

The dissertation analyses the dynamics of the non-democratic Czechoslovak regime during the era of so-called “normalisation”. Methodologically, this is a “heuristic case study”, an inductive inquiry oriented on finding a new hypothesis, focused on theory building, not theory confirming. Conceptually, it follows a “pluralistic” framework, primarily using Skilling’s typology of Soviet-type authoritarianism. The aim of this thesis is to answer the following question: “What mechanism in the Soviet-type authoritarian structure had to change to induce “pluralization” of the regime?” The dissertation is divided into three parts: First, I present a description of an intellectual context of the emergence of “pluralism” in the field of so called “Sovietology”. Notably, I focus on the preconditions of the “rise and fall” of totalitarian theory. Employing the “building-block technique”, I consider “consultative authoritarianism” in the GDR to formulate a preliminary hypothesis on the connection between degrees of pluralism and the way leaders of the Party exercised cadre policy. The second section, derived from archival research, primarily concentrates on exploring the changes in the nomenklatura system in 1960s and early 1970s. In the third, concluding section, I formulate new hypothesis and present an explanatory typology.

Key words: Totalitarianism; Pluralism; Communism; Czechoslovakia; Normalisation.