksparteien*) can be political parties." [Ibid.: 21-22]. Instead of this, as in the Weimar Republic, those parties that were not capable of creating a democratic policy for the whole of society created room here and there for Hitler's and Henlein's parties.

If we are to assume that the population paid attention to these statements of the Christian-Socialist politicians, it must have devalued everything that the Germans had thus far undertaken in the state, including participation in government and activist politics, and consequently resulting in a shift in votes in favour of the party of Henlein, who appeared as a Messiah.

Characteristic of the period at the beginning of 1938 is a stumbling between the rejection of National Socialism, which was accompanied by the "Away from Rome!"

movement, and acceptance of its claims concerning the unification of the German nation, replacing the formal relationship with Berlin with a friendly one. The Christian Socialists continued, however, to reject the severance of the German areas because this would mean war [Deutsche... 11. 1. 1938: 4, 15. 3. 1938: 3]. In March 1938 the party recommended that its parliamentary representatives join the club of the Sudeten German Party, but the party formally retained its independence.

The mixture of verbal adherence to democracy, criticism of democracy from idealist positions and anti-democratic ideas in policies, tenets and aims, and the professed interest of the Christian-Socialist politicians in the conditions of a democratic state did not contain within themselves an unequivocal development towards an authoritarian or Nazi regime. Nonetheless, this mixture of ideologies created the preconditions for acceptance of such a regime, because it had in common a value orientation: a high regard for the nation, the valuing of the equal rights of nations (collectives) rather than citizens, anti-Semitism (race), criticism of democracy from idealist viewpoints and related to this a one-sided evaluation of the behaviour the Czech side (political pin-pricking), and an unawareness of problems running in the opposite direction. This attitude was further complicated by the specific clerical character of the party with regard to certain measures that are a feature of modern societies (marriage reform, pregnancy termination, laicisation of schools etc.). The demand for the rebuilding of political parties according to class was also undemocratic. Particularly in the parts concerning classes as components of the social organism, there are evident connections with Spannism, which is a significant element of anti-democratic thinking and doctrine.

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Czechoslovakia's historical experience confirms in the short-term the validity of the thesis of the possibility of coexistence of societies with different political cultures, if both sides enter an agreement on mutual non-destruction [Rustow 1970, according to Dvořáková and Kunc 1994] or on coexistence in the case of Czechoslovakia. The outcome, however, also confirms the correctness of President Masaryk's request for 50 years of peaceful development. Masaryk of course reckoned with the emergence of one political nation rather than the maintenance of two disparately oriented societies. In the long-term, the question emerges as to whether there exists any case at all in which the breaking of an agreement on mutual coexistence does not occur, and whether then the theory of the possibility of coexistence of societies with different political cultures is at all contradicted by the theory of the impossibility of coexistence of two political cultures [Gellner 1993]

Concluding note

This article emerged as part of a larger work that was as the outcome of an RSS project. In view of the fact that it has not yet appeared in print, I consider it necessary to emphasise that I am not reproaching the German parties for nationalism, nor that they did not understand the principle of the political nation and the principle of citizenship. There is no point in moralising on history. This is not the intention of this work. The aim was to investigate whether the activist parties' endorsement of the regime of the First Republic – activism, was underpinned by a change in political culture (or symptoms of such a change) that was perceptible in the attitudes of the German political parties at the beginning of the Republic. Without scrutinising the ideas of the German activists the endorse-

ment of a large part of the German population of Henlein's Sudeten German party in the 1935 elections cannot be explained.

The results of the analysis confirm the correctness of Masaryk's request for the need for 50 years of peaceful development for Czechoslovakia, in view of the predominantly disparate political cultures of the nations and nationalities in the Czechoslovak Republic and also the societies of the Czech and German nations themselves (concerning which, I expect that for further study this disparity did not affect only the Czech and German societies). It also shows the problematic nature of the coexistence of holders of a number political cultures, which is shown not only by history, but can also be observed in our present times.

I do not deal with Czech political culture, and therefore I do not mention it often. Nevertheless, I assume, particularly in view of the electoral failure of the Czech parties of the extreme right and left, and in view of the position of democracy in Czech historical development, that it is possible to speak of a predominantly democratic political culture. A study following up the political culture of the German activist parties will deal with Czech and German nationalism and political culture.

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Historical Memory and the Plea for a National Interests Based German Foreign Policy

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Abstract: The events of 1989 and unification changed Germany's position in Europe significantly. Although German politicians stress continuity, it cannot be denied that the European map has changed and that the FRG has been forced to reorient its foreign policy. Historical memory is a key organising principle in the making of a foreign policy, and nowhere more so than in Germany. In this paper the relationship between historical memory and contemporary foreign policy is not only seen from the perspective of the question of how remembering the past influences ideas about contemporary politics, but also its opposite: what is the role of the debate on a new German foreign policy in the ongoing struggle on the interpretation of the German past and the German national identity?. This question is especially relevant, since the battle for cultural dominance has been fought with renewed vigour since unification.

Egon Bahr, the major architect of Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* once said in an interview that after the building of the Berlin Wall in 1962 it took them seven years to develop a new concept for a German policy that could replace the *Politik der Härte* of Adenauer. It is now eight years since the Berlin Wall came down, and there is still no trace of a new, more or less coherent concept of a new German foreign policy. However, this is not really astonishing and it would be unfair to blame contemporary politicians and foreign policy specialists for being less inventive and creative than their colleagues in the 1960's.

When we compare the building of the Berlin Wall with its fall, the first was only a minor event, with mainly internal German significance. The map of Europe remained unchanged, so did the bipolar system. The Berlin Wall was in fact a confirmation of the post-war relations that had already developed and stabilised.

If we compare this with what happened after 1989: not only do we see the unification of the two German states, but also the collapse of state structures in Eastern European countries, the break-up of the USSR, the end of the bipolar system, the bloody war in the former Yugoslavia, uncertainty about the future role of the US in Europe, uncertainty about the future tasks and goals of the main international organisations in which the Western European countries co-operate, and which were the product of, or at least created during, the Cold War, such as NATO and the EU.

Each of these problems is difficult enough to handle on its own, but together they create an even more complex situation because one gets unavoidably stuck in dilemmas and contradictions. Examples of dilemmas in German foreign policy are: whether to widen the EU or deepen it, the tension between having a good relationship with Russia as well as with the other Eastern European countries such as Poland; maintaining a special relationship with France but also with the US, being accused of creating a wide sphere of

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influence in the centre of Europe, and of being too passive, and so on. Almost every step in Germany's foreign policy is carefully watched by its neighbours and allies. And every step is criticised by at least some of them. In short, Germany, more than any other Western power, has to consider very different and often contradictory outside interests. The times are over for *'Genscherism'* in foreign politics, which was characterised by a *'Sowohl-als-Auch'* strategy and in which it was Germany's main aim to be everybody's friend.

The instinctive reaction to this new and difficult situation in Bonn was: the more historic changes we experience, the more we should stress continuity. And so they did. Time and again the German government and German politicians assured themselves and their foreign partners that nothing had really changed.

The Social Democratic Opposition was even less creative in formulating a new foreign policy concept. Their policy can best be described as a mixture of 'business as usual' and thoughtless, opportune adjustments. The old policy of creating stability in Europe by means of *Ostpolitik*, arms reductions and the OSCE were no longer applicable and the ideal of the UN as the peacekeeper of the world, with an international monopoly of power may have been naively attractive but not very realistic. All the more so, because the SPD was at first quite unwilling to participate in military intervention ordered or sanctioned by the UN. However useful this 'nothing-has-really-changed' reaction may be in trying to convince neighbouring countries and allies that the new Federal Republic is not a threat to the European state-system, it is not possible stick to the concept of foreign policy as elaborated during the Cold War. This does not only apply to Germany but to all other countries as well. France, the UK and the US are also having a hard time defining their position in the post-Cold War world and in elaborating new foreign policies.

In Germany we face the paradoxical situation that before unification, the country had only limited power and degrees of freedom in foreign policy, but knew exactly what its goals and co-ordinates were. After unification, there is a feeling that it has more power, and should somehow make use of it, but the questions of for what, how much, what goals, and by what means… all remain unanswered.

A foreign policy cannot be changed in one fell swoop. It is a historically developed entity which creates a form of national foreign policy identity. The evolution of a foreign policy, as W. Besson once said, consists of experiences becoming maxims. Historical memory is thus a key organising principle in the making of foreign policy and nowhere more so than in Germany [Smith et al. 1996: 137]. On the other hand, of all of the continuities in the factors which influence foreign policy, historical memory is probably the least constant, as William Paterson remarks [Paterson 1996]. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the German debates on a new foreign policy the question of which lessons can be learned from history is always a core issue. And it is this relation between historical memory and contemporary foreign policy that plays a key role in this paper. However, when raising the issue of this relationship between past and present, I would like to change the perspective and not ask the usual question of how remembering the past influences ideas about contemporary politics [see e.g. Berger 1997], but the opposite: what is the role of the debate on a new German foreign policy in the ongoing struggle over the interpretation of the German past and the German national identity? And this question is especially relevant, since the battle for cultural dominance has been fought with renewed vigour in Germany since unification.

I intend to discuss a view of the central concepts and ideas which figure prominently in the discussion about the new German foreign policy, criticise the way they are used and show that these concepts reveal more about how people want to interpret the past than about their concrete ideas of what the current foreign policy of Germany looks like, or should be. The central concepts or ideas I will briefly discuss are: the concept of national interests, the concepts of *Normalität* and *Normalisierung*, and the idea of a German *Sonderweg*.

The Question of National Interests

There are not many states which present their actions in international politics as expressions of naked egoistic power politics. Most of the time the goals a country is striving for, are legitimised or justified by referring to higher values than only the national interests. Without doubt, the Federal Republic is the world champion in referring to values that exceed the interests of a single nation. Fear of being accused of secret German nationalist sentiments, has certainly played an important role in the creation of the semantics of a politics of responsibility. Moreover, there is also the fear, especially on the Left, that accepting a semantic in which German interests are central will awaken old German ghosts.

The supranational, anti-nationalistic character of presenting the goals of German foreign policy is shown in three different ways. Firstly there is a preference for formulating goals in very general normative ideals and concepts, such as freedom, democracy, peace and human rights. References to power are avoided. Germany should not be seen as a *Machtsstaat* but as a *Zivilmacht* whose policy can best be described as a *Verantwortungspolitik*, and all mention of national interests is to be avoided [e.g. Maull 1997]. Secondly, in German political culture one does not speak in solistic terms; there is a strong emphasis on multilateralism, on co-operation with neighbouring countries and allies, on joint efforts to realise goals in international politics and on collective institutions.

The emphasis which is placed on multilateralism, and the frequency with which this term is used, shows that there is more at stake than the simple fact that sometimes it is more effective to formulate and realise goals in co-operation with your allies, than to do it alone. Equally important, is the idea of multilateralism as a goal in itself and not just a means. One could say that the Federal Republic constructed its identity through its European and multilateral policy. The unilateral-multilateral dichotomy is associated with the distinction between egoism and altruism, so the concepts are not only part of the semantics of foreign policy, but also of morality.

Thirdly, post-war German political culture is one of restraint, characterised by a desire to avoid an explicit international leadership role. In brief, Germans prefer a European institutional context for implementing their national policies, shy away form purely national justifications, and try to avoid the impression that Germany is striving for national independence of actions, or for heavy-handed political influence.

Even before unification this foreign-policy culture in Germany was deplored by a small, but influential, circle of observers of German foreign policy, including Arnulf Baring, a professor of history in Berlin and regular commentator in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Gregor Schöllgen, professor at Erlangen University and a frequent speaker at the Foreign Office's attaché training courses, Michael Stürmer, the director of the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* in Ebenhausen – the government's think-tank for

foreign policy, Christian Hacke, professor at the Bundeswehr University in Hamburg, and Hans-Peter Schwarz, professor of contemporary history at Bonn University.

It was especially the book by Hans-Peter Schwarz, _Die gezähmten Deutschen. Von der Machtsbesessenheit zur Machtsvergessenheit_, published in 1985 that put the cat among the pigeons. Schwarz's central thesis was that the attitude of the Germans to foreign policy swung like a pendulum: public opinion moved from one extreme to the other. The _Machtsverbessenheit_, which characterised Germany in the first half of the century turned into in a _Machtsvergessenheit_. The way Schwarz has chosen his concepts makes clear that he does not prefer either of the extremes, but is pleading for a reasonable balance. The terms also make clear that for Schwarz 'power' is not a moral category, something that is 'good' or 'bad', but an instrument which is indissolubly connected with the _Staatsraison_. The fixation on power by which it becomes a goal in itself as well as the ignoration of it will lead to deformations in the foreign policy. Therefore, Schwarz deplores the current state of _Machtsvergessenheit_ and pleads for a revaluation of power in German politics.

After unification, the call for a more assertive German foreign policy increased quickly. Germany had to formulate its own national interests just as all the other countries did. To quote Schwarz: "Germany will have to stop imagining that its interests can be 'European', it will have no choice but to recognise that it has national interests and to define them as such." [Schwarz 1994a, 1994b].

Or Schöllgen: "As a reborn nation-state, Germany will have to define its national interests clearly and plainly, both for itself and for others". And to make sure the readers get the message he repeats: "The Federal Republic must define its national interests" [Schöllgen 1994, 1993]. And Günther Gillessen: "Any reliable foreign policy needs a definition of national interests. But in Germany it is difficult to claim 'national interests' and to distinguish between the nation and nationalism. For the guilt-ridden collective national conscience, the term 'national interests' is banned from the domestic debate and widely regarded as 'politically incorrect' language. Yet a nation which is not able to talk about its national interests openly and clearly will appear to pursue a hidden, and perhaps suspect, agenda." [Gillessen 1994].

This message of national interests actually dominates the debate on the new foreign policy. And it is presented in such a way as if to say that if Germany does not realise soon that it has to have a national interests policy, the apocalypse is near.

The plea for a foreign policy that is centred around national interests can be summarised in five points:

1) National interests do exist. They cannot be subsumed under more general interests, and neither do they fall apart in particular interests of separate groups within the state or within society.

2) The national interest is the basic principle that determines the actions of states in the international arena.

3) The Federal Republic has been neglecting its national interests for 40 years.

4) Germany has to free itself from its special status in international politics. It has to become a 'normal' country with a 'normal' _staatsraison_, and with 'normal' rights and duties.

5) If the Federal Republic does not openly formulate its national interests or pretends it has none, other countries can do little else than interpret this as an effort to conceal its actual goals and work to a hidden agenda.

These points are presented as though they are self evident. But in fact this is not the case at all.

It cannot be denied that in Germany there is a strong tendency to translate national interests into supranational goals. However, there is something lacking in the creation of a contradistinction between national interests and European or other supranational interests. It is an open question whether national interests and international interests are negatively related, or are indifferent to one another, or dependent upon each other. This question has to be determined in each individual case, and concerns content as well as practical application and realisation. But surely they do not stay in a zero-sum relationship to one another by principle.

Also, the idea that Germany after unification finally has to act as a 'normal' state and in accordance with its national interests is more problematic than appears at first glance. It bears the implicit assumption or suggestion that the old Federal Republic neglected its national interests or subordinated them to the interests of a greater whole. However, the thesis that the Federal Republic has been quite successful in defending its interests is easier to defend than the opposite.

It cannot be denied that the Federal Republic, because of its past, its limited sovereignty, its geo-political position and its *Westbindung*, played down its foreign policy profile and felt quite comfortable in the shadow of the US. But, the transformation of Germany as a country which was completely destroyed and discredited after the Second World War, into a rich and well-respected state which is prominently represented in almost all major international organisations and surrounded by friendly nations, does not fit with a picture of a country incapable of formulating its own national interests or standing up for them. The Federal Republic was extremely successful in helping create and maintain a framework in which German interests were best served. It is difficult to imagine that a hard-nosed and explicit commitment to national interests, as advocated by the realist school, would have produced the same results. German interests are not served by upsetting existing European arrangements[Markovits and Reich 1997: 44]. This observation can be more generally formulated in a paradox: It is within multilateral organisations that Germany's national power becomes more effective and can be legitimised easier. Multilateralism and European integration enlarges Germany's elbow-room as a national state in international politics.

Another argument in favour of formulating Germany's national interests is that otherwise other countries will assume that Germany is working to a hidden agenda. Thus, instead of the open multilateral trusting politics, there is an atmosphere of secrets and distrust. However, when authors give an indication of these national interests they come up with very general notions, such as integrity of the territory, the safety of the population, welfare, etc. [Hacke 1996]. It is hard to believe that if Germany claims that its territorial integrity or the safety of its citizens is of great importance to it, Germany's neighbours will be so impressed by such openness that they will trust Germany more. It is not possible to find an example of a national interest given which is on the one hand so general that it can be deduced from the *Staatsraison* itself (otherwise we enter the field of

political preferences) and on the other hand so specific that it is at least a little informative.

It is hard to see how such general national interests can be of much help in finding solutions for practical problems and dilemmas in Germany's foreign policy. In fact, national interests often create the dilemmas themselves, because different national interests require different, conflicting policies. Translate national interests into practical decisions and the first dilemmas will arise. In fact, on nearly all important issues decision-makers disagree about what the national interests and the international context demand.

What conclusions can we draw from this brief discussion of the plea for a national interests policy? Firstly, the protagonists of a foreign policy based on national interests fail to demonstrate in which way the concept of national interests could be of help in re-orienting German foreign policy. When national interests are listed, they do not rise above the level of open doors and their specific meanings are never explicated. There is no indication of how these national interests can be translated into practical politics. Not one issue or problem is mentioned of which we can say, that if the German foreign policy had been more national interest oriented then this would have resulted in a more adequate policy. What other policies would Germany have followed with regard to, for example, former Yugoslavia, the Czech Republic or Poland if it had only better explicated its national interests? Which of the many dilemmas which characterise German foreign policy could be solved if one only dared to speak about national interests? [Pulzer 1995].

There is also no indication as to which national interest should be invoked to ensure that Germany's neighbours and allies would be less irritated about the vagueness of its politics. The widespread complaints in Europe about German 'dictates', for example, in relation to monetary union, point in quite a different direction.

Therefore, the actual goals which Baring and others strive for in their pleas for a national interest policy, must be sought elsewhere. What they want is to send the message that Germany cannot permit itself not to be a 'normal' country or to maintain a *Sonderstatus* which is the result of the Second World War. Because of today's challenges Germany has to change her relationship with her own history and this means getting rid of the heavy burden of the Nazi-period. For instance, Baring always complains that German historical consciousness is reduced to the dreadful 12 years between 1933 and 1945 and that this affects the capacity for political action within the arena of international politics [Baring 1991: 197, 1997: 15].

The discussion of national interests in German politics can thus be seen as a continuation of earlier efforts to free Germany of its past (*Entsorgung der Vergangenheit*), to make a *Schlußstrich*, and to normalise its national identity. The wish for normalisation lay at the root of the *Historikerstreit* of 1986 to 1988. The big difference with the *Historikerstreit* is that there normalisation was pursued by a reinterpretation of the Nazi-past itself, by comparing the Holocaust with Stalin's *gulags* which would make the German crimes less unique and therefore Germany less exceptional and thus more able to normalise (*Normalisierungsfähig*). Apart from the quality of particularly Ernst Nolte's contributions, this effort to normalise the Federal Republic by means of a discussion of the historical meaning of this most sensitive issue of the Holocaust, was doomed to fail.

In this sense, the effort to try to normalise German identity by appealing to national interests is probably a more effective strategy. In their generality, they remain vague enough not to lead to big controversies. And perhaps more important: in introducing the

realist ahistorical concept of national interests the past becomes irrelevant, including the German past. The realist theory is used to force Germany to adopt a *Machtspolitik* and to forget about the past.

However, to use the realist theory to normalise Germany is somehow strange. The realist paradigm was meant as a descriptive theory, as a conceptual framework for an adequate description and explanation of international politics. If you complain that German foreign politics are not guided by national interests, then the conclusion must be that the theory fails in explaining the German case. But instead, the realist theory is used as an argument to plead for another German foreign policy. So instead of being descriptive, the theory becomes prescriptive.

Another paradox is that the normalisation of Germany is something which is unavoidable from the perspective of national interests and it is something that Germany has to do on behalf of its neighbouring countries and allies. So the plea that Germany should be more assertive and stand up for its interests is supported by an altruistic argument.

