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Top hat for everyone: The image of Britain in the newspaper discourses of Czechoslovak exile and its Third Republic afterlife

Dissertation Thesis

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Abstract

The thesis focuses on the image of Britain in newspaper discourses of Czechoslovak exile during the Second World War and describes how it affected the post-war development of the country. It argues that the exiles saw Britain as the appelative Other, into which they projected their visions and fears. Anglophilia, born out of lived experience as well as objective needs of the discourse's producers, brought both benefits and detriments. It meant discursive liberation from Germans as the old referential Others and finding a safe discursive space in the severely brutalized world. Yet the hope that Czechoslovakia could adopt both "conservative" and "socially progressive" qualities of Britain proved naïve in the face of the post-war geopolitical reality. Communists appropriated the image of Britain to fit their own needs after the war. While Britain of former exiles, now democratic socialists, was still portrayed as superior to Czechoslovakia, communist Britain was depicted as an equal partner with virtues as well as flaws. The "equalization" of Britain contributed to the preservation of illusion that Communists were devoted to the principles of democracy.

Abstrakt

Dizertace zkoumá obraz Británie v novinových diskurzech československého exilu během druhé světové války a popisuje, jakým způsobem ovlivnil poválečný vývoj země. Exulanti k Británii přistupovali jako k tomu Druhému a projektovali si do ní své vize stejně jako své obavy. Anglofilie pramenící z žité zkušenosti i z objektivních potřeb producentů diskurzu s sebou přinesla užitek i škodu. Čechům se na diskurzivní úrovni pomohla osvobodit od Němců jako odvěkých Druhých a zajistila jim bezpečný diskurzivní prostor ve válkou zbrutalizovaném světě. V kontextu poválečné geopolitické reality se však naději, že by si Československo mohlo osvojit

konzervativní i sociálně progresivní kvality Británie, ukázala jako lichá. Komunisté po válce přizpůsobili obraz Británie svým potřebám. Zatímco Británie bývalých exulantů, nyní demokratických socialistů, byla zpodobňována stále jako Československu nadřazená, komunistická Británie působila jako rovnocenný partner, který má přednosti i nedostatky. "Zrovnoprávnění" Británie přispělo k udržení iluze o oddanosti komunistů principům demokracie.

Keywords

Czechoslovakia, Britain, Second World War, Exile, Third Republic, Anglophilia, the Other

Klíčová slova

Československo, Británie, druhá světová válka, exil, třetí republika, anglofilie, ten druhý

Length of the work: 353 254 characters

Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on 05 July 2023 Johana Kłusek

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to my supervisor Vít Smetana for all the fruitful debates over my texts. Also, I would like to thank my home Institute of International Studies for the endless opportunities for the academic growth during the last twelve years. Gratitude and love that I feel to my husband, who has been by my side from the first until the last sentence of this study, is impossible to express in words. Yet, I will try. Thank you for everything, Michał.

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England, an officer said to me, is all it has ever been said to be, and more. "It is s rock among shifting sands," he declared.

Daily Telegraph, Czech's Unquenched Fighting Spirit, 27 July 1940

Introduction

Between September 1938, when the First Czechoslovak Republic ceased to exist, and February 1948, when the Communists *coup d'état* definitively thwarted the attempt to renew the state on democratic principles, the Czechoslovak state and Czechs as a national community went through its biggest existential crisis. The period was accompanied by soul searching crucially important for the future. Both the political leaders in the exile and those trapped in the occupied country deliberated about the new state's pillars that would improve its domestic and international stability. When the war ended two of them seemed truly unshakable. First, it was decided to rebuild the country without Sudeten Germans as the Others who helped to dismantle the state in 1938.[1] Second, most of the society agreed on democratic socialism as the best principle of the political and economic organization of the state.[2] Both East and West were following what seemed like roughly the same direction. The period of the Third Republic was then on the discursive level characterized by the fight over what felt as mere nuances but turned out to be the issues of major importance. Those in the end brought the country into the embrace of the new Other – the Soviet Union.

The thesis focuses on rather inconspicuous phenomenon – the appellative othering[3] of Britain that developed in the minds of the Czechoslovak exiles. At first sight the country played a minor role for the exiles as well as the rest of the society. It neither entered the "game" as the main significant Other nor left it in that position. From one of the two role models of the interwar period (the second was France), it fell from the

[1] Bruce R. Berglund, "'All Germans are the Same': Czech and Sudeten German Exiles in Britain and the Transfer Plans," *National Identities* 2, no. 3 (2000), 225-45; Bradley Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 158.
[2] Jiří Štaif, Jakub Rákosník and Matěj Spurný, *Milníky moderních českých dějin: krize konsenzu a legitimity v letech 1848-1989* (Praha: Argo, 2018), 173-87; Jan Křen, *Bílá místa v našich dějinách?* (Praha: Lidové noviny, 1990), 70.
[3] The term „appelative" in relation to the process of othering is borrowed from Hans Henning Hahn who describes the approach as „we are not doing that well yet, we are not that cultured yet" – See Hans Henning Hahn, *Stereotypy tożsamość konteksty* (Poznań, Wydawnictwo poznańskie, 2011), 17.

pedestal as one of the Munich "traitors" in 1938. It rose again as the host of the exile during the war but was overshadowed by the Soviet Union not long after. However, the topic on the side of the big story of the Czechoslovakia's road to the embrace of the USSR hides the relationship that uncovers the very essence of the world's understanding of those Czechs and Slovaks who unlike their fellow nationals could at the time express themselves freely. The exiles projected their visions, hopes as well as fears and frustrations to the country, that hosted them. The careful observation of the country did not end by the departure of the exiles in 1945 but continued well into the second half of the decade when both states shared left-wing governments. The thesis argues that Anglophilia as a fantasy[4] brought exiles and ultimately post-war Czechoslovakia both significant benefits and detriments.

The benefits were of three kinds. First, identifying Britain as the role-model Other liberated the exiles from their past – the omnipresent oppressing German element - and allowed them to look into the future more freely. In this sense they joined the crowd of continental observers who often tended to attach themselves to British culture when they got disappointed with old referential Others.[5] The moment when they decided to severe all the ties to the regional hegemon could not be better as during the Second World War Germans became the global villains.[6] Second, Anglophilia provided the exiles comfortable and safe discursive space in the severely brutalized world in which nothing was certain. The thesis works with the premises of Elisa Tamarkin who claims that acts of deference, when expressed freely, show faith in a world that is filled with worthiness and that taking pleasure in someone else's value confers value on oneself.[7] The exiles valued two things – British conservatism and traditionalism in which they wanted to see their own qualities and social progressiveness that was linked to the vision of the new more equal society, the idea of which was becoming practically ubiquitous and which also mirrored their warming relationship with the USSR. Thorough analysis of the exile Anglophilia contributes to our understanding of exile's everyday life. The last big benefit

[4] Ian Buruma, *Anglomania: A European Love Affair* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 12.
[5] Ibid., 17.
[6] See Wendy Webster, „Europe against the Germans: The British Resistance Narrative, 1940-1950," *The Journal of British Studies* 48, no. 4 (2009), 958-982; compare to the examples of the anti-German sentiments connected to the occupation of Czechoslovakia in the British press: „Czechs Waiting for Deliverance," *The Manchester Guardian*, January 31, 1941; „Spiritual Revival of the Czechs," *The Times*, March 15, 1940; „The V Sign," *The Times*, July 15, 1941.
[7] Elisa Tamarkin, *Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), xi.

rose from the endorsement of socialism as radically equalizing power. At the end of the Third Republic Britain was in the eyes of Czechoslovaks not the divine Other anymore, it was a partner.

The admiration of both conservative and socially progressive Britain illustrates the extent to which the image was appropriated. Even though the exile image of Britain was often shaped by lived experience, its discursive framing was informed by the needs of the Czechoslovak cause. This together with the occasional inclination to succumb to stereotypization make the exile Anglophilia problematic. The thesis claims that the negative effects of the appelative othering of Britain contributed to serious underestimation of the threat of the too close alliance with the Soviet Union. The idea that Czechoslovaks could both keep what they liked on traditionalist Britain and to reform the country based on the principles of democratic socialism, because that was what they wanted to believe the British Other was doing, dangerously limited the capacity of the critical judgement after the war. In this regard the thesis expands Bradley Abrams' list of the discursive topics that between 1945-1948 helped Communists to "deradicalize" themselves in the eyes of public.[8] The opposition to their worldview was insignificant. The consensus between the parties of the National Front grew continuously before the *coup d'état* in February 1948. It led to the destruction of one of the last strongholds of democracy in the region without a big fuss. The almost unified image of Britain was part of the story.

The thesis is divided into two large parts. Part I *1939-1945 Looking for direction* reconstructs the exile discourse on Britain. Part II *1945-1948 Socialism is great* traces its post-war afterlife. Individual chapters examine the exile Anglophilia from various angles. They connect it to historic and contemporary events and describe its negotiation by actors who projected into it their political agendas as well as personal feelings. Chapter 1 focuses on the profile of the exile community and its first encounters with the British. The early exile months were informed by communication troubles and the shadow of Munich but also by excitement stemming from the novelty of the situation into which the exiles got. Chapter 2 examines the process of mental break-up with Czechoslovakia's two important

[8] Topics such as the First Republic and Tomáš G. Masaryk, the experience of Munich or the celebration of 28 October and 5 May – see Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*.

referential Others – Germany and France – and describes the dramatic circumstances that led to the attachment to the new Other – Britain. Chapter 3 draws attention to the distinction between Anglophilia and pro-Britishness that was due to Munich related grievance, indeed, lukewarm. Chapter 4 traces Czechoslovak courting of Britain that included the construction of the image of deep historical ties and humanitarian and cultural campaigns. Chapter 5 turns attention from the realm of politics to the realm of everyday life and brings back to life a wide range of unmediated interactions between the exiles and the British. Chapter 6 presents the core finding of the thesis – functional conciliation of conservatism and socialism that affected exiles' vision of the future. Chapter 7 reconstructs the inconspicuous decline of Anglophilia in the later stages of the war when the Soviet Union adopted the image of the main referential Other. Chapter 8 explains the kind of environment into which the former exiles attempted to implement their understanding of Britain after the war. It elaborates on a unique sociological survey that captured the contemporary relation of Czechs to Britain. Last three chapters focus on the differences between Third Republic communist and democratic socialist discourses. Chapter 9 traces the post-war image of Britain in relation to Czechoslovakia, retrospective and current. It describes the appearance of democratic socialists' patronizing attitude and Communists' equalizing attitude. Chapter 10 looks at the reception of the British post-war domestic policy and shows the willingness of Communists to make ideological concessions in order to accommodate popular demand. In the end, Chapter 11 focuses on the image of British post-war foreign policy. Playing into anti-imperialist moods in the society and lasting Munich "trauma" resulted in the discursive defeat of democratic socialists even before the infamous February *coup d'état*.

The thesis lies on the intersection of the history of mentalities, political history, and imagology. It reconstructs the mental maps of the Czechoslovak exile milieu and points to the overlooked consequences those maps later had for the post-war political and social development of Czechoslovakia. Yet it also excavates the transcultural space that had enormous importance to individuals who were mere witnesses of the times. Whether experiencing it firsthand or only imagining it, Czechoslovaks were entertained by Britain; at times it soothed them and almost always it let them dream. Ultimately the discourses that the thesis reconstructs can serve as alternative primary sources for further research

about Czechoslovakia, and on a certain level, perhaps simply human experience of the twentieth century.

I hope that the journey through the tricky meanders of the exile and later Third Republic's image of Britain will not only entertain the enthusiasts of the Central European history but provide a few general lessons. Those are of three kinds: First, the thesis shows that newspapers do not only inform and promote beliefs of individuals but, indeed, conserve mentalities of the time. Second, it brings attention to the quality and variety of information and its interpretation that exiles obtained during the war, respectively Czechoslovaks during the Third Republic. Third, it illustrates the importance of stereotypical discourses that keep determining people's life experiences as well as countries' policies. I believe that deepening the understanding of those processes is vital for orientation and hopefully reformation of contemporary international as well as interpersonal relations. The fact that images and discourses do not trend in the current historiographical research should not affect it. My last wish is linked to the Czechoslovak Anglophilia – or in other words all the amazement and thrill that so often protrudes from the exile image. I very much hope that I did not belittle it by application of excessive pragmatism and that it will live on while being only mildly marked by my careful contextualization or what Eva Hahnová calls the "tiny interpretive corrections."[9]

Theory and methodology

The chapter explains the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of the thesis. First, it roots the text in the postmodern interpretive turn and critical discourse analysis. Second, it explains which newspapers were chosen as the main primary source, and why. Third, it sketches the most important scholarship on the Anglo-Czechoslovak relations between 1939 and 1948 and on the topic of the Other – in wider geographical context as well as in the context of Central Europe and Czechoslovakia, respectively Czech Republic.

[9] Eva Hahnová and Hans Henning Hahn, "Staré legendy a nové návštěvy Východu: O obrazech dějin Normana Neimarka," *Soudobé dějiny* XIV, no. 2-3 (2007): 488-500.

Postmodern interpretive turn

When Jiří Přibáň explains what postmodern interpretive turn did to thinking about the past it is hard not to ponder about Munich and its role in the modern Czechoslovak history.

> In the collective memory of every modern nation there are moments which are inherently linked to its identity. It is not at all important if those events actually happened or if they were made up by historians and protagonists of revival movements […] Thanks to them nations can answer the questions of where they come from, what they are and where they are heading. Those kinds of historical events constitute meaningful narrations for them – a history.[10]

Following the interpretive turn Přibáň puts the made-up events on par with those that happened. For positivists, who once dominated historiography, such a premise is problematic as their mission is to ascertain and describe "the truth" about history. They cared about how exactly things happened and who was involved in the particular decision-making process. They looked for previously unused or unknown primary sources, which should primarily speak for themselves and be interpreted as little as possible. Thanks to this approach, historians are endowed with incredibly detailed mosaic of knowledge. New schools examine the same (or sometimes different) sources with other aims on mind. Discursive analysis as one of the innovative approaches, that registered its heyday in 1980's and 1990's, relies on the postmodern interpretive turn. It stops digging and trying to find the "truth" and turns attention to what is seemingly on the surface. It works with knowledge that we already have and tries to interpret it with tools that inspect the relation between power, ideology, and language.

The thesis examines the topic of the Czechoslovak Second World War exile through the discursive prism, which has so far been rarely used.[11] It examines the relation between the imagined and real world and, therefore, assesses the manipulative character

[10] Karel Hvížďala a Jiří Přibáň, *Hledání dějin: o české státnosti a identitě* (Praha: Karolinum, 2018), 25.
[11] See Pavel Horák, *Republika v exilu: Inscenování československé vlády v Londýně za druhé světové války* (Praha: NLN, 2022); Erica Harrison, „Radio and the Performance of Government: Broadcasting by the Czechoslovaks in Exile in London, 1939-1945," (PhD diss., University of Bristol, 2015).

of the ideological-discursive formations[12] that at the same time were all based on lived experience[13] or at least contained a kernel of truth. The thesis tries to cope with the challenge by understanding the inspected media products as being in harmony with already existing social moods. Eleonory Gilburd's understanding of the cultural exchanges between the Soviet Union and the West in the mid 1950's is a great example of such approach. "In the Soviet Union, the British and French culture campaigns of 1955–1956 were orchestrated, but no less significant for that. Nor does orchestration necessarily imply disingenuousness."[14] Similarly, she interprets the US and USSR's campaigns for personal relations with foreigners that created hundreds of thousands of pen pals across the Iron Curtain. Even though there were psychological warfare schemes behind the programmes of both Cold War protagonists, that did not rule off a very real excitement among both Soviet and American citizens.[15] The same logic is applied to the Anglophilic zeal of the exile discourses.

The subtle nature of the type of propaganda that the thesis deals with is well noticeable in the article about Saint Wenceslaus that was published in the exile periodical *Čechoslovák* in January 1940.

> He will go all the way to England and especially London for the Christmas vacation and, together with the English boys, he will take up the propaganda of the Czechoslovak cause for a while [...] Throughout Great Britain Saint Wenceslaus worked diligently for the Czech cause this year, hundreds of thousands of carolling Englishmen and women sang with him about the mercy of the Czech prince, reminding us of the difference between Czech humanism, which is 1000 years old, and Hun barbarism, which is also 1000 years old [...] We have constant and effective propaganda in Saint Wenceslaus.[16]

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[12] Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language* (London: Routledge, 2013), 30.
[13] Understood as a „personal knowledge about the world gained through direct, first-hand involvement in everyday events" according to the definition of *Oxford Dictionary of Media and Communication* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), accessed August 21, 2022, https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780199568758.001.0001/acref-9780199568758-e-1552.
[14] Eleonory Gilburd, *To see Paris and die: The Soviet lives of western culture* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2019), 45.
[15] Ibid., 39.
[16] "Sv. Václav a propaganda," *Čechoslovák,* January 5, 1940, 5.

By referring to the Christmas holiday of the Czech saint in England the author hinted at the popular British carol *Good King Wenceslas*. He playfully fantasized about Wenceslaus being accompanied by English boys and working for the Czechoslovak cause. The palpable romantic atmosphere of the piece is in no way deceitful. The article was written amid the greatest desperation when the exiles felt exceptionally lonely, and the favour of the British was still uncertain. Wishful thinking of the émigré who was touched by the popularity of the carol about the king of his country was combined with gentle political messaging. The author unashamedly described Wenceslaus as a tool of propaganda and made effective and at the same time delusional comparison between the tenth century and the present day. Such propagandist touch is typical for the material (mostly from the war period) that the thesis works with.

First, the term "propaganda" lacked its current derogatory connotation during the war. It could have been substituted for "publicity" or "promotion" and it was supposed to create sympathy towards Czechoslovakia (or to strengthen the patriotic spirit in the case of articles written for the exile audience) on a long-term basis. Therefore, the plausibility and temperance were crucial for the success. There were no wild manipulations or sudden ideological turnabouts that could not lean on the experiences of the discourses' consumers. This principle only started to change after the war when democratic socialist and communist press started to adhere more to the anti-Bolshevik and anti-imperialism and anti-capitalist ideologies respectively.[17]

The negotiation between the lived experience and ideology such as the one that is present in the dreaming about St Wenceslaus' propagandist work is inherent to the modern understanding of the world. One observes the world and confronts it with the ideological systems he knows, adheres to or disagrees with. The process is informed by craving for coherence and naturally takes place in both democratic and totalitarian societies that as a result are becoming more stabilized.[18] The adoption of the "British qualities" in the 1940's helped exiles to feel more anchored and less vigilant of the threat that was coming from the real and not the imagined world.

[17] Keith Lowe, *Savage continent: Europe in the aftermath of World War II* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2013), The cold war mirror, Kindle.
[18] Hahn, *Stereotypy tożsamość konteksty,* 55.

Critical discourse analysis

The methodology relies on the insights from Ruth Wodak's historical approach of the critical discourse analysis,[19] methodological operationalization as outlined by Siegfried Jäger[20] and Wolfgang Wagner's theory of social representation.[21]

Wodak builds her approach on the assumption that causal models are not suitable for research of modern societies, which are gradually becoming more complex and consequently harder to grasp and possibly explain. She looks upon politicians and other public figures as upon shapers of the public opinion and, at the same time, seismographs that react to the shifts of the society's mood. Due to the general inability to define causality in the relation between those two groups, and in a quest for a relevant social research methodological toolkit, Wodak proposes the usage of specific type of critical discourse analysis. Historical discourse analysis is multimethodological, multitheoretical and problem oriented. In other words, it is not concerned with specific linguistic issues. The approach seeks to unmask the manipulative character of what Norman Fairclough calls ideological-discursive formations[22] through a thorough contextualization of the topic and through an analysis of its rhetorical means. It decodes specific argumentation schemes of the discourse, which are offered by different proponents and propagators, and exposes all inconsistencies and paradoxes traceable in the textual corpus. As a result, "naturalized" ideologies – if there are any – normally opaque to their consumers are revealed and can no longer be stabilized as a common sense. The concrete execution of the critical discourse analysis is inspired by Siegfried Jäger who focuses on collective symbols which play important cohesive roles in texts. Jäger proposes two steps of the analysis – structure step and fine, language-oriented step. Structure step comprises of a detailed contextualization of media outlets and general themes. Fine analysis then works with figurativeness, vocabulary and argumentation types.

[19] Ruth Wodak, "The discourse-historical approach", in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, ed. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer (London: Sage, 2001), 63-94.
[20] Siegfried Jäger, "Discourse and knowledge: theoretical and methodological aspects of a critical discourse and dispositive analysis", in ibid., 32-62.
[21] As outlined in Ragini Sen and Wolfgang Wagner, „History, emotions and hetero-referential representations in inter-group conflict: The example of Hindu-Muslim relations in India," *Papers on Social Representations* 14 (2005): 1-23.
[22] Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*, 30.

Chosen combination of Wodak's historical approach and Jäger's method is in the end framed by social representation theory, which first outlined by Serge Moscovici[23] and later developed by Wolfgang Wagner.[24] In order to understand social identities, it tries to bridge the gap between psychology and social sciences. The logic is built on Wagner's claim that control of the symbolic field of the society represents a core instrument of its domination. Wagner's approach is particularly useful for the analysis of the Third Republic press. Both democratic socialists and Communists pushed through the discourse on Britain their own interests. Unmasking the strategies, that stood behind particular interpretations of Britain of the time, one can understand better the transition from democracy to totalitarianism in a short period between 1945-1948.

Press as primary source

The thesis subscribes to the methods and frameworks of history of discourse, which relies on research of published texts. One can neither approach the contemporaries neither conduct a sociological survey. Therefore, when researching modern history, she logically must turn to media. The interaction between the creator or the proponent of certain discourse and its consumer happens in real time and is crucial for the understanding of the dynamic mechanisms of power in the society. Olga Šmídová describes the interconnectedness between the discourses spread by newspapers and the public.

> Journalists write mostly about topics that interest people and formulate questions that other people ask themselves. If we start from the seemingly opposite opinion, that it is primarily the media themselves that produce (stir and direct) public opinion, or that they at least incite and co-create it, then the assumption on which the analysis is based makes the same sense.[25]

As the thesis focuses on the 1940's, the focus on printed media is natural. Newspapers are treated as a primary source and, in accordance with the methodology of critical

[23] Serge Moscovici, „Why a theory of social representation?" in *Representations of the social: Bridging theoretical traditions*, ed. Kay Deaux and Gina Philogène (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 8–35.
[24] Ragini Sen and Wolfgang Wagner, „History, emotions and hetero-referential representations in inter-group conflict: The example of Hindu-Muslim relations in India."
[25] Olga Šmídová, „Česko-německé vztahy v zrcadle tisku", in *Obraz Němců, Rakouska a Německa v české společnosti 19. a 20. století,* ed. Jan Křen and Eva Broklová (Praha: Karolinum, 1998), 268-81.

discourse analysis, contextualized by wide range of secondary sources. Strictly critical approach is crucial for successful deconstruction of power processes that happen behind the discourses. At the same time the thesis puts emphasis on careful work with lived experience that is also reflected in the discourses. In this sense, the aim is to draw the borders between those two phenomena and describe their sometimes-contradictory effects.

The only medium that had comparative impact and, therefore, could be analysed is radio broadcast. The decision not to work with the government-in-exile BBC broadcasts and later broadcasts of the Czechoslovak radio is informed by methodological and thematic factors. To produce an in-depth qualitative analysis, there had to be a selection of newspapers done already. Given the extensiveness of radio material and most probably limited originality (exile broadcasts were prepared by the same people who contributed to the exile press and were naturally less focused on the lived experience of the exiles than the newspapers; same is the case for the post-war period - former exile and BBC broadcaster Jiří Hronek became chief editor of Czechoslovak radio's news service)[26] the inclusion would bring more detriments than benefits. I also believe that the final selection of newspapers is representative and wide enough to be able to cover the main public discourses of the exile, and post-war Czechoslovakia respectively. Finally, the BBC broadcasting of the Czechoslovak exile government was well researched by Erica Harrison.[27]

Exile periodicals

Three major newspapers published by the Czechoslovak exile groups in London – *Čechoslovák* (Czechoslovak), *Mladé/Nové Československo* (Young/New Czechoslovakia) and *Nová svoboda* (New Freedom) (with 454, 109 and 61 articles analysed respectively) - represent the core of the periodicals from which the exile image of Britain is reconstructed. The vast production of the three titles is complemented by *Česko-slovenský boj* (Czecho-Slovak Fight) published by Czechoslovak National Committee in Paris,[28] *Abernantské zprávy* (Abernant News) – school magazine published

[26] Petr Bednařík, Jan Jirák and Barbara Köpplová, *Dějiny českých médií* (Praha: Grada, 2011), 248.
[27] Harrison, „Radio and the Performance of Government: Broadcasting by the Czechoslovaks in Exile in London, 1939-1945."
[28] *Česko-slovenský boj* was the official periodical of the organ representing former Czechoslovakia abroad. The thesis works with 11 articles that came out between July and December 1939.

by the students at the Czechoslovak State Boarding School in Llanwrtyd Wells and *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne* (Czechoslovak Colony in Newcastle on Tyne News) – the periodical prepared by the exiles in North East England. To find out whether the exile fondness for Britain and the British was reciprocated, the thesis works with the image of Czechoslovaks and their cause in *The Manchester Guardian*, *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* (285 articles altogether).

The weekly *Čechoslovák* was the official periodical of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile published during the whole war. Devana Pavlik captured its privileged position well by calling it "the nucleus of Czechoslovak wartime publishing and the main discussion platform for Czechoslovak resistance abroad throughout the war years – not only in Britain but worldwide."[29] *Čechoslovák* had strong culture section and a space dedicated to regular essays and commentaries, which reflected on the daily life in exile. During the war, it published 454 articles related to the exile image of Britain. The left leaning biweekly *Mladé Československo* was started in April 1940 (weekly since November 1941)[30] as the periodical of the social and cultural organization of the same name. It was edited by Karel Brušák and Ota Ornest. It was renamed *Nové Československo* in January 1943.[31] The thesis works with 109 articles it published about Britain. Exile social democrats[32] stood behind the monthly *Nová svoboda,* which came out for the first time in March 1941. The editors Rudolf Bechyně and Václav Patzak wished to "inform about the flow of thoughts in the world" in order to "step by step formulate the program policies of our future life."[33] There are 61 articles considered in the analysis.

As regards the main political standpoint of these newspapers, all three titles were similar. They all broadly supported the concept of Czechoslovakia as the "bridge" between the East and the West (with only occasional interpretive differences). All repeatedly praised Winston Churchill and the wartime British coalition government, and all three applauded the social reform drafted by William Beveridge in 1942 - suggesting

[29] Devana Pavlik, "Czechoslovak Publications issued in Britain during World War II," in *Exile in and From Czechoslovakia during the 1930s and 1940s*, ed. Charmian Brinson and Marian Malet (Amsterdam: Brill, 2009), 183-96; also see Bořivoj Srba, *Múzy v exilu*, 230-31.
[30] The periodicity could have been increased due to the cut in the circulation numbers. See „Mladé Československo bude týdeníkem," *Mladé Československo*, July 4, 1942, 1.
[31] Bednařík, Jirák and Köpplová, *Dějiny českých médií*, 220.
[32] For details regarding the functions of social democrats in exile see Jan Brož, „Jak se jedná s Labouristy: Českoslovenští sociální demokraté v exilu a Labour Party během druhé světové války," *Historica Olumuncensia* 59 (2020), 155-71.
[33] "Nová svoboda," *Nová svoboda*, March, 1941, 1.

that Czechoslovakia should follow the British example in that matter (*Čechoslovák*) or urging Britain, and by implication the reconstituted Czechoslovakia, to endorse even more radical economic plans to create a new welfare state (*Mladé Československo*). The papers did, however, differ in the extent to which they leaned towards Soviet Union as the slightly more important side of the "bridge". *Čechoslovák* only joined *Mladé/Nové Československo* and *Nová svoboda* in its strongly pro-Soviet zeal in the later stages of the war and, even then, none of these papers ever stopped expressing their fondness towards Britain.

The disagreements, which partly reflected the disputes of the Czechoslovak exile,[34] were rare. In 1942 the editor of *Mladé Československo* lamented that the "official" newspapers *Čechoslovák* and *Nová svoboda* did not care enough about the exile's cultural life and that the ideological life of the exile community should not rely only on copying the British counterparts.[35] There was also disagreement over the way the Czechoslovak cause and culture were promoted in Britain, even if such criticism was always vague. In 1944 *Nové Československo* disputed "stupid, baseless and sentimental" discourses with which the Czechoslovak establishment tried to expound the national mentality to the British.[36] Vilém Mathesius, the founder of English studies in pre-war Czechoslovakia, similarly complained in *Nová svoboda* that "one-sided publishing and the narrow propagandist style represses the depth of our tradition and relationship to the English culture."[37] Anna Jandová Patzaková complained that Czechoslovak propaganda does not reach British working class as "the future political driving force."[38] The criticism of the official line of Czechoslovak propaganda hints that the general readership was aware of the, at times, overly patriotic tone of *Čechoslovák*. Therefore, the left leaning *Mladé/Nové Československo* and *Nová svoboda* provide a vital nuance to the analysis. For the same reason the thesis works with *Abernantské zprávy* (8 articles analysed) and *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne* (9 articles analysed). As their authors were not directly connected to the political groups residing in London, the assessment of their potential bias is much simpler. Consequently, it is easier to estimate

[34] Kuklík and Němeček, *Hodža versus Beneš. Milan Hodža a slovenská otázka v zahraničním odboji za druhé světové války*; Kuklík and Němeček, *Proti Benešovi! Česká a slovenská protibenešovská opozice v Londýně 1939–1945*.
[35] "Potřeba bohatšího kulturního života," *Mladé Československo*, August 15, 1942, 4.
[36] A.J. Patzaková, "The Spirit of Czechoslovakia," *Nové Československo*, September 9, 1944, 6.
[37] A.J. Patzaková, "Dva kulturní časopisy," *Nová svoboda*, June-July, 1941, 104.
[38] A.J. Patzaková, "Kulturní práce v Británii," *Nová svoboda*, May, 1942, 112.

the extent of the manipulative practises of *Čechoslovák, Mladé/Nové Československo* and *Nová svoboda*.

The qualitative discourse analysis relies heavily on rigorous contextualization, a key part of which is the focus on the producers of the discourses. Unfortunately, the war conditions prevented some authors of the studied articles to claim their authorship, due to the situation of their relatives in the Protectorate. They were either writing under pseudonyms (most prominently B. Londoner), acronyms or they stayed in complete anonymity. Politicians and journalists about whom it was known that they live in the exile were the exception. The allegiance of those mostly well-known individuals was never a secret. Most of the politicians publishing in the examined newspapers were directly linked to Edvard Beneš as the leader of the exile (Jan Masaryk, Hubert Ripka, Ladislav Feierabend, Prokop Maxa, Juraj Slávik, Bohuš Beneš, Prokop Drtina). The rest was significantly left leaning, as is also clear from their post-war careers (Rudolf Bechyně, Vlado Clementis, Karel Kreibich, Vilém Nový, Zdeněk Fierlinger). The ideological allegiance of the journalists was less profound. They shared the respect to Beneš' leadership and the tradition of the First Republic (Kornel Synek, Jiří Hronek, Jiří Mucha, Josef Schrich, Anna Jandová Patzaková, Karel Brušák, Josef Kodíček, Pavel Tigrid, Ota Ornest). Occasionally, the British contributed to the Czech periodicals. Apart from the old sympathisers of Czechoslovakia - Wickham Steed and Robert William Seton-Watson - they were the historian A.J.P. Taylor, the journalist Hannen Swaffer or, given the lack of information, the rather mysterious Anna Drusilla Vaughan.

The conditions in which journalism functioned during the war were, of course, not standard. Not everyone could voice his opinion and not every opinion could be voiced. The image must, therefore, be methodologically treated as one that could not reflect the full spectrum of existing opinions. The distortion of the image seems, however, rather minor. As regards the practical obstacles of publishing, paper was rationed in Britain since 1940. The opportunity to publish periodicals was limited for not only the British, but even more for the exile communities. However, there are no indications of a group within the exile community that would lack a medium to spread its views. Similarly, the impact of the state censorship and the self-censorship of the individual authors on the image seems to be limited. The content of all newspapers was closely controlled by the Ministry of Information. The British state censorship was primarily focused on sensitive information

from the front lines and the bombed-out areas in England, though.[39] The regulation of the way the exile wrote about their experiences did not represent a vital interest of the country. Moreover, as Robert MacKay emphasized, the most important review of the individual media was carried out by their consumers.

> Like their counterparts in films and radio, those working in the print media discovered, if they did not already know, that there was an inbuilt resistance in the British public to being told what they should think and how they should behave. Readers and audiences knew when they were being targeted and at best found it amusing and at worst irritating.[40]

Lord Francis Williams, who was a member of the Morale Committee of the Ministry of Information, expressed himself similarly in 1941: "[Newspapers] are as good or as bad as their public allow, for the greatest newspaper in the world has no future if it cannot get and hold a public."[41] There is no reason to believe that the Czechoslovak exiles did not approach their periodicals critically in a similar manner. They were accustomed to the practice as the media scene of the First Republic was, indeed, diverse and they naturally inclined to copy the approach of their hosts.

As regards to self-censorship, two key features emerge. Firstly, *Čechoslovák* was published as the official periodical of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile, thus by default it tended to amplify gratitude for British hospitality and to temper any criticism. Secondly, in the critical years of 1940-1941 the exile readership was systematically supported in the period mantra of "keep calm and carry on" in the same way as other inhabitants of the island. The morale boosting nature of the press content was, therefore, largely a given.[42] For both reasons, the existence of self-censorship regarding purely pessimistic contributions is highly probable. On the other hand, it could not have been total as the individual authors continuously proved a capacity to critically capture wartime Britain. The discourse repeatedly works with sarcasm regarding the very different habits and behavioural patterns of the Other.[43] Also, after Britain's renunciation of the Munich

[39] Robert MacKay, *Half the battle: Civilian morale in Britain during the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 145.
[40] Ibid., 181.
[41] Cited in Hanako Ishikawa, *Winston Churchill in the British Media: National and Regional Perspectives during the Second World War* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 7.
[42] Ibid., 11-12.
[43] See Anna D. Vaughan, "Mají Angličani cit a srdce," *Čechoslovák*, June 23, 1944, 6; Jan Stříbroústý, "Z deníku neznámého emigranta," *Čechoslovák*, November 21, 1942, 4; B. Londoner, "Děti v blackoutu," *Čechoslovák*, December 15, 1939, 3.

Agreement in 1942 and the reorientation of the foreign policy towards the Soviet Union, Czechs did not need to flatter the British anymore. Yet, their affection grew further.

Third Republic periodicals

The afterlife of the exile's image of Britain is reconstructed from eight periodicals published between May 1945 and February 1948. They can be divided into two groups that correspond with the Third Republic's main political division – titles that adhered to the principles of democratic socialism and communist titles.[44] In this sense two important dailies - democratic socialist *Svobodné noviny* (The Free News, 77 articles analysed) and communist *Rudé právo* (Red Right, 115 articles analysed) - are measured against each other. They are complemented by five cultural and political weeklies – democratic socialist *Vývoj* (Development), *Obzory* (Horizons), *Dnešek* (Today), *Cíl* (Goal) and communist *Tvorba* (Creation) and one pictorial magazine *Svět v obrazech* (World in pictures, published by the communist-controlled Ministry of Information). As for the number of articles analysed, there are 114 from *Obzory*, 99 from *Vývoj*, 23 from *Dnešek*, 28 from *Cíl*, 11 from *Tvorba* and 63 from *Svět v obrazech*.

