

University's Prague College, which was founded by Mr Soros. Involvement with the university shaped Musil's professional life for years to come.

Upon learning of Jiří Musil's demise, Mr Soros expressed his deepest respect for the deceased sociologist.

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My original plan for the Central European University was to have three campuses: Prague, Warsaw, and Budapest. Being of Hungarian origin, I wanted the Prague campus to be the first in order to ensure that all three campuses would have equal weight. Jiří Musil played a key role in establishing and running the Prague College as its academic director. In fact he was the most important local participant in a bold and innovative venture. He was greatly inspired by the mission with which he was entrusted and lived up to it fully. He was an inspirational leader and enjoyed my full support, but the Prague campus could not be maintained because of the implacable opposition of Václav Klaus. We lost the building that was given to us by the previous government and we moved the headquarters of the university to Budapest. We continued to maintain a small presence in Prague however; largely because of the insistence of Ernest Gellner and the persistence of Jiří Musil. Both of them remained associated with the Central European University until their death. I worked with Jiří Musil closely during the early years. I enjoyed his company and I admired his devotion to the cause. His passing is a personal loss.

George Soros

Jiří Musil, Czech Sociologist, Dies

Jiří Musil was born in Prague in 1928 and lived through all the seismic upheavals of Central Europe in the last two centuries. As a leading European intellectual, these experiences helped to shape his thinking as well as his life. During the Nazi occupation and Second World War, he spent some time in Terezín concentration camp. In 1952 he obtained his PhD in sociology and philosophy at Charles University, and despite the fact that sociology was actively suppressed by the communist authorities, Jiří, from his position within the Institute for Town Planning and Architecture (VÚVA) and later the Czech University of Technology, managed to establish a worldwide reputation in urban sociology. Writing in English as well as German, his works on socialist city planning and urbanisation were widely read and seminal texts on the subject, even if he was seldom allowed to travel or present his ideas in person.

Jiří had many friends and associates in Britain, the United States, and in Europe who respected his work and helped to get it published. Ernest Gellner, David Donnison, and Ray Pahl helped him to escape from Czechoslovakia after the suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968 and he had the possibility of a lectureship at a prestigious British University. However, his wife Eva was unhappy in England and the family returned to the Czechoslovakia at the height of the Normalisation programme that for the next twenty years would bury the new intellectual flowering (including Jiri's own work) that had emerged from the Prague Spring.

However, in November 1989 Czechoslovakia once more became the centre of a new political upheaval that was to shake the world. When the thousands of protesters in Wenceslas Square jingled their keys and listened to the speeches of newly emergent intellectuals like Václav Havel, the Iron Curtain and the brutal communist regimes crumbled around them. Their protests joined with many others across Central Europe to produce a dramatic regime change.

Jiří Musil, in the tradition of T. G. Masaryk and like Václav Havel, was one of the leading thinkers who reflected on these changes. He began by calling for a re-evaluation of the role of Central Europe within European history, a set of reflections that helped to reintegrate what had been the 'satellite countries' of the USSR into Western Europe and later into the European Union. His works such as *The View from Prague: The Expectations of World Leaders at the Dawn of the 21st Century* [Musil 2007] and *The End of Czechoslovakia* [Musil 1995] reflect this.

After the collapse of communism, Jiří emerged as an intellectual leader in the Czech lands and was asked to head the newly restored Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences. From there he became academic director of the newly established Central European University in Prague and remained a professor in that institution until he died in September 2012. He remained a personal friend of George Soros, with whom he helped to found this institution and was instrumental in bringing it to Prague. Through these activities and his networking between Central European and worldwide intellectuals, Jiří helped to resurrect sociology from the wasteland of forty years of communism and being buried under twenty years of one of the most repressive regimes in Europe. He received international recognition for his work through membership of Academia Europaea, through the World Academy of Art and Science in the USA, and through becoming President of the European Sociological Association in 1999. He received recognition in his home country through being elected Fellow of the Learned Society of the Czech Republic and as one of its founder members.

Jiří Musil continued writing through the peaceful breakup of Czechoslovakia in 1992. His work helped to inspire a generation of scholars with a renewed interest in Central Europe and in European development. He brought leading scholars to Prague to interact with the students who came from all over the former Soviet bloc and from America to learn new ideas and to experience the social, political and economic changes that were taking place. These changes were articu-

lated by Jiří Musil as a leading scholar and his reflections as an authority on the transition process will continue to be read by many. His work was celebrated in a Festschrift by Wendelin Strubelt and Grzegorz Gorzelak *City and Region: Papers in Honour of Jiří Musil* [2008].

Jiří continued to write until he died. Those that knew him will remember those elaborate conversations that drew from sources as disparate as literature, architecture, art, and economics as well as sociology to open new insights into a changing world. In his later years he translated the work of Ernest Gellner and helped to continue the work that Gellner had begun in reflecting on the nature of nations and civilisations.

Jiří was devoted to his wife Eva, who predeceased him, but he leaves a daughter Hana and a grandson.

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References

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Jiří Musil and the East European Origins of the New Urban Sociology

It must have been mid-September 1963. My train arrived from Budapest in the middle of the afternoon at Hlavní nádraží in Prague. This was my first ever trip to Prague. I had just joined the newly created Sociological Research Group of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and I was on my way to turn myself into a sociologist. I was 'trained'—it was not much of a training—as an economist at what used to be Karl Marx University of Economics, spent some time at the Hungarian Bureau of Statistics, where in its excellent library I began to read sociological literature and published in 1962 one not too exciting literature review on the 'sociology of leisure', which instantly turned me instantly into a sociologist. When on 15 March 1963 the Hungarian Communist Party finally decided that sociology is not a bourgeois pseudo-science anymore and let the Hungarian Academy of Sciences create a sociological research group, my 'gigantic oeuvre' (consisting of one article) could not be ignored, hence I received a part-time position in the Research Group. Our director, the wonderful András Hegedüs, did not quite know