Also on the left of the political spectrum, the discussion of the quest for a new German foreign policy is deeply influenced by the problem of national interests. Before 1990 many were not very enthusiastic about the idea of a German unification. As Günther Grass, but also historians such as Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Heinrich-August Winkler, Hagen Schulze, Jürgen Kocka, and the Mommsen-brothers constantly reiterated, German separation had to be seen as a justified punishment for German crimes and as a guarantee that Europe would not face a third disaster as a consequence of German nationalism. To quote Winkler:

> *"Angesichts der Rolle, die Deutschland bei der Entstehung der beiden Weltkriege gespielt hat, kann Europa und sollten die Deutschen ein neues Deutsches Reich, einen souveränen Nationalstaat, nicht mehr wollen. Das ist die Logik der Geschichte, und die ist nach Bismarcks Wort genauer als die preußische Oberrechenkammer."* [Winkler 1997: 172].[1]

Paradoxically, those on the Left who warned that German unification would lead to a dangerous entity in the centre of Europe, are also the ones who now assert that nothing really happened, that the Federal Republic did not change in character because of the unification, and that there is no need for a readjustment of Germany's foreign policy. In these assertions there is a normative undertone and rather a lot of wishful thinking. The Federal Republic must, and will retain its old modest status of a gentle giant, and its *Westbindung*. One can almost speak of an old Federal Republic nostalgia. Habermas admits that with regard to the wish to preserve the characteristics of the old Federal Republic the left is outspokenly conservative [Habermas 1995: 93].

The main concern of people of the left with the concept of national interests is not so much the actual foreign policy, but the fear that allowing the semantics of national interests will lead to new nationalistic tendencies in Germany and in Europe. References to national interests are to be distrusted and are immediately identified with nationalistic sentiments and efforts to revise the German past. History teaches that Germany and the other countries should free themselves from nationalism and national identities and should develop another kind of identity based on universal human values as written down in the Constitution, a *Verfassungspatriotismus*, a term introduced by Dolf Sternberger,

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[1] In a *mea culpa* Heinrich-August Winkler remembers this remark of his in 1986.

but which has come in vogue after Habermas' call for it. In such a kind of post-national state with a post-national identity there is, of course, little room for national interests. Foreign policy has to become increasingly *Weltinnenpolitik* (D. Senghaas). It should be European interest oriented or, even better, based on universal values. Thus, the rejection of national interests is seen as a national interest. European or international interests are formulated from a national perspective.

However, the rejection of national interests as the point of departure for foreign policy also faces some problems. It leads in fact to the same mistake as the protagonists of national interests made. Here also national interests are seen as the opposite of international or more general interests, and are associated with the moral difference between egoism and altruism.

And how are we supposed to formulate, for instance, European interests when we are not allowed to take the wishes of the separate members as a point of departure? Moreover, don't we need strong and active nation-states to keep the process of European integration moving? And even more important: which guidelines do you use when the other countries do not see the European interest in the same way, for example, when other countries feel nothing for the federal idea of a United States of Europe? When and why do you change your own concepts of a future Europe; where are the limits of your willingness to make compromises? The more you formulate your goals on a supranational level, the less influence you have on the final results, and the more important it is to have clear co-ordinates for your political decisions and for developing alternative options and strategies. Of course, this position also leads to a paradox because the plea for a multilateral, non-national interest policy leads to a foreign policy which is unique in Europe and thus contributes to a nationalisation of foreign politics. The avowal to universal principles and values go hand in hand with provincialism and *Nabelschau*.

What then is the conclusion of this brief discussion of the concept of national interests as it is used in the German public debate on foreign policy. First of all, on both sides of the political spectrum the concept is used, not as a tool for describing or developing German foreign policy, but as a means of influencing the debate on what the German identity is, or should be, and how to cope with German history, the *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Baring, Stürmer, Schwarz, Hacke, Schöllgen and others use the concept in their attempt to normalise Germany and Grass, Habermas, Winkler, Glotz and others are directly opposed to these intentions of normalisation and getting rid of the burdens of the past. Germany should not become normal, the other countries should develop themselves in the same post-national direction as Germany did. In this perspective Germany has learned so much from its history that the country is now able to play a civilising role in world affairs. Hans Maull's concept of *Zivilmacht Deutschland* is an example of this idea, but it is even better illustrated by the following quotation of Peter Glotz:

> *"Wir haben aus unserer besonderen Geschichte etwas gelernt, wir haben anderen etwas voraus, wir können mit gemäßigten und gemischten Gefühlslagen leben, wir haben das nationale Prinzip stellvertretend für andere zu Ende gedacht. Das macht uns zu einer sehr modernen Nation. Wir können auf die ökonomischen, ökologischen, verkehrspolitischen, kommunikativen Erfordensse der Europäisierung ohne innere Hemmung reagieren. Von Gefühlsstürmen der nationalen Ehre werden wir selbst in Verhandlungspausen nicht mehr gebeuteld. Wir haben die Chance, eine notwendige Rolle zu spielen: die Rolle der Kundschafter und Pioniere der Europäisierung."* [Glotz 1990: 156].

Towards a New Concept of 'National Interests'

This critique of the concept of national interests, as it is used on both sides of the political spectrum in Germany, does not lead to the conclusion that it is a useless conceptual tool of which we have no need. It does, however, needs a thorough revision. I will briefly mention a few things that have to be revised in order to make the concept adequate.

1) Discussions regarding national interests accept too readily the idea that international politics is a zero-sum game. In this view, history is seen as the history of struggles between nation-states. If one country is more successful in realising its national interests then this will be at the expense of other countries. This situation may have been true in the 19th century where the national states saw each other as strategic opponents, and to some extent it was also true in the bipolar system of the Cold War, but it is no longer an adequate way of describing contemporary European politics.

2) We have to do away with the opposition of national and supranational interests. But we should not make the opposite mistake, as many protagonists of the *Weltinnenpolitik* do, and think that they are the same. As long as national governments remain the centre to which people address their wishes and complaints, we can speak about national interests. What the relation between the two is has to be investigated in each separate case.

3) Creating an opposition between a politics of national interests and a *Verantwortungspolitik*, and therewith, between a *Realpolitik* and an *Idealpolitik* is fruitless. National interests are always intertwined with normative conceptions about how the economy, social relations, culture, the quality of life, the political order, etc. should be. Without such normative ideals of the 'good life', national interests could not be formulated at all.

4) We also need to rid ourselves of the neo-realist idea that national interests are objective, independently existing things out there, waiting to be discovered, and which can be found, at least when you do not suffer from a false consciousness, as Marx thought of objective class interests. But in this case the false consciousness is caused by the Second World War. The question for observers of foreign and international politics is not what are the national interests of a country, but how they are produced or constructed in the political and social sphere. Thus, we do not need a substantial description of the national interests but should instead focus on the specific kind of procedures which allow a country to formulate its goals and preferences, and translate them into practical political decisions and strategies. This change of perspective opens new fields of enquiry, such as: what are the institutional, political, social, cultural conditions under which a country resolves its national interests? What is the role of the media, what is the influence of interest groups, how are decision making processes in parties organised, and how are they organised in Parliament and in government, what is the role of individual personalities?, and so on, and so forth [Kühne 1996]. And these issues can be discussed on three levels:

1) The way in which the national interests or the goals of foreign policy are formulated;

2) The way in which they are defended in international negotiations and how the results are received within the country;

3) The way the national interests are served in more bureaucratic everyday decisions in, for example, Brussels.

From this perspective national interests are no longer objective and independent, but are results of societal and political processes. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate the field

of domestic and foreign politics. Until now they have been too greatly separated fields of research with their own specialists. The ahistorical logic in which national interests spring from the *Staatsraison*, and in which there is no societal influence, further strengthens this autism of the study of foreign politics.

To read, for example, Gregor Schöllgen's book *Die Macht in der Mitte Europas* it is possible to think that domestic factors have not played any role whatsoever in foreign politics [Schöllgen 1992]. The main causes for the two World Wars Schöllgen seeks in mistakes which, moreover, were made almost exclusively by Germany's neighbours. Moreover, this is not something to be found exclusively in works of right-wing historians. The SPD foreign policy specialist Karsten Voigt, for example, writes:

> *"Häufiger in seiner Geschichte erschien Deutschland als einzelner Staat seinen Nachbarn zu stark, so daß diese sich zu einer Koalition zusammenschlossen. Hier lag die Ursache für Spannungen und bewaffnete Auseinandersetzungen in Europa."* [Voigt 1996].

The World Wars as a result of Germany's neighbours creating coalitions!

However, if you accept that domestic political factors were relevant in, for instance, World War One and Two, then a modern historian of foreign policy can no longer work within the *Primat der Außenpolitik*-paradigm. It is distressing to see how marginal the influence of the great debate in Germany about the *Primat der Innenpolitik* and the *Primat der Außenpolitik* has actually been on contemporary research of international relations. Many of the studies which are nowadays produced could, from a methodological point of view, also have been written a century ago.

'Normalität' and *'Sonderweg'*

The second point I would like to discuss, but far more briefly, is the German concept of *Normalität*, a term which I have already touched upon several times. There are not many countries in the world in which people are so obsessed by the terms *Normalität* and *Normalisierung* as in Germany. Ultimately, the whole problem could be phrased in one small sentence: What does it mean to be German: to be different, or to be like others? This question immediately puts German history at the centre of attention.

Many, predominantly conservative, historians and political opinion makers fear that by incessantly singling out the period 1933-1945 Germany is putting itself in a permanent exceptional position. As a result, its abilities to act adequately are seriously affected and delimited. With purely negative statements such as 'We are the greatest criminals in history', a country is unable to create a national identity which is stable and can be trusted. Especially Michael Stürmer, the director of the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* in Ebenhausen, the political think-tank of the Federal Government in cases related to safety and foreign policy, in many publications warns of this distorted and unhealthy national identity and pleads for a *Wir-sind-normal-Nation* identity instead of a Holocaust identity.

In contributions on the position of the united Germany in international politics, the question of how to weigh the Nazi-period and its consequences for the question of 'normality' in German history, comes back in a surprising way. If, for example, Arnulf Baring, characterises the position of the new Germany in the international system of states, then he tells his readers that the unified Germany can best be compared with the Bismarck-Reich. To quote Baring: "We are back in the Germany created". Reunification and

the renaissance of the nation-state are for him in fact a belated victory for Bismarck and his creation of 1871. The continuity of the reunified Germany with Bismarck's makes for a reopening of many questions long thought of as closed: "Suddenly very old questions reappear, questions about the position of Germany in the middle of Europe, about the relationship between East and West". If we want to understand the current position of Germany in Europe, we should look at the German Empire of 1871 [Baring 1994: 1-20].

At first sight this comparison may seem reasonable, but in fact this historical parallel is highly problematic. International politics is nowadays completely different from a century ago. Just a few indications to think about: the role of international organisations such as the EU, UN, NATO, multilateralism, the role of non-governmental organisations, the effects of democratisation, the role of the media, economic interdependencies, the changed character of diplomacy, and so forth.

But if it is clear that no historical lessons can be drawn from the 19th century history, and that a comparison in fact hardly contributes to a better understanding of the contemporary position of Germany in Europe and the international systems of states, why then continue to repeat this comparison?

There is one important reason for it. By saying that the united Germany resembles the Germany of Bismarck, new continuities are pointed out in German history. In this changing perspective the historical weight of the Third Reich diminishes. It becomes a temporary disturbance of the German order which left no traces in the unified Germany. In the old Federal Republic the historical scope was far too narrow, and now it is time to shift our attention to other periods in German history.

In this sense, these comparisons can be seen as another move in the old debate of the place of the Hitler regime in German history, and what influence this period should have on the self description of German society, on images of identity, and on the question of which lessons history teaches for contemporary German foreign policy.

By creating new continuities the ideas about the German *Sonderweg* are also shifting. From the 1960's onwards left-wing, so-called 'critical' historians of, for example, the Bielefeld School, such as Hans-Ulrich Wehler and Jürgen Kocka, tried to show that Germany's route to modernisation, dating back to the nineteenth century, was quite different from the route other European countries had followed. This *Sonderweg* could explain why Hitler was possible in Germany. After the Second World War, the Federal Republic joined the other Western countries on the normal path of modernisation. Thus, the old Federal Republic is in this perspective normality, and one has to make sure that Germany, after the unification, will not leave this path of western orientation. The title of an article by Jürgen Kocka at the end of 1990 says enough: *"Nur keinen neuen Sonderweg. Jedes Stück Entwestlichung wäre als Preis für die deutsche Einheit zu hoch"* [Kocka 1990].

However, if one claims that after unification Germany regained its normality, and one points out the continuities between Bismarck and present-day Germany, then the old Federal Republic suddenly becomes a *Sonderweg*, which comes to an end with the unification. The foreign politics of the old Federal Republic is part of this *Sonderweg*, and therefore, cannot be a guideline for the new foreign policy of the new Federal Republic. The *Westorientierung* of West Germany is no longer self-evident. The normal position of Germany is in the centre of Europe, its *Mittellage*, and this geopolitical fact must be constitutive for the German *raison d'état*, her national identity and political agenda. In a book edited by Rainer Zitelmann, reflections on Germany as a Central European country

sometimes lead to an undisguised anti-western attitude and anti-Americanism [Zitelmann, Weißmann and Großheim 1993].

Therefore, we face the paradoxical situation that during the old Federal Republic people from the left were criticising western capitalism, the militarism of the NATO and American imperialism and now they are the greatest defenders of this 'good old' Federal Republic to which they look back in nostalgia, whereas some conservatives, who were used to defending Western institutions, are now distancing themselves from the West.

To conclude, in this critique of a few central concepts figuring prominently in the German debate on the new foreign policy, I have tried to show that the discussions in fact can be seen as a continuation of the endless debate on German *Vergangenheits-bewältigung* and German national identity. Because the participants in the discussion are so concerned about the question of how Germany should deal with her past, their contributions are mostly prescriptive and normative in character. The discussion contains a great deal of *Nabelschau*. However sensitive Germans may be to the attitude of neighbouring countries towards Germany, in the discussion on the new foreign policy one looks in vain for proposals which include, or at least, take into account the discussions, objectives and strategies of the other European countries. As long as this autism continues we cannot expect a new coherent concept of a post-Cold War foreign policy.

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Attitudes of Individuals and Institutions to Social Transformation

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Summary: The paper is primarily focused in seven major issues examining the attitudes of respondents. These are concerned with support for free market; the extent of privatisation; reduction of subsidies to agriculture; joining the European Union; exposing domestic producers to international competition; individual or state responsibility for the standard of living; budgetary support for education, culture and science. In addition to the respondent's own opinion, the questions attempted to ascertain the opinions of the president, government, and opposition as perceived by the respondent. This study was carried out in both the Czech and Slovak Republics. In 1995 attitudes in favour of transformation were stronger and more widespread in Czech society than in Slovakia. However, when compared with the perceived attitudes of the above-mentioned institutions, most people held opinions somewhere in the middle of this range in both republics.

Germany as a Factor of Differentiation in Czech Society

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Abstract: Czech-German relations and the dialogue between the two countries have developed against the background of a historical 'delay' in the modernisation process in Czech society. The debate on the causes and results of the transfer of most German-speaking inhabitants of the Czech Lands directly after the end of the Second World War is also lagging. The historical dimension of Czech-German relations has gained new relevance with the demands of the homeland associations of the Sudeten Germans who were expelled (the *Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*) on the bilateral relations between Germany and the Czech Republic, and this is complicating the process of integrating the latter into Euro-Atlantic structures. On both sides there are fixed stereotypes of the former enemy who has become a partner since 1989. Fears of German dominance are also reinforced by the inequality of the two systems. Germany is at one and the same time an integrating and a differentiating factor in Czech society.

The Czech Republic is very late in entering the process of European integration and with the handicap of several decades isolation from the modernisation which western Europe underwent following the Second World War. The country which saw the most dramatic changes was Germany, where the entirely new systems of the German Federal and Democratic Republics were set up with considerable support from the victorious Allied powers. Development in the two parts of the divided Germany, and in the Czech Republic (within the former Czechoslovakia), differed widely in the post-war period, resulting in differences in the level of social awareness. This has greatly complicated the process of Czech-German reconciliation since 1989.

The diametrically opposed characteristics of the market economy and its centrally regulated counterpart meant that the experience of West Germans in their relations with their neighbours in the western coalition was fundamentally different. This was characterised by the gradual removal of resentment and tensions in their relations. The growing friendship between former enemies within the western alliance was helped by the Cold War situation and the sense of a threat from the Soviet empire. This held back Czech-German reconciliation, so that the experience with the grand ideas of the French-German reconciliation is of only limited assistance.

Germany is a source of both integration and differentiation on the Czech political scene. This was the case in recent history and is even more so since the split of Czechoslovakia and the reunification of Germany. Traditional fears of a powerful neighbour are ever-present in Czech minds, although now in a slightly different form, relating to those Germans expelled from the Czech Lands after the Second World War. The prevalent attitude towards Germany in Czech society can, with some degree of simplification, be

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described as 'guarded friendship'. It is the result of a series of parallel and opposing factors which will be discussed below.

The debate around the preparation and signing of the Czech-German Declaration was wide-ranging and at times emotive (particularly in the closing phase of the preparation of the text). It showed clearly how sensitive Czechs were on the question of the Germans as a direct neighbour and partner. In Germany the Czech Republic is generally seen as a difficult and problematic partner (particularly but not exclusively by authors from the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft*), and this is equally the case in the reverse direction. On the individual level there is a certain touchiness in the way that Czechs view the behaviour of the relatively well-off visitors and business partners from neighbouring Germany. In border areas in particular, there are regular outcries against the purchase of cheap property through 'pawns'[1], fears of becoming 'strangers in one's own land' and so on.

At the level of inter-state relations, the state of social consciousness is at least partly reflected by the media, which tend to show some reservations in reporting on the real picture of Czech-German relations (in 1996, 87% of those living in border areas felt that coverage by the Czech mass media was partly or completely inadequate in their articles on Germany). Surveys of people's attitudes towards Germany reveal clear emotional expressions in relation to the definition of the border between Germany and the Czech Republic (existing border – state border), in the interpretation of recent historical events (the concept of transfer/expulsion, the role of Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia between the Wars and their part in the fall of the independent republic, etc.). The conflict is often related to pairs of concepts (e.g. transfer/expulsion), the definitions of which lead to diametrically opposed interpretations of the problem.

If the thesis of a close link between the internal and foreign policies of a state is valid, Czech-German relations provide a model situation which is, moreover, characterised on the Czech side by a tendency to irrational reactions and an overly emotional attitude. This recalls K. Boulding's [1988: 200] comment that a nation's image of itself and other nations is significantly influenced by, among other factors, specific historical events. In the Czech case there is the latent presence of the syndrome of the Munich Agreement. While it may have directly affected only that generation whose lives it directly touched, the experience of being forced to accept a loss of sovereignty and national identity has come to hold a place in the social consciousness of later generations [see Kural 1996].

The opening of the borders and the possibility for Czechs *en masse* to see the political and economic circumstances of West Germany at first hand helped to remove many prejudices and misconceptions. At the same time the development of the Czech-Sudeten German dialogue since 1989 has created clear rifts between Czechs and has confirmed a large part of the population and of the new political elite in the opinion that the demands of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* (the right to a homeland and self determination, the annulling of the Beneš decrees, the recognition of the expulsion as unjust, etc.) present a threat to the stability and integrity of the Czech Republic. The reawakening of historical resentments have been a negative influence on the relations of Czech society with Germany.

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[1]) Individuals acting on behalf of not strictly legal capital interests.

The development of Czech public opinion on the role of Germany has of course not been shaped purely by the negative experiences of the recent past. Since 1989 this development has been extremely rapid and it is clear that Czechs are capable of shaking off the historical deformations and the partial stereotypes of the powerful neighbour. Surveys of Czech public opinion show that Czechs tend to see Germany as a close (and welcome) economic partner and political ally, with which close collaboration should be maintained. The Czechs' attitudes towards Germany since 1989 have been influenced by the euphoria of the sudden reunification of the two parts of Europe with the fall of the Iron Curtain. Germany in particular, with its obviously successful economy, offered Czechs a picture of prosperous well-being and aroused somewhat naive expectations that by rejecting the totalitarian system, they would soon and easily become part of this. At the same time, this uncritical wonder and naive faith in a historical miracle (which also affected the political elite, as shown by statements that within ten years Czechoslovakia would be an inseparable part of Western structures and would share their economic wealth), created the conditions for the subsequent disillusionment which Czech society is witnessing at present. This is not, of course, limited to its relations with Germany, as Czechs now have adopted a degree of reserve towards Euro-Atlantic political, economic and military structures. This is notable in the assessment of the Czech Republic's entry into NATO and, to a lesser degree, of the role of the European Union.