The Third Republic's media scene was marked in a major way by the reckoning with the period of the Nazi occupation during which many journalists collaborated with the regime. The measures introduced after the liberation were focused on both the punishment of individuals and general reform. One hundred nine journalists were forbidden to work in the field permanently, forty journalists temporarily and seven "activist" journalists were sentenced to death. The new environment was to be much more centralized. Both press and radio broadcast were controlled by the newly established and communist led Ministry of Information and Culture. Private ownership of media outlets was not allowed as it was argued that it contradicted the interests of the public (plus, some periodicals such as *Venkov* (Countryside) were not allowed due to their affiliation to the Agrarian Party). The Ministry also controlled titles' circulation. As paper was scarce, mainly in the first post-war months, the state assumed the right to redistribute it according to its own consideration. The law guaranteed journalists' right to write freely and

[44] Bednařík, Jirák and Köpplová suggest similar simplification of the political polarization of the Czech post-war society. They divide the socio-political environment to communist and non-communist (see Bednařík, Jirák and Köpplová, *Dějiny českých médií*, 249). In order to emphasize the interconnectedness of exile and the non-communist camp, I use „democratic socialist" in the same sense.

according to their conscience. Yet the high level of control and prohibition of economically independent press, indeed, facilitated the pace with which Communists managed to seize control of the society.[45]

The image of Britain was only marginally affected by the relatively high degree of the media's regulation. If there was anyone who wished to criticize Britain they were Communists, who had more than enough space to do it given their control of the Ministry of Information and Culture. On the contrary, former exiles who now run the prominent democratic socialist titles did not have to fix their reputation after years of working for the Protectorate media, and hence could fully use their potential to comment on Britain from the position of unchallengeable experts.

The titles were chosen based on their representativeness (*Rudé právo* had circulation of half-million copies daily, *Svobodné noviny* had only 68 000, yet it was widely discussed and seen as a forum of democratic socialist intelligentsia)[46] and thematic focus. Culture oriented weeklies as well as highly popular *Svět v obrazech* naturally tended to relate to Britain as one of the world's cultural hegemons. Given the number of periodicals issued during the Third Republic (28 dailies), it is not possible, unlike in the case of the exile, to monitor all of them while applying qualitative analysis. At the same time, it is rather improbable that research focused on regional and local periodicals and periodicals with specialist focus would uncover a radically different image.

Svobodné noviny (1945-1952) were former *Lidové noviny* (People's News). They changed their name as they had to distance themselves from their Protectorate past. Renowned journalist Ferdinand Peroutka, who used to be a friend of both Tomáš G. Masaryk and Karel Čapek and who spent the war in Nazi concentration camps, held the position of the editor-in-chief up until February 1948. Peroutka also edited weekly *Dnešek* (1946-1948) that followed the tradition of pre-war weekly *Přítomnost* (Presence). While contemporary Western observers praised both titles for being level-headed and rather impartial, Communists considered them mouthpieces of the National Socialist Party.[47] While there was no official link between the party and the two periodicals, President Beneš and former prominent exiles who, in the meantime, became National Socialist ministers (Hubert Ripka, Prokop Drtina, Jaroslav Stránský) shared the titles' worldview.

[45] Ibid., 235-41.
[46] K.F. Zieris, *Nové základy českého periodického tisku* (Praha: Orbis, 1947), 24.
[47] Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, 67-8.

Yet the quality appreciated in the West had its limits. Eva Hartmannová described *Dnešek*'s tendencies to escapism and uncritical judgement when it came to its coverage of foreign affairs.[48]

Obzory (1945-1948) and *Vývoj* (1946-1948) were affiliated with the People's Party. Both weeklies aimed to widen cognitive horizons and, therefore, focused on the adoption of articles from foreign, mainly Western, media. As *Vývoj* especially targeted younger readers, its content was more playful and its topics more focused on entertainment. A former exile Pavel Tigrid, who used to prepare the government-in-exile BBC broadcasts, edited both weeklies. From October 1947, he published his London memories *Volá Londýn* (London calling) in *Vývoj.*[49] Both weeklies were of a high quality. Special foreign correspondents informed about what was happening in Britain. Karel Brušák, Věra Jakešová and Evžen Erdély reported from London and Josef Černý from Edinburgh. In June 1947, Vývoj's news service even became officially linked to *The Manchester Guardian*.[50] Weekly *Cíl* (1945-1948) backed by Social Democrats also had its London correspondent Karel Bála. Yet its focus laid in domestic politics and its editors were not former exiles. Hence, the number of articles dedicated to Britain was significantly smaller than in the case of *Obzory* and *Vývoj*.

Communist daily *Rudé právo* could leave illegality after the war. Before another former exile Vilém Nový took over, the periodical was led by Gustav Bareš, who, unlike his high-profile colleagues, returned from exile in Moscow. In 1946, he became the head of the Department for Culture and Propaganda of the Communist Party's Central Committee. Bareš also stood behind the ideological line of *Tvorba*.[51] Václav Kopecký as the Minister of Information and Culture and the chief ideologue of the Communist Party oversaw *Svět v obrazech*. Maybe surprisingly, the quality of the coverage of Britain in all three communist titles was comparable to the quality of the democratic socialist titles. Communist argumentation was consistent and it almost never happened that the criticism of Britain would be groundless or purely performative. *Svobodné noviny*, for example, repeatedly reprinted articles of Harold Laski, one of the most prominent hard left Labour

[48] Eva Hartmannová, "'My' a ‚oni': Hledání české národní identity na stránkách Dneška z roku 1946."
[49] See foreword to Pavel Tigrid and Prokop Tomek (ed.), *Volá Londýn: Ze zákulisí československého vysílání z Londýna* (Praha: Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů, 2017.
[50] *Vývoj*, June 4, 1947.
[51] Bednařík, Jirák and Köpplová, *Dějiny českých médií*, 242-4.

politicians who was also known as Stalin's firm supporter.[52] In that context, the popularity of the leader of the Communist Party of Great Britain Harry Pollitt among the contributors to *Rudé právo* and *Svět v obrazech* was hardly controversial.

The lack of profound conflict in the coverage of Britain as one of the major Western powers can be surprising given the steadily growing tension between the democratic socialists and Communists. Already in autumn 1945, Kopecký attempted to stop publishing of *Obzory* as the weekly kept informing about the "wild transfer" of Sudeten Germans. Although he was unsuccessful, *Obzory* and *Vývoj* kept clashing with *Rudé právo* and *Tvorba* regarding the desired development in various spheres of life until the end of Third Republic.[53] After the communist takeover, all democratic socialist titles were gradually abolished. Ferdinand Peroutka, Pavel Tigrid and other former exiles had to emigrate again.

Anglo-Czechoslovak relations between 1939-1948

The Anglo-Czechoslovak relations between 1939 and 1945 have been primarily examined from the political and diplomatic perspective. The thesis works with many studies, among which Vít Smetana's book *In the shadow of Munich: British Policy toward Czechoslovakia from the Endorsement to the renunciation of the Munich Agreement (1938-1942)* and Pavel Horák's book *Republika v exilu: Inscenování československé vlády v Londýně za druhé světové války* are certainly notable.[54] Further insight into the London exile affairs is offered by works of Bořivoj Srba,[55] Detlef Brandes,[56] Jan Kuklík and Jan Němeček[57] and Bruce Berglund.[58] Edited volumes of

[52] Michael R. Gordon, *Conflict and Consensus in Labour's Foreign Policy, 1914-1965* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 1969), 157.
[53] Bednařík, Jirák and Köpplová, *Dějiny českých médií*, 250-251; Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*; "Když Západ – tak Daily Worker," *Obzory*, January 18, 1947, 35.
[54] Vít Smetana, *In the Shadow of Munich. British Policy towards Czechoslovakia from the Endorsement to the Renunciation of the Munich Agreement (1938–1942)* (Praha: Karolinum, 2008); Horák, *Republika v exilu: Inscenování československé vlády v Londýně za druhé světové války*.
[55] Bořivoj Srba, *Múzy v exilu* (Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2003).
[56] Detlef Brandes, *Exil v Londýně 1939-1943: Velká Británie a její spojenci Československo, Polsko a Jugoslávie mezi Mnichovem a Teheránem (*Praha: Karolinum, 2003).
[57] Jan Kuklík and Jan Němeček, *Hodža versus Beneš. Milan Hodža a slovenská otázka v zahraničním odboji za druhé světové války* (Praha: Karolinum, 1999); Jan Kuklík and Jan Němeček, *Proti Benešovi! Česká a slovenská protibenešovská opozice v Londýně 1939–1945* (Praha: Karolinum, 2004).
[58] Bruce R. Berglund, "'All Germans are the Same': Czech and Sudeten German Exiles in Britain and the Transfer Plans."

Charmian Brinson and Marian Malet *Exile in and From Czechoslovakia during the 1930s and 1940s* and Martin Conway and José Gotovitch *Europe in Exile: European Exile Communities in Britain 1940-45* proved indispensable as well.[59]

The war period has received more attention of scholars than the period of the Third Republic. The works on which thesis relies heavily are Christiane Brenner's *Mezi Východem a Západem: České politické rozpravy* 1945-1948[60] and Bradley Abrams's *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism.*[61] Despite the fact that they deal with broader topics, they provide crucial analytical tools for understanding of the Czechoslovak discourses on Britain. When it comes to the overview of the Anglo-Czechoslovak diplomatic relations after the war, I use the studies of Petr Prokš and Marek Kamiński.[62] Of a great help for orientation in the topic is also Milan Drápala's anthology of the Czechoslovak democratic journalism between 1945 and 1948,[63] and Eva Hartmannová's study on the discourses of the magazine *Dnešek*.[64]

The Others

Since the beginning of the Cold War the scholarship focused on historical, cultural, political and economic backgrounds of various geographical regions became more complex than ever before. Both the United States and the Soviet Union desired to penetrate deeper into the mental worlds of their adversary as the lack of direct military confrontation initiated the process of the war's hybridization. Ideology was to become the prime battlefield. Similarly, decolonization that emerged on the horizon of the European powers' agenda translated into an increased interest in African and Asian nations and cultures. Better understanding of the local contexts was helping Europeans to keep

[59] Charmian Brinson and Marian Malet, ed. *Exile in and From Czechoslovakia during the 1930s and 1940s.* Amsterdam: Brill, 2009; Martin Conway and José Gotovitch, ed. *Europe in Exile: European Exile Communities in Britain 1940-45*. Oxford: Berghan Books, 2001.
[60] Christiane Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948* (Praha: Argo, 2015).
[61] Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*.
[62] Petr Prokš, *Československo a Západ 1945-1948* (Praha: ISV, 2001); Marek Kazimierz Kamiński, "Velká Británie a československé pokusy o most mezi Východem a Západem' (1945-1948)," *Svědectví* XXI, no. 82 (1987): 437-70.
[63] Milan Drápala, *Na ztracené vartě Západu: antologie české nesocialistické publicistiky z let 1945-1948* (Praha: Prostor, 2000).
[64] Eva Hartmannová, "'My' a ‚oni': Hledání české národní identity na stránkách Dneška z roku 1946," in *Stránkami soudobých dějin – Sborník statí k pětašedesátinám historika Karla Kaplana*, ed. Karel Jech (Praha: ÚSD, 1993), 93-109.

indirect influence in the regions the control of which was one by one handed over.[65] However, the desire to understand the Other, whether it is one's neighbour who lives across the street or a faraway country of which you know little, is much older.

The first elaborated reflections of the Other can be reliably traced back to medieval times. Any travelogue or chronicle would include remarks on the Others as members of ethnical, cultural or religious groups that the observer did not consider to be part of. The process of observing and ascribing value to the unknown has not changed since that time. The reflections almost always include a combination of description and contextualization as the observer desires to explain what she sees. The imposition of value that happens in the process has two consequences. First, it leads to the development of a system of stereotypes that determines the future relations between the given in-group and out-group. Second, it serves as a mirror for the observer. She builds her identity based on what differs her from either the annoying or the inspiring Other.

For a long time, the stereotypical images had been perceived as objective categories through which one could reconstruct ethical and aesthetic worldview of different cultures or nations.[66] The imagological method reached its peak in the nineteenth century when Fichte and Hegel introduced the concepts of *Volksgeist* and *Zeitgeist*. In the same century Europe witnessed a rise of three phenomenon – birth of mass media, self-determination of nations, and antagonistic understanding of international relations.[67] The combination of those factors led to deepening of heterostereotypes as well as autostereotypes in most of the countries. A full realization of the threat those often dangerously ingrained mental concepts pose to intercultural and international relations emerged only as a result of the Second World War. Thus, it is not an accident that the research of stereotypes developed in the ensuing decades primarily in Central Europe. Especially fruitful debate has been focused on the heavily burdened German-Polish relations.[68]

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[65] Kryštof Kozák, *České probuzení z amerického snu: Proč a jak se v České republice zabývat Spojenými státy* (Praha: Karolinum, 2019), 16-7.
[66] Joep Leerssen, „Imagology: History and Method," in *Imagology: The cultural construction and literary representation of national characters*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 17-32.
[67] Hahn, *Stereotypy tożsamość konteksty*, 67.
[68] Ibid.; Tomasz Szarota, *Niemiecki Michel. Dzieje narodowego symbolu i stereotypu* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1988); Tomasz Szarota, *Niemcy i Polacy: Wzajemne postrzeganie i stereotypy* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1996).

Even though the Central European relation to other geopolitical entities is not usually associated with postcolonial studies, the major discussion concerning the collective identities undoubtedly arises from this background. The essential work of postcolonial studies is Edward Said's *Orientalism* that was published in 1978.[69] Orientalism as an image of backward, irrational and, compared to the West, inferior Arab world, turned into a foundational concept, to which all subsequent works dealing with various types of the otherness relate. In the next decade the evolutional process of postcolonial studies was mimicked when Larry Wolff,[70] Milica Bakić-Hayden[71] and Maria Todorova[72] focused on the case of Eastern Europe (not coincidentally in time when the region was experiencing a revival of Western attention). Wolff suggested that the process of the Eastern European othering had similar patterns as the one used in former European colonies. Bakić-Hayden and Todorova then applied Orientalism to the Balkans. From a relatively straightforward concept used for the description of the Western othering of the Arab world, a point was reached when basically everyone orientalises, and everyone is at the same time orientalised.

Coming back to Central Europe and to the concept of stereotypes, which sounds more proper when thinking about the region which has never been "colonized," research of great quality has also been done here. The case of Czechoslovak orientalisation of Sub-Carpathian Rus in the 1920's was studied by Stanislav Holubec.[73] Orientalising of Czechs was on the other hand described in detail by Eva Hahnová. Her study *Dlouhé stíny předsudků: Německé a anglické stereotypy o Češích v dějinách 20. století* represent one of the most significant contributions to the debate which originated in recent years in the Czech academia.[74] The topic is also popular among Polish historians and social scientists.

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[69] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).
[70] Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The map of civilization on the mind of the enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).
[71] Milica Bakić-Hayden, „Nesting orientalisms: The case of former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (winter 1995), 917-31.
[72] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[73] Stanislav Holubec, „We bring order, discipline, Western European democracy, and culture to this land of former oriental chaos and disorder: Czech perceptions of Sub-Carpathian Rus and its modernization in the 1920's," in *Mastery and Lost Illusions: Space and Time in the Modernization of Eastern and Central Europe*, ed. Włodzimierz Borodziej, Stanislav Holubec and Joachim von Puttkamer (München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2014), 223–50.
[74] Eva Hahnová, *Dlouhé stíny předsudků: Německé a anglické stereotypy o Češích v dějinách 20. století* (Praha: Academia, 2015).

Valuable contributions were produced by Tomasz Zarycki,[75] Ewa Thompson[76] or Jacek Kochanowicz.[77]

Yet the thesis focuses on the opposite image - the Eastern perception of the West. Compared to Orientalism, Occidentalism characteristically works not only with negative images of the Other but also with positive images, which is the case of the Czechoslovak relationship to Britain. The major works which represent the core of the scholarship on Occidentalism concern former British and French colonies.[78] A rather thin coverage of the Eastern European image of the West represents a desired niche, which the thesis attempts to diminish.[79]

In the Czech academia, the thesis has an ambition to pick up the threads of the research conducted by Jan Křen[80] and Jiří Rak[81] in the relation to the German speaking countries and Christiane Brenner,[82] Stanislav Holubec[83] and Ondřej Slačálek[84] in connection to the topic of the Czech mental maps in general. Jiří Rak in his study *Bývali Čechové* showed that the Czech stereotypical images of Germans and the Austro-Hungarian Empire were constructed in harmony with the needs of the Czech national revival movement. The lack of self-confidence and immaturity of the Czech society of the first half of the nineteenth century initiated a tradition of interpreting the world based on the society's own vision of the past and future. This brings us back to the central notion of postcolonialism, which is the explanation of Orientalism through the justification of

[75] Tomasz Zarycki, *Ideologies of eastness in Central and Eastern Europe* (Oxford: Routledge, 2014).
[76] Ewa Thompson, „Whose Discourse? Telling the Story," in *Post-Communist Poland, The Other Shore: Slavic and East European Cultures Abroad,* ed. Jerome H. Katsell (Idyllwild: Charles Schlacks, 2010), 1–15.
[77] Jacek Kochanowicz, „A Moving Target or a Lost Illusion? East Central Europe in Pursuit of the West in Two Globalization Phases," in *Mastery and Lost Illusions: Space and Time in the Modernization of Eastern and Central Europe*, ed. Włodzimierz Borodziej, Stanislav Holubec and Joachim von Puttkamer (München: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2014), 31-50.
[78] James G. Carrier, *Occidentalism: Images of the West (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies* (New York: The Penguin Press: 2004); Alastair Bonnett, *The Idea of the West: Culture, Politics and History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
[79] See for example Gyorgy Péteri, ed. *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and Soviet Union* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010); Gilburd, *To see Paris and die: The Soviet lives of western culture;* Malgorzata Fidelis, *Imagining world from behind the Iron Curtain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).
[80] Jan Křen and Eva Broklová, ed. *Obraz Němců, Rakouska a Německa v české společnosti 19. a 20. století* (Praha: Karolinum, 1998).
[81] Jiří Rak, *Bývali Čechové: České historické mýty a stereotypy* (Praha: H&H, 1994).
[82] Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948.*
[83] Stanislav Holubec, *Ještě nejsme za vodou: Obrazy druhých a historická paměť v období postkomunistické transformace* (Praha: Scriptorium, 2015).
[84] Ondřej Slačálek, „The postcolonial hypothesis: Notes on the Czech ‚Central European' identity," *Annual of Language & Politics and Politics of Identity* X (2016): 27-44.

Western imperialism.[85] The analysis of the image of Britain during the years when the society was subjected to extreme pressures, should in similar logic show what type of legitimization the country was looking for in its relationship to Britain.

The thinking of Czechs about themselves is the last discursive relation which needs to be mentioned. The topic has been well researched by Ladislav Holý,[86] again Eva Hahnová[87] and Stanislav Holubec.[88] The thesis has an ambition to pick up on threads of those titles and despite working with a wide range of stereotypes to avoid generalizing and categorizing, which so often forestalls constructive debates between various groups of people.

1939-1945: Looking for direction

Chapter 1: Setting the scene

The Czechoslovak emigration was initiated by the invasion of Germany to Bohemia and Moravia and the secession of Slovakia in March 1939. While in France Czechoslovak citizens could rely on a significant emigrant community, Britain was home to only some 500 nationals before the war.[89] By mid-May 1939 the Home Office registered about 14,000 Czechoslovak citizens.[90] More refugees reached the country when France fell, and Britain became the isle of last resort. During the war, however, the numbers severely oscillated – the peak never exceeding the 1939 levels, as many Czechs and Slovaks migrated further to North America, Australia, and Palestine. The final decline was registered with the opening of the second front in 1944 when the entire Czechoslovak brigade was deployed to the continent.[91] Who were the refugees and who were their hosts? What did they know about each other at the beginning?

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[85] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
[86] Ladislav Holý, *Malý český člověk a skvělý český národ* (Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství, 2018).
[87] Eva Hahnová, *Češi o Češích: dnešní spory o dějiny* (Praha: Academia, 2018).
[88] Holubec, *Ještě nejsme za vodou: Obrazy druhých a historická paměť v období postkomunistické transformace.*
[89] "New Czechoslovak Institute: Social Centre in London," *The Times*, January 17, 1941.
[90] Smetana, *In the Shadow of Munich. British Policy towards Czechoslovakia from the Endorsement to the Renunciation of the Munich Agreement (1938–1942)*, 156.
[91] Srba, *Múzy v exilu*, 49-57.

As Judith Melton points out, exiles are not only separated from physical places they consider their homes but also from important "enculturations" of the place - family, friends, status or language.[92] Their identities are suddenly shattered and only a handful of them possess mechanisms for acculturation in the new environment. The initial image of Britain that the exiles produced was to a large extent informed by their age, social and occupational profile. Almost two thirds of them consisted of people between sixteen and thirty.[93] As younger people tend to be more adaptable to new environments since they are not yet settled in life, the group was predisposed to perceive the exile less traumatically. The first encounters between the immigrants and home population often took place in the most natural and unplanned ways as the article from October 1939 suggests:

> "Somewhere in Kent" the local football club was convinced that it could play football. However, the crisis in Central Europe and the new war showed this club that it was wrong. The Czechoslovaks beat them 6-0. And it turned out that they played only in low shoes and some of them even - in flip-flops.[94]

Most of the immigrants was of middle and lower middle-class origin. As Sylva Simsova remarks, records of refugees' occupational background are tricky for simple interpretation.[95] What is possible to state is that among the Czech nationals there was an above average number of professionals and businesspeople. Many of small businessmen moved their manufactures to Britain and spent the war in relative abundance. Yet, there was also plenty of unemployed exiles, "fighting over pennies and sorrowfully meditating about their disappearing means" as Anna Patzaková noted.[96] Most professionals worked in second-rate jobs long after their arrival.[97]

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[92] Judith Melton, *The Face of Exile: Autobiographical Journeys* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1998), xix.
[93] Srba, *Múzy v exilu*, 52.
[94] "V bačkorách, ale vyhráli jsme to (podle „Daily Mirror")," *Čechoslovák*, October 28, 1939, 5.
[95] Sylva Simsova, "Who were the Pre-Second World War Refugees from Czechoslovakia?," in *Exile in and From Czechoslovakia during the 1930s and 1940s*, ed. Charmian Brinson and Marian Malet (Amsterdam: Brill, 2009), 83-102.
[96] A.J. Patzaková, "Československý ústav," *Nová svoboda*, April, 1941, 51-53.
[97] The Czech refugees who fled to Britain after the Sudetenland was annexed by Germany in 1938 were initially assisted by the Czech Refugee Trust Fund. The fund continued to operate during the entire war under the aegis of the Secretary of State for the Home Department with funding coming initially from public subscription and then, from 1939, from the British government. It assisted refugees from Czechoslovakia with their living expenses, and provided them with additional support if they chose, at the end of the war, to return home or move to a third country, see Jana Buresova, "The Czech Refugee Trust Fund in Britain 1939–1950," in *Exile in and From Czechoslovakia during the 1930s and 1940s*, ed. Charmian Brinson and Marian Malet (Amsterdam: Brill, 2009), 133–145.

In August 1941, a contributor to *Mladé Československo* described how a professor of philosophy manages a kennel to a rich Englishman, a lawyer works as a porter in a hotel, Prague architect was sent to clear debris, famous obstetrician works as a medical examiner of corpses, and electrical engineer works as a shoemaker.[98] The lack of jobs in original fields was, however, rather downplayed by the author. He also stayed on top of things when it came to his own lot. "I myself was sent to work in a brewery - when I found out they brewed g i n g e r ale, I left after the first batch."[99] Instead of contributing to a production of flavoured beer (a blasphemous concept for a Czech), he started to attend a training centre to learn working with a lathe. Relaxed and often humorous mood is typical for the early exile reflections. Apart from the favourable age profile of the exiles, this was also informed by the awareness of the situation in the Protectorate. The temporal inability to practise their profession must have felt trivial in comparison to life in Czechoslovakia that, in the meantime, turned into a brutal dictatorship. Tenax wrote in the first issue of *Čechoslovák* in October 1939:

> Although each of us misses this or that that we had at home, there are very few who can legitimately complain about the unbearable exile […] We are all in one huddle of Czechoslovaks in England and we live here conscious both of our human dignity and great equality of our rights and duties.[100]

Men serving in military represented a specific group of exiles. Most of them came to Britain in summer 1940 after being rescued during the naval operation Aerial and Cycle that followed the earlier Dunkirk evacuations. Some 3 200 soldiers were stationed in the country as members of 1st Czechoslovak Armoured Brigade[101] and approximately 2 500 Czechoslovak pilots went through RAF squadrons during the war.[102] In addition, some 1 300 Czechoslovak soldiers of the former Czechoslovak Infantry Battalion No. 11 – East came to Britain in August 1943 after the pull-out from the Middle East.[103]

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[98] "O různých zaměstnáních," *Mladé Českosloslovensko*, August 12, 1941, 10.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Tenax, "Politický nový rok," *Čechoslovák*, October 28, 1939, 2.
[101] Eduard Čejka, *Československý odboj na Západě (1939-1945)* (Praha: Mladá fronta, 1997), 235.
[102] "Československé perutě královského letectva," Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed January 15, 2021, https://www.mzv.cz/london/cz/vzajemne_vztahy_cr_a_spojeneho/osobnosti_cesko_britskych_vztahu/ceskoslovenske_perute_kralovskeho.html.
[103] Čejka, *Československý odboj na Západě (1939-1945)*, 343.

The soldiers who came in the first wave were given food and a small allowance. A secure welfare was only slowly established.[104] The provisional accommodations were often cramped places with mostly low quality of nutrition, furnishings and heating. Yet, those adversities again did not stand in the forefront of their reflections. One described his friends as "dancing, smoking, angry individualists in a Victorian castle in a picturesque, secluded provincial town."[105] Other focused on the new fairy tale-like surroundings:

> The red thread of the memories of our soldiers in Britain will wind between the oaks and beeches in the meadows and around the small lakes to the castle Ch. [Cholmondeley Castle in Cheshire], or it will get tangled in one of the numerous noble residences […] where the units of the Czechoslovak army were encamped in different places on the chessboard of meadows, wheat and oat fields, groves and medieval villages and towns. The bachelors settled there themselves in the estates and castles of squires, baronets and lords, resembling in a certain sense the migrating Slavs who, more than a thousand years ago, moved westward in search of new settlements.[106]

Rank and file military men with dubious citizenship status could allow themselves to be carried away by the charm of the British countryside as they were far from the battlefield. The soldiers who were stationed in the country since 1940 did not take part in direct fight until 1944. Also, most of them have never been abroad or interacted with foreigners before the war. That made the experience truly exciting. On the other hand, to be able to interact with the new environment more profoundly than just secretly admiring the "chessboard of meadows", they had to command English.

Problematic communication was the most frustrating issue of the refugees after their arrival. Civil servants,[107] children in schools,[108] soldiers – all were struggling. State

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[104] Alan Brown, "The Czechoslovak Armed Forces in Britain, 1940-1945," in *Europe in Exile: European Exile Communities in Britain 1940-45*, ed. Martin Conway and José Gotovitch (Oxford: Berghan Books, 2001), 167-82.
[105] "Somewhere in England," *Čechoslovák v Anglii,* October 16, 1939, 3.
[106] "Cestou k vojákům," *Čechoslovák*, August 15, 1942, 5.
[107] Horák, *Republika v exilu: Inscenování československé vlády v Londýně za druhé světové války*, 150.
[108] Andrea Hammel, "Why is your Czech so bad? Czech child refugees, language and identity," in *Exile in and From Czechoslovakia during the 1930s and 1940s*, ed. Charmian Brinson and Marian Malet (Amsterdam: Brill, 2009); "Moje vzpomínky na Camberlay," *Abernantské zprávy*, June 27, 1945.

agencies provided minimal language educational support. The War Office issued an instruction to the British Council stating that "any cultural or educational work amongst the allied armies is not required on anything more than a trivial scale."[109] The lack of action from the British state left soldiers to learn the language through contact with their British counterparts and the public. The motivation was limited, as not a long time before they had to drop French that they learned vigorously for many months when stationed on the other side of the English Channel.[110]

Czechs revisited the topic of the initial struggling with English during the whole war. In 1941, an anonymous author recalled that he and his comrades felt as "little bundles of misery, setting out to the street, lost and without any knowledge of the rich language of Shakespeare, Byron and Spencer."[111] The first phrase they learned was: "I'm sorry. I'm Czech." – trying to avoid misunderstandings and to hint on Munich at the same time.[112] Too shy to approach locals, the lonely wandering through the city was a recurrent theme:

> When we arrived in London, we wandered the streets of a huge city like lost children [...] We were very happy when we found our way home without a map and when we got off at the right stop on the underground. We all wanted to shorten our journey home somehow [which] led us to discover the old joy of wandering [...] The names we learned in school suddenly emerged from forgotten literary history. Almost everyone we knew lived in London, in old streets and old houses, which fortunately have been preserved.[113]

Jan Pilíř linked the language deficit with the feeling of physical discomfort in the unknown space:

> I remember the moment I landed in England very well. I can still see myself – clueless, self-conscious, almost desperate in the foreign noisy world, which embraced me to the extent that it almost took my breath away. Endless streets, weird signs, bizarre names, unknown faces, and

[109] Cited in Brown, "The Czechoslovak Armed Forces in Britain, 1940-1945," 175.
[110] "Odbojová angličtina," *Mladé Československo*, November 21, 1942, 11.
[111] "Naše první lekce angličtiny," *Mladé Československo*, August 1, 1941, 10.
[112] Ibid.
[113] "Literární procházka," *Čechoslovák*, August 15, 1941, 1.

> foreign, completely incomprehensible language […] My eyes worked more intensively and what they saw they impressed onto my mind like onto a rock as when I landed, I was voiceless.[114]

Yet, the memories of the troubles with English were rarely dark. Language focused articles are often full of anecdotes about who got into what funny situation. A lot of confusion was caused by notices on various items. One Czech soldier asked for a "bottle of pool" in the shop as he saw the notice on a tank and considered pool to be oil.[115] Another Czech asked on a private visit whether the hosts had "Government Property" meaning whether they possessed a car.[116] No less comical was the situation when a Brit came to a house where he was supposed to kill a fish for Christmas. Czech rushed to tell him that he himself was Fish, not knowing what his surname meant in English.[117] The language troubles did not last long. One of the biggest incentives to at least adopt the basics were the prospects of romantic relationship with British women. [118]

While Czechoslovaks were busy getting used to the new environment, learning English and taking walks through picturesque countryside and hidden streets of London, the British stood in front of quite a challenge. Until 1943, they received some 150,000 refugees and provided most of them with at least some form of help.[119] What were the British like at the time? What was their relationship to foreigners in general and to Czechs in particular?

Allan Allport describes Britain of the late 1930's as a country of exceptional national harmony. The shared legacy of the First World War held the Union close together and parliamentary politics supported cohesion.[120] Between 1939 and 1945, the population of Britain became more diverse than ever before. The wartime "mixing" made British society more open and less racially and culturally biased primarily through individual encounters that were much rarer in the past.[121] Racism decreased in those communities

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[114] Jan Pilíř, "Němý," *Čechoslovák,* July 7, 1944, 1.
[115] "Naše první lekce angličtiny," *Mladé Československo*.
[116] 21.11.1942, str. 4, Odbojová angličtina, Mladé Československo
[117] "Naše první lekce angličtiny," *Mladé Československo*.
[118] "Perutě mezi Angličany," *Čechoslovák*, July 19, 1940, 3-4.
[119] Pavol Jakubec, "Together and Alone in Allied London: Czechoslovak, Norwegian and Polish Governments-in-Exile, 1940-1945," *The international history review* 42, no. 3 (May 2019): 465-84; Wendy Webster, *Mixing it! Diversity in World War Two Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), Introduction, Kindle.
[120] Allan Allport, *Britain at Bay: The Epic Story of the Second World War: 1938-1941* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2020), 31-32.
[121] Webster, *Mixing it! Diversity in World War Two Britain,* Introduction, Allies.

that got into direct contact with black soldiers from the United States or from the British realms in the Caribbean.[122] And it worked in the opposite way as well. The Irish Catholic volunteers and workers who came to Britain recalled how quickly the wall of heterostereotypes fell when they befriended their English counterparts.[123] Yet, the unprecedentedly close contact with foreigners did not produce sole intercultural harmony. Some hostilities towards different national, racial and religious groups were temporal, some represented a stable feature of everyday life, some emerged unexpectedly after the war ended. Wendy Webster describes various types of discrimination that the Others encountered in wartime Britain. Jews were exposed to antisemitic moods mainly in 1940, when the white British accused them of cowardice and lack of steadiness during the evacuation and later the Blitz.[124] Americans fell victim to "sexual patriotism" as their relationships with British women were considered improper by wide public opinion.[125] Poles were warmly treated as allies during the war only to become estranged after its end. The Polish Air stations were soon daubed with "Polish Go Home" and "England for the English."[126]

Unlike Americans or Poles, Czechoslovaks were not targets of widespread animosities. On the contrary, the Mass Observation surveys prove that Czechoslovaks were perceived more favourably than other exile groups.[127] There were few in comparison, therefore not attracting the attention of crowds of women or representing a threat on the job market after the war – a majority returned to Czechoslovakia immediately in 1945. The British did not feel in any way threatened by their presence and perceived them rather as a harmless curiosity. In the early days of the war, ordinary British knew little about the small Central European nation. Even though the events in Czechoslovakia were covered systematically by the chief periodicals of the time,[128] Czechoslovak exiles encountered staggering ignorance regarding the ideas the British had about their part of the world.

[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid., Introduction.
[124] Ibid., Allies.
[125] Ibid., Introduction.
[126] Ibid.
[127] See the analysis of multiple Mass Observation surveys in Horák, *Republika v exilu: Inscenování československé vlády v Londýně za druhé světové války*, 151-57.
[128] See "Spiritual revival of the Czechs," *The Times,* March 15, 1940; "The man in the street," *The Times*, March 15, 1940.

> After our arrival, we were asked questions such as: do we have trains, do we have electricity, do we have pianos? […] There was disenchantment when we were able to use things that, according to the ideas of the questioners, we should not even know […] The English knew nothing about the independence of Czechoslovakia. They asked under whose rule the Slovaks lived - England, France or Germany?[129]

Yet, the ignorance did not concern only Czechoslovakia. A forester from British Honduras, who worked in Scotland during the war, remembered that the locals have never seen people of colour and thought that him and his likes all came from Africa. They asked him where he learned English. They could not comprehend the fact that it was his native tongue.[130]

It is fair to say that Czechoslovaks were no more knowledgeable. The exiles admitted knowing as little about their hosts as their hosts knew about them.

> I knew that Great Britain is an island owning the Prime Meridian (from history lessons and the movie about the six wives of Henry VIII) that you cut off a sufficient number of heads of your kings and your kings a sufficient number of heads of queens, and I guess, that most of us knew Shakespeare, Chamberlain, and Sherlock Holmes. That doesn't seem to be much more than the English knew about Czechoslovakia.[131]

A similar obscurity regarding Britain was amusedly remembered by T. B. Tilley. When he was visiting Czechoslovakia before the war, a girl approached him and asked whether he was from America. On being told no, she asked where he had learnt to speak American.[132]

In political and diplomatic circles, Czechoslovaks were, of course, less unknown. The favour towards Central European Slavs was first boosted by anti-Austrian sentiment during the First World War. It evaporated quickly afterwards and was replaced by

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[129] Jozef Valo, "Poznáváme anglický ľud," *Nové časy*, December 1, 1942.
[130] Cited in Webster, *Mixing it! Diversity in World War Two Britain,* Introduction.
[131] Josef Schrich, "Nedoznělá rozprava: O Anglii a Angličanech trochu jinak," *Čechoslovák*, May 28, 1943, 1–2.
[132] Tilley adds an explanation: „After the last Great War, Slovaks who had been living in America for many years, returned to their homes in Slovakia. Their children learnt English from them, but hearing only about America, they assumed that English was the American language." See T. B. Tilley, "My visit to Czechoslovakia," *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne*, yearbook 1943.

growing antipathies, adopted mostly under German and Hungarian influence.[133] Yet the promotors of the Czechoslovak cause, such as Robert Bruce Lockhart, Harold Nicolson, Robert Seton-Watson and Wickham Steed, kept the awareness of the Czechoslovak cause fairly high.[134] After Britain's participation in Munich Agreement, the stance towards Czechoslovakia registered a final twist. The exiles encountered expressions of kindness and sympathies as many perceived Munich a shameful mistake.[135] "Munich effect" was also mentioned in the Mass Observation survey from 1941. The document explained the popularity of Czechoslovaks among the British by a feeling of compunction about September 1938.[136]

Jan Loreta described how Englishmen reacted to him mentioning being Czech with taking their hats off, and police officers saluting saying: "I am sorry."[137] There were also alternative ways the British expressed their penitence. One sergeant used to approach Czechs and say "Já být český voják." (I be Czech soldier).[138] Penitence sounded from the political circles as well. Alfred Bossom, MP for Conservative Party, guided members of the Czech Refugee Trust Fund[139] around the Parliament and emphasized that "Every British is aware of what Great Britain and the whole world owes to Czechoslovaks."[140]

The first encounters between the exiles and the British were diffident – marked by lack of common topics and the inglorious Munich Agreement which was, at the time, already stabilized by the Czechoslovak media as a metaphor of British unreliability. While the mutual distrust of the political elites was not to disappear, ordinary Czechs and Brits were brought together unbiased and, therefore, eager to overcome both the language and cultural obstacles, and the Munich stumble.

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[133] See Hahnová, *Dlouhé stíny předsudků: Německé a anglické stereotypy o Češích v dějinách 20. století*; Herczeg Gabor, "Horthyho předmnichovská propaganda v Anglicku," *Nové časy*, October, 1943.
[134] For the analysis of the ambivalent Anglo-Czechosovak diplomatic relations in the interwar period, see Jonathan Zorach, "The British view of the Czechs in the era before Munich Crisis," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 57, no. 1 (1979): 56–70; Peter Neville, "Anglo-Czech relations and the Munich crisis," *Soudobé dějiny* 28, no. 3 (December 2021): 676-705; Jindřich Dejmek, *Nenaplněné naděje: politické a diplomatické vztahy Československa a Velké Británie od zrodu První republiky po konferenci v Mnichově (1918-1938)* (Praha: Karolinum, 2015).
[135] Mikuláš Bálint, "Londýnský dopis," *Československý boj,* December 16, 1939, 2.
[136] Cited in Horák, *Republika v exilu: Inscenování československé vlády v Londýně za druhé světové války*, 154.
[137] Jan Loreta, "Feuilleton: Anglická proč?," *Československý boj*, July 29, 1939, 2.
[138] "Odbojová angličtina," *Mladé Československo*, November 21, 1942, 11.
[139] See Jan Kuklík and Jana Čechurová, "Czech Refugee Trust Fund a československá emigrace. Část 1. Geneze a finanční zabezpečení," *Soudobé dějiny* XIV, no. 1 (2007), 9-43.
[140] "Uprchlíci v anglickém parlamentu," *Čechoslovák v Anglii,* December 8, 1939, 5.

Chapter 2: Loosening the old ties

The period between the Dunkirk evacuation in June 1940 and the end of the Blitz in May 1941 impacted the British self-perception more than any other time in the country's modern history.[141] In a long run, it contributed to the deceitful feeling of exceptionalism and self-sufficiency. While at its end the war was commonly understood as a triumph of internationalism, it yielded to the pressures of nationalism soon after. The role of the Empire as well as the Soviet Union and other allied nations was intentionally downplayed. The Battle of Britain, together with the unrelenting determination of the nation facing the Blitz, pushed away the memory of the war coalition that contributed to the final victory.[142] In the same period, Czechoslovak exiles in Britain redrew their own mental maps. The ties to the old significant Others – Germans[143] and the French - were cut off or loosened and replaced by establishment of the connection with a newcomer – Britain in its shiny heyday.[144]

2.1 Prussian Nazis

The Czech ties to Germany were always close but also ambivalent. The neighbour with whom Czechs always shared much of the socio-cultural background and who never represented only an external entity (Germans lived in the border areas of the Bohemian lands since the thirteenth century) only gained the label of "national enemy" in the nineteenth century. The National Revival movement blamed Germans for all catastrophes in the Czech history.[145] The First Republic partly adopted the pejorative stereotypisation even though Germans represented up to 23% of the country's population. The rise of Hitler in 1930's and the subsequent push for the Eastern expansion very much fit the well-

[141] Wendy Webster, „Europe against the Germans: The British Resistance Narrative, 1940-1950," *The Journal of British Studies* 48, no. 4 (2009): 958-82.
[142] David Edgerton, "How the myth of Britain alone overshadows VE day," *New Statesman*, May 8, 2020.
[143] The chapter focuses on Germans as Czechs' significant Other as the burdened relation influenced the fate of entire Czechoslovakia before the war as well as after it in a major way (see Hahnová, *Dlouhé stíny předsudků: Německé a anglické stereotypy o Češích v dějinách 20. století*). The significant Other of Slovaks would, of course, be Hungarians. Yet the anti-Hungarian discourse played no role in the development of the exile Anglophilia.
[144] See the post-war interpretation of the resentment of the German and the French Others by J.B. Čapek, "K dnešním úkolům národní kultury," *Naše doba* 53 (1946-1947), 156-61.
[145] Jiří Rak, *Bývali Čechové* (Praha: H a H, 1994), 19.

established discourse. When Germany annexed Sudetenland in 1938 and set up the Protectorate over the rest of the Bohemian lands, the pre-existing cognitive model of Germans as dangerous colonizers in Central and Eastern Europe was used to back the idea of mass expulsion.[146]

At the time that coincided with the literal and metaphorical standing up to the "national enemy," Czechs met a new cultural and political hegemon. They started basking in the glory of Britain – the new unburdened referential point that allowed them to fantasize about a better world and that put them in a better light. To complete the mental break with the German Other and align with the British, the exile politicians and journalists employed classic Germanophobic and Anglophilic stereotypes and historic allusions. Strong contrasts were supposed to guide the sympathies of the audience and to force it into a firmly established anti-German commitment.[147] In March 1940 the Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk set the general tone of the discourse.

> I have lived here for almost twenty years, and I know how an Englishman does not like to reveal what is going on inside him. He is very reserved, especially towards foreigners. But he talks every now and then. Recently, I have been traveling around England to give lectures and I am in daily contact with all strata of the English population - members of the government, parliamentarians, soldiers, students and professors, clergy, workers and peasants. Therefore, I can assure you that the British people have decided to exterminate the Prussian Nazi plague once and for all.[148]

The flair of expertise when observing and "explaining" the British would remain a constant of the Czechoslovak image of Britain no matter whether the evaluator lived in the country for twenty years of twenty months. By using both "Prussian" and "Nazi" to refer to Germans, Masaryk simplified and, in that way, obscured the complex development of the history of the German nation. After ensuring the reader that the British are in the same boat in their hatred towards Germans (whatever fell under this shortcut), he "gained" the new Other for the Czechoslovak cause. A British woman who lost her

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[146] Eagle Glassheim, „National mythologies and ethnic cleansing: The expulsion of Czechoslovak Germans in 1945," *Central European History* 33, no. 4 (December 2000): 463-86.
[147] David Welch, "Images of the Hun: The portrayal of the German enemy in British propaganda in World War I," in *Propaganda, Power and Persuasion: From World War I to Wikileaks*, ed. David Welch (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 58.
[148] Jan Masaryk, "Československý rozhlas domů," *Čechoslovák*, March 1, 1940, 6.

husband in the First World War and now sent her son to the front was supposed to say to Masaryk: "Freedom is a must for all Englishmen, and I also hear that you Czechoslovaks are a freedom-loving nation. My boy will help to save freedom and to restore it for you."[149] Without trying to assess whether Masaryk really met such a woman and whether she said what he later claimed, the story fits Vansittartism – a Germanophobic doctrine promoted by a senior British diplomat Robert Vansittart, which Czechoslovaks happily used to promote their own causes.[150] Coming back in history to emphasize the long shadows of German "primitivity"[151] *Čechoslovák* brought up Saint Wenceslaus who fought "Hun barbarism" by "Czech humanism."[152] Kornel Synek also alluded to Middle Ages when imagining "New Magna Charta" that would defeat Hitler as the "supreme product of the old vanishing world."[153] The juxtaposition of German and British qualities is played by B. Londoner in *Albion in revolution* as well:

> The German imposed totalitarianism on himself and his entire nation in peace and in war by brutal means, murdering members of the opposition, false propaganda, exaggerating his abilities and whipping up all the worst instincts of which a bad man is capable. In the struggle for life, the Englishman approaches the total effort with a smile, without violence on himself, without brutality and without lies [...] The Englishman understands the bad moment, he feels the great danger, but approaches the necessary measures required by this new world war for freedom with his old composure, fully aware that Hitler will fall in one of the hard and gruelling rounds of this unequal boxing match […][154]

Germans and the British strike one as inhabitants of different planets and not one continent. While violent Germans were supposed to be driven by the worst instincts, Englishman were incapable of violence and instead reacted with seemingly inborn smile and composure. The unreflective Anglophilia was gathering momentum in the summer of 1940 when the German attack was expected by any day. By then, contributors to

[149] Ibid.
[150] See Kirk Robert Graham, *British Subversive Propaganda during Second World War: Germany, National Socialism and Political Warfare Executive* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 45.
[151] The tradition of dehumanization of Germans as part of propaganda is described in David Welch, "Images of the Hun: The portrayal of the German enemy in British propaganda in World War I."
[152] "Sv. Václav a propaganda," *Čechoslovák*, January 5, 1940, 5.
[153] Kornel Synek, "Smysl naší doby," *Čechoslovák*, June 28, 1940, 2.
[154] B. Londoner, "Albion v revoluci," *Čechoslovák*, May 31, 1940, 4.

Čechoslovák felt confident enough to include themselves in the royal "we": "There are a lot of us on this island. At least 47 million people who will not budge."[155] The confidence was springing from the feeling of the newly discovered togetherness and shared hatred towards Germans.

> The love of freedom is at war with Goering's furious desire to humiliate and destroy human dignity. The progress of true culture and civilization struggles with the rage of madman Hitler. However, also the pride of the British people, London's wit and the spirit of modern democrats are at war with the ominous prospect of Dachau, Oranienburg, massacres in Poland, and the rape of universities in Czechoslovakia. We are on the front at Piccadilly.[156]

The need to find a counterbalance to the madness spreading through the continent that they could not fight directly made Czechoslovaks snuggle up to Britain. Piccadilly Circus – just minutes away from both Whitehall, where Churchill's war cabinet had the seat, and Trafalgar Square, from where the challenger of last great European dictator looked down, felt as the safest and, in a way, the proudest place to guard. The identification with Britain and its well-established reputation of the cradle of democracy and liberty provided the exiles (and not only them) with moral superiority over Germans.

2.2 Pernicious defeatists

The special relations between Bohemian lands and France were established during the First World War when France became a crucial proponent of the independent Czechoslovakia. During the interwar period French was the most taught foreign language in Czechoslovak schools.[157] In 1924, the countries signed the Treaty of Alliance and Friendship. Even though Britain as the "treacherous" one-time friend was put on par with France in the months following Munich,[158] only Britain was to be rehabilitated. The positive sentiments towards France practically disappeared.

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[155] B. Londoner, "Válka na našem prahu – morální klid," *Čechoslovák*, July 5, 1940, 7-8.
[156] "Picadilly 1940," *Čechoslovák*, September 27, 1940, 3.
[157] Zdeněk Kárník, *České země v éře První republiky (1918–1938): Vznik, budování a zlatá léta republiky (1918–1929)* (Praha: Libri, 2003), 525.
[158] Ferdinand Peroutka remembered how after Munich Karel Čapek told him that „his world had died" and he had „nothing to write for anymore". Peroutka elaborated on Čapek's frustration saying that the

The lukewarm feelings towards France that accompanied the temporal exile of the Czechoslovak establishment in Paris ended in June 1940. The twist of the discourse was informed by the development on the front – with the defeat of France the torch of the "last resort" was handed over to Britain. Yet, interestingly, pragmatic arguments were not enough to deal with the new situation for the exiles. After crossing the English Channel, they switched their loyalty and fully internalized the fact that Britain was not merely the only, but also a much better ally than France. The new discourse became instrumental for cementing Britain as the right partner for the future of Czechoslovakia: "This time we will concentrate our forces at the only place the stable foundation of which cannot be doubted"[159] stated *Čechoslovák* on 5 July - practicing wishful thinking more than anything else. As Britain's allegiance in the negotiations of the post-war settlement could not been certain in practice, it was at least suggested on discursive level.

Not unlike the Germanophobic discourse, but also the antipathy towards France was often expressed in the context of the British excellence. The Czechoslovaks followed in the footsteps of Voltaire, who revelled in glorifying English qualities and reprobating the French ones during his stay in Britain in 1720's.[160] B. Londoner was annoyed by the people who doubted the British prospects of the victory over Hitler.

> They can be told a hundred times that they stand on solid ground in England, which, unlike the unheard-of moral upheaval in France, is protected not only by admirable spirit, but also by steel fleet and courageous air force [...] You will never comfort a desperado who cannot live without sleepless nights and chewed-up days in café.[161]

Also, the "Maginot mind" celebrated its comeback. Even though interwar Czechoslovakia designed its defence strategy in a close cooperation with France and its border fortification was often compared to the Maginot line,[162] now it was time to condemn it as

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world Čapek meant was the „belief that in the West people are willing to live and die for the same things as here; faith in the lights that burn in France and England." (Ferdinand Peroutka, „Sbohem K.Č.," *Lidové noviny,* December 29, 1938.) Likewise, Edvard Beneš condemned France on multiple occasions – In the dramatic days of September 1938 he talked about them as about "traitors and scoundrels" – see Němeček and Kuklík, *Hodža versus Beneš*, 130-33. In the letter to Ladislav Rašín from November 1938 he promised not to forget them "the treason" – see Edvard Beneš and Milan Hauner, *Paměti I: Mnichovské dny* (Praha: Academia, 2007), 26.

[159] "Československá armáda v bezpečí," *Čechoslovák*, July 5, 1940, 1-4.

[160] Buruma, *Anglomania: A European Love Affair*, 34-7.

[161] B. Londoner, "Válka na našem prahu – morální klid," *Čechoslovák*, July 5, 1940, 7-8.

[162] Jonathan Zorach, "Czechoslovakia's Fortifications: Their Development and Role in the 1938 Munich Crisis," *Militargeschichtliche Mitteilungen* 2 (1976): 81-94.

the "pernicious defeatist line of thinking that has brought Europe to the brink of the abyss."[163] Luckily, the danger was at the very last moment exposed by the British who "finished it off."[164] The most impressive reflections were, however, more sophisticated. Jiří Hronek, who just arrived to Britain from France, engaged in the most fantastic play of stereotypes:

> Our language beautifully and aptly explains the essential difference between the two cities; Paris has feminine gender and London masculine. This is striking when we compare the two cities at war. Paris, a beautiful woman, who took the state of war into account but was not dead serious about it; it kept its smiles and light-heartedness until the very last moment, when those were replaced by panic. London, an English hulk, who takes war very seriously but with a certain peculiar ease - a sign of self-confidence. None of us can well imagine an English muscley boy panicking in fear (…) Parisians considered themselves subjects and not objects of the state of war, they carried out the orders if it was necessary but preferred to bypass them if possible. An Englishman is aware that this is not only a war of princes, cabinets, or the ruling classes. He knows that it is his war and that the result also depends on what he does or does not do.[165]

Hronek's essay is playful and imaginative. Most probably, it was really inspired by the impressions author gained from the climate of both capitals. However, the way it uses gender categories is not coincidental. Representing France as the effeminate Other was integral to the forging of English masculine national identity since the eighteenth century.[166] Its harmlessness was discredited as Hronek ascribed superior qualities to the British nation and in this way participated in the creation of the undue expectations. Similar assessment cannot be made about the articles written by ordinary citizens and soldiers, who simply described their lived experience, though.

An anonymous woman contributing to *Zprávy československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne* saw barrage balloons over Southampton and was reminded of the one

[163] "Maginot mind," *Čechoslovák,* July 12, 1940, 10.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Jiří Hronek, "Paříž a Londýn ve válce," *Čechoslovák,* July 19, 1940, 7.
[166] See Michele Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1996).

in Paris. Compared to numerous balloons above the British port, there were just two above Paris which were released "only in sunny days".[167] Soldiers, who were saved from Dunkirk harbour and came to Britain in late June, were enchanted by the hospitability provided by the Women's Voluntary Service.[168] One pilot fondly remembered how the girls welcomed them with tea and cakes in the cinema where they spent the first night. Next day, when they were leaving the town, the station was "full of cry 'Good-bye Czechs!', sandwiches, chocolate, cigarettes and boys begging for autographs."[169] He concluded:

> England surprises us at every turn. Unlike in France, everything seems to be managed with deliberation, is well organized, and there is only one spirit: we must win [...] No one is a doomsayer, no one wonders what would have happened if.[170]

The sympathy towards Britain was formed by both the need to grow fond of it and the positive experience of many exiles. The antipathy towards France faded with time. I rarely emerged later, and again only as a tool of emphasizing the qualities of the British. Conductor Vilém Tauský proclaimed that "The English have more positive attitude towards the rhythm and melodiousness of Czech music than the French"[171] and Jiří Mucha that "An English person is more willing to accept a foreign book than a French person."[172] The lack of direct contact and the general redirection of Czechoslovakia's foreign policy from the West to the East made the restoration of the once cordial relations basically impossible to renew.

2.3 A happy link

The ties to the old significant Others were severed at the same time when the exiles became enthused by Britain. Yet, despite the common juxtapositions in the anti-German and the anti-French discourses, the processes were only loosely linked. It was, indeed, natural to let the "treacherous" friend go, harden yourself against the dangerous tyrant

[167] "Výňatky z kroniky," *Zprávy československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne*, yearbook 1943, 29.
[168] Compare to the similar reflections of Poles, Free French and British citizens from West Indies in Webster, *Mixing it! Diversity in World War Two Britain,* Introduction.
[169] "Perutě mezi Angličany," *Čechoslovák*, July 19, 1940, 3-4.
[170] Ibid. see also "Poprvé v dějinách," *Čechoslovák*, July 12, 1940, 1.
[171] "O 'prodané nevěstě' na anglickém jevišti," *Čechoslovák,* February 13, 1942, 5.
[172] Jiří Mucha, "Naše literatura a britská," *Čechoslovák*, February 26, 1943, 9.

and attempt to befriend someone who accommodated you at his home. The historic momentum made the latter tendency more profound than expected, though. In summer 1940, Britain became the last stronghold of Europe. The exiles witnessed one of the biggest surges of resilience in modern history – or at least what the British later succeeded to depict as one[173] - and, just like other foreigners, became completely overwhelmed by the atmosphere of the cheery resistance.

Funny stories from the life under the Blitz were published regularly in *Čechoslovák* in the section *British Made* between September 1940 and April 1941. The newspaper informed about a girl who was named Sireen, as she was born when sirens announced the start of air-raid;[174] a British pilot who made an emergency landing in Dover and was kissed by forty-three excited women from a nearby laundry;[175] potatoes baked by an incendiary bomb;[176] special shelters for dogs and cats in Kensington Gardens,[177] or the "unpleasant wake up" of the Minister of Social Welfare František Němec who was forced from his bed by a time bomb.[178]

Over the nine months of the Blitz around forty thousand civilians died in the whole United Kingdom. Some eighty thousand bombs were dropped on London alone and a million buildings in the capital were damaged or destroyed.[179] According to the records of Czech Refugee Trust Fund, 253 people died between 1939 and 1945, even if not all of them due to "enemy action."[180] Inevitably, many people who resided in southern England, and especially in London, had to suffer immensely.[181] Yet the impact of the air raids on civilian moral was much smaller than experts predicted. People proved more resilient than expected, thanks to what Robert Mackay calls "group norms of a tribe at war"[182] and the constructive activities the people could take part in. Around 1,8 million citizens joined full or part-time civil defence and police services and 5 million engaged in Fire Guard

[173] See Darren Kelsey, *Media, Myth and Terrorism: A Discourse-Mythological Analysis of the 'Blitz Spirit' in British Newspaper Responses to the July 7th Bombings* (New York: Springer, 2015); David Morgan and Mary Evans, *The battle for Britain Citizenship and ideology in the Second World War* (London: Routledge, 1993).
[174] "British Made," *Čechoslovák,* September 7, 1940, 4.
[175] Ibid.
[176] "British Made," *Čechoslovák,* October 25, 1940, 4.
[177] "British Made," *Čechoslovák,* October 4, 1940, 4.
[178] "British Made," *Čechoslovák,* September 27, 1940, 4.
[179] Rutger Bregman, *Humankind: A Hopeful history* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2021), Introduction, Kindle.
[180] Simsova, "Who were the Pre-Second World War Refugees from Czechoslovakia?," 87.
[181] See Lucy Noakes, *Dying for the nation: Death, grief and bereavement in second world war Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020).
[182] Robert MacKay, *Half the battle: Civilian morale in Britain during the Second World War*, 258–59.

organization.[183] The correspondent of the New Yorker Mollie Panter-Downes wrote on 29 September 1940: "The courage, humour, and kindliness of ordinary people continue to be astonishing under conditions which possess many of the merry features of a nightmare."[184] Yet it also must be noted that the material for the newsreel was carefully selected.[185] Vera Brittain wrote in her memoirs: "If people who have lost their homes, been blown up, injured, burned or buried were to be interviewed forty-eight hours later, the results would not always be so useful to the Sunshine Press."[186] Hence the articles about the fortitude and good humour of the people have to be read as, at least partially, propagandist.

The exile reporting on the impacts of the air-raids on the daily life of Londoners was often taken over from the British press. Yet, while the natural goal of the British was to boost the morale of their own in-group, the Czechoslovak exiles were becoming more and more ecstatic about the high spirits of the Other. Indeed, it must have been hard to imagine a better role-model for bad times:

> "Business as usual" remains London's watchword. We saw a sign "Open as usual" in one London pub whose windows had been smashed. And right next door, a small cafe, which met the same fate, announces: "Open even more than usual. Our last customer was Hitler. Who will be next?"[187]

Jiří Hronek reported about the night he spent in a shelter:

> Those people act like they have never slept anywhere but at a subway station. There is not even a trace of nervous tension, a sign of weakness or fatigue. On the contrary, the tunnel resounds with loud laughter and resounding conversation, even though sometimes refugees from the far East End, which suffered the most from the German bombs, visit a foreign station.[188]

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[183] Edgar Jones, Robin Woolven, Bill Durodié and Simon Wessely, "Civilian morale during the Second World War: Responses to air raids re-examined," *Social History of Medicine* 17, no. 3 (2004): 463-79.
[184] Mollie Panter-Downes, *London War Notes 1939-1945* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1971), 105.
[185] Alan Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain* (London: Continuum, 2007), 9.
[186] Vera Brittain, *England's Hour* (London and Sydney: Macdonald, 1981), 145.
[187] "British Made," *Čechoslovák*, October 4, 1940, 4.
[188] Jiří L. Hronek, "Noc v podzemní dráze," *Čechoslovák*, October 11, 1940, 5.

Life in shelters was a frequent topic of the reporting. Visiting them, the exiles were leaving behind common stereotypes about the English. "Last Monday, the cabaret group began a tour of London shelters with a two-hour show at Aldwych tube station […] we hear that the British are a nation with no understanding of music and singing. It's not true."[189] B. Londoner stumbled upon a "chic" shelter that was kept by an old lady who equipped it with a gramophone, portable bookcases with Bibles and pre-war newspapers. During the air-raid she was distributing sweets. After it ended and people started leaving, she lamented: "You see that silly Hitler, isn't he really a bad and wicked man! Spoiling everything for everybody. We could have such a nice time and good fun." [190] Londoner added: "Dear old lady, Hitler will lose to you – you, who considers war a garden party and protects refugees from the Nazi bombs as precious rabbits or rich relatives, have to win in the end."

The cordiality, forbearance and the lack of doubts regarding the victory over Hitler, that the exiles observed, made the world seem filled with worthiness again. The feeling was intimately linked to their British experience. Thus, it is not surprising that just a few months into the Blitz, *Čechoslovák* pronounced London "our second capital on the banks of Thames."[191] The discourse that was at first dominated by light-hearted tone became graver and a bit more po-faced once the exiles started to feel confident in the relationship.[192] In January 1941, the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden opened the Czechoslovak Institute at Grosvenor Place at which occasion George VI sent Edvard Beneš a congratulatory message. According to the sovereign, the Institute would form a "happy link between the British and the Czechoslovak peoples […] whose fundamental ideas of liberty and democracy are so similar."[193] Prokop Maxa proclaimed that nothing could have happened to Czechoslovaks as "there are 515 million of us with the British." [194] A month later unreflective Anglophilia of *Čechoslovák* reached its peak:

> We live here [in London] as if we were born here, loving it just as much as our shelter at the moment of the fiercest German air attack. We are participating in an amazingly dramatic defence of human dignity in the

[189] "British Made," *Čechoslovák,* October 18, 1940, 11.
[190] B. Londoner, "Kryt," *Čechoslovák*, August 23, 1940, 3–4.
[191] B. Londoner, "Naše nové hlavní město," *Čechoslovák*, February 7, 1941, 2.
[192] See also Jiří L. Hronek, "Občan v první linii," *Čechoslovák*, September 20, 1940, 3; "Piccadilly 1940," *Čechoslovák*.
[193] "A happy link," *The Times*, January 22, 1941.
[194] B. Londoner, "Britannia rules our hearts," *Čechoslovák*, January 31, 1941, 3.

> bleak scenery of the London metropolis mercilessly destroyed by air bombs and, at times, lit with sacrificial fire, as if on a gigantic altar for European democracy […] When we return to Prague and time will join the events of today with a bridge of memories, St Paul's cathedral, unscathed or in ruins, will seem to us the most beautiful jewel of European civilization.[195]

The article written by the chief Anglophile B. Londoner illustrates what boost the Blitz meant for Anglophilia that before represented just a natural feature of the exiles' mental maps. The dramatic tone copies the Churchillian "never surrender" rhetoric without a single attempt to ease the gravity of the situation that is otherwise typical for the exile image of Britain. A combination of specific circumstances - the real existential threat – and especially efficient portrayal of the situation by British propaganda secured Britain a special place in the hearts of (not only) Czechoslovaks who lived in London during the Blitz. As a sergeant using the pseudonym Zdeněk Pražský put it: "Friendships forged in the fire of incendiary bombs are friendships for life."[196]

Chapter 3: Tripping over Munich

While Anglophilia, understood as an admiration of England (respectively Britain), its culture, people and language,[197] got into full swing during the Blitz, pro-Britishness as a feature of foreign policy was rarely pronounced and only as part of Beneš' diplomatic strategy. The ultimate goals of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile in relation to the British government were crystal clear from the beginning – it was the renunciation of the Munich Agreement and the expulsion of the German-speaking minority from the Czech lands.[198] On the way to the first one two significant milestones were met – the recognition of the government-in-exile in July 1940 and the termination of its ad-interim status in July

[195] B. Londoner, "Naše nové hlavní město."
[196] Zdeněk Pražský, "Thank you, Mr. Smith," *Čechoslovák*, November 27, 1942, 1.
[197] Tom McArthur, "Anglophilia," in *Concise Oxford Companion to the English Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), accessed June 13, 2022, https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/acref/9780192800619.001.0001/acref-9780192800619-e-88.
[198] Martin Conway elaborates on the importance of topic of the German-speaking minorities' expulsion in "Legacies of exile: The exile governments in London during the Second World War and the politics of post-war Europe," in *Europe in Exile: European Exile Communities in Britain 1940-45*, 263.

1941.[199] The final step Czechoslovaks were waiting for was speeded up by the worldwide consternation over the fate of the Czech mining village Lidice (the humanitarian campaign "Lidice Shall Live" is in detail addressed in Chapter 4). In June 1942, most of its inhabitants fell victim to the Nazi reprisal for the operation Anthropoid that was planned from the exile and led to the assassination of the Reichsprotektor of Bohemia Reinhardt Heydrich. The renunciation of the Munich Agreement was confirmed only two months later.

The debate about Munich and the favour of the British political circles in the exile media is mostly instrumental in the years leading to the renunciation. Yet it represents a vital context of the grassroot surge of Anglophilia that further progressed during the war. It proves that the two stances – Anglophilia and pro-Britishness – do not necessarily have to occur together. The exiles could be sworn Anglophiles while at the same time be reserved when it comes to the prospects of the future alliance with Britain. In the diary of the diplomat Jan Opočenský, entries showing criticism regarding the inaction of the Foreign Office were on the weekly basis followed by romantic descriptions of weekend trips around English countryside.[200] This kind of ambiguity is, at least in terms of Othering of Britain, not unique.[201]

The post-Munich reset of the relations was declared already in the first issue of *Čechoslovák* on 16 October 1939. It was justified by Britain's "reasonable and sincere turn in the understanding of what happened in 1938" and the hospitability that the country has expressed to the first exiles.[202] The reserve was, however, hanging in the air. The article emphasized the "moral debt taken on in Munich"[203] that was expected to be repaid.

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[199] See Michael Dockrill, "The foreign office, Dr. Eduard Benes and the Czechoslovak government-in-exile 1939–41," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 6, no. 3 (October 2007): 701–18 for details of the renunciation process; compare to Smetana, *In the Shadow of Munich. British Policy towards Czechoslovakia from the Endorsement to the Renunciation of the Munich Agreement (1938–1942)*.

[200] Jana Čechurová, Jan Kuklík, Jaroslav Čechura and Jan Němeček, *Válečné deníky Jana Opočenského* (Praha: Karolinum, 2001) – see entries for September 21, 1940, September 29, 1940, October 12, 1940, October 20, 1940, October 27, 1940, February 16, 1941, May 4, 1941, May 17, 1941, June 29, 1941, August 31, 1941, September 4, 1941, September 10, 1941, September 21, 1941.

[201] Elisa Tamarkin described it in detail in her work about Anglophilia of the eighteenth and nineteenth century Americans (see *Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America*) and Niko Gärtner in the study focused on double loyalties of the citizens of Hamburg at the edge of the First World War – see Niko Gärtner, "The end of Hamburg's Anglophilia: Wilhelmine Hamburg attitudes viewed through school examination essays and a university lecture (1912-1914)," *History of Education* 43, no. 5 (September 2014): 579-91.

[202] "Úvodem," *Čechoslovák*, October 16, 1939, 1–2.

[203] The morale debt was mentioned repeatedly – see "Československé miliony v Anglii," *Čechoslovák*, February 2, 1940, 6-7; "Oxford," *Čechoslovák*, March 15, 1940, 1.

In another article the relation to Britain was described as "good" as "politics is neither poetry nor expression of feelings."[204] The upcoming months and, indeed, years were to be marked by public courting of Britain and at the same time hidden bitterness and distrust that was partly revealed after the goal of the Munich renunciation was reached.

As in 1939 there was not much to build on regarding the British action, the representatives of the now subjugated Czechoslovakia focused on the occasional support expressed by important public figures. *Československý boj* issued in Paris brought up the pro-Czechoslovak comments of former British Prime Minister Lloyd George and Indian politician Jawaharlal Nehru.[205] At the turn of the year, *Čechoslovák* made sure that the utterances of the Archbishop of York and former Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax were not overlooked.[206] In February 1940 the stillness of the political scene was still so problematic for the desired discourse that Bohuš Beneš - diplomat and nephew of Edvard Beneš - resorted to unusually poor argumentation.

> If we go with England, we don't go with imperialism, but with European democracy […] We do not intend to conquer anything that does not belong to us by defeating Nazism. This is where our moral strength lies. [Also] the English are not looking for a single inch of foreign soil in this war, they do not want to increase their power influence and they do not intend to disturb any of the smaller peaceful nations in Europe. Their established and crystallized interests and their democracy are to be defended without needlessly destroying anyone. And it is precisely the complete lack of imperialism on the Czechoslovak and English sides that facilitates Czechoslovak-British sincerity and loyal cooperation.[207]

The discursive construction is particularly shaky as instead of focusing solely on democracy, which could be described as the British domain without much of controversy, it chose the "lack of imperialism" in the moment when the entire Empire had to rally in support of Britain. On the other hand, there are a few more desperate periods in the history

[204] "Politický nový rok," *Čechoslovák,* October 28, 1939, 2.
[205] "Poselství Lloyda George k československému národu," *Československý boj*, August 12, 1939, 1; "Indie pro Československo," *Československý boj*, August 12, 1939, 1.
[206] "Arcibiskup z Yorku o Československu," *Čechoslovák*, November 17, 1939, 2; "Anglie v čele svobodné Evropy," *Čechoslovák*, January 23, 1940, 6-7.
[207] Bohuš Beneš, "Proč jdeme s Anglií," *Čechoslovák*, February 2, 1940, 3.

of Czechoslovakia. The prospects of the country's renewal in the pre-Munich borders were at the time, indeed, meagre. A drowning man will clutch at a straw.

In May the hope for future parting from Munich got finally a real basis when Winston Churchill was appointed the new prime minister. As Munich was always very closely tied to the personality of the appeaser Neville Chamberlain his departure was interpreted as the beginning of a new chapter.[208] *Čechoslovák* declared: "The change in the British leadership means the final liquidation of the Munich spirit. The government that Churchill assembled would never have acceded to the Munich Agreement."[209] When on 23 July the government-in-exile was officially recognized in the Parliament, the paper rejoiced that the "common freedom of Czechs and Slovaks received recognition where the Magna Charta was proclaimed."[210] The "simple, undecorated and somewhat gloomy hall" that witnessed the upheavals of the Czechoslovakia's fate in the recent past was now considered the happy spot on the Czech mental map. Even though Magna Charta was proclaimed at Runnymede near Windsor, the article managed to establish the desirable connection. In October, a hint of manipulation emerged again in the reaction to Churchill's speech on the second anniversary of Munich.[211] *Čechoslovák* declared that "British politics erased Munich in both moral and legal terms from its politics,"[212] and in this way created a significant space for wondering what it meant. Churchill neither provided any guarantees, nor made any promises. The aim of his speech was "only" to raise the spirits of the Czechs and Slovaks at home, whom it could reach through the BBC broadcast, and the Czechoslovak soldiers who were, at the time, still heroically fighting in the Battle of Britain.