The situation is further complicated by the Czechs' somewhat undermined "national self-consciousness", the scepticism with which the Czechs look at not only other nations and international institutions but also at themselves. This is certainly partly due to the decades of isolation from the world of developed western civilisation and the traumas of 1938 (the Munich Agreement), 1948 (the failure of the democratic parties and politicians) and 1968, when the Soviet invasion put a stop to a process which might have led to modernisation and consequently to the country moving closer to Western Europe.

Instead of the continuous development of the national economy and gradual incorporation into supra-national structures of integration, accompanied by the development of a pluralistic democratic system including the gradual adaptation of the legal system, 1948 was followed by the destruction of the structures of civil society, accompanied by the disappearance of entire social groups and classes (i.e. the peasants and the middle class) which were fundamental to the political structure and a factor in the cultivation of the social-political environment in Czechoslovakia at that time. With respect to Czech-German relations it is worth noting that a large part of the Czech political elite was destroyed under the Third Reich's occupation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. In addition, a considerable part of the Jewish community in the Czech Lands was part of the German language and cultural community, or was at least bilingual. This community could have played a positive role in the search for a *modus vivendi* between the Czech and German environments after 1989 [Suda 1995: 49]. The Jews could have had a positive influence on events in the Czech Lands after the war (including the expressions of aggressive anti-German feeling), had they not been the target of the Nazi holocaust. This drastic attack on the continuity shaping social structures in the Czech Lands removed an important social group which had played a major role in the creation of the specific cultural environment of the Czech Lands and which had for centuries acted as a intermediary with the German lands. This is one of the sources of the still existing conflicts between Czechs and Germans.

Germany (or more precisely West Germany) has obviously come a long way since 1945, first under the tutelage of the occupation forces of the western Allies[2] and then as a result of the rapid developments in the market economy and the pluralistic democratic parliamentary system. The principle of "co-operative federalism" is generally accepted and represents the practical implementation of one article of the German constitution, which demands "centralised political direction and decentralised administration". German federalism is now an instrument for the protection of regional autonomy and its vertical distribution of power also creates a further control. This principle preserves a functional central authority (the Federal Government), while distributing a considerable part of authority to the lower units of the political system.

The result of this principle in practice is various mechanisms for ensuring the democratic nature of the decision-making process in Germany. The question is whether the Czechs are fully aware of how far this change has gone in Germany since the war, and public opinion surveys of Czechs' view of Germany indicate that, at best, they have only partially realised it. This is partly the result of a lack of information on the mechanism of the decision-making process in German politics, but the expelled Sudeten Germans and their organisations have also played a role in this, as it is they who represent Germany in the eyes of the Czech public. It is the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* that are to be thanked for the repeated appearance in Czech-German relations of the ethnic-cultural view of the nation, in the sense of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, which contradicts the "patriotic constitution" (J. Habermas). With a certain degree of exaggeration it can be said that these associations keep the poles of the Czechs and Germans apart. At the same time it is clear that on the German side the exiles are seen as a link between the Czech and the German situations, while Czechs (except in exceptional circumstances) see them in the opposite light.

Germany and Czech National Identity

An attempt to define the present attitude of Czechs towards Germany one cannot avoid at least a brief look at the history of their relations in the modern era, as certain elements of these attitudes are rooted in this. Czech-German relations are closely linked on the Czech side with the Czechs' search for their own identity, the sense of their existence as a state and the role of the Czech Lands in Central Europe. There is ample proof that these relations were already competitive and conflictual within the multi-national Habsburg empire. The conflicts of the second half of the 19th century contributed greatly to the political, economic and cultural rivalry of the Czechs and 'their' Germans in the Czech Lands, which were a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This was the background against which the relations between Czechs and Germans have developed.

The geographical and social-political relations of a large part of Europe were so complex that, without any need to move, the people living there could well feel that they belonged to an ethnic majority or minority, depending on whether they were thinking of a system or a state, a group of countries or a region, a district or a town. Neither the Czechs nor the Germans in the Czech Lands were satisfied with the position of a national politi-

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[2] "The German federalist structure was completely recreated after the Second World War; on the basis of the Potsdam Agreement the allied powers reconstructed the independence of the territorial units in the hope they would contribute to democratisation" [Schubert and Wagner 1997: 74].

cal minority and they used all possible means to guard against this eventuality [Kořalka 1996: 143].

The Czechs became an ethnic group with all the attributes of their own national identity at the turn of the 20th century, by which time the social structures here included all the basic groups and classes of a modern society [Ibid.:113]. This national society also had a developed and varied political leadership. The raised self-awareness of a part of the Czech society allowed them to move from a 'defensive' nationalism to actively developing their own approach to solving problems of learning and culture, which also contributed to international comparisons. "All basic political solutions (under the Habsburg monarchy) contributed to the worsening competitiveness between ethnic Czechs and Germans in the Czech Lands" [Ibid.: 124]. It is worth recalling the opinions of Z. Suda [1995: 42], that Czech consciousness is "overly historicised" in the sense that the idea of a continual shared historical experience has played an important role in preserving the solidarity of modern Czech society (as, for instance, with the national myth of the three-hundred-year-long subjugation of Czechs under the Habsburg monarchy). There are few nations (with perhaps the exception of the Poles) for whom a sense of historical tradition has been such an important factor in the sense of a national identity. As Suda says, asking Czechs to see their long past, both glorious and tragic, as a closed chapter in the interest of starting a new partnership with a view to the future, must seem to many of them like a threat of the loss of their collective memory. The difficulty does not lie only with the Czechs and their historically rooted identity (in which myths undeniably play their role), but also in the historicising arguments of the *Landsmannschaft*. While it is true that democratic Germany today is a very different partner than in the era of National Socialism or the Weimar Republic, the main problem Czechs face in their relations with Germans is the groups of Sudeten Germans who were expelled. These are however only a segment of German society and, moreover, not all of them accept the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* (with their claims) as their representatives.[3]

The Sudeten question constantly draws Czech-German relations back into the past, attracting too great a share of interest. "The concentration on the Sudeten problem means placing an undue emphasis on conflict and lack of understanding. Czech-German relations are wider-ranging than this and are not limited only to the Sudeten question" [Rupnik 1995: 8].

The constant interpreting of Czech-German relations in the light of the Munich syndrome, of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and the post-war expulsions has greatly complicated (and delayed) the redefinition of Czech national identity in a European context The argument of historical consciousness, in combination with Germany's economic strength has reinforced the national stereotypes of Czechs' attitudes to Germans. Research has shown [Haagendorn 1997] that the growing sense of inequality is leading to the reinforcement of negative stereotypes and to an increased sense of threat.

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[3]) According to the sociological surveys carried out by the EMNID agency at the request of Spiegel magazine in Bavaria in February-April 1996, 8% of respondents said they were belonged to the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* and 28% said that they considered the association to represent them. 10% expressed a wish to return to the old country, 83% wanted to break with the past. 37% of Sudeten Germans and their children have never visited their former country since. The results of the survey are of course only an indication, as the pool of respondents (418 expelled Sudetens and their children) was not representative [*Bulletin...* 1996].

Haagendorn [Ibid.] shows that the conflictual nature of inter-ethnic relations is influenced by factors of ethnic "rivalry", which involve a combination of strength of numbers, social position (economic, political and cultural strength), historical role and international links. Czechs' relations with Germans are undoubtedly influenced by the fact that Germans are seen as former 'rulers', political, economic or cultural rivals, and even as representatives of a 'fifth column' (in the case of the Sudeten Germans).

Research into the role of stereotypes in inter-ethnic relations (as with Czechs' attitude towards Germans) has shown the stereotypes more or less represent images which reflect the specific characteristics of the target group. Comparisons between Czechs and Germans, together with a sense of relative deprivation (arising out of the Czechs' sense of economic 'insufficiency' symbolised in a simplified form by the exchange rate between the Deutschmark and the Czech crown), reinforce latent nationalistic attitudes and negative stereotypes. In this respect they more or less represent the social reality [Ibid.]. An interpretation of the attitudes of Czechs towards Germans cannot of course be straightforward, since expressed opinions need not purely represent tendencies to defensive nationalism but may express a certain patriotism which can be considered a positive emotion, expressing a sense of solidarity and an identification with the language, nation and culture - i.e. as an expression of national identity [Scrutton 1989: 75].

The complexity and multiple levels of Czechs' attitudes towards Germans are clear in the search for a deeper structure to the opinion with a view to the factors which shaped them [Houžvička, Zich and Jeřábek 1997: 52].

Aspects of Relations with Germans on the Individual Level

After 1989, the formation of attitudes towards Germans was affected by a series of geopolitical changes following the fall of the Iron Curtain. The most important of these was possibly the decline of Russian influence over Central Europe (symbolised by the disbanding of the Warsaw Pact) and the unification of the two parts of Germany in October 1990. Germany began the process of a return to the role of a European power, a processes which was accelerated by its economic power and by its major role in the integration processes of the community of Western European states. The new outlines of the situation in Central Europe were of course interpreted by the people of the Czech Republic in the context of their historical experience with their German neighbour. At the beginning there was a clear sympathy which Czechoslovakia showed for the first stages of the unification process (which in fact began in the then Czechoslovakia in summer 1989, when dozens of cars were abandoned on the streets of Prague by East Germans seeking asylum in the West German embassy) and this was also clear in 1990 in the unconditional support for unification shown by Czechoslovak foreign policy.

As the weight of the German neighbour has grown, it has been ever more possible to hear Czechs ask, "But won't a united Germany regain control over Central Europe, albeit by peaceful means, and then use this to support its own interests?" [Handl, Kural and Reiman 1997: 153].

Although sympathy for Germany in the Czech Lands has continued since 1989 (being repeatedly expressed, with varying intensity, by two thirds of those surveyed), it is possible to identify certain factors that have often given rise to concerns and prejudices [Wagnerová 1995: 10]. The most important of these is the already mentioned historical experience with the German neighbour.

Table 1.   Assessment of the Development of Czech-German Relations
             1994-1996 (in percentages)

In this period relations between the CR and Germany have	1994 September	1995 February	1996 February
improved considerably	9	9	2
improved	40	37	12
stayed the same	30	37	45
worsened	9	8	26
worsened considerably	2	1	5
don't know	10	8	10

Source: Continuous Survey by IVVM 1994-1996

Confirmation of the weight of history on Czech-German relations can be gained from an analysis of articles on the subject in the national daily newspaper *Lidové noviny* between 1991 and 1993. Relations are most often viewed through the prism of the Sudeten German question and the dominant representative of this question is the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* and their representatives.[4] The most frequently mentioned issue is that of reciprocal compensation, which accounts for one third of the published articles. The basic view is retrospective and this creates a certain media stereotype [Šmídová 1995: 41]. It is possible to agree with the idea that the media interpretation of Czech-German relations is overly-historicised, for reasons which have been shown.

On the level of individual citizens, historical experience is not the only factor influencing relations, since the relative size of the two countries, their position in Europe, and their different cultural and historical development are also important. The socio-demographic features of the various social groups also play a role, particularly the political orientation of the respondents and, to a lesser degree, their age and level of education. Supporters of the political right tend to feel more positive towards Germany and see the trend in relations with the western neighbour as positive [Houžvička, Zich and Jeřábek 1997]. Age and level of education have a somewhat lesser affect on attitudes to Germany (with people under 30 and university graduates having a more positive attitude).[5]

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[4]) In this period there was a clearly tendency towards a strengthening of historicising arguments which eventually peaked in the debate over the preparation of the Czech-German Declaration.

"The Sudeten Germans were an important subject in Czech-German relations in the first two years after November 1989, and they are now becoming overriding as the effort to come to terms with the common past and put it in perspective gathers strength. On the other hand, even in rhetorical terms it is not easy to remove the Sudeten German problem from this collectivist national concept in which it developed and of which it is both epilogue and offspring. Even so, the press is often ready to argue with the ideas of ideologues such as Franz Neubauer, whose arguments show such a classic nationalist approach that the counter-arguments are 'naturally' in the same style."

It is difficult to provide more accurate reasons why the Czech-Sudeten German dialogue continues within a tight circle. The author's call for a de-ideologised, non-nationalistic reinterpretation will apparently not be met for some time. [Šmídová 1995: 40].

[5]) The more tolerant attitudes to Germans of those with a higher level of education is confirmed by e.g. a qualitative survey carried out among students of the Philosophical and Pedagogical Faculties of Charles University in Prague (100 respondents). Two thirds of respondents saw Czech-German relations as good or very good, and 59% said that they understood the position of the Sudeten

While there have been no dramatic changes in attitudes to Germany, certain trends can be traced in their development, and these clearly follow the course of the Czech-German dialogue which peaked after 1989 with the signature of two fundamental documents: the Treaty of Good Neighbours and Friendly Collaboration in 1992 and the Czech-German Declaration of 1997.

Both documents aroused and polarised not only public opinion in the Czech Republic, but also the political elite. Before looking at the opinions of the elite, it is worth looking at the attitudes of the general public as shown from the continuous survey by IVVM, which shows a change to a more sceptical attitude towards Germany on the part of the Czechs. In view of the fact that the first knotty point in Czech-German relations in 1992 was untangled in the rather different circumstances of federal Czechoslovakia, I will concentrate on the second 'crossroads' in the Czech Republic's relations with Germany, i.e. the Common Declaration.

The independent Czech state came into being on 1 January 1993. Czechs were virtually taken by surprise and a large part of the population was hesitant about the split of the state that had been founded in 1918 and re-established in 1945 and which many people saw as the fulfilment of centuries-long aspirations towards an independent state. Without going into the circumstances in detail, it is clear that the split of Czechoslovakia was seen as a failure of the new political elite [Jičínský and Škaloud 1996: 111], a view which was shared by many foreign observers (including some German politicians from the FDP and SPD). The later moves away from a European orientation on the part of the governing coalition in Slovakia did however soften the originally harsh assessment of the split.

While in many respects the new Czech Republic continued in the political tradition of Czechoslovakia, the sudden and largely unwanted revival of the Czech state brought new problems of national identity. Czechs' social consciousness, which was already strained by the deep-reaching economic and political changes brought by the transformation, was forced to absorb the fact of the new state as something imposed on them by circumstances and to return to those roots which Czechs' dependence on history made them aware of but whose current form and significance they were less aware of. There are at least two reasons for the problems with Czech national identity in relation to Czech-German relations.

The first is that a large part of Czech society saw its identity as interwoven with the Czechoslovak state. This was clearly one of the reasons why the Czech political elite had difficulty in understanding the Slovak arguments as to why Slovaks should withdraw from the joint state which they were apparently unable to identify with. The new political elite found it difficult to come to terms with this situation, and it was even more complicated for individual social groups and classes. There is, in fact, still a part of Czech society which has not yet managed to do so.[6] The second reason why identity was important is the fact that Czechs have always tended to define themselves in the context of their relations to Germany. There are of course many stereotypes which arise in the relations to

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Germans. A surprising 46% said that their opinion of Germany was partly or completely influenced by its National Socialist past [*Prager...* 1997: 9].

[6]) See, for example, the repeatedly expressed opinions of Petr Uhl, who among other things insists on his right to retain both Czech and Slovak citizenship. He has a considerable number of reasons for this, both objective and subjective.

Germany and Germans and these are rooted in the underlying strata of opinions and attitudes.

The basic problem of Czech national identity lies in the fact that all basic factors have changed. First and foremost, there is now a united Germany (a developed democratic state with a series of safety valves built into the political system to protect it against any possible re-emergence of the nationalist past), a new geopolitical situation (Germany has moved from being an enemy to an ally) and finally changes in Czech society itself, although there has as yet been no deep structural change in the social consciousness and there are signs of a continuing adherence to the past (as with the attitudes to Germany found in public opinion surveys).

Research into Czech national identity [Kostelecký and Nedomová 1996] has identified certain basic features of Czech society in its relations with foreigners, which have doubtless influenced relations with Germany as well.

The first point is that Czech society is unusually homogeneous (94.8% of the population claim to be ethnic Czechs), partly as a result of the expulsion of German-speaking inhabitants following the Second World War. A 'typical member' of Czech society is a Czech-speaking ethnic Czech of Czech descent, who has spent most of their life in the place they were born and is closely tied to the place they live, without any intention of moving anywhere and without any direct personal experience of life abroad. The predominant feelings towards foreigners are naturally "concern, caution and suspicion" [Kostelecký and Nedomová 1996].

There is also a 'defensive structure' which attempts to lessen foreign influence. This may be a result of having twice lost national sovereignty in modern times, rather than an expression of a desire to build a 'splendid isolation'. These defensive mechanisms in the social consciousness are now directed particularly against Russia, as the heir of the Soviet Union, which people see as presenting the greatest threat to the safety and sovereignty of the Czech state. Second in the ranking of threats (although seen as so by only half the number of respondents) is Germany.

It is also interesting to note that people do not tend to see any difference between nationality and citizenship in practical life. A 'real Czech' is seen as someone who automatically has both Czech nationality and Czech citizenship. If this tendency is confirmed in the future, it will contribute to an increasing tolerance.

Features of the Czech national character (leaving aside the justifiability of this concept) which are manifest in attitudes expressed are pragmatism and scepticism. As in other surveys (e.g. the repeated surveys in border areas) [Zich 1996], it is clear that Czechs have a highly critical view of themselves. It appears that one of the main causes for the low opinion of their own nation is the lack of direct personal experience with people of other nationalities [Ibid.: 20]. It is clear that Czechs see clear distinctions between different nations and the images of nations or ethnic groups vary widely. The national aspect (in the neutral sense of the word) in people's ideas and attitudes, as expressed by the concept of 'national character', can therefore be seen to be relevant.

Both the National Identity Research Project and the surveys in the border areas have shown that the common consciousness of the Czech people exhibits a syndrome that may, with some exaggeration, be termed 'undermined national self-consciousness'. People are highly critical of the inherited features of the Czech 'national' character and also of their state. The main source of pride is the history of the Czech state, and Czech art and

literature, followed in third place by sporting successes.[7] Targets of considerable criticism are economic performance and the army (as a symbol of the state etc.).

The trends of the surveys show clearly that a close examination of the structure of Czech national consciousness will reveal that there are two basic sources of 'self consciousness', The first is the *cultural type* (history, art, literature, sport, science, technology), i.e. everything which is a result of the long-term development of the society and is relatively independent of the government and the political system. The second type of pride arises from an *evaluation of the current state* of the Czech Republic. The intensity with which these feelings are expressed depends on the personal characteristics of the respondent.[8]

This plays a role in the formation of Czechs' attitudes towards Germans. The personal characteristics of the respondent (age, level of education, social posotion, political orientation) contribute greatly to the degree of tolerance of Germans (and of foreigners in general). The changing pattern of Czechs' attitudes exhibits an overly critical view of themselves and a pronounced admiration of Germany, which was influenced by the post-revolutionary euphoria after 1989 and thrust historical resentment and past conflicts into the background (albeit for a limited period). A world of prosperous well-being and functioning democracy had opened up, and this was accompanied by a somewhat naive belief that the rejection of the totalitarian system would soon make the Czech Republic a part of this. Czechs also fell prey to the illusion of a lack of conflict (which recalls Fukuyama and his *End of History*), abandoning the image of Germany as an enemy and seeing Germans as confident, clever, educated, rich, reliable, honest and so on. This uncritical admiration was strongest among those aged under thirty. Czechs' view of themselves, on the other hand, incorporated a whole range of negative characteristics, amounting to a virtual self-flagellation. Czech saw themselves as a mass of negative qualities (bad, disobliging, unreliable, poor, timid, etc.) [Zich 1996: 18]

The Czech media played a certain role in this 'self-examination' by offering Czechs a rather one-sided view of themselves. A typical example is an article by P. Příhoda [1990], *Naši Němci* (Our Germans), on the ethical aspects of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans. I see no problem in his asking questions about the ethical core of this expulsion (or forced resettlement as it is termed in the Declaration). What is more of a problem is the interpretation of the expulsion in the light of present-day ideas of human rights, removing it from the historical context, seeing expulsion as an act of genocide and even talking of the collective guilt of the Czech people. The article also confuses three different levels of the fact of resettlement: the concrete historical fact, the moral one and the present-day political one [Kučera 1994: 369]. Příhoda leaves to one side the fact that the trauma of the expulsion had been preceded by the no less dramatic trauma of a threat to the very existence of the Czech nation as a direct result of the disappearance of independent Czechoslovakia.[9]

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[7]) Results of *Borderlands 91-96* and *Czech National Identity 95* surveys.

[8]) *Czech National Identity 95*, p. 10.