The next shift in the public discourse regarding Munich happened in summer 1941. Germany invaded the Soviet Union which, shortly afterwards, recognized the Czechoslovak government-in-exile. The Soviet action provoked Britain to dispose of its ad interim appendix as the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden feared the growing influence of Moscow.[213] The pressure that Czechoslovaks used to exert on the Foreign Office was

[208] See also "Churchill, the fighter," *Čechoslovák*, May 15, 1942, 1.
[209] "Nová britská vláda," *Čechoslovák*, May 17, 1940, 3.
[210] "Spolu v sieni Magny Charty," *Čechoslovák*, July 26, 1940, 12.
[211] „Mnichov po dvou letech: Poselství premiéra Winstona Churchilla československému národu," *Čechoslovák*, October 4, 1940, 1.
[212] "Neville Chamberlain a jeho politika," *Čechoslovák*, October 11, 1940, 3.
[213] Smetana, *In the Shadow of Munich. British Policy towards Czechoslovakia from the Endorsement to the Renunciation of the Munich Agreement (1938–1942),* 313.

finally reduced. They could officially ally with a country that was much easier to leave out from the myth about the Munich treason. From now on the Soviet Union started to be presented as the partner equal in importance to Britain and the United States.[214] A caricature of the "three statues of liberty" decorated *Čechoslovák* in September - Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin were lighting up a cigar, a cigarette and a pipe, respectively, from one torch.[215] The foundations of the future discourse that imagined Czechoslovakia as a bridge between the East and the West can be traced to this time. "Being neither British, nor Russians, nor Conservatives, nor Bolsheviks" the exiles suggested that they had a "much clearer idea" about what is good for all sides.[216] Yet, the new alignment grew stronger quickly and brought worries that had to be moderated to keep all doors open. Two days before the start of the operation Barbarossa, Jan Masaryk denied that Czechoslovakia leaned toward the Soviet Union and socialism. Refusing that Czechoslovakia could emerge from the war "dark red" he wrote that "our destiny is bound up with the destiny of the British Empire, and it is our most sacred duty to assist the victory of the Anglo-American brotherhood with our feeble powers."[217]

The doubts that the exiles had regarding the British loyalty became evident after the renunciation of Munich in August 1942. The gush of support all major British newspapers reacted with had little effect.[218] Behind the expressions of relief and satisfaction[219] there were "buts" and "stills". The same Masaryk who uncritically praised Britain on so many occasions since the beginning of the war, was much less celebratory than one would expect: "Lawyers could say: requiescat in pace. We, however, cannot because to us Munich is too disgusting a corpse"[220] Rudolf Bechyně, the strongly pro-Soviet president of the Czechoslovak state council in London, focused on what had not yet been done and criticized Britain's hesitancy regarding the guarantee of the future borders of Czechoslovakia.

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[214] See Edvard Beneš, "Proč jdeme s britskou říší," *Čechoslovák*, December 19, 1941, 1; "President Beneš o britsko-sovětské smlouvě," *Čechoslovák,* June 19, 1942, 9.
[215] "Tři sochy svobody," *Čechoslovák*, September 5, 1941.
[216] "Mezi Moskvou a Londýnem," *Čechoslovák,* June 13, 1941, 6.
[217] Jan Masaryk, "Sny, plány a odpovědnost," *Čechoslovák*, June 20, 1941, 1.
[218] See "A pledge to the Czechs," *The Times*, August 6, 1942; "No more Munich," *The Daily Telegraph*, August 6, 1942; "Britain and the Czechs – Act of reparation, Munich formally repudiated," *The Manchester Guardian*, August 6, 1942.
[219] Edvard Beneš, "Pád Mnichova a jeho důsledky," *Čechoslovák,* August 14, 1942, 1-2.
[220] Jan Masaryk, "Největší zásluha," *Čechoslovák*, August 14, 1942, 1.

> Chamberlain's government helped France to overcome its doubts about its betrayal. We used to tiptoe around this act – we cannot remain silent anymore. […] We consider it the duty of Britain to right this wrong. Trust between nations cannot be completely restored by mere words. Actions are needed.[221]

Munich kept re-emerging further on. Armed with a new self-confidence, the exile became sensitive about the independence of its decision-making. In autumn 1943, *Nové Československo* expressed concerns regarding the plans of the AMGOT's influence (Allied Military Government of Occupied Territories) over Czechoslovak matters.

> Let no one be angry with us, but similar things sound somewhat Runcimanish to Czechoslovak ears [...] We welcome any help from the Allies and we ourselves are willing to contribute to war and post-war cooperation with all our forces and abilities. But we do not want and will not allow post-war aid, flour, shoes and the recognition of freedom to be dismissed again.[222]

References to the Runciman's mission, which immediately preceded Munich and was retrospectively considered an unacceptable interference into Czechoslovakia's affairs, were made also when Britain protested against Beneš' visit to Moscow in September 1943.[223] Britain at the time opposed the intention of the Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement based on the unofficial self-denying ordinance that it agreed on with Soviets in 1942.[224] After protracted negotiations and amidst a growing tension between the Foreign Office and the government-in-exile, the Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Postwar Cooperation between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia was signed in December with Britain's reserved approval.[225] The reservation was not admitted publicly. Both the British and the Czechoslovak exiles could read in *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* on 14 December 1943 that "Czechoslovakia has reaffirmed her confidence both in the future of

[221] Rudolf Bechyně, "Slovo o německé otázce," *Nová svoboda*, July-August, 1942, 149.
[222] "Cena svobody," *Nové Československo*, September 28, 1943, 1-2.
[223] "Nikdy víc Mnichov!," *Nové Československo*, October 2, 1943, 1.
[224] Vít Smetana, "Britové, Američané a československo-sovětská smlouva," in *Československo-sovětská smlouva 1943*, ed. Jan Němeček et al. (Praha: Historický ústav, 2014), 51.
[225] See the details of the agreement's negotiations in ibid.

its own people and in the destiny of Europe reinforced by the cooperation with Russia"[226] and that "it is a step which enjoys the full approval of the British Government."[227]

In the second half of the war Munich was overshadowed by the focus on the future. Yet renounced did not mean dead. It kept re-emerging as a signpost leading towards Moscow. In 1944, communist politician Vilém Nový compared Munich to the "national catastrophe" such as the battle of the White Mountain and called for its redemption by the establishment of people's democracy.[228] It was supposed to be reached by the orientation on "the most progressive European countries." A major uproar in the exile circles was provoked by the Viscount Maugham's book *The truth about the Munich crisis*[229] in the same year. Karel Palkovský wrote for *Nová svoboda* that "only now we realize that in 1938 we had only one friend," meaning the Soviet Union, "of whom our official circles were, unlike our people, actually ashamed."[230] The representatives of the government remained more reserved. Both Masaryk and Opočenský criticized the book of the former Conservative lord Chancellor, yet they did not make any conclusions regarding the reliability of Britain.[231] The bold position of Communists and the lukewarm liking of Britain by Beneš' circles became constants in the upcoming years.

The "moral debt taken on in Munich" was never repaid, instead it gradually developed into a real "syndrome".[232] The hurt feelings of the Czech Anglophiles never recovered. The fact that Beneš and his closest allies were never able to get over the events of 1938 had tragic consequences. The conciliation of Anglophilia and pro-Britishness would serve Czechoslovakia's democracy much better than their split. It could even give it a chance of liberation from the imperial dependence that Beneš' nephew once mentioned. Instead, the leftist circles got opportunity to strengthen the myth of the treason that they ascribed solely to the West.[233]

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[226] "Neighbours of Russia," *The Times,* December 14, 1943.
[227] "Czech-Russian Amity," *The Daily Telegraph,* December 14, 1943.
[228] Vilém Nový, "Legendy – aneb odčinění Mnichova?," *Nové Československo,* September 30, 1944, 2.
[229] Viscount Maugham, *The truth about the Munich crisis* (London: William Heinemann, 1944).
[230] Karel Palkovský, "Muž, jenž dosud nepochopil," *Nová svoboda*, April, 1944, 66-9.
[231] Jan Masaryk, "Poznámky o Mnichovu," *Čechoslovák,* January 22, 1943, 3 (Masaryk commented on Maugham's article that preceeded the book); Jan Opočenský, "Pravda o mnichovské krizi," *Čechoslovák*, March 24, 1944, 1-2.
[232] Smetana, *In the Shadow of Munich. British Policy towards Czechoslovakia from the Endorsement to the Renunciation of the Munich Agreement (1938–1942),* 314.
[233] See Beata Kubok, „Czeska koncepcja zdrady jako element mitu monachijskiego," *Adeptus,* no. 12 (2018), 1-17; Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948*, 261-64.

Chapter 4: The truth prevails, but it's a chore

Pavel Horák compares the Czechoslovak government-in-exile to a court involved in statesmanlike performance.[234] Indeed, the Information Service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs communicated with the outside world with political and diplomatic goals in mind (the renunciation of Munich being the most important one as shown in the previous chapter) and adjusted its rhetoric, self-presentation and propaganda strategies accordingly. After all, in this sense it did not differ from any other political entity in history. Jan Masaryk laid bare this mechanism while connecting "truth" with "chore". He freed the national motto *Truth prevails* invented by his father, President Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (who derived it from Jan Hus) of the last touches of the divine tone. As the quote "The truth prevails, but it's a chore" proves, the time spent in exile meant no idle waiting for justice to happen. The representatives of the government as well as ordinary exiles advocated Czechoslovakia's cause on British political, media and cultural scenes.

There are three topics to cover in relation to the background of the Czechoslovak political courting Britain. The first concerns the image of deep Anglo-Bohemian and later Anglo-Czechoslovak historical ties. The second concerns the highly popular pro-Czechoslovak humanitarian campaigns (most prominently "Lidice Shall Live"), and the third is linked to the extensive cultural activities of the exile. The impression that media provided in connection to those topics profoundly strengthened exile's Anglophilia. It seemed that Czechs had special relationship with the British since the Middle Ages (which they did not have), that the destiny of one tiny Czech village deeply moved the whole island (which was mostly true) and that the interest in Czech music and art matched the support British were willing to provide in politics (which was a pure dream).[235] Yet the effect was not a result of some propagandist plan. The stories of Anglo-Bohemian historical encounters, Lidice remembrance events or music concerts generally fitted government's political and diplomatic purposes, but were shaped by people – of both Czechoslovak and British citizenship – who, apart from hoping for Munich's renunciation, also enjoyed engaging with other cultures and collecting money for good causes, or they were simply doing their job. Musicians played music, journalists wrote

[234] Horák, *Republika v exilu: Inscenování československé vlády v Londýně za druhé světové války*, 9-10.
[235] Independent pre-1918 Anglo-Slovak ties played no role in the exile discourse. Also, only Czech classical composers made it into the discourse.

for newspapers, and reviewers reviewed. The discourse that emphasized the fruitful relations between Czechs and the British in history, the humanitarian campaigns and the cultural events were positively received by diverse audience. The reason why the Anglophilia of Czechoslovak exile community grew stronger can be primarily found here. The fact that the diplomatic successes were registered during the same period is, of course, not accidental.

4.1 Historical ties

The exile image of the historical ties between Czech lands and Britain gives an impression of strong comradeship even though the relations were always rather episodic. The newspapers revisited the topic repeatedly, as it represented a safe ground, which could be moulded more easily than the recent past. The choice of the stories and their interpretation depended on the potential of ideological conformity.[236] At the same time, the producers of the discourse recruited from both Beneš' and leftist circles and usually forged it without any obvious behind-the-stage consultations.

It is no surprise that one of the chief protégés of the Anglo-Czechoslovak bonds was the 14th century Czech church reformer Jan Hus who took inspiration from the teaching of John Wycliffe. Hussitism, as a uniquely Czech contribution to the Reformation and to social progressivism, was one of the favourite historical narratives of the Czech National Revival and later First Republic.[237] It was portrayed as a return to the old Slavic democratic order and as a fight against the German Catholic principles of authority and feudalism.[238] Hus and his legacy represented the argument to exist as a separate and equal nation, therefore he naturally became one of the objects of the exile's cultural propaganda. According to Edvard Beneš "the deep understanding of democracy and the meaning of popular participation on *res publica*" [understood at the time as inherently British domains] were rooted in the Czech nation since the times of Hus and Jan Žižka's people's army."[239] Huge public events and masses in Anglican churches were

[236] Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Washington: John Hopkins University Press: 1986), 103-4.
[237] Hugh LeCaine Agnew, "Czechs, Germans, Bohemians? Images of Self and Other in Bohemia to 1848," in *Creating the Other: Ethnic conflict and nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe*, ed. Nancy Wingfield (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 69.
[238] Rak, *Bývali Čechové,* 19.
[239] Edvard Beneš, "Proč jdeme s britskou říší."

in Britain held every year at the occasion of the anniversary of his death on 6 July.[240] The intercultural link was resonating so well that in 1942 Hussite chorale was chosen for the public Lidice manifestation at Stoke-on-Trent[241] and even the British historian Reginald Betts attempted to debunk what was considered a German myth about Hus' copying of Wycliffe.[242]

The fact that Hus was one of the few historical figures directly influenced by English thinkers did not stop Czechs from radically exaggerating the closeness of the nations. At the occasion of the awarding of the honorary doctorate to Edvard Beneš by the Oxford University, Hussite clergyman František M. Hník claimed that "a lively thought collaboration has existed between Prague and Oxford since 14th century" and therefore Edvard Beneš had "the journey there prepared".[243] Socialist Anna Jandová Patzaková also painted the role of Britain in the Czech intellectual development as crucial.

> The emigration that went to England came to a country with whose history and culture we are connected by the most important stages of our own cultural development. Whenever a great reform movement passed through our countries, which was general and broad and which concerned the entire orientation of our development, it was England from which we took our inspiration, example, model, from which we drew breath for the greater strides of our history.[244]

As examples she mentioned theologian and Hus' friend Jeroným Pražský, educationalist Jan Komenský, who helped to inspire the formation of the Royal Society in 1662,[245] and composer Bedřich Smetana, who was inspired by William Shakespeare in his fight against provincialism in art. Yet, the continuity, which the producers of the discourse tried so hard to prove, never existed. Instead, a palpable desire to be closer to the British than they really had been represents the common feature of the interpretations of the occasional encounters.

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[240] See "Husův večer v londýnské City," *Čechoslovák*, July 12, 1940, 11; "Odkaz Mistra Jana," *Čechoslovák*, July 9, 1943, 1; Srba, *Múzy v exilu*, 176-77.
[241] Josef Hejret, "Lidice Shall Live," *Čechoslovák*, September 11, 1942, 1.
[242] "Anglie a Čechy," *Čechoslovák*, July 5, 1940, 5.
[243] F.M. Hník, "Oxford československým prezidentům," *Čechoslovák*, March 15,1940, 3.
[244] A.J. Patzaková, "Emigrace jako národ," *Nová svoboda*, January, 1942, 15.
[245] See also C.J. Wright, "Comenius: Czech thinker," *The Manchester Guardian*, September 17, 1941, 3.

A peculiar example of the ability to find the tiniest link between the two distant countries and transform it into a major connection centres on another medieval figure. Anna, the daughter of the King of Bohemia and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, married the English king Richard II in 1382. An article from January 1945 claimed that, at the time, the English art realized perfection and won primacy in the world.[246] The author sought and found the roots of English art's qualities in Czech tradition, specifically in the book culture.

> The art of painting brought from Prague pushed back the older English illumination style. It was defeated by newer and more modern Flemish style and opened the gate to the influences of Renaissance, which are no longer of national but of cosmopolitan character.[247]

While, according to the author, the newly adopted illumination style did not originate in Czech lands but was only brought to England by the royal delegation, English madonnas, saints and angels gained features of "pretty Czech gal" in the process, and not of "insipid Rhenish saint" or "chaste ascetic French from Avignon". For comparison, the author added a list of English and Czech illustrated manuscripts as a supplement.

A famous Czech, whose trace in England was more profound than the one of the vague Anna and the "pretty Czech gals", was graphic artist Wenceslaus Hollar, who emigrated to England from Prague during the Thirty Years' War. In spring 1942, the Czechoslovak Institute hosted an exhibition focused on Hollar. Its success was crowned by the visit of Queen Elizabeth.[248] In the meantime, *Čechoslovák* wrote in celebrative tone:

> England almost adopted Hollar because he fell into her note all the way. But with Hollar, by past and present a piece of the fertile Czech contribution to European culture also entered the English artistic and scientific world.[249]

The periodical further praised him for his "intimate, almost tender relation to things" and the ability to capture objects "in their factuality". "Consecrated realism" was a "fine

[246] "Česká a anglická knižní malba: Český vliv na Anglii na sklonku 14. století," *Čechoslovák*, January 12, 1945, 7; compare to Bosák, "Elizabeth of Bohemia," *Čechoslovák*, January 31, 1941, 7.
[247] Ibid.
[248] See the picture of the Queen and Edvard Beneš at the exhibition in *Čechoslovák*, May 1, 1942, 2.
[249] "Hollarova výstava," *Čechoslovák*, April 24, 1942, 1.

thread" linking English and Czech culture.[250] The exhibition and the *Čechoslovák*'s short book *Hollar: A Czech Emigré in England* by Johannes Urzidil was also noticed by *The Manchester Guardian*. It called Hollar "perhaps the most accomplished draughtsman of an age which drew no snobbish distinctions between graphic art and graphic craftsmanship."[251]

The 19th century was reminisced as the time when Britain became the major exile destination of the continental revolutionists and socialists. Czechoslovak exiles saw Karl Marx, Lajos Kossuth, Mikhail Bakunin, or Giuseppe Garibaldi as their direct exile predecessors.[252] As Pan-Slavism was gaining momentum after the German attack on Soviet Union,[253] it was only natural to try combining the loyalty to Britain and to fellow Slavs. A nice example of such an attempt is the praise of a rather weak connection between Mikhail Bakunin [as London exile] and the Czech radical democrat revolutionaries Josef Václav Frič and Vojtěch Náprstek: "Everything that had to leave Europe, whenever the old continent was exhausted by fits of reaction, had some connection with this city."[254] The Pan-Slav propaganda had a fertile soil in London. In May 1944, the British capital even hosted the Congress of Slavonic nations under the chairmanship of the devoted friend of Czechoslovakia Robert Seton-Watson.

The chronology of the cordial encounters between Czechs and British was symbolically crowned in the discourse by the London exile of the founder of the First Republic Tomáš Garigue Masaryk. Given the existence of his memoirs, nothing had to be exaggerated or glamorized. Masaryk's recollections of the time he spent during the First World War in Hampstead sound idyllic despite the dramatic circumstances.

> I've always liked being in London […] I would ride into town on the top of a bus, watching the swarms of people and traffic. I didn't like using a car. Why pay more, I said to myself, when you can get there on so little? […] Sirens would periodically go off to warn us of German air raids, and

[250] "Evropan Hollar," *Čechoslovák*, April 3, 1942, 7.
[251] "Hollar," *The Manchester Guardian*, August 26, 1942, 3.
[252] "Londýn – tradiční středisko emigrace," *Čechoslovák*, May 10,1940, 6.
[253] The Pan-Slavic Committee was formed in Moscow in August 1941. Czechs were represented by Zdeněk Nejedlý and Jan Šverma. See Hans Kohn, "Pan-Slavism and World War II," *The American Political Science Review* 46, no. 3 (September 1952): 699-722.
[254] Ibid.

> we were all supposed to take cover in basements or tunnels, though I much preferred standing in the garden and looking on.[255]

Masaryk was very popular among the British. In 1940, Paul Selver's biography of the president was received with a huge acclaim.[256] Harold Nicolson admired the "will-power and the endurance of the son of a Slovak coachman" that stood behind the success of "one of the most prosperous Republics that the world has seen had it not been for Herr Hitler."[257] Alan J. P. Taylor wrote about the "first philosopher-king since Marcus Aurelius."[258] Masaryk was apparently one of the bestselling figures that the Czechoslovak exile was able to market in Britain. At the occasion of his birthday there were even special events organized in some British schools. Children in the public school in Chesterfield spent 7 March 1941 by performing Czechoslovak dances, songs, wearing badges with Czechoslovak tricolour and reading from Masaryk's memoirs.[259] There is no doubt that the resonance Masaryk's name generated was important for both the self-esteem of Czechoslovaks and for the prospects of their cause.

The same is true about the last pre-Munich Anglophile – acclaimed dramatist, writer and Masaryk's friend Karel Čapek. His prominence was so great that Bořivoj Srba even called him "exile's Trojan horse."[260] In 1924, Čapek published hugely popular travelogue *English letters*.[261] Until 1937, it had been reprinted 22 times and translated to English by Paul Selver only a year after the first Czech edition. The realistic yet idyllic image of Britain prepared a perfect ground for the development of positive sentiments towards the country in the interwar period. At the same time, Čapek helped to connect Czechoslovaks and the British on the level of literary stylistics. Self-deprecating irony, understatement or hidden focus on a moral stance, that are considered typical for the English sense of humour,[262] were Čapek's favourite tropes. It is not an accident that the light-hearted tone and playfulness of the many images of Britain in *Čechoslovák* share

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[255] Karel Čapek, *Hovory s T.G. Masarykem* (Praha: Aventinum, 1929) cited in "Londýn (Úryvky z Čapkových Hovorů s T.G. Masarykem)," *Čechoslovák v Anglii,* March 1, 1940, 3.
[256] Paul Selver, *Masaryk* (London: Michael Joseph, 1940).
[257] Harold Nicolson, "The Founder of Czechoslovakia," *The Daily Telegraph*, April 20, 1940, 3.
[258] A.J.P. Taylor, "Masaryk," *The Manchester Guardian*, April 29, 1940, 7; compare to Dr. Temple, "Wordsworth Realized," *The Daily Telegraph*, June 23, 1942, 4.
[259] "Anglické děti památce T.G.M.," *Čechoslovák*, March 14, 1941, 8.
[260] Srba, *Múzy v exilu*, 182.
[261] See Bohuslava R. Bradbrook and Karel Čapek, "Letters to England from Karel Čapek," in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 39, no. 92 (1960): 61-72.

[262] Anthony Easthope, "The English Sense of Humor?," *Humor* 13, no. 1 (2000): 59-75.

these tropes. As in the case of Masaryk, the admiration was mutual. After Čapek died, *The Times* described *English letters* as a work that "contains some of the wittiest and most trenchant descriptions of English life and customs ever written by a foreigner."[263] At the first anniversary of his death the periodical wrote with a similar conviction that he "interpreted English life in its varied phases as no other foreigner seemed able to do, and equally be representative of his own people."[264] Not surprisingly, the British journalist Anna Vaughan considered Čapek the most read Czech in Britain.[265]

The writer, who died in December 1938, and thus could never join his fellows in the British exile, lived further on in the imagination of his comrades. They missed his cultural and intellectual leadership to the extent that they were making up what he would do and say if still alive. On Christmas Day 1943 writer František Langer dreamt:

> What if Čapek had been taken across the border after all and now he was here with us […] He moved into a house with a garden at the outskirts of London […] He writes most about the details of life here around us, about people and oddities, about devices, ideas, books and works that are worth knowing and thinking about […] He says there will be half a dozen books about England […] The English accepted him as a surprising continental exception, a bright man, clear and unorthodox in his judgment, who has their reticence and shyness in expression, says simple things interestingly and interesting things simply, and exhibits such a pure Western culture as they ascribe only to themselves […] he would tread many paths to the British people.[266]

The image of the Anglo-Czechoslovak relations produced by the exile, tried to tread the paths that Čapek could not anymore. It was informed by exiles' need to belong and to be noticed. Also, the pragmatic need to strengthen the Czechoslovak case played its part. The major long-term effect it had was, however, different. It further eroded the ability to critically judge reality. In this case, to simply see the historical ties between Britain and Bohemian lands as, first of all, random, and weak.

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[263] "Dr. Karel Čapek: Czech Dramatist and author," *The Times*, December 27, 1938, 10.
[264] "Čapek's death from a broken heart," *The Times,* January 3, 1940, 9.
[265] Anna Vaughan, "Co cizího čtou Angličané?," *Čechoslovák*, October 15, 1943, 7.
[266] František Langer, "Kdyby Karel Čapek," *Čechoslovák*, December 24, 1943, 1.

4.2 Humanitarian campaigns

For the British, the current fate of Czechoslovakia was more gripping than the older history. Already at the beginning of the war, British students joined with their Czechoslovak peers to honour the memory of students arrested and killed after the peaceful demonstration against Nazi regime on 17 November 1939. Two years later, the International Student Conference in London declared 17 November an International Students' Day and demonstrations, services and requiems in honour of the Czech students who had remained in Prague were organized on that day around Britain until the end of the war.[267] The "badge campaign" took place on the anniversary of Czechoslovakia's occupation in 1942. Badges with an inscription "Czechoslovaks Fight for Freedom" were sold on the streets by Czechoslovak volunteers but also by the pharmacy chain Boots, London Transport, British schoolchildren and trade unions. *Mladé Československo* estimated that around four hundred thousand of them found their place on the lapels of British coats and blazers.[268]

Yet, the humanitarian campaign "Lidice Shall Live", initiated by the Labour MP Barnett Stross and a group of miners in Stoke-on-Trent, a city in England's West Midlands, had by far the biggest impact on the public awareness of the Czechoslovakia's affairs. It successfully spotlighted the destruction of the Czech mining village of Lidice by the Germans in reprisal for the joint British and Czechoslovak operation that killed the Reichsprotektor of Bohemia, Reinhard Heydrich in June 1942. The warmest words were suddenly uttered by British politicians on local and national level. The Lord Mayor of Stoke-on-Trent declared that "The fire lit by the British miner's movement 'Lidice shall live' will bind our two nations, the British and the Czechoslovaks, for centuries, because the working people of the whole land stand behind it."[269] The Earl of Dudley added in a

[267] "The Czech Students," *The Manchester Guardian*, November 18, 1940, 4; "Czechs' Silent Tribute," *The Daily Telegraph*, April 14, 1941, 5; "Manifestace v Albert Hall, Rekviem ve westminsterské katedrále," *Čechoslovák*, November 20, 1942, 2; "Příklad Československa světu," *Čechoslovák*, November 27, 1942, 1.
[268] "O demokratickej propaganda," *Mladé Československo,* April 2, 1942, 2.
[269] "Nové Lidice – Pomník mezinárodní solidarity a středisko horníků celého světa: Slavný den Britsko-čs. přátelství," *Mladé Československo*, September 12, 1942, 1.

similarly dramatic tone: "For as long as this world will stand, nothing will shake the love of the British people towards Czechoslovakia."[270]

The media coverage of the story of Lidice and the "Lidice Shall Live" campaign that went on until 1947 contributed to the enhancement of the Czechoslovak-British mutual sympathies. Just two days after the tragedy, *The Manchester Guardian* published a commentary *Murder of Czechs* that set the tone of solidarity.

> It was a mining town of stone-built houses, rather like a South Wales or a Derbyshire village perhaps, or possibly rather prettier, because it was on the edge of the great forest of Krivoklat. It has a village green too, and every family had its garden or a little small holding… Like miners all over the world, the men of Lidice were tough, self-reliant, fiercely radical. And because they came of a nation that had been subject to alien overlords for centuries, they were possessed with burning patriotism.[271]

Rather than out of general humanitarianism, people were expected to identify with the inhabitants of Lidice due to the resemblance of Czech and British countryside, the same occupational and class background, and the high level of the inhabitants' patriotism that was supposed to develop as a result of German oppression. The comparisons of Lidice with British and other foreign localities that suffered more than others during the war were brought up at almost every opportunity. The Lidice solidarity campaign organized in 1944 by Coventry, which suffered severe bomb damage four years earlier, was called by *Nové Československo* "symbolic."[272] When in July 1944 *The Times* informed about the massacre in the French village Oradour-sur-Glane, they called the article *A worse Lidice*.[273] However, the analogies were not always as persuasive. To gain sympathies of miners in Durham, Edvard Beneš drew up a purely performative comparison. The journalist Glorney Bolton described that:

> [Beneš] said that the lives of the people of Lidice were surprisingly similar to the lives of many workers in County Durham and that there were even some external details between Prague and Durham. In both cities, the

[270] Ibid.
[271] "Murder of Czechs," *The Manchester Guardian*, June 12,1942.
[272] "Coventry pro obnovu Lidic," *Nové Československo,* March 11, 1944, 1.
[273] "A worse Lidice," *The Times*, July 15, 1944.

> cathedral and the castle are closely adjacent to each other. I am glad that the president spent a few moments in the premises of the building, which of all English castles most strikingly resembles Hradčany.[274]

However, it was not only the Czechoslovak government-in-exile that attempted to "profit" from the tragedy of the village. Since the beginning, the British left tried to appropriate it for the promotion of socialism. At the pro-Lidice manifestation in Stoke-on-Trent on 6 September 1942, the Home Secretary for the Labour Party Herbert Morrison praised Czechoslovakia for its "advanced democracy […] and social policy - a phenomenon which in many ways approaches our conception."[275] The Secretary of Midland Miners' Federation G. H. Jones talked of new Lidice as a model for the construction of new mining towns and villages around the world.[276] He claimed that "for the British working class New Lidice is a symbol of a new better future that will lead to the victory of the good, just social order and world unity."[277] Lidice were also used to increase production of coal for the war effort.[278]

The mobilizing potential of Lidice in the socialist movement was limited on the world scale. Yet, when Barnett Stross talked about the "miner's lamp" of Lidice that could "send a ray of light across the sea to those who struggle in darkness"[279] he was not too ambitious. Apart from shedding a light on Czechoslovakia as a brutally violated country that was, however, willing to fight back, the campaign raised enough funds to facilitate the construction of new Lidice close to the original site after the war. The few survivors of the massacre had a place to come back to. Moreover, a project that follows up the original fundraising campaign and focuses on "twinning" of Lidice with Stoke-on-Trent has been planned in England since 2010.[280] It is not only one of the stable grassroot links that keeps connecting Czechs and the British[281] but also a potent symbol of productive transnational identification.

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[274] Glorney Bolton, "Dr. Beneš v severní Anglii," *Čechoslovák,* January 1, 1943, 1.
[275] Josef Hejret, "Lidice shall live," *Čechoslovák*, September 11, 1942, 1-2.
[276] Cited in "Lidice a britští horníci," *Čechoslovák*, October 28, 1942.
[277] Cited in ibid.
[278] Cited in "Lidice shall live."
[279] Barnett Stross, *Lidice Shall Live* (London: Czechoslovak-British Friendship Club, 1942).
[280] Jessica Rapson, "Mobilising Lidice: Cosmopolitan memory between theory and practice," *Culture, Theory and Critique* 53, no. 2 (2012): 129-45.
[281] See the official website of the „Lidice Lives" initiative by Alan and Cheryl Gerrard, accessed January 22, 2023, https://lidicelives.org/.

4.3 Cultural activities

As the exiles settled down and the imminent threat of the Blitz ceased, they became more active in public and cultural life. Also, the official initiatives of the government-in-exile grew in number and were gaining more attention.[282] Among the events aimed at British audience were concerts, exhibitions, get-togethers, screening of educational films, lectures, and courses of Czechoslovak cuisine.[283] Czech music was promoted by Czechoslovak army bands, individuals such as conductor Vilém Tauský,[284] and by British ensembles that took Czech music into their repertoire. Lectures were mostly given by people directly connected to the government and most get-together events were organized by the Czechoslovak-British Friendship Clubs, the first of which was founded in 1941.[285] During the war, seventy-five such Czechoslovak clubs were established across Britain and, according to their records, some seventy-two thousand British people visited their various events.[286] The image of the cultural activities and their reception brings an insight into the everyday experience of exiles and hence into their mentality.

Music has been regarded a source of power since Plato. The Second World War initiated new forms of its appropriation. Soviet Union funded bands to maintain soldiers' morale, the United States had the famous Glenn Miller Orchestra and Britain established the Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA) under which Vera Lynn or Laurence Olivier performed.[287] The Czechoslovak Information Service also tried to actively control and use the symbolic and emotional dimension of music.[288] The

[282] Pavel Horák focuses on the background of the Information Service's activities in *Republika v exilu: Inscenování československé vlády v Londýně za druhé světové války*, 135-41.
[283] J. Josten described the popularity of the cooking courses organized by the propagational department of the Czechoslovak Division in "Ze života československé armády: Československý voják a anglická kuchařka," *Čechoslovák*, June 13, 1941, 8; See also "Angličané se loučí," *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne*, February, yearbook 1942.
[284] Tauský conducted the band of the Coldstream Guards in 1942 despite the tradition that allows it only to the British. See "Čechoslovák dirigoval britskou plukovní hudbu," *Čechoslovák*, September 5, 1942, 2.
[285] Srba, *Múzy v exilu*, 452–55.
[286] Ibid., 66-7.
[287] John Street, "Fight the Power: The Politics of Music and the Music of Politics," *Government and Opposition* 38, no. 1 (2014): 113-30.
[288] See Luis Velasco-Pufleau, "Reflections on Music and Propaganda," *Contemporary Aesthetics* 12 (2014).

politicians realized that, given its cross cultural intelligibility, music could overcome the language and national barriers more easily than other artistic forms.[289]

From the vast number of music performances that were organized in during the war, newspapers kept an eye on the series of concerts of the music platoon of the Czechoslovak Division. It took place in 1941 at various places in London - at Trafalgar Square, in front of St Paul's Cathedral, at Marble Arch, in the gardens of the Horniman Museum and in Victoria Park. The article in *Čechoslovák* commenting on the series of "naše kutálka"[290] mentioned the heart-warming shaking of hands and ordinary people's hopes that Czechoslovakia would soon be liberated.[291] The concerts had warm reception in the British media as well. *The Daily Telegraph* wrote:

> I last heard the challenging music of Smetana when the Czechoslovak army band was playing on the steps of St Paul's. It mingled happily with the roar of traffic on Ludgate Hill. It did not suggest the music of an oppressed people.[292]

Two years later the band played concerts across England, in venues ranging from factories to the Royal Albert Hall. Jiří Svatý described a "clapping, shouting and rejoicing" audience that spontaneously danced when the band played dancing pieces and empathized when it heard songs about pain and homesickness.[293] He proudly added that *News Chronicle* wrote that in London "they" liked Czechoslovaks so much that they considered them Londoners and attempted to round off the essay with a cheering answer to the question, why the exile musicians celebrate such a success. "The longing for the native land" that was felt and appreciated by the British, as he claimed, certainly fit into the desirable patriotic discourse. Yet it is unconvincing in the face of much simpler explanation of the audience's joy, which is the morale boosting effect that music has particularly in hard times. The description of the atmosphere at one of the events of the Newcastle-on-Tyne's Czechoslovak-British Friendship Club speaks for itself: "They were all so cheerful that in the end we really didn't know who our countrymen were and

[289] Srba, *Múzy v exilu*, 171.
[290] Slang word for an amateur brass band of lower quality.
[291] "Ze života našich vojáků: Kutálka v Londýně," *Čechoslovák*, August 1, 1941, 3.
[292] "London vice Prague," *The Daily Telegraph*, August 28, 1941.
[293] Jiří Svatý, "Naši muzikanti," *Čechoslovák*, August 20, 1943, 8.

who were English. The proverbial English calm melted like spring snow with Czech music."[294]

Yet there were also critical voices that commented on the conditions Czechoslovak musicians had in Britain. Apart from government's insufficient financial support[295], that was mentioned by socialist *Nové Československo*, British pro-German bias was considered the major problem for spreading of the Czech, especially classical, music. Anna Jandová Patzaková believed that "England, more than any other nation, lives by German music". Hence its understanding of Slavic cultures and art was rather negative.[296] This level of scepticism seems rather exaggerated, though. It might be on point when it comes to the limited presence of the Czech music in opera houses[297] and prestigious concert halls, but false when considering the reception of the wider public. Here it seems that the tireless effort of amateur musicians and the general atmosphere of mutuality and friendship, that dominated the country during the war, bore fruits. The fear that the popularity of German music could endanger the reception of Czech music mirrors the fear that the new appellative Other was not fond of "us" enough, as it contradicted its traditional friendship with "them".

Exhibitions as a vital feature of cultural diplomacy were the second most important propagandist tool systematically employed by the Czechoslovak government. Numerous exhibitions were organized at the Czechoslovak Institute in London, some also travelled around Britain. The exhibition of the Czechoslovak army that went first for display in Edinburgh in February 1942 and later visited Glasgow, Leeds or Belfast[298] won big public acclaim. It was accompanied by themed film sessions, concerts and public lectures.

The propagandist mission resonated especially well in Scotland. Scottish intellectuals enthused about the common values they shared with the Czechoslovaks.

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[294] "Výňatky z kroniky," *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne*.
[295] See "Naši skladatelé ve Wigmore Hall," *Nové Československo*, October 23, 1943, 4.
[296] Anna Jandová Patzaková, "Dílo Bedřicha Smetany v Anglii," *Čechoslovák*, May 19, 1944, 1.
[297] One of the few productions was run by the Sandlers Wells company in the New Theatre in 1943. The theatre staged Bedřich Smetana's *Prodaná nevěsta* (The Bartered Bride). See "Naše národní opera v Londýně: Prodaná nevěsta promluvila k srdcím Angličanů," *Čechoslovák*, November 20, 1943, 1.
[298] See detailed report about the opening of the exhibition in Belfast by Jan Masaryk and general Sergěj Ingr in "Ministři Masaryk a Ingr v Belfastu," *Čechoslovák*, December 24, 1942, 7.

Scottish Brain Trust, a member of which was the director of the Scottish National Gallery Stanley Cursiter who hosted the Czechoslovak exhibition, agreed that:

> [Czech] religious wars are not unlike the Scottish reformation; their spiritual stance towards life is closer to Scots than the stance of all other allies; they are democrats, just like Scots, and they are people who love freedom and independence.[299]

Scots also became interested in free education in the pre-war Czechoslovakia. *Nová svoboda* reported about the sting of envy and even anger of the exhibition's visitors when confronted with the standards in access to education. The admiration went so far that, in Glasgow, major general Bisset suggested that Britain should ask Czechoslovakia for help with reconstruction after the war given its vast experience.[300] Compliments of "advanced social legislation" and "exemplary education system" were also paid by listeners of the lecture about Czechoslovakia in Welsh mining village Dowlais.[301]

Other exhibitions were praised by the British media as well. *The Manchester Guardian* complimented the exhibition of Czechoslovak cartoonists for "sharp-edged satire and unforced humour" and, at the occasion, called the Czechoslovak Institute "the liveliest of the Allied Nations' centres in London."[302] Czechoslovak exiles were also welcomed in British cultural institutions. The director of the Imperial Institute in Kensington, Sir Harold Lindsay, personally gave a tour to a group of Czechoslovaks, even though the museum was closed for the time of war. He said that it is now opens only at special occasions and, therefore, it would open for any interested Czechoslovaks.[303]

The exiles were understandably flattered by the respect. The mutual bond between the national communities was steadily deepening in the process. The fact that Edinburgh Castle suddenly felt to Czechs as Vyšehrad[304] is just one of many examples of the tendency. The long-lasting support of the "Lidice Shall Live" campaign or the attention the British media paid to the remembrance of important events and personalities of Czech history fall into the same category. While the motivations that informed the exile

[299] "Historky o lidech a věcech," *Mladé Československo*, March 13, 1942, 2.
[300] "Československo a Skotsko (Výstava naší armády v Glasgově)," *Nová svoboda*, May 1942, 116.
[301] „Naši přátelé v Jižním Walesu," *Čechoslovák,* August 20, 1943, 2.
[302] "Five Czechoslovak Cartoons," *The Manchester Guardian*, September 28, 1943.
[303] "British Made," *Čechoslovák*, March 7, 1941.
[304] "Československá výstava v Edinburghu," *Nová svoboda*, February, 1942, 44.

discourse on the Anglo-Czechoslovak historical ties, the promotion of the humanitarian campaigns, and the organization of the cultural activities were political, peoples' interactions with those topics or events were not orchestrated. Hence the interest of the Czechoslovak exiles in the British and the British in Czechoslovak exiles can be considered a by-product of the Munich renunciation project. It was a by-product that helped open the minds of people and, in this way, contributed to the creative power of the war.

Chapter 5: Humoresque

While politics were directly involved in all Anglo-Czechoslovak interactions that were covered in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 focuses on unmediated interactions between Czechoslovak exiles and members of British public. It traces them in the period after the Blitz, that has been described as the momentum that laid foundation to exile Anglophilia. The diversity and cordiality of the interactions, which developed outside the realm of government's propaganda, exposes situational closeness of the communities. Hundreds of individual experiences informed the way Czechoslovak exiles understood Britain, respectively the world, and the way they thought about future. As the interaction with the British Other was overwhelmingly positive, a hope that a bright future can emerge after the raging war became the natural assumption.[305]

As in some instances in the previous chapter, the newspaper articles are here primarily used as records of lived experience. Despite being mostly descriptive and lacking figurative attributes the texts are highly significant. They help us understand the process of identification of the exiles with values and ideas they consumed via Britain (see Chapter 6). The exiles' enjoyment of the British company and culture, that will be shown to be neither blind nor idolizing, led to the development of strong sympathies towards the ideological positions by which surrounded them.

In 1942, anonymous author described in *Čechoslovák* the ways in which exiles got to know the British closer:

[305] Compare to *Z humoru západní armády* (Praha: Tiskové oddělení hlavní správy výchovy a osvěty při Ministerstvu národní obrany, 1945).

> We mostly found our friends in the same environment in which we mixed at home: Friends of the booze in pub, intellectuals at lectures, religious people in churches and the Romany in dance halls, or at promenades. Except for a few morose and shy people, everyone found some friends.[306]

He went on to stress that thee exiles who got a chance to live in English families had the best experience.

> Here, no one wears his heart on sleeve or boasts about eternal, undying, heartfelt friendship in order to in a minute forget what brought him to tears a little while ago. Englishman is not very talkative, he prefers to say less, but what he says, he usually means.[307]

The author shows that he is aware of the existence of purely performative discourses that were emerging both via propaganda channels and in private conversations and proves a clear capacity to distinguish between those and others that were more sincere. He captures typical Englishman as a rather reserved person, who is, however, generally not pretentious. Czechoslovak exiles often mentioned cultural and behavioural differences of the British and sometimes openly criticized them.[308] Yet it seems that they got used to them and in some cases even grew fond of them during the years spent in the country.

The politically unmediated contacts between Czechoslovaks and the British often took place during free time - during vacations or at parties and festivals. A party to which a few Czechoslovak soldiers were invited serves as an example of how mutually exciting some of the encounters were. Sergeant Zdeněk Pražský described it in article *Thank you, Mr. Smith*. The British hosts were surprised how good exiles' English was, they had Czech phrases and toasts prepared and the hostess played Antonín Dvořák's Humoresque on piano.

> And then we all sat down and started talking about Czechoslovakia. You see, at that moment I did not feel like a man of a country about which, a few years ago, average Englishmen knew about as much as we did about

[306] "Angličané a my: Jak jsme se seznamovali," *Čechoslovák*, June 5, 1942, 8.
[307] Ibid.
[308] See "Honba za taxíkem," *Abernantské zprávy,* May 28, 1944; "Queues," *Abernantské zprávy*, June 10, 1944; "Československí vojáci mezi anglickými dělníky," *Čechoslovák*, December 5, 1941, 4.

> the namesakes of the great Confucius; I felt like I was among old, good friends.[309]

We get similar idyll in Juraj Slávik's account of his experience of Wales. The Minister of Interior travelled to Welsh Bangore to attend the Eisteddfod festival in 1943 and could not resist the urge to compare the surrounding countryside to the Lower Tatra Mountains in his homeland of Slovakia. He also noted,

> I felt at home in this appealing environment. In the midst of the petrifying war […] I relocated into this ancient tradition, breathing the air of bards, lute singers, harpists and wandering folk singers. You listen to the ancient Celtic language, and you feel like you understand it.[310]

Despite his political background, Slávik engaged with the experience without trying to manipulate it for propagandist purposes. His fond recollections resemble those of students at the Czechoslovak State Boarding School in Llanwrtyd Wells, who went for international Scout camp in Scottish Auchengillan in 1944. They loved the friendly spirit of the event and ever since boasted about the tartan badge that they got there.[311] The accounts of Pražský, Slávik and the students exemplify uncomplicated enchantment with the British culture. However, texts that captured the exile experience while keeping some distance from the subject were more common.

Soldiers serving in the Czechoslovak Division benefited from the initiative of the Scotto-Czechoslovak Christian Fellowship. It organized holidays in Scottish families to "make the life among us more pleasant" as the letter to the Minister of National Defence Sergěj Ingr specified.[312] More than two hundred of them spent Christmas in 1941 in Scotland. One of them described the combination of caring and, at the same time, patronizing approach of their hosts.

> They bent over us like over children, bathed us, fed us, warmed us with rubber bottles and did not allow us to take a bus alone and preferred to see

[309] Zdeněk Pražský, "Thank you, Mr. Smith," *Čechoslovák*, November 27, 1942, 1; Czechoslovaks who were leaving the Bren factory in Newcastle on Tyne felt very similar in 1942 – see "Angličané se loučí," *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne*.
[310] Juraj Slávik, "Eisteddfod y cymry," *Čechoslovák*, August 13, 1943, 4.
[311] Taurus, "Skautský sjezd ve Skotsku," *Abernantské zprávy*, October 8, 1944.
[312] "Vy i my jsme malý národ," *Čechoslovák*, January 10, 1941, 5; "Naše angličtina," *Čechoslovák*, December 5, 1941, 6.

> us in their car […] Evening after evening, as I sat by the fireplace with my hosts, bent over a book or a newspaper, I was reminded that there is no childhood without trials. Have you heard of Selkirk of Fife? How do you like the Pentland Hills? Can you pronounce Loch? What did you say to Melrose Abbey? Have you read anything by Walter Scott by any chance?[313]

Yet what surprised the host of the Scottish family was also the extent of lively interest. Young artist wanted to know about the relationship between the Czechoslovak culture and the Hungarian one. "And if I may, she will ask me one more question: I had a long and friendly conversation with a Polish officer on the street. Do I speak Polish, or how does it work?"[314] The story suggests that the exiles distinguished the nuances of their hosts' subconscious intuitions well. Yet instead of being offended by the hints of superiority, they chose to focus on the positive traits of the Other. It resulted not in bitterness or frustration, but in curiosity similar to the British one. In this way the author does not mock his companion's poor knowledge of the Central Europe, but finds it cute just as the British found the exiles cute – with their imperfect English and imperfect knowledge of British history, landmarks and literature.

The willingness to confess to love of Britain openly and yet perceive the Other critically is best demonstrable in articles of Josef Schrich. In *Mám rád Manchester* he resorts to the same sentimentality as his fellow nationals, who kept comparing British localities to the Czech and Slovak landscapes and landmarks.

> Manchester smells like autumn, Prague and Monday morning. I remember how I used to go home early in the morning in Prague […] I cross Piccadilly in Manchester and the rain, fog, empty square and the sleepiness of Monday morning suddenly turn the plate of memory.[315]

Yet shortly he rushes to remind himself and the reader of the things that he tends to forget, such as the anti-war demonstration he witnessed at Downing Street after his arrival to Britain. The slogans "We won't die for Warsaw", "Down with the Jews" or "Out with the

[313] "Pozor na Skotsko, zkouší tam z dějepisu," *Čechoslovák*, March 14, 1941, 1.
[314] Ibid.
[315] Josef Schrich, "Mám rád Manchester," *Čechoslovák*, January 21, 1944, 8.

foreigners" resonate next to the dreamy descriptions of Manchester that he learned to love so much.

In another article, Schrich colourfully describes how much he hated a loud group of British and Americans who joined him in his coupe. After the train company put one of the cars out of operation and the group ceded him the only vacant seat in the new coupe, he could not be more embarrassed.[316] The image that is most telling of the exiles' understanding of Britain is formulated when, at a party, he is called upon to write about his view of Englishmen following the example of Karel Čapek. Schrich, indeed, sketches a witty portrait even the great literate would not have to be ashamed of. It is no a eulogy but a sincere and, in its merit, valuable observation of an outsider, who enjoys his life in its variety. The Other is not in any way judged but tenderly teased by someone who grew to be his respected fellow.

> We don't like porridge, early closing hours and adherence to them, the absence of pegs [for coats] in trains and newspapers in cafés, the fact that anyone can open a school and teach there what he wants, we do not like English coffee, we are offended by the fact that hospitals are maintained by charity, that girls dance together and we do not like English fireplace as a heating element. We like the English breakfast, detective novels, freedom of thought, girls in long trousers, kindness, English humour, resilience and courage that made British people famous during the air raids and the fireplace as a family retreat, and Scotland.[317]

The reproductions of those lived experiences suggest that exile's Anglophilia was not reckless. It was based on Czechoslovaks' openness to the new culture and, at the same time, numerous expressions of sympathies by the British. In a sense, they could be called "true Anglophiles", who according to Ian Buruma, do not love Britain blindly[318] and are "liable to be disappointed with the real thing."[319] As the community was searching for the Other it could lean on, it was happy to overlook occasional hints of British superiority. Yet it did not leave them unnoticed. They just considered them less important than the

[316] Josef Schrich, "Prvotřídní nenávist," *Čechoslovák*, April 6, 1944, 1.
[317] Josef Schrich, "Nedoznělá zpráva (O Anglii a Angličanech trochu jinak)," *Čechoslovák*, May 28, 1943, 1-2.
[318] Buruma, *Anglomania: A European Love Affair,* 18-19.
[319] Ibid., 27.

acts expressing care and respect – the rehearsal of Humoresque as one of the most patriotic Czech compositions being the best example.

The British sympathies were not conveyed to them only in person but, importantly, also via media. Locals who once complained about the presence of Czechoslovak soldiers in their town (as the British soldiers were at the same time deployed abroad) missed them when they left.[320] British children wished to exchange letters with Czechoslovak children[321] and one police officer boasted that he can say the Czech tongue-twister "strč prst skrz krk."[322] Czech language became a common subject of conversations. In 1943, A.V.de Bray wrote a letter to *Čechoslovák* with the intention of debunking the myth about the difficulty of Czech language. According to her, it was not more difficult than Hungarian and as difficult as Russian. She encouraged Czechoslovaks to be more self-confident in their propaganda.[323] In the same year, R. Beryl Williams from Chester, where the Czechoslovak Division was deployed at the beginning of the war, also shared her experience with the periodical. She remembered: "Czech signs suddenly appeared in the shops; it was almost as if we were living in a Czech city."[324] Initial distrust transformed into mutual sympathies. Before the soldiers packed up, they left Beryl and her friends a few vinyl records with Czech music. That inspired her to learn Czech. She wrote that, despite never visiting Czechoslovakia, the country became her second home.

The fact that Czechoslovaks stopped being unknown strangers and became common participants in daily affairs also translated into their more frequent presence on the pages of British newspapers or on the cultural scene in general. Czechoslovak periodicals were naturally noticing each mention and proudly reporting about them further. Thus, one could read about a Czech professor of music who was the main character in the British film *Let the People Sing*[325] or about a court hearing in Bristol, which in 1943 sentenced Mr McFarlane for tricking a widow by posing as a Czech. She pitied him as he had claimed that the Nazis shot his parents in front of him, and he only saved himself by fleeing to Britain. *Nové Československo* added with amusement: "This

[320] Zdeněk Vršovský, "Omyl v ulice The Close," *Čechoslovák*, August 20, 1943, 1-2.
[321] "Československo-britské přátelství malých," *Nové Československo*, December 23, 1944.
[322] "British Made," *Čechoslovák*, November 1, 1940.
[323] A.V.de Bray, "Čeština není těžká," *Čechoslovák*, October 8, 1943, 9.
[324] R. Beryl Williamsová, "List z Anglie," *Čechoslovák*, December 10, 1943, 8.
[325] See the review of the film: "Český profesor v anglickém filmu," *Čechoslovák,* May 8, 1942, 6.

is perhaps the first case in which a British person pretended to be a Czechoslovak."[326] Czechoslovakia even made it to such narrowly focused periodical as the magazine *The Racing Pigeon*. Not only did the periodical convey sympathy to Czechoslovak (and Polish) pigeon breeders, but an anonymous British marked the relevant article, added "Long live to Czechoslovakia" in Czech and sent it to the editors of *Čechoslovák*.[327] Another light-hearted story was taken from magazine *Homes and Gardens*:

> The reader [of *Homes and Gardens*] discovered that he has a violin signed 'Antonius Stradivarius Cremonensis, Faciebat, anno 1727: Made in Czechoslovakia.' I do not know if such violins were made in our country, but, in response, the paper says that such cheap and commercialized Stradivarius copies were made in Czechoslovakia in the XIX century.[328]

The exiles did not seem to be offended by the factual mistake. They chose the story for the section "Stories about people and things" that was normally covering curiosities and topics relevant for Czechoslovaks from foreign press. There was no need of a comment.

The sympathies they were encountering were for some hard to believe. When a Czechoslovak soldier was told that the relatives of the British motorcyclist, who did not survive a collision with him, want to see him, he was terrified. He could not be more surprised that instead of blaming him

> they asked about his health, brought some small gifts, and apologized profusely that the organization of the funeral had delayed their visit. And, as they left, they promised to come again.[329]

Chapter 6: A top hat for everyone

A top hat - tall, flat-crowned hat – is traditionally associated with Western upper classes. While by the end of the Second World War it was considered a rarity, its symbolism lived on. Together with a frock coat George Orwell made "the queer shiny hat shaped like a

[326] "Historky o lidech a věcech," *Nové Československo,* March 13, 1943, 2.
[327] "British Made," *Čechoslovák*, January 17, 1941.
[328] "Historky o lidech a věcech," *Nové Československo,* February 12, 1944, 2.
[329] "British Made," *Čechoslovák,* April 4, 1941.

stovepipe" a part of the uniform that capitalists wore in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Winston Churchill kept wearing it still in the 1960's. In December 1941, B. Londoner published an article titled *Cylindr v anglické demokracii*.[330] In the light-hearted essay, he described how the members of parliament for the Labour Party rushed to buy top hats, which they had condemned as a too bourgeois headwear, once their party entered the government. Even though this could easily be interpreted as indisputable hypocrisy on the side of the Labour MPs, Londoner chose to focus on the "behaviour" of the top hat instead. He used it as a metaphor of English greatness. The fact that "the conservative top hat has adapted so well to many different heads, different political views of opposition politicians, and has even endured socialist ideas beneath it, represents one of the miracles of English democracy."[331] By suggesting that leftist ideas can be freely wrapped into conservative coat, Londoner's piece elegantly exemplifies the conciliation of conservatism and socialism that was gradually reached by the exiles. Original Anglophilia based on the admiration of traditionalism and conservatism transformed into a concept that primarily bore socially progressive ideas. The turn had negative effects after the war, as it practically erased differences between the communist worldview and the worldview represented by the democratic socialists in the Third Republic. England as the jolly good Other could be anything you wanted. And, if you wanted it to be a socialist role model, then necessarily the communist discourse was more authentic and more consistent.

For the entire war, the conservative Anglophilia astonishingly coexisted with the socially progressive one (and B. Londoner helped to shape both). The chapter examines the seemingly opposing trends one by one and subsequently turns the attention to their reconciliation.

6.1 Ode to conservative Britain

Conservative Britain was admired for all sorts of reasons. Many of them were already described in previous chapters. The thrill from the first encounters with picturesque countryside and medieval towns (Chapter 1) was followed by the imitation of the morale-boosting patriotism during the Blitz (Chapter 2) and growing trust that came with the deepening of individual Anglo-Czechoslovak friendships (Chapter 5). All those modes of

[330] B. Londoner, "Cylindr v anglické demokracii," *Čechoslovák,* December 19, 1941, 1-2.
[331] Ibid.

"conservative" fantasizing were rather harmless. Yet there was also conservative Anglophilia that was potentially detrimental. It was characterized by moralising or dangerously idolizing traits that reveal exile's issues with self-confidence and critical assessment of the reality.

The moralizing discourse often concerned different cultural manners. Some exiles felt the need to explain the rest of the community how it could grow and what it should learn from its host. B. Londoner claimed that Britain reached "higher level of human civilization" and called for the adoption of teamwork and "reasonable", less paternalistic media censorship, that would not belittle people by not admitting flaws and mistakes of the government bodies.[332] "It would be bad if our twelve thousand people in this country did not bring back home with them at least a part of the moral and spiritual wealth that is within everyone's reach."[333] Conservatism assumed a look of maturity and experience for which Britain was considered superior. Exiles also called for the abandonment of too judgemental approach that distinguished Czechoslovaks from other nations, and suggested that they should instead strive for greater self-criticism.[334] Interestingly enough, the author did not notice that while condemning the judgement of Others, he unhesitatingly applied it to his in-group.

Education sphere appeared to be a particularly fertile soil for practising self-diminishment. Minister of Finance Ladislav Feierabend appealed to his fellow exiles not to look down on the British for what appeared as knowledge gaps.

> Let us unlearn to lecture the English. […] It is true that our general education gives us far more knowledge, but that does not mean that we should instruct the English in fields where they may lack the knowledge. The Englishman has many other qualities by which he stands above us.[335]

In other words, Feierabend advised exiles to forget about any feelings of pride based on their previous life experience in Czechoslovakia as the object of such pride would always be less important than the qualities the British were proud of. Similar conclusions were made by a contributor to *Čechoslovák*'s column *Volná tribuna.* He praised the right

[332] B. Londoner, "Britský příklad: Team work," *Čechoslovák*, August 30, 1940, 7.
[333] Ibid.
[334] "Kritické poznámky o kritice," *Čechoslovák,* October 4, 1940, 11; compare to "Česká hudba na anglické vlně," *Nové Československo*, December 31, 1943, 4.
[335] "Čechoslováci v Anglii," *Čechoslovák,* May 16, 1941, 2.

balance between liberty and discipline of the British based on the supposed effects that the British educational system had on exiled children. The emphasis of personal freedom was a part of the classic (here labelled as conservative) Anglophilia that spoke to the exiles. Liberalism was closely linked to the art of democracy that Britain, according to the stereotype, basically invented and later practised so well.

> They have not been there long, but in that short time they have certainly acquired what our fathers and teachers never managed to teach us […] British children are very early adults. They do not need a high school diploma. Children return home for the holidays as independent, free, but internally disciplined beings who, by their appearance and their behaviour, acquire the same respect for the other that their parents expect from them.[336]

No matter how big the kernel of truth might have been in both education related articles, the argumentation was misleading. British culture was presented as superior and Czechoslovak as inferior. The impact of this discourse might have been twofold. Either its consumers internalized it and lost distance to the relation between them and the Other, or they refused it and became even more prone to favour the communist discourse that despised the West for being reactionary. *Čechoslovák* clearly hoped that its readers would follow the first path. The uncommented excerpt from Dorothy Sayers' pamphlet *The Mysterious English* published on its pages in April 1941 serves as a great example.

> The English cannot be imagined as conquerors of the territory occupied by them. It is true that if you rummage through English baggage, you will find countries of foreign origin in them, but the owner will give a quite an honest explanation […] that he never had conquest in mind. He was just wandering around the world doing a bit of business when he came across […] Cleopatra's Needle […] or maybe half a continent that no one cared about and he slipped it into his pocket and looked after it further […] When an Englishman says England, he does not mean army and dominion. He means the lane or the fields and the cliffs by the sea.[337]

[336] "Britský případ," *Čechoslovák*, March 28, 1941, 8.
[337] Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Mysterious English*, (London: MacMillan, 1941) cited in "Angličané – Britové," *Čechoslovák*, April 18, 1941, 5.

The vision of the Englishman as a kind of accidental colonizer with the best imaginable intentions is certainly a product of its time. Also, the literary style, which is highly playful suggests that Sayers, a popular crime writer, did not intend to produce a serious study – she just tried to capture certain traits of English character as manifested in relation to Britain's global engagements. The problem of publishing such a text is that it was not followed by any interpretation or a more critical text. George Orwell's *The Lion and the Unicorn*, that thematized the connections between the national character and imperialism, was published in the same year, after all. The image of the British Empire that the exile community had was, therefore, highly idealized and, at its core, distorted. Expecting that people would assess other aspects of British public life, critically, is unrealistic. How could they when the relation between the Empire and its subjects was limited to the presentation of the perspective of a Little Englander?[338]

It is, of course, not surprising that the figure conservative Anglophilia centred on was Winston Churchill. Stephen Fielding, Bill Schwarz and Richard Toye consider Churchill "good to think with" (they refer to Lévi-Straus term) as he has been "a highly charged figure through whom many Britons imagine their relationship with their past, present and future".[339] While considering his image in the exile press, it seems that the tendency to deify the war leader has not been limited to his fellow nationals. Apart from using him for propagandist purposes, the Czechoslovak exiles filtered through his personality their deepest worries. He was there to secure their safety and the future of the Czechoslovakia. That is perhaps the reason why Churchill's image today seems so absurdly propagandist.

Right after he was appointed Prime Minister, *Čechoslovák* proclaimed that "Churchill's government would never accept Munich agreement."[340] The uncritical adoration of Britain and Churchill was led by anonymous editors[341] as well as the most important exile politicians – Jan Masaryk and Hubert Ripka. "Fate and providence have chosen Winston Churchill and have spiritually prepared and groomed him for sixty years

[338] Dangerously uncritical stances represent a recurrent topic in the Eastern European relations with the West – see Fidelis, *Imagining world from behind the Iron Curtain*, 125-6; Johana Kłusek, "Porevoluční ideové diskurzy Václava Klause: Socialismus, kapitalismus a nové lepší zítřky à la paní Thatcherová," in *Otisky sametové revoluce: Kde přebývá devětaosmdesátý?*, ed. Petr Agha and Jan Géryk (Praha: Karolinum, 2021), 45-66.
[339] Stephen Fielding, Bill Schwarz and Richard Toye, *The Churchill Myths* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 1.
[340] "Nová vláda," *Čechoslovák,* May 17, 1940, 1.
[341] See "W. Churchill," *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne*, yearbook 1943.

for his gigantic task today,"[342] wrote Masaryk in the foreword of Churchill's biography in April 1941. Ripka commented in a similar style:

> Churchill's proud promise to the victorious Hitler to keep on fighting was, in essence, a better guarantee of safety for England than its advantageous insular position. An irrational element in Churchill's creative personality electrified the latent virtue of his nation and directed its will to persevere in the fight until the end.[343]

Ripka also believed that "the name Winston Churchill appears to be an expression of the best British historical tradition."[344]

Churchill shined in the eyes of the exiles so much not only because, at the time, he represented the universal symbol of resilience needed to beat Hitler, but also because of the poor reputation of his predecessor. Neville Chamberlain was, next to Édouard Daladier, considered the destroyer of the First Republic. Now, Czechoslovaks needed someone who would atone the old mistakes. Jan Masaryk insisted that Churchill was ready to do that.[345] Likewise, Churchill himself behaved in a way that did not exclude it. In April 1941, he visited Czechoslovak Army stationed in England. After the soldiers started singing *Rule Britannia*, he was visibly moved. Czechoslovaks rejoiced.

> Churchill looked into the faces of the singers. They were smiling at him. They put everything into the singing. Churchill and his wife sang together. They let themselves go. Then, perhaps, Winston Churchill realized that these were boys from some country that was unknown to England when it was experiencing its worst hour. And that they are standing here on land that is foreign to them. And that they stand in arms not only for their own, but also for this country. Tears welled up in his eyes.[346]

The emphasis was also often put on Churchill's masculinity. One of his speeches was described as "the manly words of a manly man with a strong artistic feeling who

[342] Jan Masaryk, "Churchill," *Čechoslovák,* April 25, 1941, 6-7.
[343] Hubert Ripka, "Za Churchillova vedení," *Čechoslovák*, May 9, 1941, 1-2.
[344] Hubert Ripka, "S láskou a obdivem," *Čechoslovák,* December 1, 1944, 1.
[345] Jan Masaryk, "Churchill."
[346] Jiří Mucha, "Winston Churchill naší armádě," *Čechoslovák*, April 25, 1941, 6-7.

loves Kipling, the manliest English poet."[347] Superlatives filled the pages of *Čechoslovák* every time Churchill was mentioned. "A feeble complaint, an unconscionable defence, an odd excuse, an empty promise never found their way into this man's eloquent armoury."[348]

A few months before most of the exiles got on their way back home, historian Otakar Odložilík imagined a celebratory triptych that would depict all the important moments of the war. Churchill was supposed to stand in the centre of all of them. In the middle "a picture of the session of the British Parliament, when in the week after Munich, Churchill rightly condemned the retreat from Hitler and named the sacrifice that was demanded of Czechoslovakia to save world peace by its rightful name" was envisioned.[349] On one of the sides, Churchill was visiting the Czechoslovak army to commemorate "his interventions in favour of Czechoslovakia during this war."

> The third image […] is still floating before the eyes of the Czechoslovak citizens as an idea and a wish. During his visit of liberated Prague, Churchill receiving the most valuable distinction, the honorary title of Doctor of Laws, […] at the oldest Czech institution, Charles University, so that the gratitude of the Czechoslovak people in this way balanced at least a bit the manifestations of his favour and loyalty in truly fateful moments.[350]

It is apparent that, at the time, Churchill and Britain were considered indispensable. Exiles took both into account for the future. The fact that they planned to transform the new friendship into a special relation after the war contributes to the understanding of the exile war Anglophilia as an authentic phenomenon rather than a mere performative practice. Unfortunately, the conservative "Britain for future" was largely toxic. Exiles (at least in public) were blind to the real problems of the British people – their observations stayed on the surface. No one really dug into what it meant to live through the war as an ordinary British citizen, not to mention the Empire.[351] The inability to reflect on the great Other critically makes the admiring gazes a rather regrettable result of the exile's war

[347] "Řečnické klady Churchillova projevu," *Čechoslovák*, December 4, 1942, 5.
[348] "Churchillův parlament," *Čechoslovák*, February 6, 1942, 1-2.
[349] Otakar Odložilík, "W.S.Churchill," *Čechoslovák*, December 1, 1944, 1-2.
[350] Ibid.
[351] See Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain*, 6-26.

meditations. Ian Buruma's line on the main problem with traditional Anglophilia feels more than apt: "If freedom is one component of Anglophilia, snobbery is another."[352]

6.2 A new life

While the conservative, moralizing Anglophilia was performed exclusively by the governmental *Čechoslovák*, the socially progressive Anglophilia was developed by all exile periodicals. Although there were hints that Britain headed to become a progressive role model before,[353] the media fully turned their attention to the left-wing course in November 1942, after the British government published a report titled *Social Insurance and Allied Services*. Better known as the Beveridge Report, the text provided a blueprint for social policy in Britain after the war. Public interest in the policy document was enormous. On the first day, 73,000 copies were sold. In total, some 670,000 copies of full and abridged report were sold in Britain and in the United States.[354] While the battle against the "five giants" – idleness, ignorance, disease, squalor and want had a support across the political scene, particular programmes such as the free national health service were far from being unanimously endorsed.

The response of the Czechoslovak exile was quite united. In general, it considered Britain's social system outdated compared to other European countries, Czechoslovakia included. Yet the proposed plan was deemed so good that it could make Britain the leader of the social progress.[355] *Nová svoboda* had reservations regarding the efficacy of the reform. "It wants to cure the defects of the capitalist system without treating their causes and trying to eliminate them."[356] For exile socialists, Labour Party was not left enough.[357] At the same time, the periodical found the proposed plan "brilliantly simple" and, therefore, applicable in other environments.[358] The editors worried that the situation in Czechoslovakia after the war would be much worse than in Britain and the interwar

[352] Buruma, *Anglomania: A European Love Affair*, 9.
[353] Kornel Synek, "Anglické úvahy o poválečném světě," *Čechoslovák,* June 16, 1940, 2; "Britský parlament: Strany samy nejsou cílem," *Čechoslovák*, January 10, 1941, 2; "Tato válka jest revoluce," *Čechoslovák*, February 14, 1941, 1.
[354] Derek Fraser, *The Beveridge Report: Blueprint for the Walfare State* (London: Routledge, 2022), 107.
[355] P. Haras, "Londýnský týden," *Čechoslovák*, December 11, 1942, 4; "Komentáře a odpovědi," *Čechoslovák,* December 12, 1942, 3.
[356] "Beveridge," *Nová svoboda*, December 1942, 260.
[357] Antonín Tichý, "Jak je vidíme," *Nová svoboda*, June-July, 1943, 128-32.
[358] "Beveridge a my," *Nová svoboda*, January, 1943, 11.

welfare laws would have to be adapted. Hence, they thought that the British blueprint might be useful.

Compared to Moscow exile and the resistance movement in the Protectorate, the exile Ministry of Social Welfare had great conditions to study the Beveridge Report and the alternatives to the programme.[359] The direct influence of the report on the Ministry's plans for the reformation of the social system was limited, though. A "collective guarantee" of the individual's social security became a key idea of the design months before Britain gathered to debate the Beveridge Report.[360] In the end, the Third Republic's social system, influenced by the former exiles, still strongly relied on the pre-war Bismarck model. Surprisingly, it was only the Communist government in 1948 that introduced changes that followed the egalitarian model proposed by William Beveridge.[361] The new national insurance scheme resembled Beveridge's reform even though it was not as equalizing as the British scheme and, understandingly, the Communists did not recognize the source of their inspiration out loud. Ultimately, Beveridge was abandoned for Stalin in the first half the 1950's when the social welfare gradually succumbed to sovietisation.[362]

Beveridge's Britain did not only impact Czechoslovakia on the practical level, but, perhaps more importantly, it shaped the exile's mental map. Sooner or later, the exiles were to set on the way back home. The fact that they spent half a decade in the society that was just laying foundation to what would become known as "post-war consensus" must have greatly influence their general mindset. The "progressive" or even "socialist Britain" entered exiles' thinking about the world early on. Jan Opočenský already drew the socially progressive connection in March 1941: "We must give people hope for a new life, and a better one than the previous one. If Britain succeeds in building this world […] it would enter a new era of history as a leading nation."[363] A year later, Jan Házek went

[359] Jakub Rákosník, Igor Tomeš, ed. *Sociální stát v Československu: Právně-institucionální vývoj v letech 1918-1992* (Praha: Auditorium, 2012), 120.
[360] Ibid.
[361] Principles and policy ideas formulated in the Beveridge report were appropriated by many countries. The impact of the report on Denmark, Canada and France is discussed in Daniel Béland, Gregory Marchildon, Michelle Mioni and Klaus Petersen, "Translating social policy ideas: The Beveridge report, transnational diffusion, and post-war welfare state development in Canada, Denmark and France," *Social Policy & Administration* 56, no. 2 (2022): 315-28.
[362] Jakub Rákosník, "Kontinuita a diskontinuita vývoje sociálního státu v Československu (1918-1956)," *Soudobé dějiny* XX, no. 1-2 (2013): 36-9.
[363] Jan Opočenský, "Britské veřejné mínění a válečné cíle," *Nová svoboda*, March, 1941, 17-9.

further: "I have to admit that it was mainly my stay in Great Britain that made me an unreserved supporter of the socialist order."[364] The Czechoslovak exiles of course did not invent the "socialist" discourse about Britain. They adopted it from the contemporary debates that took place in the Anglo-American world. Hannen Swaffer claimed confidently that "Europe is going left" and only those who can adapt themselves to new conditions can find support.[365] George Orwell at the same time popularized the idea that Britain turned left with the Blitz.