[9]) "Specifically, the Czech trauma of the disappearance of the Czech nation, which was pursued by the revivalist generation prior to March 1938, was common throughout the Czech world after 1939, as they knew that a German victory would mean the end of the nation's existence." From a letter by R. Luze to Z. Hejdánek. In [*Češi,...* 1990: 162].

The extensive and exhaustive discussion of the expulsion in dissident circles in the late 1970s and early 1980s and on the pages of the exile review *Svědectví*, which saw it as a key question of post-war relations between Czechs and Germans, was unfortunately not repeated to the same degree after 1989. The greatest publicity was given to opinions calling for a unilateral revision of the post-war resettlement of the Czech Germans. Here I quote Příhoda again: "It may be asked how a nation of Central Europe with a thousand years of Christian tradition fell in the course of a few weeks to a level of pagan barbarity and at the same time to a state of impersonalised thinking, characteristic of the contemporary totalitarianism. This is the question which we Czechs should be asking ourselves today. And we should not be content with a purely scientific explanation." [Příhoda 1990: 22]

The generalisation of this statement must be rejected. On the one hand it was not the whole nation that fell, and on the other we should not forget the causal connection with the occupation by the Nazi regime. Were there not similarly motivated expressions of retaliation in liberated France? Like other nations, Czech society underwent a rupture as a result of the Nazi crimes, and this meant a step into the post-modern era. The classic ideals of European humanism went up with the smoke from the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

Ideas of critical self-examination came to the forefront in a society whose previous value system had collapsed and which had not yet had time to formulate a new one. The chaos of ideas and doubts concerning the legitimate sovereignty of the state were deepening among large groups of society. Such "self-examination" may have acted as a catharsis if Czech society had shared the characteristics of a partner with such self-confidence as Germany (social well-being, a functioning democracy, the social structures of civil society, decades of continuity in the development of the pillars of the middle class and the power elites, etc.). These were, and still are, lacking in post-1989 Czechoslovakia (and later the Czech Republic), for reasons that are only too well known.

A similar view is given by E. Hahnová, who says that, "Traditional stereotypical fears (...) prevent Czechs from looking at Germans confidently, as political partners. (...) If Czechs could cease to see themselves as a nation that has been oppressed by Germans for centuries, overthrown at White Mountain and sold to Hitler's Germany by their German-speaking fellow citizens, they could perhaps perceive the culturally and politically diverse society of Germany today and stop viewing the Bonn government as a power centre on whose will the solution of the Sudeten German problem depends." [Hahnová 1996: 216]

Surveys show that opinions of Germany and the displaced Sudetens are becoming more diverse. While there is a greater openness and tolerance towards Germany, there are still reservations about the demands of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft*, which claims to represent all those who were expelled. There is a certain rationality to this position, however, (even if there is a dash of stereotyping present in it), as Hahnová, as a historian, is undoubtedly aware. At the sane time, the post-1989 dialogue between Czechs and 'their' former Germans can be seen to have had a degree of success, in that there is now a greater variation of opinions among the formerly monolithic Sudeten German society (the Circle of Friends of Czech-German Understanding in March 1998, for example, claimed that the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* include only 8% of expelled Sudetens, and rejected them as exclusive representatives).

It should also not be forgotten that the results of current surveys show some signs of tolerance of former Czech Germans, as with the repeated statement by almost three quarters of respondents that they would have no objections to the presence of Sudeten German families as neighbours [Houžvička et al 1997]. The rejection of the demands of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* (by more than three quarters of those surveyed) should not therefore be seen as proof of mass anti-German feeling in Czech society. Quite the reverse, it is a sign of the ability to distinguish between the different aspects of Czech-German relations. Proof of the relatively objective assessment of relations between Germany and the Czech Republic can be seen in the following view of what obstacles there are in the way of good relations.

Table 2.   Obstacles in the way of Czech-German Co-operation (in percentages)

factor	1993	1994	1996	1997
differences in language	44	39	47	43
differences in national character	52	46	50	55
differences in purchasing power of the currencies	85	77	82	82
differences in prices	81	69	78	76
historical events	40	44	57	62
political system	30	34	30	45
poor transport links	41	33	26	25
lack of information	55	30	25	27

Source: Special research team, Border Areas 1993-97.

In the eyes of the people of the Czech Republic, economic inequality in their relations with Germany had pushed the historic factor into second place. The clear priority placed on the influence of the difference in the purchasing power of the respective currencies and on the price differentials shows that everyday contacts with the richer neighbour were seen in a very pragmatic light.

There are two trends indicated in the table that are worth noting. First, the marked rise in the importance of historical events (the so-called reminiscence factor), presumably caused by the raising of the topic of expulsion by the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft*. The second notable shift shows how much more informed people were about Germany.

The change in the Czechs' originally tolerant attitude towards the demands was probably due to the delays in the preparation of the Declaration and to the debate itself. One model of the way in which the opinions of both public and elite gradually became critical in the discussions on the 'Declaration' is the commentary in *Lidové noviny*.[10]

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[10]) To mention only some [Třeštík 1995: 8], or [Putna 1996: 2].

Ideas on the German problem were developed by V. Bělohradský in particular. He refers to the dilemma of finding an identity for a united Germany and its connection with the new Czech national identity that is now taking shape (as a direct result of the split of Czechoslovakia and the emergence of an independent Czech state) in the following way: "Will the united Germany become part of a non-centrist Europe, a western, relativist and liberal 'demos', or it will fall prey to its former demons which will whisper that it should be the 'empire of the centre' in which Europeanism is primarily something 'ethnic'? I think that Germany's neighbours should support those Germans who see their country's orientation towards the West as liberating and definitive. We

Václav Havel's speech on Czech-German relations at the Karolinum on 17 November 1995 brought new momentum to the Czech-German (but also primarily the Czech-Czech) discussions. Following this there was the challenge by 165 Czech and German intellectuals, largely of Christian orientation, calling on the Czech government to negotiate directly with the Sudeten German organisations. Petr Pithart defended this challenge on the pages of *Lidové noviny*, saying "Negotiations at the government level with the political representatives of the Sudeten Germans would certainly be a far from a standard move, just as what happened between us was also far from standard" [Pithart 1995: 8]. The basic idea of the challenge, i.e. direct negotiations between the Czech government and the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft*, was rejected by all the major Czech political parties.

People living in the border areas of the Czech Republic have a different view of the expulsion of the Germans and almost 90% of those questioned see the Sudeten German question as still open (at least in part). Opinions about the simple fact of the expulsion of the German-speaking inhabitants of the Czech Lands are still changing.

Table 3.   Opinions on the Expulsions (in percentages)

Answer	1991	1994	1996	1997
Justified, since the Sudeten Germans destroyed the Republic	27.0	28.1	30.3	27.3
Justified, but I have reservations about the way they were carried out	39.5	37.0	42.8	41.4
Sudeten Germans broke up the Republic, it was the powers that decided	6.2	10.8	10.1	12.6
They were unjust	6.4	4.7	2.3	4.1
They were unjust and cruel	3.2	2.9	2.6	3.7
Don't know, no opinion	14.0	12.6	7.9	6.4

Source: The survey of borderland team.

From the comparison it is clear that the number holding each point of view is more or less stable, although the number of those justifying the expulsions has risen slightly. This can imply that this tendency was supported by the repeated demands of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft*. Political orientation is a more important influence on opinions than is age, as almost three quarters of those describing themselves as left wing consider that the expulsions were just, while those on the right tend to fall into the group of agreement with some reservations.

The opinions of people living in the border areas as to the possibility of resolving the Sudeten German question are a crucial factor in the Czech-German settlement.

Czechs are however stopped from doing so by the Iron Curtain which the Sudeten German attempt to monopolise the dialogue has erected between us and those Germans." [Bělohradský 1993: 6].

"The idea of a political concept of the German problem and of the need to keep a joint watch over it has split Europe along entirely new lines, into those countries which apparently support the ethnic principle (Germany) and the rest. It would mean the disintegration of everything that has been built in Europe with fifty years of joint effort." [Doležal 1995a]

Table 4.   Possible Solutions to the Sudeten German Question (in percentages)

Variant of solution	1991	1994	1996	1997
An apology is sufficient	23.6	21.4	55.1	47.8
Concede to all demands	0.6	0.1	0.1	x
Restitution of property	1.7	4.9	2.5	3.1
Allow them to purchase property	14.4	23.6	20.2	x
Provide financial compensation	3.4	7.1	6.8	8.6
Compensation only if reciprocal	47.4	59.0	63.4	x
Do not negotiate at all	17.7	19.6	18.1	17.4
Everything will sort itself out	17.8	23.0	10.4	23.0
Everything will be solved by the CR's entry into the EU	x	19.0	12.6	17.5
The Declaration is the basis of a resolution	x	x	33.4	13.0

Note: x – the question was not posed.
Source: The survey of borderland team.

It is interesting that the number of supporters of Václav Havel's apology has more than doubled over a five-year period, although it is somewhat limited by the fact that this generous gesture was not reciprocated on the German side.

One specific response to the raising of the Sudeten German question on the Czech political scene was the foundation of a voluntary association, the Czech Borderlands Club (KČP). Since 1992 a number of organisations have appeared throughout the whole area of the Czech-German border, aiming to "protect" the Czech border areas from the pressure of Germanisation. A regular publication – *Českomoravský hraničář* (Czech-Moravian Frontiersman) – is the principal media platform of the association, whose ideas can be seen from their position on the Czech-German Declaration:

– The Declaration should be aimed purely at the future.

– The Potsdam Agreement put a full stop to the past.

– The Beneš decrees are a pillar of the legal system.

– The property claims of the Sudeten Germans should be rejected, together with other demands. (Shortened) ["K otázkám…" 1995].

According to the secretariat of the KČP, it has between 35 and 40 thousand members and sympathisers in the border areas. The *Borderlands 96* and *Borderlands 97* surveys show that 5-6% of respondents agree with the platform of the KČP, although only one third of all respondents were aware it exists. It is not impossible that the Club's opinions, which are patriotic and markedly left wing, are shared by more people than the surveys indicate. Fears of being seen as political extremists or nationalists could lead some people to alter their responses.

Thus the whole course of the debate preceding the signing of the Declaration confirmed that Czech politics and public opinion are far from united on the subject of Germany and the expulsions [Bednář 1996: 8].[11]

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[11] "The post-war transfer of a large part of the German minority, which had posed a political threat to democratic peace in Europe since the second half of the 19th century and was at the root of two world wars, cannot be seen as morally ideal but rather as a historical punishment. The moral impetus behind it came from the democratic Allies and the Czech resistance. If the German

The second factor (obstacle) which changed considerably between 1993 and 1997 is the degree of knowledge about Germany. Table 1 shows that the number of those seeing a lack of information as an obstacle to Czech-German relations fell by a half. This essentially positive trend must of course be placed against other factors showing that the majority (more than 70% in 1996) have some reservations about the way in which the Czech mass media report on relations between the Czech Republic and Germany. There is also the question of how reliable this self-analysis by the public actually is. Certain facts indicate that there is in fact a lack of information – in 1995 only 17% of Czechs could name the German president [Naumann and Gabal 1995]. At the beginning of 1995 there was a survey aimed at determining how aware Czechs were of German politicians ["Jak známe... 1995: 23]. The best known were Helmut Kohl (81%), Erich Honecker (45%), Willi Brandt (37%), Richard von Weizsäcker (32%), Hans Dietrich Genscher (24%), Klaus Kinkel (21%), Konrad Adenauer (21%), Franz J. Strauss (17%), Walter Ulbricht (13%) and Franz Neubauer (11%). It is interesting that the list of those who respondents named lacked such important figures in German politics as the former West German Chancellors (Ludwig Erhard and Helmut Schmidt).

In the light of these facts, it seems that the Czech public tends to over-evaluate its level of knowledge about Germany. This ultimately confirms the idea that more information about life in Germany could improve relations [Naumann and Gabal 1995], a view that has been repeatedly held by almost 80% of respondents.

Another sign of contradictory tendencies in attitudes to Germans is the conflicting degree of sympathy which Czechs feel towards Germany and their preferences for it as an economic and political partner. While in April 1997 Germany was tenth on the list of the most attractive countries in the world ["Sympatie..." 1997], it should be noted that the level of sympathy for all countries fell from its 1995 level, in the case of the USA by 17%, compared to Germany's 7%. The first three places are always taken by France, Austria and Great Britain.

On the other hand, other surveys from 1995-1997 [Kostelecký and Nedomová 1995; Houžvička 1996, 1997] show Germany as having a clear margin in first place among countries with which the Czech Republic should collaborate in the political and economic spheres.

public and the political elite cannot recognise this, reconciliation in a European spirit is immaterial." [Doležal 1995b]

There may be different opinions of the post-war expulsions. Some (including myself), for example, disagree with Havel and maintain that the expulsions were an atrocity that can to some degree be explained by the past (as a man may explain his murdering his unfaithful wife by saying she was unfaithful), but under no circumstances justified.

Table 5.   Who Should the Czech Republic Work with Most Closely in the Economic Sphere (in percentages)

Country	Identity survey 1995 (nation-wide)	Borderlands survey 1996	1997
Germany	73.3	45.4	41.4
USA	33.9	17.3	17.8
Austria	33.7	x	x
Slovakia	x	6.5	10.8

Source: [Kostelecký and Nedomová 1995; Houžvička 1996, 1997]

Table 6.   Advantageousness of Political (Military) Collaboration between the Czech Republic and Germany (in percentages)

Country	Identity (nation-wide) 1995	Country	Borderlands 1996	1997
1. Germany	56.6	1. Germany	25.8	30.1
2. Slovakia	34.1	2. USA	17.3	27.7
3. Austria	33.7	3. Slovakia	6.5	10.8

Source: [Kostelecký and Nedomová 1995; Houžvička 1996, 1997]

It is primarily the younger generation and those that sympathise with the political right who consider Germany to be both a valuable and also the closest partner for the Czech Republic. All surveys, however, indicate that around half of all respondents consider Germany to be a potential threat to the sovereignty of the Czech state (putting it second after Russia). The number of people who are afraid of Germany's possible moves towards dominance of Central and Eastern Europe is notably higher among older age groups and left-wing voters.

People's attitudes towards particular aspects of the partnership between the Czech Republic and Germany indicate that they are aware of the importance of collaboration but are at the same time 'on their guard' about Germany's policies towards Central and Eastern Europe. This combination of respect and circumspection is also evident in their assessments of the role of the German economy. In 1995, 15% of respondents considered that the entry of such major German firms as Volkswagen or Siemens into Czech industry should be supported, 39% felt that no moves should be taken for or against it, and 40% thought that moves should be taken to limit their involvement [Naumann and Gabal 1995].

In 1996, almost half of those questioned ["Mínění... 1966] considered that Germany had a negative effect on the Czech economy. Such attitudes clearly reflect the opinions of some economists and politicians that the Czech Republic is in danger of becoming an 'assembly line' for the German economy. In spite of this, research by the borderlands team in 1996 into the share of companies with some foreign capital did not find any grounds for these fears, and indeed found that in their sample of twenty towns on the Czech-Saxony and Czech-Bavarian borders the presence of German capital was less than expected. Both representatives of the local administrations (mayors, clerks, council members) and of the management of companies working in the area were in agreement on this fact.

Czechs' views on the role of the German economy can be seen clearly from the following overview.

Table 7.   Assessment of the Influence of Germany on the Czech Economy
             (in percentages)

German influence	February 1995	February 1996
Decidedly favourable	12	9
Favourable	36	30
Unfavourable	18	23
Decidedly unfavourable	21	25
Don't know	13	13

Source: [Kostelecký and Nedomová 1995; "Mínění..." 1996].

It is clear that Czech social consciousness is well rooted in the historicising stereotypical ideas of the aims of German politics, although this is often a direct reaction to the arguments of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* and the pressure of the German economy. The figures given above can be interpreted as the result of a certain rigidity in attitudes towards Germany and of the closed Czech environment. Similar concerns about Germany are however to be found in other countries, such as Poland.[12] There are also similar fears about the aims of the German economy from British politicians. We need only recall Margaret Thatcher's regular confidential discussions with leading British and American historians, in which she sought to determine whether the new Germany is in fact different to the old. Similar concerns regularly emerge among some politicians, intellectuals and businessmen in France, Britain and the Netherlands [Berghahn 1996: 2]. People are afraid that the bankers and businessmen of the new Germany are continuing with the earlier concept of *Grossraum Politik*. These concerns are however generally thrust into the background by the fact that German economics and foreign policy represent many partial interests which often cancel one another out so that no single aim of German dominance in Germany has yet been identified. The fears of Germany's neighbours are more an extrapolation of historical experience with Germany's expansive idea of its role in Europe.

In France, the debate on the 'German question' gained new intensity at the end of the 1980s (having in fact continued uninterrupted since 1945). Relevant here was the approach of German diplomats on the eve of the collapse of Yugoslavia, as well as the proposal which F. W. Christians (Deutsche Bank) made to Edvard Shevardnadze in 1988 that Kaliningrad (formerly Königsberg – East Prussia) should be "Europeanised" as a centre "for the exchange of people, ideas, capital and goods". The ever suspicious French press saw there wide-ranging ambitions, particularly in connection with the suggestion that this city could be attractive to returnees from among the Volga Germans (deported to Central Asia and Siberia by Stalin) [Ibid.: 31].

Although many German academics, intellectuals and politicians, and particularly the fully functional pluralist democratic political system, are proof of the real rebirth of Germany, doubts still remain. Here the reservations of parts of Czech society are by no means unusual in the European context.

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[12]) The increasing demands of the German minority in Opolian Silesia, which is already well represented in the administration and many of whose demands were met by the Polish-German Treaty, are very badly regarded by Poles in general. The latter are aware of the surprising disproportion in the fulfilment of treaty obligations on the German side towards Poles living in Germany [Lesiuk 1994: 132].

Czechs' attitudes towards Germany vary widely and exhibit a number of contradictory values. While at first sight this may make them seem a muddle of inconsistent opinions, in fact they more or less realistically reflect the characteristic features (partial constants of the German character) defined by the German sociologist, W. Hellpach in 1954: compulsion to work, thoroughness, orderliness, lack of courtesy, inflexibility and romanticism [Musil and Suda 1995: 25]. Similarly, students from the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University and the Central European University found in 1994 [Ibid.: 25] the following positive features of Germans: orderliness, reliability, precision, talent for organisation and willingness to work hard. The most commonly mentioned negative characteristics were aggressiveness, expansionism, arrogance, noisiness and pessimism linked with irrationality. The results of surveys in the Czech-German border area (a belt of 18 districts directly bordering on Germany) [Zich 1997: 49] showed that the largest number of respondents agreed with the statements that Czechs should show greater pride in their dealings with Germany, and that it is possible for Czechs and Germans to live together in peace and calm.

In summary, it can be said that the attitudes of people living in the Czech Republic towards Germans are a complicated mix of fear, admiration and pragmatic tolerance. They are the sum of the negative experience of the historical consciousness, reflecting the conflicts between Czechs and Germans in the past (Palacký's association and conflict, Rádl's War between Czechs and Germans) and direct social experience with present-day Germany's developed economy, functioning system of parliamentary democracy and civil society. At the same time there is a degree of equivocation, a swaying backwards and forwards between a lingering sense of threat, the influence of a powerful neighbour whose very presence and size arouse a sense of challenge, and a dominance, which, thanks to the geopolitical connections, is seen by Czechs as a link to the Euro-Atlantic structure and the circle of Western civilisation.

Final Note

The past conflicts of Czech-German coexistence are still latent in attitudes today and form the background to current Czech-German relations. This is particularly true of older people whose personal experience of the Nazi era has done much to shape their attitudes. Czechs apparently distinguish between relations with Germany (its culture, economy, political system) and the problem of the Sudeten Germans expelled from the former Czechoslovakia. Two types of attitudes are becoming more and more embedded: a positive view of Germany, and a rejection of the demands of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft* (in both cases accounting for 65-70% of respondents).

The most important factor in determining relations with Germany is political orientation. People tending to the right have a notably more positive attitude towards the role of Germany and to collaboration with it (the difference between supporters of the right-wing ODS and of the Social Democrats is between one-third and one-half). The degree of openness and tolerance of Germany also depends on age (particularly those under thirty), with younger and more highly educated people (university graduates) being much more positive towards the Czech Republic's western neighbour. People inclined towards the left, on the other hand, are more likely to express reservations and even some doubts about the advantages of collaboration between the Czech Republic and Germany and about the ultimate aims of the latter's foreign policy and economic activity in Central Europe.

It is clear that the polarisation of opinions is dependent not only on the 'Sudeten problem', but also on the course of the transformation of Czech society. The economic inequality between the two systems is increasingly important in relations with Germany, being approximately twice as important in the minds of people living in the border areas as is the weight of historical memory of the conflicts between Czechs and Germans in modern times (the disappearance of independent Czechoslovakia, the occupation under the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, the expulsion of the German-speaking inhabitants of the Czech Lands).

Germany is seen as a politically and economically important country with which it is both necessary and desirable to work. At the same time, the majority of respondents expect that any collaboration will be in a context of the sovereignty and partnership of both countries. Relations with Germany, and particularly with the states of Saxony and Bavaria which share borders with the Czech Republic, will continue to be a divisive factor among both Czech politicians and the general public. This should be reflected in the timing and content of the different phases of Czech foreign policy in drawing closer to NATO and the European Union.

Translated by April Retter

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HUMAN RIGHTS AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Course Dates: July 5-July 16, 1999

Course Directors: Professor Arthur C. Helton, Director, Forced Migration Projects, Open Society Institute, Adjunct Professor of Law, New York University
Professor Boldizsár Nagy, Associate Professor, Eötvös Loránd University, Recurring Visiting Professor, CEU

Resource Persons: Professor Alastair Ager, Queen Margaret College (Edinburgh)
Bernadette A. Brusco, Consultant: Open Society Institute
Professor Danièle Joly, University of Warwick
Professor Will Kymlicka, University of Ottawa
Professor Gil Loescher, University of Notre Dame
Nuala Mole, Director, AIRE Centre (London)
Marina Murvanidze, Consultant: Open Society Institute
Professor Vello Andres Pettai, University of Tartu
Professor Endre Sik, Budapest University of Economics

Course Description: Purpose

The aim of the course is to offer an intensive interdisciplinary review of the law (with a focus on human rights) and other social sciences related to the refugee (forced displacement) phenomenon. Centred around a comprehensive approach to the process from forced displacement and its causes to durable solutions, the lectures present insights from a variety of disciplines – including law, political science, international relations, sociology, social psychology, and other interdisciplinary inquiries such as the study of nationalism.

The course is designed for an audience with varied backgrounds. Scholars who are used to broad statements about "refugees" will investigate the law and associated values at the universal level, with significant regional dimensions. Practitioners will become acquainted with the sociological problems of integration, and the psychological complexities of traumatised, isolated persons. After the course, each participant should have a deeper knowledge of forced displacement in his/her own field and a clear understanding of the interrelationships between the fields. They should have the resources to develop a curriculum, conduct research and analyse issues of forced migration.

Course level and target audience

Because of its interdisciplinary character, the assumption is that participants will have at least a basic level of knowledge of the topic within their own field of specialisation, but have little or none in the other aspects of forced displacement. The course is designed for a varied audience with different professional backgrounds, who nevertheless have common characteristics: they are educators or researchers associated with educational institutions, or graduate policymakers in their early to middle careers.

Course content

The course is issue oriented, combining insights on forced displacement from different disciplines. It introduces the participants to classical and current relevant literature, theories and documents necessary to develop and support the capacities of university faculty, professionals and policy-makers in the areas of human rights and forced displacement.

Germany and the Germans in the Attitudes of People Living on the Czech-German Border

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Abstract: The article deals with the attitude of the population living along the Czech-German borders to Germany and Germans. It is based on a series of empirical sociological surveys conducted since 1990. Improvement of good neighbourly relations is a condition necessary for the inclusion of the former socialist countries into European integration processes. The relationship between Czechs and Germans has been historically affected primarily by World War Two and its consequences. In addition, the present attitude of Czech people to Germans is affected by the different level of economic development reflected mainly in different purchasing power, and by communication difficulties resulting from poor knowledge of language and other factors. The results of the survey show the prevalence of positive stances to Germans and Germany as such. Germany is perceived as a country with which it is worth all-round co-operation. Besides openness and confidence, the analysis has also revealed the existence of relatively strong vigilance toward the German neighbour. The 'image' of a German in the minds of the population of the Czech borderlands is generally more positive than the 'image' of their own compatriots. At the same time the results show that these 'images' are gradually converging. The attitude to so-called 'Sudeten Germans' is also generally positive but the majority reject all claims raised by certain Sudeten-German organisations for settlement or revision of their transfer from Czechoslovakia after World War Two.
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The success of integration processes and the stability of large multi-national regions presupposes good relations between neighbouring states and nations. This is of course particularly important in the case of European integration, where these processes must overcome a series of conflicts, real and imagined wrongs and misunderstandings over history. Even if many of these points of past conflict have been resolved or at least settled, particularly in Western Europe during the building and working of the European Union, nothing has been forgotten and the relatively satisfactory situation that exists between nations in this multi-nation space cannot be taken as settled once and for all. This is borne out not only by the problems arising with the integration of further European countries into the structures of the European community, or conflicts over joint undertakings (e.g. the single currency, the degree of integration, the power of centralised institutions, problems of subsidiary, etc.), but also by the existence and indeed from recent indications the growth of various extremist and nationalist movements and organisations in different countries. On the other hand, there is a general will to make these joint undertakings a success, and a rational approach based on experience to finding a way for various nations and cultures to live together in this European space.

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Without effective collaboration, and a certain level of organisational and executive integrity, it would be very difficult to create the necessary conditions for the continuing resolution of possible national and ethnic tensions in Europe (not to speak of their social and economic causes and results). It is entirely natural that the Czech Republic has tried to join the European Union and other supra-national organisations and to use the processes of integration to resolve its own problems and pursue its own interest in this relatively new situation.

In the light of Czech participation in the processes of European integration, it is necessary to clarify and resolve various problems relating to (among other things) its relations with its neighbour, Germany. This is due not only to the length of the common border, the number of inhabitants and the fact that Germany is clearly the economically strongest and most politically influential country in the EU, but also to the continuing tensions in relations between the two countries.

A number of questions were re-opened following the fall of the Iron Curtain, including various problems relating to the coexistence of different national groupings in the first Czechoslovak Republic, the guilt for its collapse, and the course of the German occupation and its consequences (particularly the transfer of the ethnic Germans) after the defeat of fascist Germany. It is impossible to ignore the attempts of the homeland organisations of the displaced Germans (*Sudetendeutsche Landsmannschaft*) to review the very act of their transfer and the documents forming the legislative foundation for the post-war transfer of Germans from the then Czechoslovakia (international agreements between the victorious powers and particularly the so-called Beneš decrees). They have reopened old wounds in relations with Germans and Austrians and these are having a strong influence on the state of Czech-German and Czech-Austrian relations today.

The historical and political aspects of these events are being widely discussed and this has led to a deeper understanding of the various positions and thrown light on some taboos (particularly among the Czechs) relating to the actual course of the expulsions. Many questions, particularly of changing attitudes, are still open and require further steps, contacts and moves to resolve them (if, of course, they are in fact soluble). The so-called Sudeten German question has received considerable attention in the media. Questions of the justice or injustice of the transfer and the coverage of the Sudeten Germans' demands for "compensation" are discussed with various attitudes and intensities, as are the questions of cause and guilt. An evaluation of this debate would require a separate study, but it can be said that, despite a certain attempt at objectivity and neutrality, the nature of the debate is strongly influenced by the general stance of the newspaper or magazine. The media is strongly influenced by public opinion and attitudes, and any lack of balance can distort attitudes and aggravate both internal and cross-border relations.[1] For example, the fact that they place too great an emphasis on the excesses committed by the Czechs during the transfer without trying to explain the origins of these excesses, which lie deep in the wrongs done to Czechs by the Germans (including and sometimes principally by the

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[1] As, for example, *Lidové noviny* frequently presents the opinions of supporters of the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft*, including the views of their representatives [see Neubauer 1997]. The dailies *Mladá fronta Dnes* and particularly *Právo* are more neutral towards the representatives and tend to reject the views of the Sudeten Germans. Party newspapers such as *Haló noviny* (Communist) and *Republika* (Republican) adopt strongly negative positions towards the demands of the Sudeten Germans.

Sudeten Germans) arouses a defensive reaction which reinforces the position of those adopting a nationalist standpoint.[2] Among those groups of people who do not suffer from a priori nationalistic prejudices this is more likely to arouse a sense of guilt, which is another obstacle hindering the formation of a rational national consciousness.

One specific example of people's reactions to pressure from Sudeten German organisations is the founding of the Czech Borderlands Clubs. While these do not have any great force (surveys in the border areas showed that slightly less than 38% of respondents were aware of the clubs' activities),[3] but their platform is directed at a consistent defence of national interests and could become a ground for developing Czech nationalism, against the background of a strong and influential Germany and the activities of the displaced Germans' organisations. At present, Czech nationalism is primarily represented by the Republican Party (SPR-RSČ). The continuing sensitivity of this matter is borne out by the 62% of people living in border areas who see historical links between Czechs and Germans as important for the development of collaboration. Even if people see the different economic levels of the two countries as a stronger factor in determining current relations with Germany, the events of the countries' common past should not be disregarded.

In the political sphere, a document was drawn up and accepted by both parliaments with the aim of providing an acceptable basis for overcoming past conflicts and misunderstandings and so creating a ground for optimising future coexistence. The Czech-German Declaration [Češi... 1997: 221] was undoubtedly drawn up with the best of wills and lays down the preconditions for resolving conflicts, or at least preventing them from intensifying, but as will be shown, it is controversial and has not met with unqualified acceptance on either side of the border. The opinions and experiences of the people living near the Czech-German border indicate that this document will not resolve problems between the two countries. Fewer than 13% of respondents consider that the declaration has resolved the points of conflict from the past. Moreover, 33% consider that it has little significance and the rest (54%) think that it has none at all. The lack of enthusiasm with which this document has been received in some quarters is due not only to its inherent shortcomings, but is rather proof that the roots of the problems in relations between the two countries are too complex to be resolved by a single document. Nonetheless, despite the various complications, the moves that have been made on the basis of the Czech-German Declaration (the founding of the Czech-German Future Fund, the Czech-German discussion forum) aim to increase deeper mutual understanding and collaboration.

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[2]) Nationalism is understood here as going beyond the level of 'reasonable patriotism'. It is linked with a feeling or judgement that the principle of political and national unity underlying the social system has been disturbed. As Gellner [1993: 12] said, nationalism is an original political principle which proclaims that the political and the national units must be one and the same.

[3]) "The attitudes of people living in the border areas toward Germany and to questions of European integration" – empirical sociological research carried out by a research group of the Sociological Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Ústí nad Labem 1997. The research was carried out in all districts bordering on Germany. Respondents were selected by the quota method and questioning was conducted by specially-trained secondary school students from the border areas. The sample included 929 completed questionnaires, which represent about 1.5 per thousand of the adult population of the area. All variables considered indicated that the sample was representative of the adult population of the border areas. Unless otherwise stated, all data used is taken from this study.

Alongside the weight of history there are a number of other facts which have a considerable influence on Czech-German relations today and also influence opinions about and attitudes to Germans and Germany and are therefore important for the future development of good relations. The first of these is the different economic strength of the two countries, which people living in border areas see mainly in terms of the differing purchasing power of the currencies, and of the differences in the prices of goods and services. In repeated surveys in these areas, people saw these as by far the most important factors in the development of cross-border collaboration, with 82% expressing this opinion [Houžvička et al. 1997: 21]. It is clear that people view these economic differences primarily from the point of view of their everyday interests, where the strong German mark and weak Czech crown put them in an unbalanced and more or less subordinate position which is damaging to their self confidence and behaviour. Here the roots of the ambivalent attitudes of Czechs to Germans, often referred to in the media, are clear. On the one hand, there is a growing national pride and patriotism, while on the other people are grasping for marks and hanging out signs saying '*Zimmer frei*'. A sociological analysis shows that this ambivalence is in some degree a confirmation of the level of this inner personal (socially psychological) inconsistency in attitudes adopted and on the other hand is evidence of people's pragmatism. This analysis does, however, also show the important social differentiation between people holding these attitudes. There are groups of people who see these differences simply as a fact and do not try to make use of this situation for any reason, while others very intentionally and pragmatically take advantage of the economic differences and certainly do not see these as factors influencing the negative development of collaboration. These groups will be discussed in more detail later.

Some problems in the development of relations can lie in what is interpreted as the national character as it appears in different ways of life, ideas, cultural features, and so forth. The difference between the national characters of Czechs and Germans was noted by about half the respondents in the Czech border areas and almost three quarters of them felt that this difference had a strong influence on developments.

By no means last is the role of communications in relations, largely due to the low level of knowledge of each other's language. People living in the border areas place considerable importance on this factor (43% seeing it as major).[4]

For Czechs and particularly for those living near the German border there is a constant supply of difficult questions, which influence their actual attitudes towards Germans and to Germany as a neighbour and future partner in European structures. There is a range of influences shaping these attitudes. In order to understand the possible means of contact between people and the probable development of cross-border relations in the area it is important to understand people's attitudes. This is also important for the maintenance of good relations on the political and inter-state levels.

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[4]) In the 1994 survey, in answer to the question: "How well do you know German?", 6% of respondents said they could speak it very well, even on abstract subjects, 25% said they could speak well enough to talk about everyday matters, 26% said they had only a passive knowledge, and 36% said they knew only a few words. 7% said they did not know any German at all. Knowledge of German corresponds closely to the age of the respondents. This survey showed that a majority of respondents in the youngest age group claimed to speak German well or very well ["Názory..." 1994].

This article takes the results of empirical sociological research in order to try and throw light on the attitudes of people living on the Czech side of the Czech-German border towards Germany and Germans. The surveys were carried out by a detached team of the Sociological Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Ústí nad Labem, with the support of the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic, and have been carried out each year since 1990. The pool was a representative sample of 1000-1500 people living in the border area. The results also make it possible to study changes in attitudes over time.[5] The results of other nation-wide surveys were also used in order to sketch out people's attitudes to Germany.

1. The Image of Germany in the Minds of People Living in the Border Areas

The survey in 1997 showed that the majority of people living in the Czech border area see Germany as the main partner with which the Czech Republic should collaborate in economic and political matters. Orientation towards other developed Western countries (Great Britain, France, USA, etc.) is definitely in second place. The 'traditional' links with the countries of the former 'Eastern bloc', which were formerly determined by COMECON and the Warsaw Pact, are not now seen as important. Russia is, in fact, the country that is most often seen as a threat.

In this respect the position of Germany is often ambivalent, as while more than 60% of respondents in the border area see it as a country with which it is necessary to work economically and politically, more than a third of respondents tend to see Germany as a possible threat.

Fewer respondents see Slovakia as a useful partner than the long-term coexistence between the two countries would indicate. Slovakia is also in fourth place among countries which could pose a threat. The position of the Czech Republic's other neighbours, Poland and Austria, is more or less the same as that of the developed countries of Western Europe (France and Great Britain). Respondents did not see these countries as posing any potential threat.[6]

The same questions were asked in a nation-wide survey in 1995,[7] which was concerned with the question of national identity. As the following graph shows, the first five positions are almost identical.

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[5]) The results of this survey were processed and published in various works listed in the bibliography. It is an empirical survey carried out every year since 1990 in all districts bordering on Germany. The sample was approximately 1000 persons.

[6]) Data used is from the 1997 survey "The attitudes of people living in the border areas toward Germany and to questions of European integration", see note 3.

[7]) Results of the nation-wide ISSP survey in 1995 [Nedomová and Kostelecký 1996].

Figure 1.   *What countries could pose a threat to the Czech Republic?*
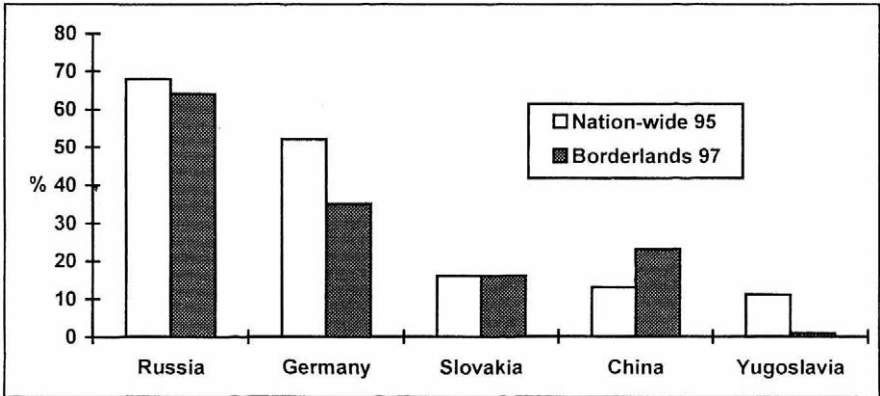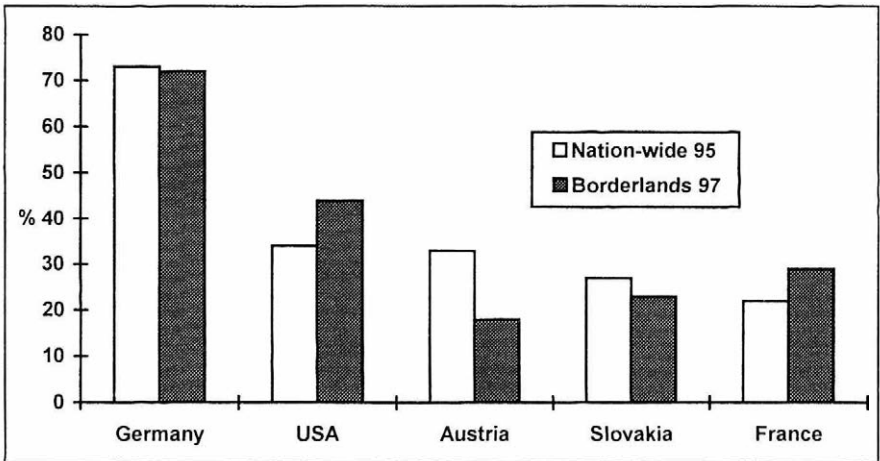

Figure 2.   *Who should the CR collaborate with most closely in the economic sphere?*

As was shown above, the majority of people living in the border areas see Germany as a valuable economic and political partner with whom it is desirable to collaborate. A not negligible percentage of respondents, however, also saw Germany as a potential threat to the Czech Republic.

This was further investigated in the 1997 Borderlands survey with the question: *What do you feel about the following statements?* Each statement was then assessed according to the number agreeing with it. In Table 1, these statements are ranked according to the percentage of "totally agree" replies.

The statements were varied and dealt with various areas of relations between the two peoples. They do however provide a relatively objective picture of the attitudes that respondents from the border area hold towards Germany.

Table 1.   Responses to Statements Characterising Relations with Germany
(in percentages)

| | Agree | | | |
Statement	totally	partly	not at all	don't know
We can live together with Germans peacefully and quietly	67	24	5	4
Germans buy property here cheaply	58	21	5	16
We should show greater pride in our dealings with Germans	68	16	10	5
Germany is the European country which has the greatest influence over us	44	40	7	8
The expulsion of the Sudeten Germans was justified	41	41	10	9
We must never forget what the Germans did to us after Munich	47	31	15	7
We should make a greater effort to work together (with Germany)	38	47	7	7
It is in the interests of the whole country to work closely with Germans at every level	36	44	8	11
Fascism and nationalism can always reappear in Germany	34	32	13	21
It is an economic advantage for us to have Germany as a neighbour	28	60	7	5
We must always be on our guard against Germany	32	45	13	21
Germans are our friends	13	68	12	8
We can always learn something from Germans	14	53	27	6
German culture is very close to us	11	41	37	11
Germany is a potential threat to the Czech Republic	12	30	42	16
We will always be powerless in the face of Germany	8	28	56	8

Note: Totals not equalling 100% are the result of rounding up or down.

Over two thirds of respondents consider that we can live peacefully together with Germans and only 8% are convinced that we will always be powerless in the face of Germany (with 55% of respondents disagreeing with the latter statement). Very few people totally agreed with the statements that German culture is very close to Czechs, that we can always learn something from Germany, and that Germans are our friends. This corresponds to the strong agreement with the statement that we should show more pride in our dealings with Germans and that we must always be on our guard against Germans. On the basis of these examples it is possible to draw up a hypothesis *of the relatively strong national consciousness (or at least a sense of being different) of people living in the Czech border areas, and of their feeling that the Czech Republic is sufficiently strong (witness the disagreement with the statement that we are powerless in the face of Germany). At the same time they confirm the finding that most respondents see Germany as having an important role in Europe and so see it as important to develop collaboration with Germany.*

Some of the statements were previously included in the 1996 survey. A comparison of the responses shows no fundamental difference, implying that there was no significant shift in opinions in this area in the following year.