> Before that the case against capitalism had never been *proved*. Russia, the only definitely Socialist country, was backward and far away […] Socialism? Ha! ha! ha! Where's the money to come from? Ha! ha! ha! […] But after the French collapse there came something that could not be laughed away, something that neither cheque-books nor policemen were any use against – the bombing. Zweee – BOOM! What's that? Oh, only a bomb on the Stock Exchange. Zweee – BOOM! Another acre of somebody's valuable slum property gone west. […] For the first time in their lives the comfortable were uncomfortable, the professional optimists had to admit that there was something wrong.[366]

When Beveridge report was published, thinking about Britain as about a leftist trendsetter felt natural even across the pond. Newspapers in the US called the Beveridge Report a blueprint for a "British Revolution" that was supposed to free "dukes and garbage collectors alike."[367]

The impact of social progressivism on exile's discourses manifested in various topics. *Mladé Československo* praised the plan of the Council House for the post-war redevelopment of London. It reminded the readers that capitalist interests prevented Christopher Wren's post-1666 plan for the capital's reconstruction. In a result, "the general atmosphere of the city is unhealthy and depressing."[368] The periodical criticized the existence of slums, insufficient number of open spaces and too loud traffic. Inspiration

[364] Jan Házek, "Naše cesta," *Nová svoboda*, January, 1942, 11-3.
[365] Hannen Swaffer, „What the exiles think of us," *Daily Herald*, February 26, 1945 cited in „Hlasy anglického tisku," *Čechoslovák*, March 2, 1945, 6.
[366] George Orwell, *The lion and the unicorn: Socialism and the English genius* (London: Penguin, 2018), 38-9.
[367] Fraser, *The Beveridge Report: Blueprint for the Walfare State*, 108.
[368] "50ti letky pro nový Londýn," *Nové Československo*, August 14, 1943, 5.

was found everywhere. Scotland was praised as a place where "your social class is determined by your education and not your father's bank account."[369] The deduction was obvious - democracy depended on the equality of educational opportunity. And "democracy" used as a synonym for social democracy also appeared in *Čechoslovák*. *British Made* section cited a woman from Kensington: "The best evidence that we are really fighting for democracy is the fact that the wreckage of the bombed Buckingham Palace today mingles with the ruins of less aristocratic houses in the great Hyde-Park wasteland."[370] The periodical also hoped for more egalitarianism in the British Parliament after the war.[371]

Apart from the reform of the social welfare system and a careful promotion of egalitarianism there were also more radical and, from today's perspective, more unexpected topics which brought Czechoslovak exiles and the British left together. In 1944, Labour Party published *The International Post-war Settlement* that summed up its foreign policy vision. Hugh Dalton as the President of the Board of Trade stood behind the preparation of the document that was imbued with deep anti-German bias. A collective guilt of Germans was established as a starting point for further analysis. Even though not all leading members of the Party agreed with this radical formulation (Harold Laski requested to replace "Germans" with "Nazis") the document was in the end approved.[372] It elaborated on numerous topics including the need of the joint occupation of Germany by the US, Britain and the Soviet Union, reparations that were to be paid in kind and in human labour and "organized transfers" of German population. It was no surprise that *Čechoslovák* welcomed the document wholeheartedly.[373] By 1944, the principle of collective guilt and the plan for large-scale expulsion of Sudeten Germans was endorsed not only by practically all Czech exiles but also by part of German exiles.[374]

Not unlike the conservative Anglophilia, the socially progressive Anglophilia brought both positive and negative impulses. Britain became a natural mediator between the exiles and the ideas of social progressivism. The atmosphere of the "British

[369] Prokop Maxa, "Demokratická výchova," *Nová svoboda*, May 1941, 74.
[370] "British Made," *Čechoslovák,* April 10, 1941; For another example of Čechoslovák's praise of socialist Britain see "Tato válka jest revoluce," *Čechoslovák*, February 14, 1941, 1.
[371] "Britský parlament: Strany samy nejsou cílem," *Čechoslovák,* January 10, 1941, 2.
[372] John T. Grantham, "Hugh Dalton and the International Post-War Settlement: Labour Party Foreign Policy Formulation: 1943-44," *Journal of Contemporary History* 14, no. 4 (1979): 713-29.
[373] "Labour Party a budoucí mír," *Čechoslovák,* May 12, 1944, 7.
[374] Berglund, "'All Germans are the Same': Czech and Sudeten German Exiles in Britain and the Transfer Plans."

revolution" affected the way exiles perceived the changes initiated by the war. Thereupon the move of the Czechoslovakia's political "centre" to the left after the war should be linked not only to Beneš' foreign policy focused on the alliance with the Soviet Union, but also to the British experience of the exiles. Yet it should not be overlooked that "leftist Britain" became the devil's advocate when Labour Party supported the retributive solution of the German question.[375]

6.3 Reconciling irreconcilable?

The fact that the two sets of values observed and admired on the British were not internally coherent led to attempts at their conciliation. The exiles created a new all-encompassing discourse that in its core resembled the one sketched by Giuseppe Mazzini in the nineteenth century. The Italian revolutionary, who spent many years in London exile, was a sworn Anglophile as well. He also tried to make peace between the "admiration for English tolerance and moderation and a fierce, rather Catholic desire to unite mankind in the sacred cause of human progress."[376] Yet no matter how hard he tried to reconcile his intuitive fondness of the English world and the higher aims that he wished English politicians fought for, the result was disappointing. The same cannot be established about the Czechoslovak project of reconciliation.

The exiles' war reconciliation of conservatism and socialism was rather a result of natural effort to ascribe meaning and purpose to the world that surrounded them than a success of government-in-exile's propaganda. Editors of all main newspapers contributed to the discourse over the years. Also, Britain undoubtedly was at the time going through changes that made it less elitist and backward looking and more egalitarian and future oriented. Alan Sinfield described the disbelief of the British elites when the Blitz exposed the extent of the structural poverty.[377] According to him, the experience of the people who went through the Blitz and the way the social order was adjusted represented "a crucial turning point in the development of the modern world."[378] Hence it makes sense that the observers of those dynamic processes were inspired by what they

[375] See Philipp Ther and Anna Siljak, *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic cleansing in East-Central Europe 1944-1948* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).
[376] Buruma, *Anglomania: A European Love Affair,* 121.
[377] Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain*, 10.
[378] Ibid., 7.

witnessed and desired to test the new ideas on their own, and probably even more so when they needed a rationale for the socially progressive and yet conservative and nation-oriented restart of Czechoslovakia. The symbiosis of the two seemingly opposite sets of values in Britain represented a unique opportunity to strengthen the plans for quickly approaching future.

The exiles thematized the idea that "the world [meaning Britain], which is not a child of today, is maturing right before our eyes"[379] in a great variety of stories. The British version of the social revolution was to happen without bloodshed and murder of proponents of erstwhile regime. It was to be a "purely English revolution carried out in traditional tranquillity."[380] The stereotypes of British composure, stability and prudence were applied on theoretically inimical concept of revolution. However, what seems bizarre on the surface, makes sense internally. The usage of stereotypes did not mean that the message was necessary manipulative. British tradition of socialism was always evolutionary; therefore, it was at least possible to imagine a non-violent, quiet and hardly discernible revolution.

History, literature and culture helped the exiles with the conciliatory task. In 1940, *Čechoslovák* applauded the idea of a new bill of rights that would guarantee not only personal freedom but also minimum of economic welfare and security.[381] The original Bill of Rights was here of course understood as the great achievement of the British genius. *Nová svoboda* borrowed the services of Shakespeare.

> Every Englishman, across all divisions of social class, has been a "gentleman" for centuries and even the worst reactionary would never try to deny this fact. Recall here the characters of Shakespeare's plays: not the kings, leaders and noblemen, but the common folk who provide the playwright with the cheerful dramatic element, but who are never undignified in comparison to Italian and French comedies. These English figures act in their own way, and despite their sometimes grotesqueness, they always appear as gentlemen. England is a land of old struggles for

[379] Kornel Synek, "Úděl anglosaského světa," *Čechoslovák*, July 26, 1940, 13.
[380] B. Londoner, "Albion v revoluci."
[381] "Sociální progam uprostřed války," *Čechoslovák*, August 23, 1940, 2.

privileges, not only for the privileges of the king and the nobility, but also for the privileges of the people."[382]

Again, it is hardly disputable that a literary scholar could come up with maybe a bit more nuanced but still factually similar reflection today. British literary tradition is certainly specific, and Shakespeare himself must have projected national stereotypes into his characters. That certainly did not translate into "privileges of the people", though.

Ota Ornest brought up Shakespeare as well. In his review of Laurence Olivier's Richard III, he praised the British art of stage speech that was, in his view, neglected in Czechoslovakia. He thought that the classic drama did not need opulent costumes and make-up anymore. Civility, as practised on British stages, was a new trend to follow.[383] The last example of the conciliatory discourse from the world of culture concerns the famous Proms concerts in the Royal Albert Hall. The author of the article from *Mladé Československo* proclaimed his astonishment that there are no men in dress suits or ladies in gowns and that they do not sit on soft chairs. "There are no chairs. The audience stands. After work people, mostly young, clerks, soldiers, the representatives of so-called lower middle class make their way to the concert hall."[384] He liked that some of the tickets to the prestigious concerts cost less than a visit to the cinema. In this case the high culture was, indeed, not anymore just for elites. Britain was changing the rules.

The need to prepare for the future that would keep what was positive and stable about the past and at the same time adopt what still more loudly knocked on the doors was also manifested on topics more challenging than art. The exiles had the courage to rewrite conservative heavyweights such as British royalty, Winston Churchill and the Church of England.

In 1943, *Čechoslovák* informed readers that King George VI unexpectedly visited a local lido in Tunisia and was immediately encircled by British soldiers who started to sing the popular song *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow*. "It was a typical English scene. Even the vivid imagination of a Central European would never be able to imagine that a Francis Joseph I or a William II could mingle so simply with soldiers on the beach."[385]

[382] Karel B. Palkovský, "Demokracie zápasí," *Nová svoboda,* April, 1941, 41–3.
[383] Ota Ornest, "Kultura: Poučení z divadla," *Nové Československo*, December 23, 1944, 6.
[384] "Hudba lidu," *Mladé Československo,* August 1, 1941, 3.
[385] P. Haras, "Londýnský týden," *Čechoslovák*, June 25, 1943, 4.

The author of the commentary expanded the comparison of the British and Austro-Hungarian monarchy further on. He called the Austro-Hungarian monarchy an "imperfectly camouflaged autocracy." On the contrary, British monarchy was exceptional in his eyes. "Its rulers had long ago set aside the ways of absolutism and became, so to speak, guarantors of the country's freedom."[386] While given the strict obedience of the royal prerogatives by the British monarchs this was certainly true, the comradeship of the King and the common folks, that the story suggested, was of course little more than a fantasy. George VI featured in two more stories run by *Čechoslovák* and *Nové Československo*. While reporting about his visit of Czechoslovak RAF pilots in 1941 it was without any context emphasized that he is "a true democrat"[387]. When he was granting distinctions at the occasion of his birthday two years later, "ordinary people and workers, who distinguished themselves by their participation in the war effort" gained a special mention.[388]

The King and the royalty never stood in the main spotlight of the Czechoslovak exiles and therefore the leftist appropriation seems rather uncontroversial. However, that is, of course, not the case when it comes to Winston Churchill, the guru of British conservatism. Progressive Churchill emerged from the pages of the exile periodicals rarely, yet he was put on display when needed. In 1941, he was praised for standing behind the members of the pro-communist union People's Convention, who were banned from the BBC.[389] In 1943, his political outlook was described as "progressive conservatism"[390] and, since then, the focus of his government on social agenda was repeatedly emphasized even though the position of the Conservative party towards reforms planned for the post-war period was reluctant. Similarly, later during the war, gone were the news about events in which the British aristocracy, that Churchill was a member of, took part. Instead, *Čechoslovák* informed about his speeches at the Congress of Miners[391] or at an event in Albert Hall recognizing female workers.[392]

The last actor appropriated by the exiles was the Church of England. In April 1941, Zdeněk Fierlinger wrote that, the fact that "[English] church circles do not close

[386] Ibid.
[387] "Angličtí královští manželé u našich letců," *Čechoslovák,* January 24, 1941, 5.
[388] "Anglický týden," *Nové Československo,* June 12, 1943, 2.
[389] "Zápas o svobodu projevu v Anglii," *Nová svoboda*, April, 1941, 41-3.
[390] "Dosah a význam Churchillova projevu," *Čechoslovák*, March 26, 1943, 2.
[391] P. Haras, "Londýnský týden," *Čechoslovák*, November 15, 1942, 4.
[392] P. Haras, "Londýnský týden," *Čechoslovák*, October 8, 1943, 4.

themselves to considerations of the necessity of deep social changes" is for the country symptomatic.[393] He based his claim on the results of the Malvern Conference that was called up by the Archbishop of York William Temple to "consider how far the Christian faith and principles based upon it could afford guidance for action in the world today."[394] A year after the conference, Temple published tract *Christianity and Social Order*, which in turn influenced William Beveridge in his work on his report.[395] While social progressivism of the Church of England during the war and social radicalism of William Temple are indisputable, less watertight is Fierlinger's suggestion that this should be a part of the British character. The generalization shifts the meaning of the message so that it confirms the author's worldview. In a similar manner, P. Haras called Temple, now Archbishop of Canterbury, "a modern church dignitary" while writing that "the radicalism of his speech could even shame quite a few socialists" in 1942.[396]

The reconciliation of conservatism and socialism was achieved by direct and indirect methods. Some journalists just observed and described the real contradictory tendencies of the British society. Some interpreted them in a way that suggested the need of simulation in Czechoslovakia. Some simply took over stories from the British press that fit the conservative-progressive scheme and in this way shaped the discourse. The exile Anglophilia seen from the ideological perspectives does not seem primitive or false. It was based on the lived experience of the exiles and strongly embedded in the societal development of Britain. Yet one should not overlook the element of wishful thinking that comes back with almost every single story. The exiles looked for a specific role model, a specific Other. Therefore, it was sometimes convenient to leave out things that did not fit or, on the other hand, to overly emphasize those that fit. The inability to see that conservatism and socialism cannot be fully reconciled (or the hesitance to admit it) was to be later proved fatal as the democratic exile was not the only player on the Czechoslovak political scene who was ready to employ Britain for achieving its goals.

[393] Zdeněk Fierlinger, "Dnešní politické a sociální proudy v Anglii," *Nová svoboda*, April, 1941, 36-7.
[394] Cited in Ian Jones, "Faith in the public square in 1941 and 1991: Two Malvern conferences reviewed," *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 37, no. 3 (2016): 247-58.
[395] Ibid.
[396] P. Haras, "Londýnský týden," *Čechoslovák*, October 9, 1942, 4.

Chapter 7: The other Other

With the war nearing to the end, the exiles naturally started to focus on their return to Czechoslovakia. An important friendship with the British was established, lessons in English language and manners taken. Now it was time to start thinking about what to do next. While the British were to become friends who you invite for a beer when they visit once in a few years, Russians were to become closer than ever. For a long time, the exile elites were doing their best to prepare the people and themselves for the new reality. The interwar anti-Bolshevism[397] had to be overcome and all "buts" and "ifs" accommodated in the way that excluded serious worries linked to the hegemon of the East. The USSR's joining the Allies in 1941 and the continuous growth of the country's reputation in Britain made the task relatively easy.[398] The Czechoslovak endeavour was backed by both direct proponents of Vansittartism, such as historian Alan J.P. Taylor, and rather spontaneous fans of the Soviet-British alliance. Among the latter there were clergymen of the Church of England, Robert Seton Watson or William Beveridge.[399] The public discourses on the USSR of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile and the British government were at the time actually strikingly similar. In 1941, Peter Smollett, the Head of the Russian Division at the Ministry of Information, decided to widely use the Soviet propagandist posters, that Stalin gave to Lord Beaverbrook, in order to "steal the thunder" of the radical Left.[400] Similarly, Edvard Beneš could have thought that he could control the way Czechoslovaks engaged with socialist ideas and the Soviet Union. The exiles were deepening their ties to the other Other while the Soviet posters were displayed on 1100 sites around Britain and books such as *The Spirit of the Soviet Union* were published on quality paper, despite paper rationing, and with forewords of His Majesty's Ministers. Slogans such as *Rush Aid to Russia!, Their Fight Is Our Fight* and *Comrades in Arms* could be commonly seen around Britain[401] and many British cities enthusiastically commemorated Red Army Day

[397] See Jonathan Haslam, *The Spectre of War: International Communism and the Origins of the World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021), 278-99.
[398] For the development of the Soviet-British relations after June 1941 see Martin Kitchen, *British Policy toward the Soviet Union during the Second World War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986); Gabriel Gorodetsky, *Stafford Cripps' mission to Moscow 1940-42* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
[399] Beveridge's pro-Russian utterances were reproduced by the exile press, see "Potřebujeme nového ducha," *Nová svoboda*, April, 1942, 76; "Londýnský týden," *Čechoslovák*, November 27, 1942, 3.
[400] Jim Aulich, "Stealing the Thunder: The Soviet Union and Graphic propaganda on the home front during the Second World War," *Visual Culture in Britain* 13, no. 3 (2012): 343-66.
[401] Ibid.

in February 1943.[402] The Royal Albert Hall pageant called *Salute to the Red Army* attended by two thousand participants represented one of the peaks of the British pro-Soviet enthusiasm.[403] Unfortunately going with the East, as the West at the time seemed to do, turned into a hazardous game as, unlike Britain, Czechoslovakia could not back out of it.

The chapter examines the metaphor of Czechoslovakia as the bridge between East and West. It helped to disperse concerns regarding the alliance with the USSR as for the duration of the war the Eastern ally was always accompanied by the Western, i.e. the British one. Also, the chapter wraps up the exiles' more than five years long British.

7.1 Czechoslovakia as a bridge

To assign Czechoslovakia a meaningful role in the post-war order, the exile politicians employed the metaphor of the bridge between the East and the West. During the war as well as in the immediate post-war months the metaphor was widely debated – politicians and public intellectuals juggled with it with varying degree of skill. Yet the obvious reference to the never-ending balancing of the Czech lands between Western and Eastern cultural orbitals secured it an important place in Czechoslovak history.[404] Britain with all its contradictory characteristics became one of the two focal points of the metaphor. Accommodation of Britain's image was crucial for the exile's success in the struggle for dominance of the political scene when back in Czechoslovakia. The establishment of cordial relations with Churchill's Britain helped to legitimize Beneš' leadership.[405]

The first attempts to conciliate the world of the East and the West can be traced to the days that followed the attack of Germany on the Soviet Union. Rudolf Bechyně wrote:

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[402] Claire Warden, "'We are here to salute the Red Army': Basil Dean and his Russian Adventures," *Theatre Survey* 54, no. 3 (September 2013): 347-66.
[403] Ibid., compare to "Anglický týden," *Nové Československo,* March 4, 1943, 2.
[404] The most famous work that is constructed around the topic and has resonated internationally ever since its publication is Milan Kundera's essay "The Tragedy of Central Europe," *The New York Review of Books* 31, no. 7 (April 1984). The topic is still so key that it keeps appearing in books' titles: Petr Hlaváček, ed., *Západ, nebo Východ* (Praha: Academia, 2016); Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948.*
[405] Conway, "Legacies of exile: The exile governments in London during the Second World War and the politics of post-war Europe," 259.

> For us - as well as for the whole of Europe - it would be optimal if Britain and Russia agreed on the next arrangement of European affairs. Under the powerful protection of two great empires and nations, and in cooperation with them, the smaller nations would finally find security, unity and peace.[406]

Soon after, *Nová svoboda* enthusiastically engaged in a debate about the Czech Russophilia and Anglophilia and their degrees. Jan Házek claimed that if "our nation is today Anglophilic, it is as much Russophilic" and supported the wish of the joint post-war British-Soviet leadership of "new, healthy and just Europe" by a reference to *The Economist*.[407] Even though the voices that would prefer Russia to Britain were still rare, there were none that would opt for Britain if they were to choose. Britain and France started to be listed after Russia when the strength of the ties to allies was debated.[408] The USSR was considered closer on the emotional level, while the relation to Britain was called "more platonic."[409] The special bond between Slavs based on "mental affinity" shaped by common genes and instincts represents a recurrent discourse that emerges when a counterweight to the German dominance is needed. Nevertheless the "platonic" influence of the West is traditionally also considered important as it brought humanist ideals and "high respect for man."[410]

Knowing how quickly democracy eroded after the war and that the resistance to the Communists' pressure was in the end fairly limited it is easy to conclude that the bridge metaphor was from the beginning a mere propagandist slogan, skilfully used to cover the kidnap of Czechoslovakia to the East. Yet the war perspective provides an important corrective. Czechoslovakia seen as the bridge between the East and the West emerges as genuine and apt image of the world that at least part of the exile community appropriated. The world where Czechoslovakia could find stability and not only balance between the East and the West seemed, for the time being, possible. Accordingly, Vilém Nový considered the bridge metaphor redundant:

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[406] Rudolf Bechyně, "Zdar sovětským zbraním," *Nová svoboda*, June, 1941, 78.
[407] Jan Házek, "Mezi dvěma póly," *Nová svoboda*, August-September, 1941, 124.
[408] "Věrnost za věrnost: Trvalé tendence československé zahraniční politiky," *Čechoslovák*, November 15, 1942, 1-2; Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948,* 238.
[409] „Respektují nás, ale nemají nás rádi," *Nová svoboda*, October, 1943, 218.
[410] Otakar Machotka, „Západ či Východ?," *Svobodný zítřek*, October 18, 1945, 5 and 10.

> The concept of Czechoslovakia as a "bridge between East and West" is flawed in its very essence. The development does not lead to the emergence of two opposing worlds at the end of this war and in the post-war period, for which our republic is supposed to act as a neutral messenger. The Anglo-Soviet alliance is permanent and genuine. It is growing and will continue to grow - albeit with difficulties and understandable fluctuations.[411]

In 1943, an anonymous reader of *Nové Československo* also attempted to rewrite the metaphor that the media (mostly governmental *Čechoslovák*) seemed to endlessly repeat. Instead of the need to believe in the genuine partnership between Britain and the USSR, she called for greater self-confidence of Czechoslovaks:

> The thought of some sort of bridge, over which Russian prose and poetry would walk on one side and English drama on the other, both expeditions led by a Czech guide and Čedok's interpreter, is terrifying. Trying to be someone's bridge is a sign of smallness, a product of weakness and a lack of faith in one's own creative power. We are still looking for something here, we are serving, we are still tiptoeing, and we still want to be something to someone. Instead of being to ourselves. Good. Culturally we are closer to Russia than the English and closer to the English than the Russians. So where to turn? East or West? East and West. And how to make it happen, please? Self-orientation.[412]

The article is refreshing by its straight-forwardness and refusal of empty phrases. It exposes the vision of Czechoslovakia as a mediator between the two great powers as naïve at best. The fact that for different reasons Czechoslovaks felt close to both entities did not make it in any way especially valuable for Russians or the British. In other words, the feeling of Czechoslovakia's indispensability, that could be deduced from the image of the war Anglo-Czechoslovak "romance", was flawed. The author also suggested to stop looking for the direction, as that was given by Czechoslovakia's geopolitical and cultural background and engage in some kind of introspection. If realized, such redirection of the

[411] Vilém Nový, "Mezi východem a Západem," *Nové Československo,* October 28, 1943, 2.
[412] "Forum čtenářů: most mezi Východem a Západem," *Nové Československo*, November 20, 1943, 4.

exile's attention could have boosted the critical assessment of the world. Unfortunately, self-reflective voices were extremely rare.

The function of the bridge that the exile press did not mention always but was, indeed, crucial, was its ability to prevent a new rise of Germany. In October 1944, Karel Kreibich wrote that "we do not want to be a bridge, but a forward guard in the outskirts of the impregnable fortress of the Slavic bloc."[413] While, after the war, the USSR replaced the bridge idea and stepped in as the sole protector of Czechoslovakia, the discourse of the late war years still counted on two-pillar support.[414] On top of that, the discourse was also supported by the British Russophiles. The proponent of Vansittartism Alan J.P. Taylor used his authority of renowned historian to portray Britain and the USSR as the equal guarantors of Czechoslovakia's future.

> Excluded from Bohemia, the Germans can never trouble Europe; influencing Bohemia, however, indirectly, the Germans will renew their bid for the mastery of Europe again and again […] Prague is for the twentieth century what Vienna was for previous centuries – the barrier against pan-Germanism […] the bastion of Bohemia will long need reinforcement; and this can come only from two great powers who have withstood German aggression. […] In Prague two worlds meet, the Slavic world and the world of Western civilization. The Czechs with their Hussite tradition have a deeper respect for individual liberty than any other Slavic people […] Czechoslovaks are destined to resemble the British in the Russian eyes and the Russians in the British eyes.[415]

Robert W. Seton-Watson wrote about the topic in a similar manner.[416] As showed in Chapter 6, the British were also open about their opinion regarding the future of Czechoslovakia's German minority. Labour Party was joined in its radicalism by the Church of England. In March 1943, *The Daily Telegraph* referred to the Archbishop of

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[413] Karel Kreibich, "Mezi východem a západem," *Nové Československo*, October 28, 1944, 5.
[414] Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948,* 238-39 compare to Vít Smetana, "Pod křídla Sovětů: Mohlo se Československo vyhnout 'sklouznutí' za železnou oponu?," in *Soudobé dějiny* XV, no. 2 (2008): 274-302 and Edvard Beneš, "Budoucí mír," *Čechoslovák*, May 15, 1942, 2.
[415] A.J.P. Taylor, "Czechoslovakia's 25 Years," *The Manchester Guardian*, October 27, 1943 cited in "28. říjen v britském tisku," *Čechoslovák,* November 5, 1943, 5.
[416] "Evropa potřebuje ruský přínos (Projev profesora R.W.Seton-Watsona na slovanské manifestaci)," *Nové Československo,* June 3, 1944, 2.

York's demand for "retribution against the savage brutes who have enacted the regime of atrocity" and suggested that "the best solution is probably the one recently put forward by the Czech government in London, that everyone who has taken any part in the administration of Bohemia-Moravia should be rounded up and arraigned."[417]

The British "support" of Czechoslovakia's alliance with the USSR as a means of protection against the German threat was, of course, counterproductive. When calling for the eradication of the German influence on Czechoslovakia Alan J.P. Taylor had the British rather than Czechoslovak interests in mind. Czechoslovakia very well might tip the scales of the power balance in Central and Eastern Europe, and Britain was rightfully watchful of the development that would make Germans again stronger in the future. Yet, Taylor obscured the fact that if the scales did not tip to the side of one regional hegemon, it would tip to the side of the other. Whether strategic or genuine,[418] the zeal that some British actors publicly expressed regarding the partnership of the USSR and Czechoslovakia, helped to undermine Czechoslovakia's chances to renew the country on a solid democratic basis.

The development on the discursive level matched the diplomatic development. When, in March 1945, the representative of the London exile started to debate about the programme of the post-war government with their Moscow counterparts, Communists formulated the part focused on foreign policy. The future Minister of Information, Communist Václav Kopecký emphasized "the tightest alliance with the victorious Slavic power in the East as the unwavering course of the Czechoslovak foreign policy."[419] In comparison the relations with Britain and the US were supposed to be only "friendly" and "all the playing with the bridge stopped."[420]

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[417] "Retribution," *The Daily Telegraph*, March 15, 1943; Čechoslovák also brough information about the delegation of the Church of England to Moscow - see "Londýnský týden," *Čechoslovák*, September 24, 1943, 5.
[418] In February 1944 *Nové Československo* informed about a Gallup poll according to which 70 % of the British agreed that three to four million Germans should be sent to the East after the war to participate on the reconstruction of the destroyed countries – see "Historky o lidech a věcech," *Nové Československo*, February 26, 1944, 2.
[419] Cited in Marek Kazimierz Kamiński, "Velká Británie a československé pokusy o most mezi Východem a Západem' (1945-1948)." *Svědectví* XXI, no. 82 (1987): 440.
[420] Ibid.

7.2 Into the bright future

As the Soviets were advancing through Czechoslovakia, Edvard Beneš was preparing for his departure. On 14 February, he and his wife dined with the royal couple in the Buckingham palace and, two days later, they were hosted by the representatives of the British government in Savoy hotel.[421] On 21 February, he addressed the country in a farewell speech. The line "I am proud to have been in Britain in the hour of her greatest glory"[422] was cited widely and provoked many responses. Hannen Swaffer wrote about Beneš in so celebratory a manner that it felt as if Beneš became an honorary British. The journalist wrote: "[Beneš] expresses more than his own feelings and those of his countrymen. Thousands of men and women of our race share his pride."[423] Swaffer suggested not only that Czechs were invited to be as proud as the British for what had been accomplished but that the deepest feelings of the British can be expressed and interpreted by a Czech.

Voices full of cordiality and positive sentiments sounded from both sides. They prove that the once wary relationship that practically lacked history (Chapter 1) and was burdened by the Munich "treason" (Chapter 3), had enough time to transform into a fruitful platform that stimulated its participants' subjectivity and creativity (Chapter 5). Josef Schrich who used to compare Manchester to Prague and who so amusingly enlisted what Czechs liked and disliked on Britain wrote in one of his last comments for *Čechoslovák*: "Having said good-bye to our new friends in England, we are living in the doubly sentimental solitude of a sensitive No-Man's-Land."[424] Jiří Mucha also felt confused once it was obvious that the exile years are over. In a poem he reminisced both Paris and London.

> If I were at home
> I would probably get lost in the streets of my hometown
> I would look for a door
> opening the opposite way like in Paris
> and grope

[421] „Před návratem domů," *Čechoslovák*, February 23, 1945, 3.
[422] Cited in Swaffer, „What the exiles think of us," and „President se loučí s Anglií: Rozhlasový projev Farewell to Britain," *Čechoslovák*, February 23, 1945, 3.
[423] Swaffer, „What the exiles think of us."
[424] Josef Schrich, „Země všech," *Čechoslovák*, January 26, 1945, 1.

blind for the handle
damp with the London fog.
I would go astray
because I have built
new homes that resemble each other
like egg to egg
among which even a hen, a good mother
cannot tell the first born.[425]

The exiles from Newcastle on Tyne, who built up the factory for Bren guns in the city, exchanged especially warm goodbyes with their British co-workers. In December 1944, the representatives of the Newcastle exiles were received by Winston Churchill and the King as they manufactured Bren miniatures for them.[426] Metal plates with depictions of Europe served as a base of the gold and silver-plated miniatures. The rifle butts were secured in Czechoslovakia while the stands in Britain. The symbolism was not intricate – it was as plain and straightforward as the present feelings of the exiles. Muriel Watson wrote about her Czechoslovak factory colleagues in similarly uncomplicated way. She considered them "extremely kind and hospitable", she thought "buchty" (sweet buns) were "simply delicious" and considered the habit of spending Sundays actively outside (as Czechoslovaks did) instead of at home (as the British did) much better.[427] According to Watson the war did a lot of good for people in Britain as it opened the world for them through the multitude of contacts with different cultures. She concluded her essay with a cheerful reference to Chamberlain's "far away country" speech. "I feel that [Czechoslovaks] are no longer strangers, and I hope that they will never become strangers again."[428]

The war and the mixing up of tens of thousands of natives, exiles, migrant workers and foreign soldiers broadened horizons of all who lived through this unique experience.[429] Both Czechoslovaks and the British shared hope that the horizons would broaden further in future. Yet already before the end of the war there were signs that this

[425] Jiří Mucha, „Pátý rok," *Čechoslovák*, July 14, 1944, 7.
[426] „Vděčnost a dík Anglii," *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne*, December, yearbook 1944.
[427] Muriel Watson, „Two years with Czechoslovaks," *Zprávy z československé kolonie v Newcastle on Tyne*, yearbook 1943.
[428] Ibid.
[429] See also J. Urzidil, „Američané a Angličané," *Čechoslovák*, December 4, 1942, 4.

hope had significant limits. The treatment of the British-born wives of Czechoslovaks set boundaries the Other was expected not to overstep. In the special English issue of *Čechoslovák,* that was dedicated to these women in September 1944, Hana Benešová chose the Czech proverb "Love Moves Mountains" to communicate the conviction that any cultural differences were surmountable. "May each of you prove its truth in a happy future."[430] Yet the encouragement was not supposed to instigate cultural equality. In March 1945, Anna Vaughan appealed to the British-born wives, who were preparing for moving to Czechoslovakia, not to forget about Britain but to prefer the Czech habits and adjust to the Czech way of life.[431] "Do teach your children English and tell them about England. But don't forget that their loyalty and love belong first and foremost to Czechoslovakia."[432] Similar nationalist backlash was registered in Britain. The enthusiasm regarding foreigners did not outlive the war. A Gallup Poll taken in 1946 revealed that more than half of the interviewees did not agree with government's decision to allow Poles who wanted to stay in the country to do so.[433] Polls indicating the post-war attitudes to the Czechoslovaks unfortunately do not exist, but similar sentiments were no doubt felt towards all the Central Europeans, even if, in 1946, Churchill famously denounced the abandonment of Czechoslovaks behind the Iron Curtain. The war years also served as a remainder of the costs and complexities of European entanglements that later manifested in Britain's hesitant attitude towards the process of European integration.[434]

Hence, the remaining question is how profoundly the exiles were influenced by living in Britain on subconscious level. Hannen Swaffer thought about the topic in relation to all European statesmen who took shelter in Britain.

> Their stay here must have altered almost all of them. They saw democracy working even under the Blitz […] They saw resolute island people who can differ without hatred and be friends indeed even with their opponents. And how impressed they were with a populace who could joke even amid

[430] Hana Benešová, „Love moves mountains," *Čechoslovák*, September, 1944.
[431] Anna Vaughan, „Do's and Don't for British-born wifes of Czechoslovaks," *Čechoslovák*, March, 1945 compare to Anna Vaughan, „Aby přátelství neuvadlo," *Čechoslovák*, December 1, 1944, 6 and Anna Vaughan, „O vás Čechoslovácích," *Čechoslovák*, August 4, 1944, 1.
[432] Ibid.
[433] Webster, *Mixing It: Diversity in World War Two Britain*, Introduction.
[434] Conway, "Legacies of exile: The exile governments in London during the Second World War and the politics of post-war Europe," 259.