After rotation, the factor analysis of the responses to the statements revealed the existence of three relatively strong factors, which accounted for 42.2% of the total variance of all responses. These factors make it possible to better identify the structure of attitudes along three basic axes, each of which accounts for approximately the same percentage of variance.

The first factor may be termed *'vigilance'*. It covers 17% of the variance and is characterised primarily by the following statements: We must never forget what the Germans did to us after Munich, the transfer of the Sudeten Germans was justified, fascism and nationalism can always reappear in Germany, we must always be on our guard against Germany, Germans buy property here cheaply, and we should show greater pride in our dealings with Germans.

The second factor may be termed *'openness'* and willingness to work together. It accounts for 14.1% of variance of responses and is characterised by the statements that it is an economic advantage for us to have Germany as a neighbour, Germany is the European country which has the greatest influence over us, we can always learn something from Germans, it is in the interest of the whole country to work closely with Germans at every level, and that we should make a greater effort to work together (with Germany). Disagreement with the statement that we must always be careful about Germany is also characteristic here.

The third factor may be termed *'trust'*. It covers 15.5% of variation and corresponds to the following statements: Germans are our friends, we can live together with Germans peacefully and quietly, German culture is very close to us, and we should work more closely together. It also includes disagreement with the opinion that Germany is a potential threat to Czech independence.

The assessment of Germany's significance for this country differs according to certain socio-demographic and other features of respondents.

In the case of *age*, the difference between older and younger people who consider that "We must always be on our guard against Germany" is statistically significant (level of significance of 0.05). Younger respondents show greater tolerance relating to such statements as "we must never forget what the Germans did to us after Munich," or "fascism and nationalism can always reappear in Germany," and more often agree that "Germans are our friends". They are also less likely than older respondents to disagree with the opinions that "we will always be powerless in the face of Germany", "we should show greater pride in our dealings with Germans," and, somewhat surprisingly, "German culture is very close to us". (The level of significance for all these factors was 0.05).

Statistically significant differences in opinions according to the respondent's *level of education* were only found for the statements "We will always be powerless in the face of Germany" and "We should show greater pride in our dealings with Germans," where respondents with a higher level of education were more likely to disagree. For the other statements there was a higher percentage of responses indicating openness and tolerance towards Germans among people with higher or tertiary education (although the differences are not generally statistically significant).

It can be presumed that opinions of Germany's significance for the Czech Republic are also influenced by the respondents' *political orientation*. For all statements with the exception of "German culture is very close to us" and "Germany is the European country which has the greatest influence over us" there was a statistically significant correlation with declared political orientation on the left-right spectrum.[8] The differences are shown in the following graph.

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[8]) Left-right orientation was determined by answers to the question: *The terms 'left' and 'right' are frequently used in politics. Where would you place yourself?* Respondents then decided their position on a scale from 1 = definitely left, ... 3= centre, ... 5 = definitely right.

The political spectrum that this determined for people living in the border areas should be borne in mind. 3.9% included themselves in the category of 'definitely left', 14.5, in 'left of centre', 43.0% into 'centre', 25.4% into 'tend to the right', and 13.2% into 'definitely right'. There is a clear shift of declared political orientation towards the centre and right and this is stronger than that indicated by various nation-wide surveys. Comparison with socio-demographic indicators shows the usual characteristics: right-wing respondents are more common in all age groups except the over-60s and the 31-45 age group, where a position in the centre is predominant. Left-wing respondents are rarest among the under-30s and increasingly common among older age groups.

In terms of education, the percentage of right-wing respondents increases with the level of education, while the number placing themselves on the left is approximately the same in all age groups.

There is a higher proportion of right-wing respondents in cities than in small communities. Left-wing orientation is more or less the same whatever the size of the community where the respondent lives.

Figure 3.   Average agreement with statements according to respondents' political orientation. Graph shows the average value of agreements with the statement, where 1 = totally agree, 2 = agree in part, 3 = totally disagree. The lower the average value, the greater is the level of agreement with the statement.
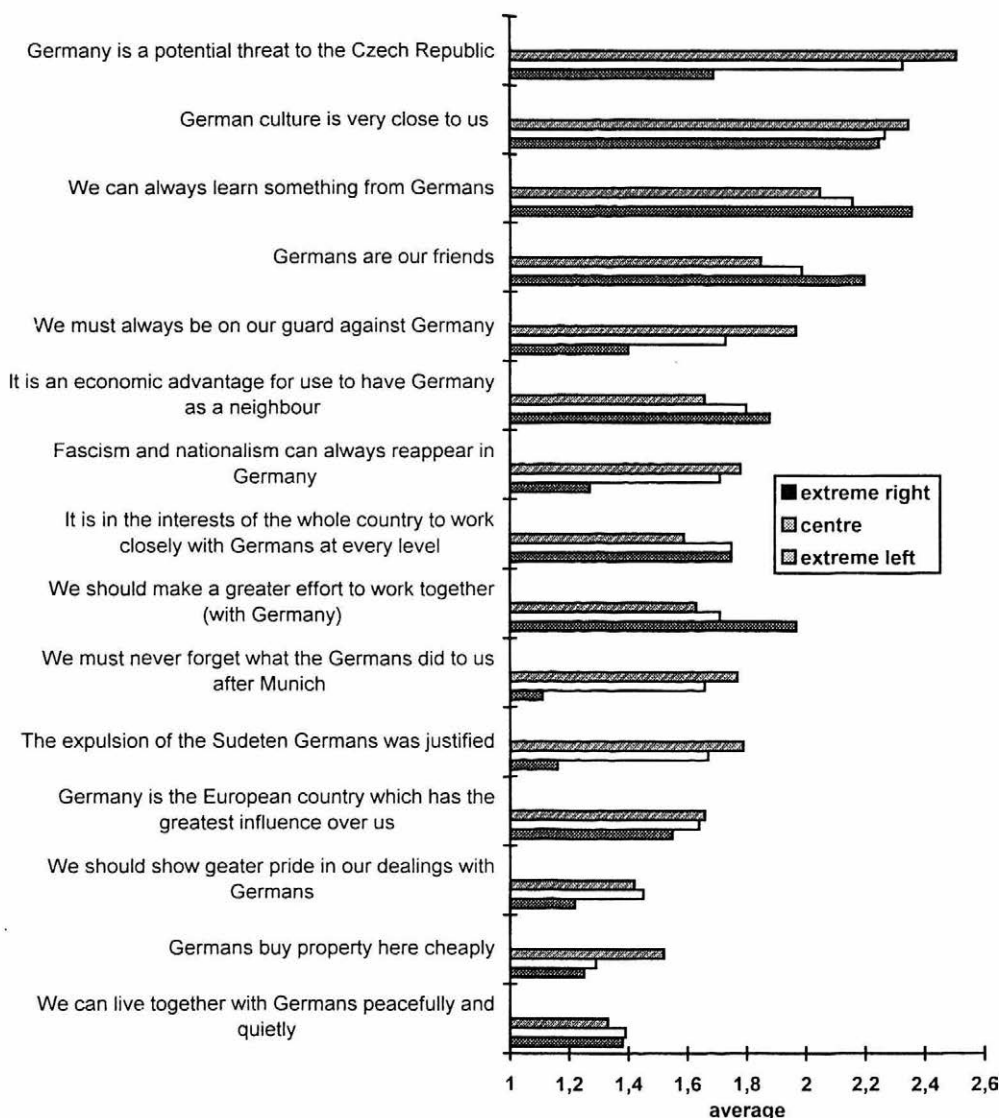
The statements given make it possible to show how evaluation of Germany's significance for this country differ according to the political orientation of respondents.

With the exception of two statements ("German culture is very close to us" and "Germany is the European country which has the greatest influence over us") the differences in agreement with the statements between left- and right-wing respondents are statistically significant. People tending towards the left are more critical of Germany than

are those further right on the political spectrum, and also expect less of Germany and trust it less.

Those on the right of the political spectrum are more positive about Germany's significance for the Czech Republic. From the characteristics given for those placing themselves on the right (see note 8) it can be said that this positive attitude is linked with the respondents' age and level of education, with younger people and those with higher or tertiary education being more positive. Left-wing orientation is generally linked with a certain sense of caution towards Germany, with a stress on bad experiences with Germans and with a higher level of expectations (in some respects an overestimation) of Germany's role in Europe. Left-wing tendencies are more common among older respondents (level of significance of 0.05%). Differences according to education are not significant.

2. The Image of Germans and Attitudes towards Germans

The process of forming people's attitudes towards people of other nationalities is complex and subject to many influences. Attitudes are influenced by historical experience, both within the family and more general collective experience, education, state policy in shaping and pursuing national interests and a series of other factors. People's attitudes towards individuals from other countries also differ internally according to various largely socio-cultural factors which carry varying weights. Despite this differentiation, there is a certain basis which brings together opinions shaping the modal image of a person of another nationality and attitudes towards him.

Various traditional projectional questions were used to investigate attitudes in this survey, so as to determine supposed (or manifested) behaviour in certain situations. The results of the 1997 survey are shown in Table 2.

Table 2.   *How would you react if the following happened near you?*
(in percentages)

	fairly positively	I wouldn't mind	fairly negatively	average[*]
a German family moved in	11	80	9	2.01
a Sudeten German family moved in	7	71	23	1.85
a German firm opened up	24	59	16	2.08
your new boss was a German	9	47	44	1.64
your son/daughter married a German	15	57	27	1.87

[*]) The average is calculated according to the scale: fairly positively = 3, I wouldn't care = 2, fairly negatively = 1, so the higher the value the more positive the reaction.

The table shows that for the majority of attitudinal indicators used the position is neutral. Most respondents would have no objections to a German firm working in their area or to a German family moving in, but they would be rather less happy if their new boss was a German. (Further questioning showed that 17% more respondents would welcome an English person as their new boss than would welcome a German.) In fact, like most Czechs, the respondents have very little experience of working with people of other nationalities in positions of authority and their responses depend rather on their feelings towards the nationalities. It is obvious that attitudes are based on hypothetical and mostly indirect knowledge and experience of people of other nationalities. These attitudes are modified in concrete social contacts (see the comparison of results of semantic differen-

tials in 1991 and 1994) and only gradually come to express the actual state of mutual relations.

The existence of socio-cultural differences is reflected by the finding that only 15% of people living in border areas would be happy if one of their children married a German. In comparison with 1994 there is only a slight change towards a more positive attitude (not, however, statistically significant).

More than one fifth of respondents would be unhappy if a Sudeten German family moved into their area, although the majority of respondents were neutral on this question, showing that an a priori rejection of the idea is not prevalent. It is clearly largely determined by the hypothetical nature of the questions used, as such rejection is always due to actual everyday experience. It should be recalled that since relations with Germany were limited and abnormal for some decades (even where the border was not closed, relations between individuals were largely controlled by the state), the attitudes of Czechs towards Germans (and indeed the reverse) are not yet fully mature, and as mutual contacts increase, attitudes will change.

The Image of a German

Each new generation forms its own 'generational image of the world', its values, opinions and attitudes on the basis of its own experiences and does not just take these wholesale from the previous generation. This is definitely the case with the 'image' of the country's neighbours. While for elderly people the 'image of a German' was influenced by the events of the 1930s, the emergence of fascism and nationalism, the struggle for survival and liberation from the German occupation, and was usually associated with the idea of an enemy, middle-aged and younger people have a very different 'image' of a German. There have, however, also been distinct changes in this 'image' among elderly people, as the relatively calm, even if not entirely problem-free, coexistence of the last decades has led to much greater tolerance and understanding than in the immediate post-war period. It can be seen that people in the Czech Republic today do not see a German as first and foremost an enemy, but rather as a modern person, a citizen of a developed state and as a generally educated and cultured neighbour.

These conclusions can be drawn from a survey of the 'image' of a German which was conducted using semantic differentials.[9] The findings[10] are given in the following table. Figures given are averages for the whole sample, calculated from individual respondents' evaluations on a five-point scale. The tables have been drawn up along the positive poles of a continuum, regardless of whether the average was over 2.5 or not, and in this case it is basically a negative assessment of the given characteristic. The lower the

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[9]) The method of sematic differentials for research in border areas was based on twelve selected characteristics which were placed on a scale of 1-5 using extreme concepts (e.g. good-bad). Using this scale, the content of the concepts of a German, a Czech and an Austrian was measured and attitude was assessed from the 'image' gained [Osgood, Suci, Tannenbaum 1957].

[10]) The data is taken from surveys in 1991 and 1994. The 1991 survey was carried out in all districts bordering on Germany and Austria. Respondents were selected by the quota method and the sample included 1430 respondents. The 1994 survey was also carried out using the quota method but was limited to districts bordering on Germany. The sample size here was 1236. Figures given in the table apply only to districts bordering on Germany in both cases (1991 and 1994).

value of the average evaluation, the more positive is the assessment of the characteristic in question.

Table 3.   Average Evaluations of the Characteristics of a German in surveys in 1991 and 1994ˣ

Survey	1991		1994	
Characteristic – continuum (1 … 5)	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average
confident-shy	1	1.56	1	1.55
hard-working-lazy	2	1.70	3	2.20***
rich-poor	3	2.03	2	2.10*
educated-uneducated	4	2.11	4	2.47***
intelligent-stupid	5	2.13	5	2.52***
obliging-disobliging	6	2.34	7	2.65***
honest-dishonest	7-8	2.40	8	2.66***
reliable-unreliable	7-8	2.40	6	2.53**
friendly-unfriendly	9	2.51	9	2.68***
good-bad	10	2.63	10	2.83***
sincere-insincere	11	2.79	11	2.92***
generous-avaricious	12	3.03	12	3.35***
Overall average		2.30		2.54

ˣ) In the table the limit of statistical significance of the difference of the average evaluation of characteristics between 1991 and 1994 is marked as follows: * means a statistical significance of up to 5%, ** of up to 1%, and *** lower than 0.01%.

From the table it is clear that the views of these characteristics of Germans are changing with clear shift between the results from 1991 and 1994. The difference in the overall average is 0.24 points and for most of the characteristics investigated the difference is statistically significant. The comparison shows an overall decline in the average evaluation of all characteristics, meaning that evaluation of Germans has shifted towards the negative pole in all cases. The difference between 1991 and 1994 is greatest in the characteristics hard-working (a fall of 0.50), intelligent (0.49), educated (0.36), obliging (0.3) and generous (0.33). While in 1991 only four characteristics fell into the negative side of the continuum (unfriendly, bad, insincere and avaricious – but hardly significantly), in 1994 the number had increased to 8. According to the 1994 survey, a German is confident, rich, hard-working and educated, but tends to be disobliging, insincere, unfriendly, bad, dishonest and very avaricious).

The Image of a Czech

A comparison of the results of the 1991 and 1994 surveys, shows changes in both the image of a German and that of a Czech, when measured by the same scale. The changes in the latter are clear at first glance from Table 4.

Table 4.   Average Evaluations of the Characteristics of a Czech in surveys in
             1991 and 1994ˣ

| Survey | 1991 | | 1994 | |
Characteristic – continuum (1 ... 5)	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average
friendly-unfriendly	1	2.27	1	2.2*
intelligent-stupid	2	2.37	2	2.26**
educated-uneducated	3	2.43	3	2.27***
good-bad	4	2.53	4	2.48
honest-dishonest	5	2.86	7	2.79*
confident-shy	6	2.88	11	3.12***
obliging-disobliging	7	2.91	5	2.70***
generous-avaricious	8	2.99	8	2.85**
hard-working-lazy	9	3.01	6	2.70***
reliable-unreliable	10	3.04	9	2.91*
sincere-insincere	11	3.13	10	3.06*
rich-poor	12	3.47	12	3.39*
Overall average		2.82		2.73

ˣ) In the table the limit of statistical significance of the difference of the average
evaluation of characteristics between 1991 and 1994 is marked as follows: * means
a statistical significance of up to 5%, ** of up to 1%, and *** lower than 0.01%.

Self-evaluation (since the majority of respondents in the border areas are Czechs) was
included in the 1991 survey. In that year respondents saw Czechs as friendly, intelligent
and educated, but all the other characteristics investigated fell on to the negative side of
the scale. Thus Czechs tend to be bad (only just above 2.5), dishonest, shy, disobliging,
avaricious, unreliable, insincere and poor. A comparison with 1994 shows that assess-
ment of individual characteristics improved. The sum of the averages of the characteris-
tics in 1994 is 1.25 points further towards a positive evaluation. The differences are
statistically significant at 1% level.

The only characteristic for which position on the continuum worsened was confi-
dent-shy, where it was by a relatively marked 0.24 of a point. Even if there was an overall
shift to the better (see Table 4), the good-bad continuum was the only one where the shift
was to the positive side. This means that on average Czechs still view themselves criti-
cally in most respects.

Assessment of Characteristics in Relation to the Age of the Respondent

The following tables show the average evaluation of the characteristics of the nationali-
ties investigated, as included in the used semantic differentials, according to the age of
the respondents.

Table 5.   Average Evaluation of all Characteristics Employed, by Age Group –
             Germans

| Survey | Age Group | | | | | |
	under 21	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+
1991	2.25	2.29	2.27	2.32	2.24	2.33
1994	2.64	2.67	2.45	2.52	2.41	2.50
Difference (1991-1994)	-0.39	-0.38	-0.18	-0.20	-0.17	0.17

The above indicates that it was the youngest respondents whose views of the image of a German changed most radically. In age groups above 30 the change is slight and moreover is virtually the same for all age groups. It is worth asking what has caused this change in the assessments of the youngest age groups. One possible hypothesis is that the change is partly due to the every-day experience that young people now have with Germans (at home or in Germany).

Table 6.   Average Evaluation of all Characteristics Employed, by Age Group – Czechs

Survey	Age Group					
	under 21	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+
1991	2.80	2.92	2.84	2.88	2.79	2.68
1994	2.72	2.76	2.65	2.78	2.63	2.76
Difference (1991-1994)	0.08	0.16	0.19	0.10	0.16	-0.08

In comparison with 1991, almost all age groups show a slight shift towards a more positive assessment, except the oldest. For the latter, however, the overall decline was influenced primarily by a fall in the characteristics of "rich" and "confident". The greatest positive shift in evaluation of Czechs' nature was found in the 31-40 age group, but unlike with the evaluation of Germans, the differences between the age groups were not great.

The differences in evaluation of the characteristics making up the images of a German and a Czech were also compared by education, but generally the differences were not statistically significant.

The differences found in the overall assessment of the images of a Czech and a German after a period of three years raise the inevitable question of what led to this. There are several hypotheses to explain the change.[11]

The causes of the change should be sought in the processes of perception of new everyday experiences and contacts between Czechs and Germans in normal life. Possible hypotheses for the change in the characteristics attributed to Germans could be formulated as follows:

As a result of increasingly close relations (there is a demonstrable growth in the number of contacts on both sides of the border) has meant that the 'image' of a German has become more realistic. During the period of closed borders and partial, rather formal, contacts, the lack of contact meant that this 'image' was somewhat idealised. After 1989 this idealised image was also influenced by the post-revolutionary euphoria and the generally uncritical view of the West.

Another cause of the worsening in the evaluation of Germans' characteristics may be the activities and repeated demands of the so-called Sudeten Germans and the unresolved problems of the past, particularly in relation to the results of the Munich Agreement, the post-war transfer of Germans from the border areas and the postponement of compensation for Czech victims of Nazism.

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[11]) For the moment the methodological aspects of using semantic differentials in quantitative sociological surveys can be left aside. The method used allows us to compare surveys carried out at different times.

There may of course be many more factors which have influenced the change in characteristics attributed to Germans. The above two hypotheses, however, seem to be the most important, although confirmation of this would of course require further research.

The shift in the assessment of Germans' characteristics was also identified nation-wide, as is shown by the findings of the IVVM survey on relations ["Jaký…" 1995] with nationalities living in this country. Respondents country-wide were most positive about their relations with Germans in 1991 (46%), while in 1995 this had fallen to only 33%. It therefore seems that the increasing realism in view of other nationalities is not limited to the border areas and cross-border relations, but also affects the interior of the country. It is probably also linked to the gradual rationalisation of life and to the passing of post-revolutionary euphoria. Hand in hand with a more rational view of Germans goes an im-provement in the way that Czechs view themselves.