> the horror and "grouse" without becoming angry. They have not only studied for five years our system but read British books and newspapers, seen British plays and learned British music. How much all that will in the end anglicise the thoughts on the Continent we can only wonder.[435]

The question of the effect that the British exile of the foreign intellectual elites (and not only them) could have on the post-war development in Europe did not only intrigue Swaffer's contemporaries. He formulated a perfect reason why the early post-war years in the countries, whose elites spent the war in Britain, should be revisited and analysed from the perspective of the "anglicisation." Martin Conway rightly pointed out that in terms of long-term political development the influence of the exile elites was negligible. Europeans' willingness to accept their leadership depended on domestic aspirations that were sometimes in conflict with exiles' visions.[436] Yet, the analysis of the soft influence of exiles' British experience in their home countries still awaits to be done. Czechoslovakia represents especially potent ground for such investigation as it took almost three years until it fully disappeared into the Soviet sphere of influence. The thesis followed the formation of the appelative relation to Britain as the new significant Other in detail. Reconstructing the image of Britain during the war helped to uncover multiple factors that shaped it – the main division run between the lived experience of the exiles and the propaganda of the government-in-exile (both are perfectly extractable from the exile press). Yet, as the post-war perspective will prove, the importance of the Czechoslovak fondness towards Britain does not lie only in the contribution to the understanding of the everyday life of the exiles and their mental milieu. The British link and particularly the Czechoslovak-made reconciliation of the conservative and socially progressive Britain contributed to country's slow retreat from the West.

[435] Swaffer, „What the exiles think of us." Edvard Beneš talked about the influecne already in 1942: „Here we could prepare a new and better future for our nation in the saddest period of its history." See „Budoucí mír," *Čechoslovák*, May 5, 1942, 2.
[436] Conway, "Legacies of exile: The exile governments in London during the Second World War and the politics of post-war Europe," 261.

1945-1948: Socialism is great

Chapter 8: Anglophiles addressing Anglophobes

According to leading historians, the West was generally perceived and depicted as morally degraded during the Third Republic.[437] France seemed tired, hesitant and conceited, England "bloodless" and devoted to outdated values and America a country of disappointed hopes and social coldness.[438] Indeed, Czech intellectuals tended to side with the East regardless of their political affiliation. Yet, as Christiane Brenner rightly noticed, the image consisted of multiple layers that were sometimes contradictory.[439] Also, following only a handful of intellectuals cannot encompass the image of the West and its different components in its entirety. The thesis challenges the established view while shedding light on the afterlife of the exile experience and its highly Anglophilic discourses. While the macro analysis of the debates about Czechoslovakia's place between East and West might suggest otherwise, the more focused analysis of the image of Britain proves that Czechoslovakia was marching into the embrace of the USSR while still fixing its eyes on Britain, at the time the most significant Western Other.

The overall post-war image of Britain in Czechoslovak press was deeply affected by its exile predecessor. Not only did most exiles come back to Czechoslovakia and continued informing about the country from abroad (Pavel Tigrid, Jiří Hronek, Josef Schrich, Ivo Ducháček or František Hník), but the exile discourses were preserved as well. The conciliation of conservatism and social progressivism, produced and gradually stabilized during the war, fit perfectly into the post-war mantra of democratic socialism represented by the National Front. Yet while in many areas, including the discourse on Britain, the exile was able to produce relative unanimity, the situation now dramatically changed and, apart from the alternative interpretations of Communists, the former exiles faced readership that was exposed to Nazi propaganda for six years. During the war the exile regularly criticized German propaganda and appealed to Czechs for critical judgement in the BBC broadcasts.[440] Jiří Hronek considered Nazi propaganda that

[437] Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, 104; Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948,* 236; Hartmannová, "'My' a ‚oni': Hledání české národní identity na stránkách Dneška z roku 1946."
[438] Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948,* 236.
[439] Ibid., compare to Čapek, "K dnešním úkolům národní kultury."
[440] Volker Mohn, *Nacistická kulturní politika v Protektorátu: koncepce, praxe a reakce české strany* (Praha: Prostor, 2018), 201-6.

attacked Britain and, with it, Czechoslovak exile as "a seat of Jewish plutocracy and broken capitalism" boring and unoriginal.[441] Yet, for example, the Munich "treason" of Britain and France was much more alive for those who spent the war in the Protectorate than it was for ordinary exiles whose negative sentiments were soon pushed out by friendliness of the British and their media.[442] Therefore, the adoption of the exile press' Anglophilia by former citizens of Protectorate could not have been automatic at all.

A unique sociological survey conducted by the Institute for Public Opinion Research in 1946 proves how wrong Pavel Tigrid was, when, in September 1945, he proclaimed that neither among common people nor among the intelligentsia there was any "grudge or deeper distrust" towards Britain and its government.[443] The survey *Public opinion about England* examined sentiments that different classes held towards the country.[444] While representatives of working class expressed signs of "radical Anglophobia," respondents from upper middle class were significantly pro-British.

Eleven claims with different degree of associativity were presented to ninety individuals in Prague port in Holešovice (loaders, crane operators, sailors, drivers and other labourers) and in the villa district of Prague IV (professors, lawyers, doctors, editors, writers, senior officers, bigger entrepreneurs and their family members). Each respondent could mark between one and three claims that she mostly agreed with and additionally add her own comment. While 58% of "votes" from the port went for the most critical claims, the equivalent proportion for the villa district was only 10,5%. On the contrary, the three most Anglophilic claims gained 50% of votes in the villa district and mere 21,5% in the port.[445]

Where both groups met was the suggestion that Czechoslovaks should be grateful to Britain for arming the Czechoslovak units abroad and hosting the exile government. Also, labourers and the socially secure people agreed that all allies contributed to the war victory equally. Extremely low number of votes for the claim suggesting that "the English

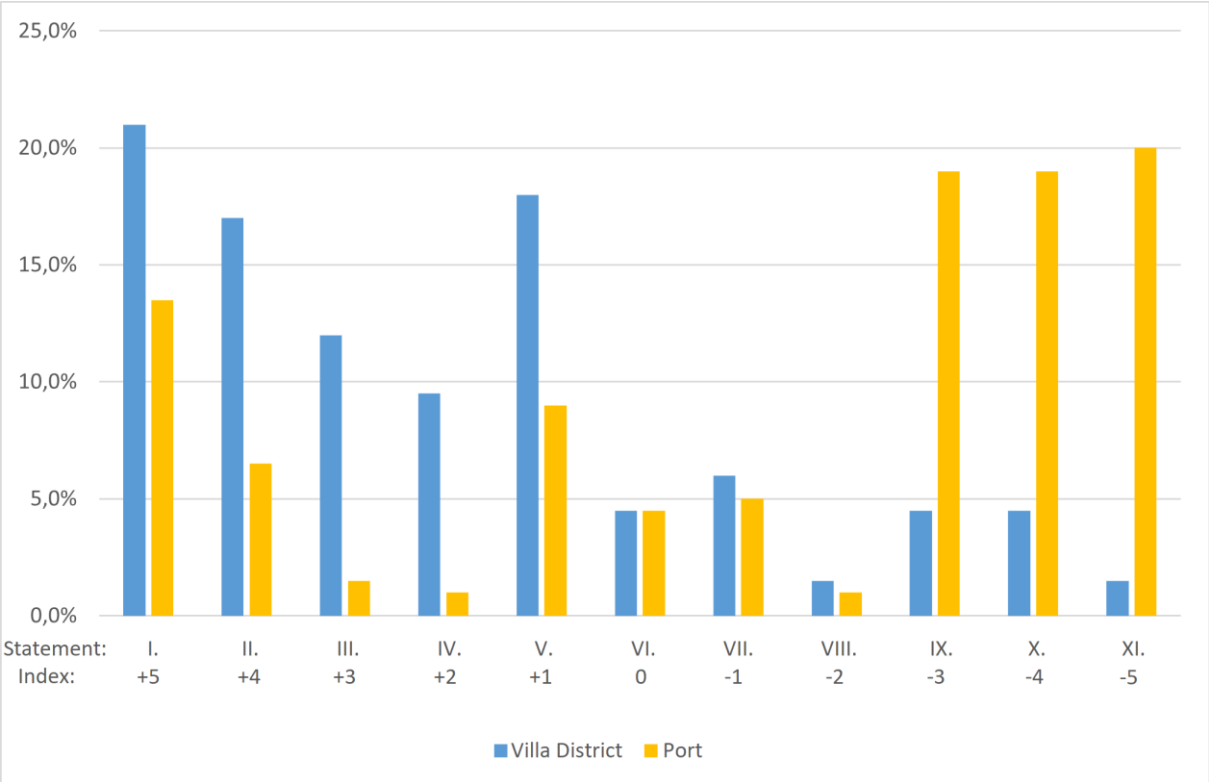
[441] Jiří Hronek, „Londýn očima Prahy," *Čechoslovák*, March 27, 1942, 8.
[442] "Veřejné mínění o Anglii," *Kruh: Týdeník pro poznání soudobé společnosti* 1, no. 14 (April 1946): 7-9.
[443] Pavel Tigrid, „Otevřený list Britům," *Obzory*, September 15, 1945, 59.
[444] The original documentation of the survey was not preserved as it was conducted during preparatory phase of the renewal of the Institute for Public Opinion Research. The conclusions of the survey were published in journal *Kruh: Týdeník pro poznání soudobé společnosti* – see "Veřejné mínění o Anglii."
[445] See the the list of claims and the reproduction of the original graph that were published in *Kruh: Týdeník pro poznání soudobé společnosti* in Appendix no. 1, 2.

are too cold and withdrawn; they cannot get excited about anything" proves that this type of old-fashioned stereotypes no longer spoke to the Czech public.

Appendix no. 1: Claims used in the sociological survey *Veřejné mínění o Anglii* in *Kruh: Týdeník pro poznání soudobé společnosti* (Circle: A Weekly Magazine for Learning about Contemporary Society)

I. We should be grateful to England for arming our foreign army and for hosting our foreign government.
II. When it was worst, the English found their bearings and heroically resisted the danger of Nazism.
III. I like England because it can combine reasonable progress with reasonable conservatism.
IV. "Smile!" is the life principle of the English; I see it as a path to satisfaction and happiness.
V. All Allies contributed to the victory equally, including England.
VI. Although England's rise to power is a matter of the past, I expect that the country will still play an important role.
VII. For an Englishman there is nothing in the world more perfect than his traditions and institutions.
VIII. The English are too cold and withdrawn, they cannot get excited about anything.
IX. An Englishman is a gentleman towards all but his own people.
X. England would rather sacrifice ten Central European nations than one colony. England betrayed us once; when something happens, it will betray us again.

Appendix no. 2: Reproduction of the graph describing the results of Kruh's survey



The survey was also replicated outside of the capital – in South Bohemian Písek, in Pěčín in Orlické hory, and in Tišnov in South Moravian region. The methodology was not as elaborate as in Prague. Respondents were chosen randomly, there were no contrast groups. Yet the results proved similar – both Anglophilic and Anglophobic claims made it into the top three most popular. Quantitative analysis of the results from Tišnov exposed that Anglophobic claims were more often registered with people of working-class background. Apart from the class affiliation as a determining factor of the individual's relation to Britain, that seemed to function around the country, sociologists also noticed frequent contradictions in people's notions about Britain. While most of the workers sympathized with Anglophobic claims, at the same time they expressed gratitude for the country's help to Czechoslovakia during the war and considered its contribution to the defeat of Hitler equal to contributions of other allies. The diversity of the recorded additional comments speaks for itself: "Stay away from England." "England does not exist for me." "[England] is opportunist." "[England] leads an anti-Slavic policy." "It is a centre of capitalism." "It enslaves a quarter of humankind." "It is not good to think about Munich all the time." "I remember it fondly." "I hope that it will deal fairly with socialism." "Englishmen are good businessmen but also sly fellows." "Englishmen are too rich to understand us." "England does not stand for the working people at all." "I like

them, but I would not want to live there." "England belongs one hundred metres under the sea." "It is good and noble country."[446] Regardless of the class background of the comments' authors, it is apparent that in post-war Czechoslovakia Britain was not perceived in the same way by everyone. On the contrary, albeit representing rather "low profile" topic it was, indeed, ambivalent and hence up for grabs (as were the "high profile" topics).[447] The key players on the political scene tried appropriating the British Other and, given the emotions the country apparently brought up, they also tried pursuing their own agendas through it.

Following the image of Britain brings unique opportunity to observe the period through different lens as it is surprisingly mostly freed of purely performative ideological clashes that normally say a lot about the manipulative strategies of different parties but little about periods when societies find themselves at crossroads. The Third Republic's crossroad is often forgotten, replaced by the infamous road heading East that we now know the country took in the end.[448] Accordingly, most historians have focused on the aftermath of the *coup d'état* and the extensive repressions of the regime.[449] Yet, at the time, the Communist Party was generally not expected to take over in what turnout to be just a few months. It acted, or pretended to act, like a standard democratic party. Hence, the important question is why Communists appeared "normal"? In the parliamentary election in May 1946, some 40% of Czechs casted their votes for the party, and less than two years later the country was fully under the Soviet grip. In what climate this all happened?

British Catholic writer Philip L. Daniel who spent three weeks in Czechoslovakia in 1947 noticed that the war loosened political affiliations. He observed the impossibility of guessing them based on people's appearance or occupation. "When I sat in Prague trams every day, which is the only way to travel through the city, I observed passengers reading their newspapers [...] The anatomy professor from my neighbourhood carried *Rudé právo*, his housekeeper *Lidová demokracie* (People's Democracy)."[450] Also only a

[446] Ibid.
[447] Bradley Abrams elaborates on the legacy of Munich Agreement, the First Republic or public holidays: Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism,* 104-55; Matěj Spurný puts emphasis on the Czech (mostly anti-German oriented) nationalism: Matěj Spurný, *Nejsou jako my: Česká společnost a menšiny v pohraničí (1945-1960)* (Praha: Antikomplex, 2011), 14.
[448] Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948,* 235.
[449] Matěj Spurný, *Nejsou jako my: Česká společnost a menšiny v pohraničí (1945-1960),* 13.
[450] Cited in "Pohled anglického katolíka na Československo," *Obzory*, February 8, 1947, 82; *Lidová demokracie* was a daily of People's Party.

minority of people in Third Republic (practically only the exiles) based their opinions about the outer world on their own lived experience. An article from *Svobodné noviny* captured the way common people pondered about their relation to the West and to the East. The author claimed that conversation with strangers usually turned to the topic within ten minutes. "Západník" (proponent of the West) typically used Western culture as an argument why Czechoslovakia should go with the West.

> [Yet] he knows absolutely nothing about the true culture of the West. And he often does not know even a single work of the great Western literature, of art in general, or of philosophy. What he considers to be Western culture are mostly remnants of Germanness and Austrianness [...] the number of mailboxes, the punctuality of timetables, the weight of printed paper, the number of traffic policemen, the cleanliness of public toilets [...] Proponents of the East and West have two sets of glasses, black and rose-coloured, and they alternately put them on.[451]

It might be true that the separation from the former significant Other – the German one - attempted on the discursive level by the exiles, did not have desired effects. Apparently, the Austro-Hungarian cultural influence, that directly shaped people's norms and intuitions for decades, was so strong that mediated contact with Western culture could not rival it. The author also suggested that both proponents of the West and the East were prone to succumb to ideological manipulations. The notion must be remembered when analysing the Third Republic's image of Britain. While, during the war, Czechoslovaks who related to Britain in the exile press always measured their worldview against their everyday life in the country, after the war the overwhelming majority of Czechoslovaks could form their views only through media images. In this way, the image of one of the major Western powers becomes even more important than it was in the exile period. In the past, its generally appelative character was given. Now it became one of the political battlegrounds.

The following three chapters inspect the process of renegotiation of the image of Britain as the significant Other in the run up to the infamous days of February 1948. The division line between the position of Communists and democratic socialists was generally blurred as it was when it comes to many other topics that got into the spotlight at the

[451] "Východníci a Západníci," *Svobodné noviny*, August 13, 1947, 1.

time.[452] Sometimes the communist position deviated mildly, sometimes severely, and, at other times, it was in complete harmony with the democratic socialist discourse. For a long time, the development on the domestic scene, represented mostly by Labour government's socially progressive policies, was approved by both sides. This changed only when the conflict between democratic socialists and Communists culminated in autumn 1947 and they decided to use all the weapons they had. On the contrary, Britain's foreign policy always represented friction area. While direct and indirect bearers of the exile discourse avoided criticizing British imperialism, Communists denounced it openly and consistently. The area where Communists and democratic socialists met regularly concerned the image of Britain as Czechoslovakia's war ally and current equal partner.

Chapter 9: Normal Britain enters the scene

In March 1945, Philip Nichols, who was to become the new Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, formulated the aims of the future British mission as preventing the country from falling under the sway of Moscow, boosting trade relations, and promoting decisive influence of British culture.[453] As visible from the three policy pillars set up by the British side, the Anglo-Czechoslovak relations between 1945-1948 were shaped by two contradictory factors - the shared interest in economic and cultural cooperation, and the pressure exerted by their respective allies that gradually drew them apart. Even though the British were aware of Czechoslovakia's orientation towards the Soviet Union, for a long time they believed it can remain democratic. That translated into a 1945 loan of five million pounds intended for the reconstruction of the country and the agreement about cultural cooperation concluded in 1947. Unfortunately, the promising trade relations were limited by the poor condition of the British economy, which resulted in the conclusion of the Anglo-American Loan Agreement that was conditioned by adoption of a tougher position towards the Soviet Union. The financial problems of Britain culminated in August 1947, when the convertibility of sterling against dollar was suspended, and Czechoslovakia could not count on any further financial assistance. Another strain on the relations stemmed from protracted negotiations regarding the compensation of the assets

[452] Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism.* 104-55; Spurný, *Nejsou jako my: Česká společnost a menšiny v pohraničí (1945-1960)*, 14.
[453] Petr Prokš, *Československo a Západ 1945-1948*, 122.

that British citizens lost after Czechoslovakia nationalized certain industrial companies and financial institutions in November 1945. Significant political blow came in March 1946, after Churchill's speech in Fulton, when the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Masaryk confirmed Czechoslovakia's lasting and consistent alliance with the Soviet Union. Two months later, the Communist Party won parliamentary election. Czechoslovakia's absence at the Paris conference about the Marshall Plan in summer 1947 indicated that the preservation of its democratic institutions is improbable.[454]

The Anglo-Czechoslovak political and diplomatic relations naturally affected all parts of Britain's image in the Third Republic press. Its general nature was positive. Yet the official relations neither represented the thematic core of the image nor determined its various forms. In a way, the image lived its own life and, more than by diplomacy, it was informed by the exile experience of democratic socialists and ideological manipulations and public expectations of Communists.

The following chapter focuses on the image of Britain in relation to Czechoslovakia, retrospective and current. It is divided into three sections. The first part focuses on the early months of the Third Republic when the public was, indeed, hungry for the story of the exiles and Britain as the country that provided Czechoslovaks contact with the free world during the war. The second part looks at the legacy of the exile image in the new democratic socialist discourse. The last part contrasts the findings with the discourse devised by the communist press. The chapter also touches on the cultural image of Britain.

9.1 Exile reminiscences

The exiles started to come back home immediately after the end of the war in May 1945. Both Pavel Tigrid, who was involved in the government-in-exile's BBC broadcasts and afterwards became one of the leading anti-communist exiles 1948, and František Jaromír Kolár, a soldier who was to become communist journalist, described the elation of the people who welcomed them. "They are eager to learn how we, the soldiers of the foreign army, look at events and want to hear how we intend to contribute to the solution of new

[454] Ibid., 120-40 and 217-30; see the summary of the reaction of *The Manchester Guardian* in „První reakce," *Vývoj*, July 16, 1947.

problems," wrote Kolár.[455] While watching the cheering crowds in Plzeň Tigrid "realized that perhaps the work in London was not quite in vain after all, that the desire, determination, and patience of a large part of the nation really grew stronger through those sessions."[456] Another soldier wrote about similar experience for *The Manchester Guardian*.

> They called us the Intellectual Brigade, or the Army of Lords, partly because we were so well-fed and well-turned-out, and partly because we never stopped talking about England. We went home as ambassadors of Britain, just as we came to this country as ambassadors of Czechoslovakia […] Everywhere people asked us about political and cultural life in the English-speaking countries. They had been cut off for so long from everything but German propaganda about pluto-democratic slums and class distinctions; now they had a chance to learn the truth from people they could trust. They are still world citizens and anxious to collaborate with the Western democracies – to understand them and to be understood by them.[457]

The interest in the Western power, from which only the morale-boosting BBC broadcast was coming for almost six years, was indisputable among those who came to meet the Czechoslovak soldiers. People thought that the former exiles could help them orient themselves in the dramatically changed world. They were expected to explain and guide. Even though these intuitions naturally weakened with time, and, as the sociological survey suggested, even at the beginning they were not shared by everyone, they determined the general character of the Third Republic's discourse on the exile and partly also on Britain.

Former exiles happily reacted to the public demand for expertise, interpretation and guidance.[458] Communist Kolár, for example, praised the British for being calm and

[455] František Jaromír Kolár, „Návrat našich ze Západu," *Rudé právo*, May 29, 1945.
[456] Pavel Tigrid, „Volá Londýn," *Vývoj*, February 18, 1948.
[457] „Czechoslovak homecoming: The liberation of opinion," *The Manchester Guardian*, August 7, 1945, 4.
[458] Publishers sensed the demand for Britain themed content as well. André Maurois' *History of England* was translated to Czech and published already in 1945 (Praha: Julius Albert, 1945). It was followed by original publications of two Czech authors. Renowned historian Josef Polišenský published *Anglie a my: Esej o dějinách anglo-českých styků* (England and us: Essay about the history of Anglo-Czech relations) (Praha: Václav Petr, 1947) and journalist Václav Cháb popularizing *Dějiny Anglie od dávnověku do roku*

brave while withstanding the heaviest bombarding. His list of the British qualities clearly combined conservative and progressive notions - there was tradition of democratic discussion, fair play, genuine care of exiles, progressiveness, and British sympathies towards the USSR.[459] *Obzory* were less concrete and emphasized that Czechoslovaks shared with the British "attitude to life, approach to the democratic ideal, pursuit of the highest welfare and freedom for each individual citizen."[460] As apparent from the two early post-war reflections, no big discursive clash was coming. On the contrary, at first most images produced by the democratic socialists and the Communists differed only in the amount of acclaim with which they were willing to shower Britain. Hence when one averages the extremes – the great and the mild enthusiasm - she again gets appelative Othering.

The topic of the war through the British lens remained, indeed, popular for the rest of 1945.[461] Pictures from the war years and from the ongoing reconstruction of the country filled *Obzory*. The weekly looked back almost nostalgically and reprinted pictures of Londoners sleeping in the underground during the Blitz, or the famous picture *St Paul's Survives*.[462] In December, Winston Churchill celebrated seventy first birthday and *Svobodné noviny* honoured it by providing space for personal memories of Vladimír Henzl. He recalled how Czechoslovak soldiers met Churchill while clearing debris after the bombing of Coventry in November 1940.[463] When the Prime Minister stopped to chat briefly with them a "Czech shoemaker from somewhere in Brdy" asked him to drop by at his unit one day. Churchill agreed. Henzl interpreted Churchill's visit of the Czechoslovak Army half a year later as fulfilment of the promise. After obligatory mention of the joint singing of *Rule Britannia* and Churchill's teary eyes, he wished

1947 (History of England from ancient times until 1947) (Praha: Josef Hokr, 1947) which was intended as a "handbook for readers of books and newspapers." Publishers also registered increased interest in Anglo-American literature at the expense of the French one ("Co vyšlo za války v Anglii," *Obzory*, December 29, 1945, 267.)

[459] Kolár, „Návrat našich ze Západu."

[460] „Anglie a Československo," *Obzory*, September 29, 1945, 81.

[461] See „Československí letci v Britanii," *Obzory*, September 1, 1945.

[462] *Obzory*, September 1, 1945, 32.

[463] Vladimír Henzl, „He is a jolly good fellow," *Svobodné noviny*, December 11, 1945, 3; compare to the article in *Vývoj* that was published two years later at the occasion of Churchill's seventy third birthday: „Nesmrtelný bojovník," *Vývoj*, December 10, 1947.

Czechs had a chance to learn and sing him *Jolly good fellow* as all the other well-wishers.[464]

With the New Year the reminiscences on exile became scarcer. The society was trying to shake off the shade of the war and look forward. Those who were interested in the adventures of the exiles could delve into the growing number of high-quality memoirs of Jan Masaryk, Prokop Drtina, Jiří Hronek, Jiří Mucha, Vladimír Štědrý and, in the end, also of President Edvard Beneš.[465] Yet dailies and cultural weeklies were oriented on the current developments. Therefore, Pavel Tigrid's series *Volá Londýn*, which started to appear in *Vývoj* in the last months of 1947, was in a way unique. It provided an insight into the exile experience with all its privileges as well as discomforts and into the backstage of the BBC broadcasting. The last episode came out a mere week before the *coup d'état* and strikes one as, indeed, prophetic. Tigrid described the events of 7 May 1945 when he announced to listeners that the Czechoslovak-manned fighter squadron had taken off from London bases to assist Prague uprising. He recalled it as the most beautiful broadcasting he had done. Yet, immediately after it ended, Tigrid received a phone call from Hubert Ripka who informed him that the pilots had not been allowed to take off. According to the agreement with the Soviets, the airspace above Prague was Soviet operational space and it was not possible to secure a change of this agreement.[466]

The fact that the Czechoslovak pilots flying with the RAF during the war could not take part in the liberation of the Czechoslovak capital certainly played a role in the future political development. The Soviet grip on the country had only tightened since that moment. Yet agreements negotiated behind the scenes naturally had no immediate impact on the mood of the society. How things were was not really connected to how they seemed to be. A closer look on the way the press presented contemporary Britain can shed light

[464] Apart from two translated biographies of Churchill between 1945-1948 O.H. Richter published his own account of Churchill's life in 1946: C. Lewis Broad, *Winston Churchill 1874-1945* (Praha: Sfinx, 1947); Malcolm Thompson, *Winston Churchill: život a doba* (Praha: Ladislav Kuncíř, 1946); O.H. Richter, *Winston S. Churchill* (Praha: Melantrich, 1946).
[465] Jan Masaryk, *Volá Londýn* (Praha: Práce, 1946); Prokop Drtina, *A nyní promluví Pavel Svatý: Londýnské rozhlasové epištoly z let 1940-1945* (Praha: Melantrich, 1947); Jiří Hronek, *Od porážky k vítězství: Český novinář v emigraci* (Praha: Práce, 1947); Jiří Mucha, *Oheň proti ohni* (Praha: Sfinx, 1947); Vladimír Štědrý, *Než přijde naše léto* (Praha: Sfinx, 1946) – see the review of B. Polan, „Anglický skizzář českého vojáka," *Svobodné noviny*, August 9, 1946, 5; Edvard Beneš managed to revise only part of his war memoirs. The part until 1943 was published in February 1948: Edvard Beneš, *Paměti: Od Mnichova k nové válce a k novému vítězství* (Praha: Orbis, 1948).
[466] Pavel Tigrid, „Volá Londýn," *Vývoj*, February 18, 1948.

on this critical discrepancy and explain why more people did not expect the Third Republic's democracy to fail.

9.2 Good old England

Traditional Anglophilia that flourished in the exile, focused on Britain's cultural brilliance and developmental superiority, continued to be popular among democratic socialist journalists. In March 1946, Jan Bělehrádek presented a variation on the favourite topic of "what we have in common" in social democratic *Cíl*.

> The stiff struggle for political existence has bred in us tenacity and sobriety, just as the British were bred to their present form chiefly by struggles with the ocean; but their realism is a sign of successful conquerors, ours is rather a sign of permanent successful defensiveness. [467]

Interestingly, conquerors and formerly "conquered" emerged on the same boat in Bělehrádek's essay. They gained the same qualities while going through mirror experiences – the former had to persist in subjugating Others, the latter had to resist the subjugation. The respective sobriety of Germans, who should theoretically cultivate the same qualities as the British, was obviously omitted. Instead, they emerged as "villains" on the same side as those who resisted the colonizing efforts of the British. The context in which the article was published is, of course, crucial for its understanding. The "organized transfers" of Sudeten Germans were peaking at the time. Until the end of 1946, almost three million Germans were expelled mostly to the American Zone of occupied Germany.[468] While physically almost gone, the "national enemy" was more present in the public discourse than ever before. All parties of the National Front agreed on the principle of collective guilt that determined the future of the German minority. They differed only in explanatory strategies. While national socialists worked with the concept of "fascist national character", Communists explained the Czech-German conflict by Germans' class domination.[469] In other words, Germans were condemned so thoroughly and vigorously that it left mark even on the contemporary image of Britain. Apart from using the anti-

[467] Jan Bělehrádek, „Kulturní styky s Británií."
[468] Eagle Glassheim, „National mythologies and ethnic cleansing: The expulsion of Czechoslovak Germans in 1945."
[469] Brenner, *Mezi Východem a Západem. České politické rozpravy 1945-1948,* 145.

German discourse indirectly, as did Bělehrádek, the press also attempted to gain Britain's moral approval of the expulsion.[470] There was also a number of articles that insinuated that Czechoslovaks and the British were in the same boat when it came to the relations with Germans – objectively hardly sustainable claim. *Obzory* brought a long article that summed up German Anglophobe discourse.[471] *Vývoj* was more playful and joked about the quarter of a million of German prisoners of war who "do not appreciate English 'hospitality'" and "are getting on the nerves even of the calm English".[472] The suggestion, indeed, seems like an understatement. A month later *Vývoj* cited *British Zone Review* that demonstrated "degraded morale of Germans" using the example of twelve-year-old girls who sell themselves for tinned food.[473] The way the Czechoslovak press informed about the severe humanitarian crisis in Germany (it did not), suggests how deep the rift opened by the war events and the hate propaganda was.

Of course, not all material about Britain was burdened by the anti-German bias. The section *Víte že?* (Do you know that?) opened each issue of *Vývoj*. It consisted of short non-political curious news from around the world. Britain was without a doubt on the top of the list of countries the news came from. One could for example read that a mead factory in Cornwall was a curious proof of the common Celtic origin of Czechs and the British[474] or delve into a poetic essay of Karel Brušák, who, three days before 1946 Christmas, went through all features of the festivities in Britain.[475] *Svobodné noviny* were aware of the public's interest in Britain as well. In summer 1946, the former exile Josef Schrich wrote a report from the Wimbledon tournament. Judging based on his knowledge of the English mentality, he considered the Czech tennis player Jaroslav Drobný "their cup of tea" as the sportsman "strolls the green with a graceful composure and self-effacing poise, firing his serves and tossing his deadly drives with the stroke of a racket without pathos or bravado."[476] Schrich's decision not to translate the phrase "cup of tea" and the words "serves" and "drives" to Czech is a peculiar remnant of the exile stylistic habit. At another time the daily tried to ease the gravity of the murder of the 12-year-old British

[470] Ivo Šašek, „Londýn-Paříž-Vídeň," *Svobodné noviny*, September 27, 1945, 1-2; „Proč je odsun Němců nezbytný? Britský zahraniční ministr Bevin o německém útisku," *Svobodné noviny*, November 4, 1945, 1.
[471] „Hlas Německa o Anglii," *Obzory*, February 8, 1947, 84.
[472] „Víte že," *Vývoj*, October 12, 1946, compare to František Kafka, „Jak jsem viděl Německo," *Dnešek*, May 30, 1946.
[473] „Trochu víc humoru," *Vývoj*, November 30, 1946.
[474] „Víte že," *Vývoj*, November 5, 1947.
[475] Karel Brušák, „Vánoční čtení," *Vývoj*, December 21, 1946.
[476] Josef Schrich, „Veselé paničky a temný oř wimbledonský," *Svobodné noviny*, July 10, 1946, 3.

schoolgirl Muriel Drinkwater by referring to the fame of the British crime short stories and novels. "The course of the investigation could be the subject of intricate detective stories, as neither an experienced tracking dog nor a mysterious letter to the investigating constable are missing."[477]

Unfortunately, the light-hearted articles that apart from admiring Britain also tended to copy British humour[478] occurred next to those that suggested Czechoslovak insufficiency. Unlike the Anglophilic texts written in the exile, those comparing national qualities now often felt patronizing. If Britain ever had the potential to function as a widely accepted role model in the Third Republic, those well-meant yet imprudent comments seriously undermined it. Pavel Tigrid lamented about concrete things:

> British papers, even the less serious ones, have news service that is disproportionately truer, more factual and more accurate than our post-war press. Compared to the dullness of our newspapers, the variety, interest and originality of the graphic design of the British press is an oasis for the continental reader.[479]

But democratic socialist authors more often admired the British for abstract notions such as discipline ("even a bad law is a law to an Englishman"),[480] morality,[481] honesty ("not only proclaimed and praised"), respect for the freedom and another's opinion, and simple human decency.[482]

František Loubal juggled with the notions of moral integrity and character in *Dnešek*.

> We pay little attention to moral education. Then we are surprised that, as adults, we cannot debate properly and that no polemic can be done without personal attacks, or even scandalizing. Moral education can be illustrated by several examples of a nation of high character [...] In England, they consider cheating in school to be immoral. When an English student does not know the answer, he admits it to the teacher […] Our situation, for

[477] „Záhadné vraždy v Anglii," *Svobodné noviny*, July 16, 1946, 3.
[478] See also „Londýnský týden," *Vývoj*, November 9, 1946.
[479] Pavel Tigrid, „Jak se mi zlíbí," *Obzory*, April 26, 1947, 225-6.
[480] František Kafka, „Jak jsem viděl Anglii."
[481] F. Humler, „Bílá kronika," *Dnešek*, January 1948, 29.
[482] Pavel Tigrid, „Jak se mi zlíbí," *Obzory*, June 8, 1946, 360; compare to „Lekce našim demokratům," *Obzory*, December 6, 1947, 332.

> example under the Austrian rule and during the occupation, pushed us directly towards hypocrisy, lying, and similar phenomena. […] How to fix it? Moral education in school at all levels. […] Then, as adults, we will spark with fight, but an honest fight, substantive and impersonal. Then it will be a joy to read polemics, to listen to the speeches of politicians, because they will be direct and honest, and they will honour the individual.[483]

The article is misleading on two levels. First, assuming that the British live according to the principles that are ascribed to them is, at best, naïve. Second, if measured in a sociological study, Czechs would most probably prove to be less open and more sceptical of authorities. It is also not hard to imagine that cultural anthropologists would ascribe this to Czechs' mistrust to Austrian and later German rulers. Yet unsubstantiated and put next to highly idealized claims about Britain, such notions can only lead to suppression of the idea of equality amongst nations severely violated by the years of the Nazi ideology.