Conclusions

The findings of the surveys show that despite a somewhat increased criticism of the 'im-age' of a German, the overall attitude towards Germans on the part of people living in the Czech border areas is positive. Most of the features which make up the 'picture of their nature' are positive. At present, a German is usually taken to be a German citizen and distinctions between people from the different German states (e.g. Bavarians, Saxons, or Sudetens) are secondary. If people do make any distinction between Germans, their atti-tudes towards the different groups tend not to differ greatly. Surveys produced no evi-dence to support the generalisation often found in the German media that Czechs are nationalists (most recently during the discussions on the composition of the Board of the Discussion Forum set up following the Czech-German Declaration).[12]

There is also evidence of a generally positive relation with the so-called Sudeten Germans, although surveys also show a clear rejection of the Sudeten Germans' demands. These demands and the continuing debate of the justice or injustice of the transfer are today the main factors which distinguish the Sudetens from other Germans in the minds of Czechs.[13] The inconsistent results of the debate, have led not only to positive results in terms of Czech-German conciliation, but also to a greater distinction in the minds of Czechs (and indeed of Germans) between 'Sudetens' and other Germans. This is likely to lead to a strengthening of the position of nationalists on both sides of the border, and in the Czech Republic to a general worsening of attitudes towards Germans.

Alongside this process of largely verbal confrontation which has had a generally negative effect on relations between the nations, there are also cross-border contacts in everyday life. These include institutional links (collaboration in administrative bodies, the Euroregions and other local organisations) and of trade and production links. There has also been a significant growth of everyday contacts between individuals. Even if the comparative economic advantage is on the side of the Germans, these relations represent a very important element in the creation of normal cross-border attitudes and relations between people.

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[12]) See, e.g., the article by E. Mandler in *Lidové noviny* on 28. 1. 1998, in which he claims that a large percentage of Czechs are anti-German.

[13]) The concept of 'Sudeten German' is today used as a somewhat imprecise abstraction, since it has changed from the original topological term to mean all Germans transferred from the Czecho-slovak Republic [See Kastner 1996].

The research results confirm that the critical attitudes and stereotypes of Germans are changing. The historical experience of the older generation, which meant that in the post-war period the image of a German was synonymous with that of a fascist, has not automatically been passed on to following generations. For middle-aged and young people today, the image of a German is not comparable with that of a German (or Austrian) of the last century and of the entire period of national revival, when Czechs saw Germans and Austrians as the enemies of all Slavs and of Czechs in particular [see e.g. Rak 1990: 34]. This research did not set out to provide a historical analysis of the image of a German, but it is clear that such a historical view would be somewhat simplified. It is a simple fact that in some periods Austrians and Germans were seen almost exclusively as enemies. This was related both to the attitudes of these nations towards the Czechs and with the pragmatic interests of the latter, as well as with the contradictory historical and practical experience of long-term coexistence. On the other hand, it should be recognised that this coexistence was accompanied by cooperation, communication between individuals, intermixing and the mutual influence of the cultures. A more detailed historical-sociological examination reveals existing social links, intermixing and the existence of local mixed groups, families, and so on. It also shows the existence and spread of nationalism and its counterweight in society [see e.g. Křen 1990, *Češi,...* 1990, Kural 1993].

The periods in which the view of Germans and Austrians as enemies was prevalent generally coincided with global political changes. The collapse of Austria-Hungary followed a wave of general rising nationalism and dissatisfaction with the way in which the national identity of small nations throughout Europe was being stifled. Against this background in the second half of the last century, the image of the enemy began to be linked also to the Germans living in the Czech Lands. This negative view of Germans was widespread and survived up to the end of the Second World War, and only the transfer and the building of nation states of two ethnic majorities (or indeed three – Czechs, Slovaks and Germans), and the post-war developments in Europe in general, led to a change in attitudes towards Germans and their 'image' in the minds of Czechs. Somewhat paradoxically, the transfer, the limitations on contacts due to the split of cold-war Europe, and the relatively ethnically homogeneous nature of the state all contributed to the positive change in attitudes towards Germans and their 'image' throughout much of society.

As was seen above, the surveys of people living in the Czech border areas in 1991 revealed an almost surprisingly positive picture of Germans, but a relatively critical view of Czechs themselves. Comparison of the results of surveys carried out at different intervals then showed a certain change of attitudes towards Germans and a positive change in people's assessments of their own nation. This shift (rapprochement of assessments) is probably a result of greater experience of normal contacts. It can be said that the originally rather euphoric view of Germans has become more realistic, without any fundamental change in the positive attitudes towards them and the positive expectations of future developments in relations between the two nations.

On the other hand, it should be recalled that the negative picture of a German in the minds of some Czechs is influenced by the socio-demographic composition of the population. A sociological study reveals the existence of certain groups which do not share the positive view of Germans, or at least not completely. These people show a higher level of defensiveness towards German influence. The complexity of relations due to the ends left untied (the lack of a consensus about a break with the past), the results of the Second World War and the present economic strength of Germany all reinforce feelings about the

inequality of relations. The more realistic view of Germans which has emerged in recent years also includes a certain strengthening of negative trends in attitudes. The imbalance in relations between Czechs and Germans and the unfavourable position of the Czechs may have a negative influence on future developments in relations.

There is frequent talk of Czech nationalism, particularly by the displaced Germans, in relation to the formation of a qualitatively new relationship with Germany in the conditions of a democratic and market-based society. Survey results (within the limits of the methods used) do not provide any evidence of such nationalism in relations with Germany. The attitudes of people living in the border areas can be considered to meet all the norms of mutual collaboration, and indeed tend to show considerable openness.

These conclusions based on empirical sources are not intended as definitive, but rather as a contribution to the debate on the process of building Czech-German relations against a background of European integration.

Translated by April Retter

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Peter Katzenstein (ed.): Mitteleuropa – between Europe and Germany

Providence-Oxford, Berghahn Books 1997, 286 p.

The recurrence of a Central Europe is an indication of deep political change. Thus reads Professor Peter Katzenstein's opening line in the first chapter of a book that presents the conclusions of an international project that was initiated in Cornell University in 1989. He thus covers almost symbolically with his opening the revolutionary changes that ended the bipolar arrangement of the world and of Europe. Whether or not Germany returns to her old role of continental superpower, Katzenstein warns against drawing misguided parallels between Germany's present-day role and that of recent history. The Bonn Republic is not the Weimar Republic and united Germany will not be a Berlin Republic. Germany's current situation contains the following theses.

* The German economy continues to have an export orientation, which was a response to the post-war division of the country and the surrendering of part of the Polish territory. In the 1980's and 1990's the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) became the world's largest exporter, which has brought dependence on the world market, which Germany has only minimal control over.

* The socially-orientated market economy of the FRG has reached capacity as a result of the pressure of three factors: the unification of the country, growing global competition and European integration.

* The German economy has quickly established itself in Central and Eastern Europe, so that in Poland and Czechoslovakia in the first months of 1990, joint ventures with German companies formed 30-40% of the total. Both countries have tried to offset the significance of German investments with only limited results. Russia's share of foreign trade with Central European countries fell drastically.

* The new democratic constitutions and political systems of the post-communist states of Central Europe were considerably influenced by co-operation with the Christian-Democratic Union and Social Democratic Party in Germany, the British Conservative Party and the US Democratic and Republican parties.

* Germany advocates (also in her own interests) the expansion of the EU to the East and, with regard to financial possibilities, the role of German capital is almost unrivalled. In addition, the role of the independent *Bundesbank* serves as an institutional model to Central European states.

* The Czech, Polish and Hungarian bids for EU entry met with the strong opposition of a number of member states, in particular France and other states of southern Europe, which do not consider expansion to the east as the highest priority.

* The debate about the security architecture for Central Europe was scarcely opened but for a short period in 1990. From a number of possible scenarios the USA gave priority to a redefinition of NATO's mission and its expansion, while Germany favoured the OSCE mechanism.

The publication, edited by a recognised expert on the given theme, presents in six chapters (studies) the specific situation of the countries of Central Europe in relation to the phenomenon of Germany. He is also the author of the introductory chapter, which characterises in broad outline the new geopolitical situation, among whose formative factors is the unified Germany, the collapse of the monolithic Soviet block and the subsequent decline of Russian influence in Central Europe, a decline which deepened as a result of the continuing economic and currency crisis now threatening the remaining state integrity of the Russian Federation.

Chapters 2 and 5 offer a four-part case study surveying the economic, social and ethnic problems being dealt with by Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia since 1990 in connection with the transformation of their political and economic systems, in which the key circumstance in an international context is their coming closer to Euro-Atlantic structures.

The final six chapters introduce a thesis that the efficiency of sub-regional tendencies

directed towards Central European integration has been falling since 1993, when European supra-national institutions became an increasingly significant organisational element of this region.

The chapter devoted to Poland (by W. Aniol, T. A. Byrnes and E. Iankova) states that the Polish return to Europe is noticeably marked by two strong opinion strands, the first of which is the Polish *nationalists*, a concentration on trade unions and the Catholic Church, which contributed to the fall of the Communist system. The second strand consists of the *cosmopolitans*, many of whom are among the voters of the post-communist parties who are convinced advocates of a secular, social welfare state and a pluralist democracy. At the same time, criticism is heard particularly from Polish Church circles of the consumer society, along with demands for a spiritualising of contemporary capitalism. In this concept a revitalisation of the spiritual values of Christianity should contribute to the cultivation of the materialist Western society.

The Polish Catholic bishops want to acquire and preserve a Polish national identity (distinctness) in the integrating society of Western Europe. Interesting is the passage surveying in detail the principles of introducing the West European standards of emigration policy into the Polish environment.

The detailed breakdown of the Polish nationalist policies will certainly strike a note with the Czech reader, in particular the situation of the German national minority, which is protected on the one hand by the documents of the European Commission and on the other by a bilateral agreement between Poland and Germany. It is estimated that three million German citizens left Poland between 1945 and 1950. There remained, however, one million people of not clearly defined nationality, whose status was inclined towards assimilation into the majority population. Peculiar to Poland is *regional national identity*, which operates in such a way that citizens can state in census polls whether the consider themselves to be primarily Silesian, Kashubian etc. and only then Poles or Germans.

German politics views Poland as the most significant ally among the post-communist states, but continues at the present time to support the *ethnic revivalism* of German minority groups in Silesia and other areas. In this regard the often disputed border on the Oder and Neisse in the course of the Cold War is not forgotten. This naturally gives rise to disbelief among the Poles, along with reminiscences on the role of the *Volksdeutsche* in the German expansion policies of the 1930's. For example, in 1990 the *Landsmannschaft* formulated a demand for the provision of a privileged status for the German community in Opolian Silesia. It contained the possibility of resettlement and provision of property to the exiles, the internationalised question of the Silesians and the inclusion of the Oder and Neisse lands into the economic jurisdiction of the European Union. We may add that similar demands are repeatedly heard in connection with the Kaliningrad/Königsberg enclave.

The most troublesome point in the treaty talks of 1991 was the demand of the *Landsmannschaft* for the provision of dual nationality for members of the German minority. It is estimated that there are about 60,000 citizens in Opolian Silesia with German and Polish citizenship. However, there also exist organisations attempting greater integration of both nationalities, e.g. the workers' association, Reconciliation and the Future, in the county of Katowice.

In the third chapter dealing with Hungary, P. Gedeon arrives at the conclusion that the Church has much less influence than in Poland. Equally insignificant are fears of German influence. In the area of social policy the deciding role is played by international financial institutions, the IMF and the World Bank. Neither is Germany a theme in the area of privatisation and the influx of foreign investment. Nonetheless, the Hungarian National Bank is considerably inspired by the institutional model and policy of the *Deutsche Bundesbank*.

H. Jeřábek and F. Zich deal with the situation in the Czech Republic. In the title of the chapter they already characterise the fundamental tendency of Czech-German relations – internationalisation and dependency forming an integral part of this process. The first model case is the entry of the Volkswagen concern

into Škoda, constituting ties between the Czech economy and the German, European and world markets. Škoda, like the Czech government, strongly pushed for the influx of foreign capital and know-how, which would revitalise this key strategic company, whose position strongly influences a range of connected branches.

Czech mass communications, on the other hand, went through internationalisation by means of an almost lightening-quick process. The entire network of Czech regional daily newspapers ended up in the hands of the Bavarian firm *Passauer Neue Presse*. In evaluating this situation, however, the Czech government came to the conclusion that the increased level of German influence was offset by the presence of American capital controlling the electronic media (CME). I am not quite sure, however, about the effectiveness of this concept of the balance of information.

The essay dedicated to the Czech border areas points out that Czech entry into the European Union is being complicated by organisations of displaced Sudeten Germans, particularly the Sudeten German *Landsmannschaft*, which remains a concrete manifestation of the historical burden of Czech-German relations. Their demands also projected into the Euroregion projects, which cover the whole length of the mutual border of the two counties. In the results of sociological research into the Czech border regions, the contradictory views of the inhabitants towards the role of Germany, which is considered a desirable partner in the fields of politics and culture, while at the same time there are fears of economic dominance. The Czech-German Declaration of 1997 represents a compromise solution, which allowed both sides to retain their own position and still find a positive basis for co-operation.

Slovakia, according to the authors D. Brzic, Z. Poláčková and I. Samson, is embarking on an experiment in independence for the first time in thousands of years of history. The specifics of the Slovak situation they see in the possibility of bridging the gap between the East and the West. This concept was of course already defined by pre-war foreign policy, particularly in the renewal of the Czechoslovak Republic, however. It is not necessary to point out the consequences. More than any other

Central European country Slovakia follows the German model with the leading role of banks, while Anglo-American opinion considers market mechanisms a priority. According to the authors, Slovakia does not adhere to European standards with regard to protection of minority rights. She emphasises traditional military interests, strengthens links with Russia and presents a certain scepticism towards NATO. We should remember that the departure of the HZDS from the government will very likely lead to considerable alterations in this stance. Overall, though, Slovakia is less orientated towards the West than the Czech Republic, Poland or Hungary.

The sixth chapter by V. Bunc returns to the new situation of Central Europe after 1989. In the period 1990-1992 a number of international incentives were launched with the aim of institutionalising co-operation in the region. In November 1989 the Pentagonal Treaty between Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Italy and the Yugoslavia had already been signed. This was later expanded to include Poland and Ukraine. Bavaria, among others, also asked for the opportunity to participate in specific projects. The turning point for Czech foreign policy came in 1993, when the Klaus government began to consider the Central European initiatives as a brake to fast membership of Western European structures.

The individual case studies create a somewhat heterogeneous impression from the point of view of a unified structure, which is partly accorded by the different initial situations of the individual countries, but also by the specialisation of the authors. The editor himself points out that the Hungarian and Slovak studies have only an illustrative character. I also found a lack of a systematic reflection on the contemporary and historic role of Germany in the Central European environment. Nonetheless it is necessary to appreciate the detailed presentation of the situation of Polish society and relations with Germany. Seen from a Czech perspective a certain connotation offering itself in the relationships of the Czech Republic and Poland to Germany remained unexplored. The question arises whether Czech foreign policy reflects this co-relationship in an appropriate manner.

The current trend is for Central Europe to find itself outside of the main area of focus. This also applies to a certain extent to Germany, whose aspirations are now directed towards a confirmation of its new role in a dimension wider than the Central European one. It remains, though, the motive force of European integration, for which it is prepared to sacrifice even the symbol of its post-War boom, the *Deutschmark*. As T. G. Ash remarks, however, the contradiction between the architecture of Berlin as a symbol of the renewal of the national state and the pro-European rhetoric of Bonn remains. The situation of Central Europe in the third millennium will undoubtedly also emerge from the answer to that question.

Václav Houžvička, translated by April Retter

J. Krejčí, assisted by A. Krejčová: Great Revolutions Compared. The Outline of a Theory

New York-London-Toronto-Sydney-Tokyo-Singapore, Harvester Wheatsheaf 1994, 302 p.

It was not by chance that the first of the author's studies on theory of revolutions appeared in the year 1968, in the time of political loosening and, at the same time, of the renaissance of Czech sociology on the back of the Prague Spring events. ("Sociologický model revolučního procesu" [A Sociological Model of the Process of Revolution]. *Sociologický časopis* 4: 159-173 and 635-649.) The first version of the English-language and more extensive work, which the author finished with the assistance of his wife during their engagement at Lancaster University, was published in 1983 and in the paperback issue again in 1987. The reviewed title represents so far the most recent topical and voluminous modification of his considerations concerning theory of revolutions. If we accept the classification of the study as sociological, it is one of the largest and theoretically most important works of a Czech sociologist published in English since the Second World War.

The conditional used in the previous sentence has some serious grounds. The eventful scientific career of Professor Krejčí has been influenced on the one hand by the tragic turns of Czech history in the 20th century and, on the other, by his extraordinary diligence and invention. During his life, he has been an economic statistician, economist, demographer, historian, ethnologist, cultural anthropologist and sociologist. The erudition acquired in this way certainly entitles him to formulate his methodological creed in the introduction to his book in the following words:

"However interesting individual sociological, socio-psychological, economic or political theories may be (...) a good understanding of the phenomenon of revolution requires a comprehensive approach." (p. 4)

Following this idea, Krejčí dissociates himself from the Arendt's one-sided philosophical (value-oriented) concept of revolution as well as Skocpol's deterministic sociological and politological concept. In addition, he even more relativises the disciplinary approach of his study by doubting the viability of exclusively either idiographic or nomothetic methods and accepts the risk of a middle path. This enables him neither an extensive use of historical sources, nor a strong emphasis on subtle and well-elaborated abstract considerations. In his recently published methodological study ("The Comparative Historical Approach as a Unifying Principle in the Humanities and Social Sciences." *Czech Sociological Review* 4: 135-147.) the author lays stress on the joining of historiography and the complexity of social sciences. At the same time he adds that he has in mind *"an integrated social science, in which cultural, political, economic and demographic aspects enter into an appropriately modified framework of sociology, in which the idiographic account is analysed in comparative, nomothetic terms"* (p. 135).

This book is probably the best demonstration of the author's comparative historical approach aiming at theoretical generalisations. The main stream of the study is a treatise of historically significant 'great' world revolutions from the end of the Middle Ages until the present times, from the point of view of an *a priori* constructed and seriously argued system

of theoretical categories and abstract classifications. In the conclusions, the analysed cases of revolutionary processes are interpreted in the given theoretical framework in the form of a concrete typology. Only after reaching this point of investigation is the generalising knowledge enriching theory derived.

Thus, it concerns a non-traditional conception of historical sociology synthesising the knowledge summoned by the specialised social sciences. The main argument for this interdisciplinary methodological choice is clearly the complexity of Krejčí subject. It is one more proof that his clear priority is always the adequate cognition of the subject of research, to which the disciplinary, theoretical and methodological instruments are subordinated. Nowhere in his book can there be found spectacular demonstrations of a 'science for science' approach.

It goes without saying that throughout the book the author proves his erudition in the mentioned disciplines, particularly in knowledge of history, and economics. At the same time, he presents an enviable overview of sociological theory and its application as the conceptual framework of reference for the analysis of various types of revolutions, as well as the background for theoretical generalisations. Despite the difficulty in unambiguously classifying Krejčí's work as belonging to conventional sociology, there is no doubt that it is relevant, contributive and inspiring for sociological thought in the broad sense. The 'methodological eclecticism' (or, in other words, the complex approach) provides the author with the opportunity to formulate many ideas highlighting the individual cases and groups of cases and, on this base, original contributions to both sociological medium-range theory and general theory of societal change. On the concluding pages (pp. 266-270) he opens several as yet unresolved questions of the theory of societal change, for example, of the dependence of the revolutionary or non-revolutionary solutions on geographical and historical conditions, on the 'spirit of the time' and *genius loci*'. Another problem offered for further consideration is how to distinguish unique, repetitive and cyclical phenomena. In the reviewer's opinion, the evaluation of the book as a significant work in the field of sociological theory is fully justified by the mentioned contributions.

The way in which the author handles sociological theories is also unconventional. He does not declare himself to be an adherent of any of the acknowledged sociological schools, does not confront the advantages of it in clashes with other orientations and does not label any of the theoretical approaches with a priori ideological evaluations. Instead of this, he dives into the treasury of world sociological theory in those points where it is functionally grounded, that is, where it is necessary for the analysis of various aspects of the complex phenomenon called revolution in its proper historical and geographical contexts.

He devotes most attention to the possible theoretical approaches in the subchapter dealing with the aetiology (causes) of revolutions. He does not conceal the variety and even controversial character of some aspects of theories in which he seeks incentives. He does not hide his personal critical distance to excessive generalisations which were formulated on their base. However, he intentionally selects from theories mentioned in his book such elements which he (emanating from the preliminary study of historical processes) considers to be relevant for the clarification of the essence of the revolutions in general, as well as of the analysed cases in particular. Following this path, he is able to present an interesting overview of relevant theories of revolution and, later, of their useful elements. He begins, of course, with the comparison of Weber's and Marx's concepts. He finds the roots of the theory concerning the significance of the feeling of social injustice in the works of Aristotle and de Tocqueville. For highlighting the role of elites and various other problems he refers to some considerations of Pareto. In order to clarify the issue of the 'militant spirit' of the revolutionaries as well as of their adversaries he seeks inspiration in the writings of the Islamic medieval scholar Ibn Khaldun.

In one of the concluding passages, dealing with the structure of causal nexuses (pp. 248-251), Krejčí gives characteristics of the individual cases of revolutions using the categorical apparatuses of the authors in question, using them for the explanation of both specific

and common causes and motivations of various types of revolutions. From the same framework, he derives one of his main theoretical ideas, namely the thesis on the plurality of the causes of revolutions: both cultural-civilisational and social, objective and subjective, a rising from 'basis' and 'superstructure', etc. He rejects the pretension of individual theorists to the universal validity of their partial contributions to theoretical knowledge. Is this theoretical eclecticism? In a sense certainly yes. It is, however, critical and functionally argued eclecticism, oriented to a more profound and differentiated knowledge of the complex processes in societal reality.

The structure of the reviewed book is given by the method just depicted. In the first part (pp. 1-45), Krejčí explains the concept of revolution and presents the introductory abstract classification of revolutions (revolution 'from above', 'from below' and 'from the side' i.e. from abroad; 'vertical' and 'horizontal', 'endogenous' and 'exogenous'). Further on, he deals with their topography, grounding the selection of the cases which become subject of proper analysis. After the chapter devoted to the previously mentioned etiological issues, a detailed morphology of revolutions follows, describing – with a claim to general validity – the historical course of the revolutionary processes from the initial formation and institutionalisation of the reform, revolution and counter-revolution forces until the restoration and final consolidation of society with saving certain results of the revolutionary endeavour. Under this conception, revolutions show up rather as complex historical processes lasting for decades, or, in some cases, even for centuries.

The second and third parts of the book (pp. 47-244) encompass detailed 'case studies' of six original and two subsequently included – for the second edition – 'great' 'vertical' revolutions. Three of them are already historically finished (the Czech Hussite, English Puritan, French bourgeois). Five others are still unfinished (the Russian, Turkish, Chinese, Iranian and Mexican). In the chapters analysing individual revolutions the explication is arranged according to the phases of the revolutionary process as explained in the chapter on morphology. As a rule, the individual cases are described

and analysed objectively, perhaps with the exception of a somewhat less historically anchored and slightly biased text about the Russian revolution – for example, the Chinese revolution is described with some understanding devoted to the historical circumstances that caused its birth and historical fates, while the role of Russia and the Soviet Union in the First and Second World Wars and the difficulties these enormous conflicts inflicted on the country are evaluated very briefly and somewhat coldly. I find a better method of summarising of the analyses in the verbal characteristics at the end of the book than the attempt to illustrate the individual cases by the model diagrams (pp. 190-209) presenting the subjective qualitative evaluations of the phases of the revolutionary processes by means of quasi-quantitative classifications using criteria that vary from case to case.

The fourth part presents the already mentioned theoretical conclusions. In such an extensive and demanding text as *Great Revolutions...*, it is inevitable that anyone acquainted with the subject matter will find some passages and ideas with which it is difficult to agree entirely.

Thus this reviewer would welcome a less sharp distinction between vertical and horizontal revolutions (the latter being conceived as oriented against a sovereign power coming from another country). The horizontal revolutions are not analysed in this book as a specific type. The author's fidelity to historical reality compelled him not to omit the horizontal aspects of the Chinese and Mexican revolutions. On the other hand, such significant and really great revolutions as the American in the 18th and 19th centuries or the revolutions of the Central, Eastern and South-Eastern European nations, which began in the course of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian, Turkish, German and Soviet Empires, were entirely left aside, although all of them had historical continuations with clear-cut vertical aspects.

My second comment concerns the initial definition of revolution as a certain type of societal change. From the broadest characteristics of revolution as a 'sweeping dramatic change' the author arrives to a more exact concept of revolution as an accelerated, in

some phases violent, process of societal change, which encompasses shifts in both social and power structures. When considering the types of revolutions, he classifies those revolutions that were not accomplished exclusively from below as only revolutions in the broad sense of the word. The revolutions carried out both from below and above are considered as hybrid (pp. 6-15). This is certainly a definition more or less acceptable from the sociological point of view. However, one must take into account also that Krejčí uses the concept of revolution for such qualitative changes in the partial aspects of societal life that were realised without collective violence (for instance, the industrial revolution) only as a metaphor (p. 16). This all means that he does not tend to accept the possibility of non-violent political upheavals and social and economic transformations as a specific type of revolutionary changes for present or future periods – despite the fact that such processes seem to be more and more frequent in our epoch.

It is remarkable that in his definition and in the analyses of a majority of aspects of the typological classifications of revolutions, the formal and procedural characteristics of revolutions are much more emphasised than the characteristics of their contents (the ends and their realisation). His generalisation of all analysed revolutionary processes is attended by the following statement:

"It is important to point out that all the above-mentioned generalities concern only the procedural aspects of the phenomenon 'revolution'. It is the 'shell', or 'vehicle', and not the 'filling', the 'cargo', that is similar." (That is mutually similar in various types of revolution.) (p. 269).

It seems to me that in this point the relativisation of the causes of revolutions, and derived from this, the stress laid on the plurality of the 'contents' of revolutions goes too far. It may be that just this tendency led the author to the qualification of the upheavals led by Italian, German and Spanish fascists as an example of 'hybrid revolutions'. However, this might only be a momentary deviation from the main orientation of thought. The emphasis of the primary significance of the revolutions 'from below', as well as numerous reminders of the *democratic, social and modernising changes* as important characteristics of the investigated cases calls for deliberate generalisations concerning the 'contents' orientation of the great revolutions. These 'eternal themes' of great revolutions come forward in a concrete geographic and national area and in a concrete phase of the revolutionary process in many cases separately, or even in mutual conflicts, but in any of the actual historical revolutionary processes all of them have played their role and have fulfilled that what Krejčí calls 'outcome', that is, the historical result of the revolution.

Regardless of these comments, the study of Professor Krejčí on the great revolutions represents an important contribution of Czech social science to the cognition in one of the crucial fields, that is, in the theory of societal change. At the same time, it makes for instructive and interesting reading.

Pavel Machonin

Miroslav Novák: Une transition démocratique exemplaire? L'émergence d'un système de partis dans les Pays tchèques [An exemplary transition to democracy? The emergence of a party system in Czech countries]

Prague, Centre Français de Recherche en Sciences Sociales 1997, 275 p.

Miroslav Novák, Czech political scientist specialised in comparative politics, is specialised particularly in questions of party system and political parties (see his *Systémy politických* *stran*, SLON 1998). This book has been written in French, which is rather uncommon, but for the French reader, it makes for welcome reading and has to be commended. Especially so, since it is presented to a readership which is not highly informed on contemporary Czech affairs, that is, life after the 'Velvet Revolution'.

The richness of political life in the emerging party system in the Czech Lands makes the creation of such a work a demanding task. Therefore, this book is composed of six chapters. The first five are a study of the devel-

opment of the party system in Czechoslovakia (although the study is accented more towards the Czech development) from the beginning of the Civic Forum (OF) to the split of Czechoslovakia at the end of 1992. These chapters are very interesting, particularly the last, since the political party (the ODS on the Czech side, and the HZDS on the Slovak side) clearly played an important role in the dislocation of the common Czechoslovak state.

Three chapters are dedicated to the "first steps of Civic Forum", its "evolution" and its "end and legacy". These show how the first moments of the constituting party system are important, and the way that these played out in the Czech case. But it also shows that the others parties, that is, parties existing at that time, have been rather neglected, even if their role might now be considered important (they can be found in final chapter). Unfortunately, in this book it is not possible to find any answers to the specific problem of the National Front and the parties in it (not before, but after November 1989: how does its existence affect these parties?). The presentation of Civic Forum and its evolution shows us just one aspect of the newly constituting party system after 1989, evidently the more important and the more specific one. It should be noted that of the six parties present in the Chamber of Deputies after the elections of 1996, just one directly originated from within the ranks of OF (the ODS – Civic Democratic Party), two others have links with the OF (the ODA i.e. the Civic Democratic Alliance and perhaps the Social Democratic ČSSD) because of the presence of certain personalities who played a role in OF, the three others, the Communist Party (KSČM), the Republican party (SPR-RSČ), and the Christian Democrats (KDU-ČSL), were from the beginning completely distinct from the OF. The priority given by the author to Civic Forum, and its development, does not really explain this political scene, and therefore the reader has to wait until the last chapter in order to understand the situation of the contemporary Czech party system (that is, until autumn 1997). The inner transformation of OF clearly shows the reconstruction of the logic and importance of a political party in a modern political pluralist system.

However, a problem not treated in this book is the question of the difference between political party and political movement, and the logic placed in the fact that OF was a 'movement' (particularly in its relations with the political parties existing or reforming at that time), and the legal consequences of this dilemma. Another interesting problem is that at its inception OF seemed permeated by an antiparty sentiment, which is not merely due to its opposition to the former Communist Party.

The problem of systems in transition is that it is not a specific phenomenon, that is to say the 'playing field' is not stable. The system, as shown by Miroslav Novák, is continuously modified by its elements (the parties, the leaders of the various political currents etc.), and it is very difficult to understand each evolution. Nevertheless, it shows the process of party system development. Even if the speed of evolution has seemingly slowed recently, the quick pace of modification is still hard to anticipate. That is perhaps the reason why the author did not foresee the evolution of the party system of the Czech Republic after autumn 1997; the book was written at a time when the signs were not really visible (such an evolution was not expected). Moreover, the election of June 1998 provided some rather unanticipated results (the most significant being the failure of the extremist Republican Party). This is another reason to bear in mind that it is a study about a changing subject, and therefore can only be read for what it is – a study of the beginning of the late post-communist Czech party system. As the title indicates, it is 'only' the emergence of a party system. The evolution is not complete (even if the beginning may have ended) and, as such, it can not be read as a final result.

To a certain degree, the application of the 'classic' typologies of political parties and party systems seems to have been used by the author without reference to its usability in the framework of a system in transition: he seems to be too hurried to allow to the new party system a label of (western) 'normality'. For example, is the ODS really a 'voters party' in the way meant by Jean Charlot? Another French political scientist, George Lavau, specialist of the French Communist Party, is men-

tioned, but his ideas are not used by Novák (the ideas of the 'plebeian function' of the Communist Party, even if Maurice Duverger criticised it, and the mentioned concept of 'imperfect pluralism'). Another interesting aspect is the author's use of the opinion poll, perhaps only for a French reader, which is rather unexpected due to problems of reliability. The 1997 French legislative elections (after the dissolution of the *Assemblée nationale*) highlights the problems connected with its use (in fact, Novák himself sometimes seems wary).

The question of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia is evidently one of the more important. Classified by the author, as "one of the more dogmatic in the world", this party is evidently one of the poles of the Czech party system, which shapes its character polarised in Sartori's sense, and which therefore blocks the evolution of the Czech system into a two parties and a half system ('German model'). But what is to be done with it? Is it really necessary for this party to disappear (at least from Parliament)?

At the end of the book can be found the author's idea of the type of party system in Czech Republic. Using models, particularly of Jean Blondel, Giovanni Sartori and Maurice Duverger, and writing about the forming or emerging Czech party system, Novák presents his answer to the questions of "bipolar or multipolar", "polarised or not". His answer is that

the system is rather bipolar (the parties can be classified on a left/right continuum), and very fragmented. Even though the number of political parties has decreased, the system always corresponds to an extreme multipartism, which fits with, in the sense of Giovanni Sartori, a very polarised model that refers to a great ideological distance between the parties (even if this seems to have closed somewhat in 1998 because of the failure of the Republican Party). There is also no more a dominant party.

Novák presents three possible party systems for the future: polarised pluralism, multipartism with a dominant party, and (an extrapolation from the tendencies of the system) the two parties and a half system. The results of the most recent elections and the probable evolution of the electoral system, of which Miroslav Novák is a great advocate, points to a strengthening in the prospects of the third alternative.

This book of Miroslav Novák's is very interesting, in spite of the points it overlooks, and, its occasional over-complexity (the evolution of Civic Forum is sometimes difficult to follow), and seems destined for a public that has a basic grasp of modern Czech history. Nevertheless, it is recommended reading for anyone interested in Czech political life and the Czech transformation.

Michel Perottino

Histoire des idées politiques de l'Europe centrale

Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, collection Politique d'aujourd'hui 1998, 604 p.

Histoire des idées politiques de l'Europe centrale (The History of Political Ideas in Central Europe) is a compendium of political history and the history of political ideas edited by two French specialists. Chantal Delsol teaches Polish literature and civilisation, and is also director of the European research team at the University of Marne-la Vallée in France. Michel Maslowski also teaches Polish literature and civilisation and is a co-director of the intercultural research team on Central and

Eastern Europe at the University of Nancy in France.

This book is interesting insofar that it is the first publication which attempts to present Central-European political ideas in such detail (in greater breadth than, for example, Bernard Michel's book *La Mémoire de Prague*, published in 1986), and is comparable to many of the books on the history of political ideas in 'Europe', meaning Western Europe. This work is more for French readers (or rather French-speaking readers, or even western readers), than for a East-central European readership. Nevertheless, a Czech, Polish or a Hungarian reader would no doubt be interested by the development of ideas of other countries of the region, and perhaps how the Western reader

will be informed about this theme. It is because the Western reader is not so well-informed as to the political ideas developed in the region that this book fills a gap in this area.

The book is divided into four parts. The first contains five articles and an introduction on "Medieval intellectual traditions from their origins in the 15th century". The second part introduces "Political liberties" in the 16th and 17th centuries (ten articles and an introduction). The third concerns "Questions of identity" in the 18th and 19th centuries (nine articles and an introduction), and the final part deals with "The great modern streams" of the 19th and 20th centuries (seventeen texts). Thirty-six writers (including the two editors) of various nationalities contributed to this compendium, hailing from Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine and France. The plurality of approaches they employ make it difficult to classify these four parts, even if the more homogeneous is the first one. In other respects, the studies are also global approaches to the great questions (for example, nationalism, conservative thought, etc.) than more detailed studies (the European thought of Jan Patočka, István Bethlen and Hungarian conservatism, etc.).

The subject chosen is very broad indeed, but the concept of 'Central Europe', even if there is an attempt at explanation (Chantal Delsol in the introduction "Europe of the centre-East" [Europe du Centre-Est]), raises certain expectations that go unfulfilled. The first is that we might expect a more global and unifying vision of the political ideas of Central Europe. For the French or Western reader, the notion of 'Central Europe' is more accepted than 'East-central Europe' (as opposed to 'Eastern, Central and Balkan Europe"), and more precise than the 'Other Europe'. But, in fact, what is Central Europe, and is Austria in or out of this area? It appears fleetingly, and only indirectly, in the course of a few articles in the book. Four countries seem to comprise the Central Europe of the editors (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic [the Czech lands] and Romania), but sometimes Slovakia makes an appearance (has the split of Czechoslovakia already thrown this country into Eastern

Europe?), and, more curiously, Belorussia and Ukraine.

This collection presents two kinds of problem. The first is that the subject chosen is very large and therefore difficult to summarise in 'just' 600 pages. Nevertheless it is the first book on this subject that details this very broad theme in a such way. The second is perhaps more crucial: the manner chosen to present this topic, a compendium, has its advantages, but also its inconveniences, particularly the heterogeneousness, even if the classification into four parts seems to reduce this problem.

Another uncertainty that lies heavy on this book is that we find no answer to the question of the political ideas of Central Europe (for example, Coudenhove-Kalergi), and nothing about the Central-European idea of Europe (even if there is an article about J. A. Komenský). The questions of Central-European Marxism inspired only two Polish authors. The answer to the question of relationships between the state and political ideas (particularly in the sense of state-building) is just evoked. Another deficiency lies in the absence of study about the political ideas of the dissent in the different countries despite the appearance of several dissidents (Michnik, Havel), with the exception of Jan Sokol's study on Jan Patočka. In this way, the book is perhaps more of a *morceaux choisis* than a broad perspective of the whole history of political ideas of Central Europe. But this is the quantitative limit of just one volume. It could also be mentioned that in the article of Miloš Havelka (on Czech liberalism and realism) the title of Masaryk's book *Světová revoluce*, has been translated directly from Czech into French, while the French title is *La Résurrection d'un Etat* (the English version is *The Making of a State. Memories and Observations. 1914-1918*).

Nevertheless, this book represents a great step forward in the knowledge of the diversity of Central-European political ideas, and we can hope that it is just a first step toward a better knowledge of the political ideas and thus identity of this region in France.

Michel Perottino

Carol Skalnik Leff: The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State

Boulder, CO, Westview Press 1997, 295 p.

The book by Carol Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics...*, is an attempt at a complex analysis of the developments in the Czech Lands and in Slovakia since the emergence of their joint state in 1918. The author, however, pays most attention to the events of the period 1989-96.

The first part of the book deals with the 1918-1938 period. The brief account of this historical epoch is dominated by Czech-Slovak relations, set by the author against the broad international and domestic backgrounds. Thus, for instance, she devotes attention to the history of minor Central European countries, influenced by the policy of the Great Powers, the movement of capital between the Czech Lands and Slovakia, the insistence of the Czech representatives on a single state as a means of defence against foreign interventions, and many other important facts.

Much attention is also given to an analysis of the period of communist rule. It is a short but apt description of the 1948-89 period, with identification of the key aspects of the development of communist Czechoslovakia (exhaustion of sources, lack of investment, falling behind in the development of science and technology, transformations of the forms of repression, etc.). But the author also points out that the communist regime, besides its gross deficiencies, must be credited with the achievement of levelling out the differences in development between the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

The author further deals with the Prague Spring, but without suggesting the complexity of this event, consisting in the issues of the possibility of a reform of communism, the mechanisms of reproduction of power, and so on. I believe that more attention could have been focused in this part of the book also to the 'Helsinki process' and its role in the dismantling of the communist state.

The core of the book is in part two, i.e. in the analysis of the events leading from the Velvet Revolution up to 1996 (pp. 75-209). The interpretation of this period is based on the concept of "triple transformation" by K. Offe, who operates with transformations in three spheres – political, economic and identity/security relations. The problem given most attention is the break-up of the Czechoslovak Federation. In the author's opinion it was the orientation of the programmes of political parties in the two republics to national interests, which prevented the possibility of their operation throughout the whole territory of the federation, and thus considerably contributed to the split of Czechoslovakia.

Much attention is paid in the book to privatisation, regarded by the author as a step with positive effects. But she believes that this step also had its disadvantages because the privatisation undertaken through the coupon method brought profit neither to the plants nor to the state. The author, however, only briefly mentions the social impact of transformation and the responses to it. She leaves completely aside the legislative frame of the privatisation processes, which in an important way structured the transformations both in the Czech and in the Slovak Republics. She also passes over the importance of the pre-revolutionary expectations of the people and the role of the idea of economic prosperity, which in my opinion was one of the driving engines of those processes. The author deals in more detail with the shortcomings of the post-revolutionary economic start of Slovakia, much more closely linked than the Czech Lands to the needs of the former Soviet bloc in the sphere of arms production, which in the 1990s was hit by the decline in foreign orders.

The third part of the book analyses the international dimension of the transformation of both republics. Among other things, she analyses the differences between the Czech Republic and Slovakia in their attitude to NATO. This difference is explained primarily by the geographical factor and Slovakia's fear that its approach to NATO would bind its hands in the settling of relations with its Hungarian minority.

The author regards the transformation of the Czech Republic as relatively successful and believes that some of its sacrifices were unavoidable, regardless of which of the available strategies of transformation was accepted. In

the case of Slovakia, she identifies its latent authoritarian tendencies, which presage less freedom in the political sphere in the future. One of the barriers to a successful transformation of the Czech and Slovak Republics is seen, however, in a certain reservedness of Western Europe towards co-operation with the two countries.

It is difficult to find an adequate conceptual framework for the explanation of the turbulent processes taking place in post-communist countries. The conception of triple transformation, used by Skalnik Leff, offers a relatively simple and effective tool for this role.

But it seems that this tool somewhat ignores the aspect of values and norms of the processes under analysis; underestimation of these is now often thought to have been one of the major mistakes committed by the post-November development in the two republics.

Carol Skalnik Leff's book is a systematic work, filled with facts and with a solid analysis of the theme (probably one of the best treatments available on the development of the Czech and Slovak Republics), and should not be overlooked by anyone with a serious interest in the developments in the two countries.

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