Despite building on the successful exile model, the image of Britain in relation to Czechoslovakia produced mostly by former exiles differed from its predecessor. The lived experience that used to lighten the admiring gaze disappeared and the image became more unified and less critical. The critique of Czechoslovakia's social and political environment might logically affect its general appeal (no matter if the critique was justified or not). Also, the former exiles did not have a monopoly on the image anymore. There was an alternative – not as shiny and forceful, but perhaps more sustainable and more reflective of the socially radicalizing mood in the society.[484]

9.3 Chronicle of encounters

Communist press worked with the British Other differently. The contrast is well visible on the example of the image of Winston Churchill. For democratic socialists, the former

[483] František Loubal, „Vychováváme charakter?" *Dnešek*, February 12, 1948.
[484] Bradley Abrams describes the effects of World War II that led to the realization of the radical social reforms in Central and Eastern Europe – see *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, 12-38.

Prime Minister was simply the "old bulldog as we like him."[485] Communists understood that Churchill was a widely admired Second World War hero who people easily recognized and liked to hear about. They regularly criticized him as a warmonger and imperialist (Chapter 11).[486] Yet, at the same time they depicted him as an ordinary person (while, for example, bending to a white kangaroo in London Zoo)[487] – and, in this way, still enabled Britain to be all you wanted – conservative and socialist all at once.

"Communist" Britain was a normal country with virtues and flaws and Czechoslovakia was expected to pursue "friendly" relations, as it had been emphasized since negotiations in Moscow in March 1945.[488] For almost three years it seemed that no drama was happening and no curtain falling. The communist press did not publish many texts that would elaborate on non-political topics concerning Britain. A few longer reportages emerged in *Svět v obrazech*, yet they were still an exception.[489] What the communist press focused on instead was a brief yet systematic informing about encounters between the citizens of the two countries. Hence, the communist image of Britain as an ordinary friend had two functions. It helped explain the way Communists were perceived by the public (as a standard party opened to the Western world) and it also served as a chronicle of the early post-war Anglo-Czechoslovak encounters. The subchapter works primarily with articles from the Communist press as it reconstructs the Communist discourse, yet to document the variety of the encounters some democratic socialist sources are used as well. Their function is exclusively informative.

The abundance of news, indeed, suggests that the war activated a potential of close relationship. In September 1946, London correspondent of *Rudé právo* Věra Colesová reported from the local Czechoslovak-British Friendship Club that

> Housewives, older and young, who have never travelled and were not interested in foreign countries and politics, are impatiently preparing for a

[485] „Londýnský týden," *Vývoj*, November 9, 1946
[486] See for example E. Tarlez, „Poučení z války," *Rudé právo*, September 1, 1946, 1.
[487] *Svět v obrazech*, September 20, 1947; compare to the coverage of the 1946 VE Day in *Svět v obrazech*, June 23, 1946.
[488] „Ministerský předseda Fierlinger o své cestě do Anglie," *Rudé právo*, September 12, 1945, 2.
[489] Rachlík, „Panoptikum – Muzeum madame Tussaud v Londýně," *Svět v obrazech*, February 24, 1946; Jindřich Marco, „Anglické lodi," *Svět v obrazech*, November 17, 1946; Jindřich Marco, „Petticoat Lane – londýnský bleší trh," *Svět v obrazech*, February 1, 1947; Jan Jeha, „Scotland Yard zasahuje," *Svět v obrazech*, December 6, 1947.

> trip to Czechoslovakia to finally get to know our country, about which they have already heard so much.[490]

Professional and artistic groups regularly travelled to pay a visit to the partner country. Already in July 1945, a delegation of fifty Czechoslovak professors and teachers went to exchange experience with their British colleagues.[491] In 1947, police inspectors spent a few weeks doing internship in Scotland Yard. *Rudé právo* published a lively account of the stay written by one of the interns: "The detectives from Scotland Yard are somewhat like the heroes of an Edgar Wallace novel. They are jovial lads who wear waistcoats with the last button undone and have their favourite pub, the Black Lion."[492] In the same year, industrial workers participated in an exchange trip as well. Steelworkers from Třinec, Vítkovice, Kladno and Podbrezová went to study production and living conditions in English steelworks.[493] In January 1948, the negotiations between the British Ministry of Health and its Czechoslovak counterpart were still going on about sending some eighty Czechoslovak doctors to improve their skills in Britain. At the time, the cooperation in the prevention of cancer diseases and tuberculosis were firmly established.[494] When it comes to the British professionals visiting Czechoslovakia, press focused on trade unionists who came repeatedly to learn about nationalising processes.[495] It also informed about the visit of the leader of the Communist Party of Great Britain Harry Pollitt, who came in April 1946 to participate in the Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party,[496] and about the visit of A.J.P. Taylor, who spoke at the YMCA conference in Brandýs nad Orlicí in the same year.[497] Surprisingly, some eight hundred British-born wives of Czechoslovaks, who moved to Czechoslovakia after the war, were rather neglected by the press.[498]

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[490] Věra Colesová, „V Anglii se mluví o Československu," *Rudé právo*, September 11, 1946; compare to the impressions that the visit of Britain made on the Communist member of parliament Anežka Hodinová: „Angličané o Československu – Cizina nás obdivuje, naše reakce pomlouvá," *Rudé právo*, May 16, 1947, 2.
[491] „Československá učitelská delegace do Velké Británie," *Rudé právo*, July 25, 1945, 3.
[492] „Z Prahy a Bratislavy do Scotland Yardu," *Rudé právo*, May 31, 1947, 1.
[493] „Mladí hutníci odjeli na zkušenou do Anglie," *Rudé právo*, October 4, 1947,3.
[494] „Ministr zdravotnictví dr. Adolf Procházka: Styky s Anglií jsou dobré," *Vývoj*, January 21, 1948.
[495] František Kafka, „Jak jsem viděl Anglii," *Dnešek*, January 16, 1947; „Britští odboráři v Československo," *Rudé právo*, September 2, 1947, 2.
[496] Harry Pollitt, „Uznání a obdiv Československu," *Rudé právo*, April 11, 1946, 3.
[497] „Akademická YMCA konferovala," *Rudé právo*, July 16, 1946.
[498] Eugen Erdély, „Angličanky se připravují k nám," *Svobodné noviny*, June 29, 1945, 1-2; „Britské ženy v Československu," *Vývoj*, December 21, 1946; Pollak, „Co s britsko-českými manželkami," *Dnešek*, September 26, 1946; For more information about the conditions they lived in see Kathleen Geaney's

Professional and amateur artists had a chance to visit Britain during the Third Republic as well. In 1947, the press informed about three ensembles who travelled across the English Channel. Members of the Disman Radio Children's Ensemble spent two months with British families.[499] Lidice brass band was reassembled and was hosted by the Union of nationalized mines in summer[500] and the ensemble of Moravian teachers went to take part in the Eisteddfod international musical festival once visited Juraj Slávik.[501] British Sandler's Wells ballet ensemble travelled in the opposite direction and performed in Prague for a week in September.[502]

The indirect Anglo-Czechoslovak cultural contacts were backed by the British Council and the British Institute which opened a bureau in Brno in 1946, in addition to the already existing offices in Prague and Bratislava. Hence, people in the three biggest cities could easily get into direct contact with British culture and, sometimes, also with its important protagonists.[503] The English poet John Lehman, who revisited the country after seven years, encountered similar pro-British zeal as Pavel Tigrid and František Jaromír Kolár after their arrival home. The rooms in Brno and Bratislava were not big enough to fit everyone who came to listen to his lecture at the beginning of 1946. This was a great surprise for Lehman as, at first, he judged the situation in the country based on the omnipresent pictures of Stalin and Beneš in shop windows.[504] It seemed that behind the visuals declaring eternal brotherhood with the Soviet Union, there was still a bubbling thirst for the West. Communists were apparently aware of it, as just a month before the *coup d'état* the Minister of Industry for Social Democratic Party Ludmila Jankovcová, who immediately after February joined the Communist parliamentary club, opened a new exhibition focused on the post-war reconstruction of Britain in the British Institute and praised it wholeheartedly.[505]

The last topic that stands out from the cultural image of Britain is film. All periodicals wrote extensively about the British film festival in Czechoslovakia in 1946

study „Špatná strana hranice? Anglicky mluvící levicová komunita v Československu na počátku studené války" *Střed* 5, no. 1 (May 2013): 40-63.
[499] „Kulturní život Londýna," *Svět v obrazech*, February 1, 1947;
[500] „Hornická kapela do Anglie," *Rudé právo*, May 13, 1947, 3.
[501] „Pěvecké sdružení moravských učitelů do Anglie," *Rudé právo*, January 30, 1947, 7.
[502] „Anglický balet v Praze," *Obzory*, July 30, 1947, 425.
[503] Jan Bělehrádek, „Kulturní styky s Británií," *Cíl*, March 8, 1946; „Britský ústav v Brně," *Svobodné noviny*, September 5, 1946, 6; „Britské umění v Brně," *Obzory*, February 2, 1946, 78.
[504] Cited in „Návrat do Československa," *Obzory*, February 16, 1946, 98-9.
[505] „Poválečné úsilí Velké Británie," *Svobodné noviny*, January 31, 1948, 2.

and the Czechoslovak film festival in Britain in 1947.[506] Yet the communist-controlled pictorial magazine *Svět v obrazech* functioned as the chief chronicler of the events. To mark the British film festival, Vivian Leigh as Cleopatra in 1945's *Caesar and Cleopatra* was peeping from its front page in September 1946. Eight more pictures from new British films waited for the reader inside alongside a thematic article. The magazine also paid special attention to the film *The Captive Heart* in which famous British actor Michael Redgrave portrayed Czech officer Karel Hašek.[507] The communist titles also rejoiced in the release of one of the most awaited films of the time – 1946's *Great Expectations*. *Rudé právo* published a complimentary review, *Svět v obrazech* again dedicated it the pictorial front page and added a review by Josef Schneider inside:

> *Great Expectations* are the work of deep feeling and deep thought. In some stages, they resemble the Soviet trilogy about Maxim Gorky's childhood and youth. After all, even here we follow the mental and physical growth of a little poor boy, for whom the world has much more scorn than love [...] We can feel the atmosphere of the harshness of the hypocritical pseudo-morality of Victorian England [and] limited small-town snobs [...] *Great Expectations* is a precise work of art, after watching which one feels somehow beautiful and pure. In addition, it teaches kindness of heart and love for people and life, a lesson that is always needed.[508]

The praise for the British film industry proves that Communists did not seem to be in any way biased against Britain. On the contrary, they even expressed fondness towards the features of British life and culture that were not directly linked to social progressiveness. Compared to the democratic socialist discourse it was not in any way exclusive. Neither Germans nor Czechoslovaks were measured against the British. It focused on the uncontroversial realm of the individual Anglo-Czechoslovak encounters and occasionally reviewed a film. No one could be offended. Indeed, the strategy pursued by Communists would today be easily described as one from the repertoire of catch-all parties.

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[506] Jaroslav Brož, „Československý znárodněný film před britskou veřejností," *Cíl*, May 30, 1947, 314; „Československý znárodněný film si získal Londýn," *Rudé právo*, May 6, 1947; „Londýnská bilance," *Vývoj*, May 14, 1947.
[507] „Festival britského filmu," *Svět v obrazech*, September 29, 1946; *Vývoj* brought a long article about actor's personal life in September 1947: „Víte, že," *Vývoj*, September 17, 1947.
[508] Josef Schneider, „Film Velké naděje," *Svět v obrazech*, November 22, 1947.

Chapter 10: Socialism everywhere you look

Compared to the continent, and particularly Eastern Europe, Britain did not go through enormous material suffering during the war.[509] Yet when it comes to the ups and downs of the respective societies' morale, the dynamics seemed to be opposite. The British government kept on boosting the nation's spirit as well as the war production until the very end of the war. On the contrary, ordinary inhabitants of the Protectorate spent the war in relative apathy. The general goal was not to draw the attention of the occupier. Hence, they were able to save much more mental energy for when the war was over. After the liberation, they found themselves caught in the explosion of activity and idealism which Keith Lowe considers a natural reaction to the renewal of rights and freedoms that accompanied Nazis' downfall.[510]

The opposite emotions hit Britain. When the euphory of the VE Day was gone, the levels of peoples' adrenaline suddenly dropped. The economy was virtually bankrupt and, apart from having to rebuild its own damaged infrastructure, Britain, as one of the victorious powers, had to police the rest of Europe as well as its collapsing Empire. Aware of the tasks lying ahead the spirits of the British were, indeed, low. Novelist and commentator J.B. Priestley later wrote that the nation found itself in "emotional and spiritual void."[511] After Labour Party won the parliamentary election in July 1945, "many people did not stop hoping for miracles and were indignant when they did not come."[512] Britain's economic problems kept fuelling the mood of gloom. To help alleviate famine in Asia and Germany, bread rationing was introduced in summer 1946 – a shocking event for the country that avoided the measure during both world wars. Rationing of meat lasted until nine years after the war.[513] The morale got probably to the lowest point during the coldest winter in memory when, in 1947, the supply of coal collapsed.[514]

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[509] Keith Lowe, *Savage continent: Europe in the aftermath of World War II*, Famine, Moral destruction.
[510] Ibid., Hope.
[511] Cited in „Nálada anglického lidu," *Svobodné noviny*, October 3, 1946, 1.
[512] Ibid.
[513] Peter Hennessy, *Never Again: Britain 1945-1951* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), Ice, dollars and new looks, Kindle; Karel Bála, „Příděl chleba v Anglii a volby," *Cíl*, August 9, 1946, 494.
[514] See the Czechoslovak account in Svobodné noviny: „Situace v Británii stále kritická," *Svobodné noviny,* February 14, 1947, 1; „Také britský rozhlas postižen," *Svobodné noviny*, February 16, 1947, 2; Evžen Erdély, „Nepohodlí naší zimy," *Svobodné noviny*, February 18, 1947, 1; „Uhlí a politika v Británii," *Svobodné noviny*, February 19, 1947, 3.

Czechoslovak press paid close attention to what was happening in Britain. Unlike in the case of the "relational" image described in the previous chapter, the democratic socialist and the communist discourses were in this sphere hardly distinguishable. Both sides praised the Labour victory in July 1945 and the subsequent welfare reform and extensive nationalisation of industries. Democratic socialists continued in deepening of the discourse that reconciled conservatism and social progressivism. The European hub of traditionalism was socializing. On the contrary, the Communist press sticked to its "catch-all party" strategy and, for example, joined its democratic socialist counterpart in keeping an eye on the British royal family. As Czechoslovaks seemed to demand the coverage, Communist provided it. The chapter examines two topics – the unanimous support of the Labour government, that lasted almost until the end of the Third Republic, and the image of the royal family as an example of a "socialized" conservative topic.

10.1 Love affair with Labour

Britain was the first European country that organized parliamentary election after the end of the war in Europe. Labour Party beat seemingly invincible Churchill by almost 10% with a program that included establishment of welfare state and nationalisation of coal, gas, steel, electricity, railways, road transport and the Bank of England. All policies were realized and, together with the support for strong trade unions, high regulation and taxes, became known as the post-war consensus all successive governments respected until late 1970's.

Democratic socialist *Svobodné noviny* nodded approvingly to the result of the 1945 election. The editor-in-chief, former exile Jan Stránský tried to explain how the celebrated saviour of the country could lose. This must have seemed like a weird twist to those who could not follow the British politics during the war.

> Although Churchill is and always will be one of the saviours of human liberties, we must not close our eyes to the fact that he is an implacable opponent of socialism even in its mildest forms [...] To depict the Labour Party, which has repeatedly refused any cooperation with the Communists, as the beginning of the Bolshevization of England is outrageous just as it

> is absurd to say that the war was won by the Conservative party almost against the will of Labour.[515]

To Stránský, Churchill represented old Toryism which was dying out in Britain as everywhere else in the world. In the end, he emphasized that Czechoslovaks traditionally had great relations with Labour and, expressed hope that the party would not "judge us harshly" as he thought they were ideologically so close.[516] Hence, Britain was once again perceived as superior – someone Czechoslovaks should court or, at least, make sure they maintain its favour. *Obzory* repeated the same notion when calling for Labour to lead a "democratic revolution" in Europe.[517] It seemed that the famous remark "Left understands Left" of Ernest Bevin, the new Foreign Secretary, was noted on the continent.[518]

Communist press welcomed Labour Party's victory as a proof of a wind of change in Europe. Its appropriation of the event was more convincing than that of their opponents, as, unlike democratic socialists, Communists did not participate in the government in the interwar period and, therefore, could criticize Conservatives as embodiment of pernicious capitalism without being blamed of hypocrisy.[519] Their argument was simple: Look at the good old England - even they turned socialist, so what stands in our way? Gustav Bareš argued that even the country of traditional liberal capitalism was wise enough to choose a new path.[520] Another article stated that "it is clear that some scaremongering by socialism or communism no longer applies even in England."[521] The way Communists treated Britain and the Labour Party was no different than the way they treated other foreign entities (apart from the glorified Soviet Union). Their stance was internationalist – the progressive British were equal to them; they were heading towards the same goal. Between 1946-1947, *Svět v obrazech* brought four extensive profiles of Labour politicians (Prime Minister Clement Attlee, Minister of Health Aneurin Bevan, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin and trade unionist Arthur Deakin) and a profile of Communist trade unionist

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[515] Jan Stránský, „Labour Party u vesla," *Svobodné noviny*, July 29, 1945, 1.
[516] Ibid.
[517] „Anglie a Evropa," *Obzory*, September 1, 1945, 18.
[518] Peter Weiler, „British Labour and the cold war: The foreign policy of the Labour governments , 1945-1951," *The Journal of British Studies* 26, no. 1 (January 1987): 54.
[519] See Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, 22-9.
[520] Gustav Bareš, „Anglické volby a Československo," *Rudé právo*, July 29, 1945; „Výsledky anglických voleb – Drtivé vítězství Dělnické strany," *Rudé právo*, July 27, 1945, 1; compare to Galuška, „Socialismus kráčí do Anglie," *Tvorba* XV, July 1945.
[521] „Vláda Labour Party v Anglii," *Rudé právo,* July 28, 1945, 1.

Arthur Horner.[522] None of them bore signs of propaganda. They were highly informative and focused not only on the individuals' engagement in current policies but also elaborated on topics, such as Bevin's anti-Soviet stances, where the British leftists and Czechoslovak Communists diverged.

The scarcity affecting the daily life of the British for many post-war years was noticed and commented by both Czechoslovaks who visited the country and those who lived and worked there as correspondents. The first female professor at Charles University, Byzantologist Milada Paulová participated in a trip organized by the British Council. Prague was a "small paradise" compared to the reality she observed in England.[523] Contributor to *Rudé právo* Kamil Winter visited London in 1947. "I ate in restaurants and paid 50 Czech crowns for lunch. It would cost half as much in Prague. I saw beautiful fruit in the shop windows, but I did not know many people who could afford to buy it."[524] The grim situation was also documented by national socialist journalist Arno Bělohlávek.

> The English are not really doing well in the hotel business. It is not unusual for a hotel room to still not have running water (mostly as a result of war events), for the light to be off, or for it to rain into the room. Some London restaurants still have a starry sky instead of a ceiling. However, it is only romantic in exceptionally nice weather. And that does not happen often in London.[525]

The treatment of Britain that struggled with profound shortages was simply compassionate. The suggestions of Conservatives that the Labour Party was to be blamed for the situation did not resonate in Czechoslovakia at all. On the contrary, London correspondent Taussig called Conservatives "demagogues" and lamented over the narrow horizons of people who believed their manipulations.[526]

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[522] „Ernest Bevin," *Svět v obrazech*, September 29, 1946; „Aneurin Bevan," *Svět v obrazech*, October 27, 1946; „Kdo je Arthur Horner," *Svět v obrazech*, January 5, 1947; „Kdo je Clement Richard Attlee," *Svět v obrazech*, June 7, 1947; „Kdo je Arthur Deakin," *Svět v obrazech*, June 21, 1947.
[523] Milada Paulová, „The British Council," *Svobodné noviny*, October 10, 1946, 1-2.
[524] „Desetitisíce kilometrů za zprávami pro naše čtenáře: Evropa roku 1947," *Rudé právo*, January 1, 1948, 4.
[525] Arno Bělohlávek, „Chudák stará teta Anglie," *Svět v obrazech*, August 16, 1947.
[526] H.C. Taussig, „Týden v Londýně," *Obzory*, April 6, 1946, 221.

The clash over the assessment of the Labour government emerged only three months before the *coup d'état*. Once balanced and to a large extent analytical image of Britain suddenly became distorted by ideology and propaganda. After suffering minor losses in local election Labour Party became the bad one for both communist and democratic socialist press. Both groups projected the sharpening conflict on the domestic scene into British politics.[527] Kamil Winter wrote that

> By its treacherous policy, the right wing of the Labour discredited socialism in the eyes of British citizens and disappointed the trust placed in it by the vast majority of the British people in 1945 […] The Labour government did not implement socialism. Therefore, even its defeat in Sunday election cannot mean the defeat of socialism."[528]

What stood behind the empty phrases targeting Labour's non-socialism was criticism of the Anglo-American loan of 1946.[529] Even though the government was implementing all socially progressive policies promised before the election, Communists did not need to pretend that they look for a broadly defined international alliance.[530]

Democratic socialists did the complete opposite in the still tenser atmosphere. Realizing that they had to pull hard to the right if they want to save democracy in Czechoslovakia, they suddenly reversed their previously unconditional support of the Labour Party. Conservatives, Churchill and old stereotypes were rehabilitated. *Obzory* proclaimed that the "the genius of the British nation is paralyzed by the restrictions imposed by a wrong political philosophy," and put Labour Party into the same bag with communism – the idea they opposed so vigorously in July 1945.[531] Anticipating manipulations by Communists in next year's parliamentary election, they instrumentalized success of the British right even though it was, indeed, insignificant. "The victory of the British Conservatives represents a phenomena that shows that wherever elections are truly free, communism is on the decline."[532] The idealization of

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[527] M. R. Myant, *Socialism and democracy in Czechoslovakia (1945-1948)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 161.
[528] Kamil Winter, „Výstraha britským socialistům," *Rudé právo*, November 5, 1947, 2.
[529] See Philip Gannon, „The special relationship and the 1945 Anglo-American loan," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 12 (2014): 1-17.
[530] See Kamil Winter, „Taktika podvodu," *Rudé právo*, February 12, 1948, 2.
[531] „Churchill o hospodářském stavu Anglie," *Obzory*, November 15, 1947.
[532] „Vítězství britských konzervativců," *Obzory*, November 15, 1947.

Britain was back in full scale together with morale as democratic socialists' favourite theme a mere four days before the coup.

> Today, England goes through the entire ideological trouble with a mild flu of its socialism, represented by the Labour government, which, however, does not even remotely dare thinking that it could touch a single old English freedom for the beautiful eyes of its socialist program […] The English cannot get enthusiastic about ideology, they look at it with distrust. Others will learn from the English how to do politics for a long time to come. It is not just about technical virtuosity; it is about several very important qualities of a moral nature that are the property of both the controlled and those who temporarily rule."[533]

The paths of Czechoslovakia and Britain finally split in February 1948 and, obviously, democratic socialists were honestly devasted by the fact. It is highly probable that their post-war support of the British left was much more sincere that the one expressed by Communists. Yet, obviously, this was irrelevant in the end. Communists played the discursive game better. The twist in the image, that revealed Communists' indifference towards the cooperation with the West and democratic socialists' emphasis on the "democratic" in "democratic socialism," came too late to be able to reverse the former consensus. The unified image of Labour as friendly Other that walks in the same direction as Czechoslovakia was taking roots for long two and half years.

10.2 All the nice girls love a sailor

The post-war image of Britain had two major effects – it blurred the differences between democratic socialists and communists and reinforced the illusion of the Communist Party's harmlessness. This was achieved while democratic socialist press was picking up on an array of topics to demonstrate that conservative Britain was socializing,[534] and

[533] Luděk Forman, „Ústavu či panústavu?," *Obzory*, February 21, 1948, 102-3.
[534] See „Nová opera v Anglii," *Obzory*, September 7, 1946, 574; „Anglické univerzity po poslední válce," *Obzory*, February 14, 1948, 95-6; Ivo Šašek, „Londýn-Paříž-Vídeň,"; „Móda – Den Angličanek," *Vývoj*, April 23, 1947.

communist press was in convivial harmony with its opponents accommodating people's interest in a topic that could not be more alien to socialist ideology - the British royalty.

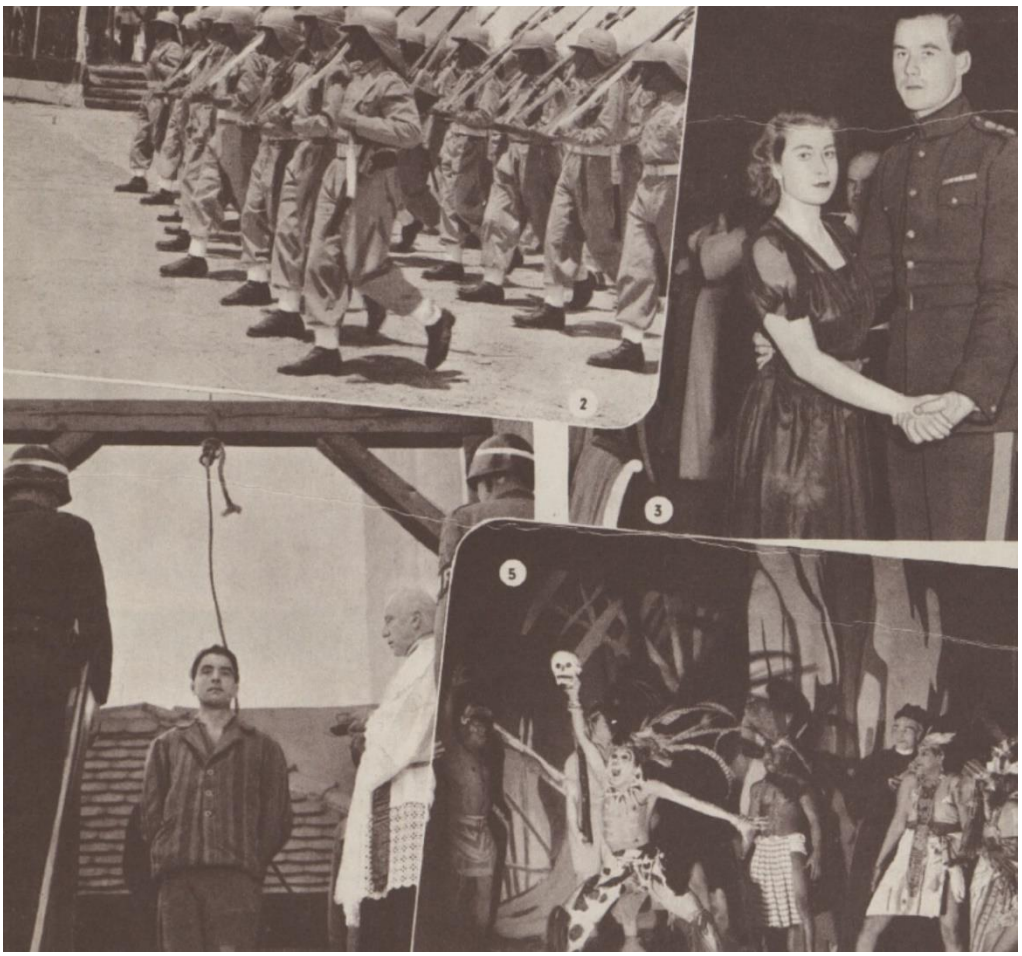
In Britain, royalty became one of the major distractions from the post-war austerity.[535] Given the demand of Britain-related topics, it seems only natural that Czechoslovak press noticed the phenomenon and started taking the material over. Its attractiveness now doubled as the prime ambassadors of the British monarchy became two young women. While during the war all eyes were fixed on the King and the Queen, who famously stayed in the Buckingham Palace during the Blitz and paid regular visits to neighbourhoods that suffered major damage, the attention now moved to their daughters – nineteen-years-old successor to the throne Princess Elizabeth and fifteen-year-old Princess Margaret.

It is interesting that the way Czechoslovak periodicals informed about their life and public engagements was not neutral. The press focused on the features that complied with the overall image of Britain as socializing and rapidly modernizing country. Before the press became absorbed in the plans of Elizabeth's wedding in late 1947, one can primarily encounter articles that try to adjust the monarchy to the new world order. The article *Třídní rozdíly a móda* (Class differences and fashion) in social democratic *Cíl* serves as a great example.[536] The essay about the changing function of clothes in history was complemented by a photograph of London female workers in head scarfs and a photograph of the Princesses wearing the same headwear. The comment below the pictures suggested that the royals willingly adjusted to the new popular fashion. The Princesses were in this way symbolically equalized; the material suggested that functionality now determined clothing not only of the poor but also of the noble. The collage *Ze světa* (From the world) published in *Obzory* is also telling.[537] A picture of Princess Elizabeth captured while dancing with a naval cadet at a ball was placed next to a picture of a Nazi, who was just to be hanged for torturing prisoners in Dachau to death. The editor apparently did not find it inappropriate to combine her picture with a picture of a war criminal. The collage illustrates the general brutalization of the society which is,

[535] Hennessy, *Never Again: Britain 1945-1951* (London: Penguin Books, 2006)
[536] „Třídní rozdíly a móda," *Cíl*, January 18, 1946, 24-6.
[537] „Ze světa," *Obzory*, June 29, 1946, 401.

in this case, expressed by desacralization of individuals once considered divine and sacred.[538]

Appendix no. 3: Collage *Ze světa* published in *Obzory* (June 29, 1946)



In less controversial coverage, Princess Elizabeth appeared simply as "twentieth century Princess."[539]

> Like a common girl, she gained driving license and training in a unit of girls of her age and under the same conditions that applied to everyone else […] There the Princess became thoroughly familiar with the life of her

[538] For the topic consult Jean Hani, *Sacred royalty: From the Pharaoh to the most Christian king* (London: The Matheson Trust: 2011).
[539] „Královna zítřka," *Vývoj*, April 9, 1947.

> father's common subjects [...] The Royal Family had just as much fabric ration tickets as any other family in England, so Princess Elizabeth's wardrobe is certainly the smallest that any princess ever had […] She talks without the slightest embarrassment to high-ranking foreign dignitaries as well as with a worker from an armoury […] She is always well informed about everything and expresses herself very simply and without contrivance. Her hobbies? She often goes to theatre, preferably incognito and prefers to sit in the fourth or fifth row. She always pays for tickets, like any other visitor. After the theatre, she usually goes to a restaurant and likes to dance there, because she knows all kinds of dances perfectly, from waltz to the rumba.[540]

The author of the article in *Vývoj* tried to present the future monarch as a girl like any other. The image feels exaggerated, though. The author sticked to the basic facts such as Elizabeth's war training but found himself on a slippery ground when, for example, suggesting that the Princess moved around London incognito. This did not match reality and had to be fabricated somewhere along the way. The same is the case when it comes to Elizabeth's supposedly great social skills. Later, in her thirties, she was famously criticized by Lord Altrincham for not being able to "string even a few sentences together without a written text" and sounding like a "priggish schoolgirl."[541] While such a conclusion, of course, could hardly be made by a Czechoslovak journalist, it was up to him what material he chose to rely on and how critically he approached it. *Vývoj* in this regard emerged as, indeed, an exceptionally royalist title.

From autumn 1946, when it was launched, until early 1948, it published fifteen articles about the British royal family – all praising and admiring it while emphasizing its progressiveness or, at least, generosity. Hence the readers could read that on Christmas Windsors ordered ten thousand small pies for their employees, the King and the Queen were newly giving audiences in walking dresses or that their interest in all who were suffering was sincere.[542] Unsurprisingly, the weekly informed extensively about the

[540] Ibid.
[541] Ben Pimlott, *The Queen: Elizabeth II and the monarchy* (London: Harper Press, 1996), Chapter 12, Kindle.
[542] „Vánoční čtení," *Vývoj*, December 21, 1946; „Víte že," *Vývoj*, February 5, 1947; „Ze zahraničí," *Vývoj*, March 19, 1947.

wedding of Princess Elizabeth in November 1947. At the occasion, the editors felt an urge to object to the criticism of the amount of space they dedicated to the event.

> Those people who, in newspapers and in interviews, mock the interest that millions around the world have in the British royal family only demonstrate their ignorance and their fundamental misunderstanding of Europe's oldest political democracy.[543]

The balance had to be preserved. Royals were agents of progress, yet their political and social function remained deeply traditional. *Vývoj* was definitely not the only fan of the royals. Communist newspapers paid it less attention but even that speaks volumes. In June 1946, *Svět v obrazech* prepared a material about Windsor Castle and its usage not only by the royal family but, thanks to the royals' kindness, also by veteran generals and other eminent public figures.[544] The article accompanied by pictures could, indeed, be published by any democratic socialist title and so was the case of the monthly's coverage of the royal family's visit of Africa in spring 1947. The communist-controlled title rejoiced that "the comfort of the royal family will, indeed, be well catered for, with a brand-new special train, a sumptuously furnished aircraft and a specially constructed motorcade."[545] When the royals met a chief of South African tribe, readers were informed about it, yet, surprisingly, did not obtain any anti-imperialist interpretation that, at the time, accompanied most of material about British colonies (Chapter 11).[546] Elizabeth's wedding secured even the attention of *Rudé právo*. The event emerged on the front page for two days in a row and English music hall song *All the nice girls love a sailor* was mentioned while referring to Princess Elizabeth's "commonness" and Philip Mountbatten's naval past.[547] *Svět v obrazech* celebrated with a full page pictorial coverage. Two out of five pictures captured people sleeping on cold November streets of London in order to watch the next day parade from the closest possible distance.[548] British

[543] „Královská svatba," *Vývoj*, November 26, 1947.
[544] „Vindsorský zámek," *Svět v obrazech*, June 30, 1946.
[545] *Svět v obrazech*, Feburary 15, 1947.
[546] *Svět v obrazech*, April 26, 1947.
[547] „Princezna Alžběta se vdává," *Rudé právo*, November 21, 1947, 1 – the song was wrongly translated as „Every nice girl loves a sailor"; „Princezna Alžběta s vévodou Mountbattenem," *Rudé právo*, November 22, 1947, 1.
[548] „Princezna se vdává," *Svět v obrazech*, December 6, 1947.

nobility in lavish clothes was on the remaining three. No revolution was apparently happening, and Czechoslovak communists did not mind.

The favour expressed by both democratic socialist and communist periodicals towards the British royal family farther obscured the ideological differences between the two groups. By rooting for socially progressive Britain and adhering to the left-wing spirits of the time, democratic socialists helped to tip the balance to the Communists side. The metaphor of the English top hat that can adapt to many different heads turned from harmless and funny to misleading and detrimental in its consequences. The Communists put the fancy headwear on with no intention to conciliate conservatism and socialism.

Chapter 11: Right side of history

The last discursive battleground where democratic socialist and communist press clashed concerned British foreign policy.[549] Its respective interpretations were linked to Czechoslovakia's growing dependence on the Soviet Union and Britain's deepening alliance with the United States. Both countries were critical of the other's attachment.[550] Yet, interestingly, the topics that dominated the discourse – the legacy of Munich and British engagement around the world – only marginally concerned the superpowers.

At times the communist discourse bore traits of the Soviet influence, but even in such cases Britain was not condemned as a whole. Communists often backed their criticism by citation of the British left-wing periodicals and targeted specific individuals such as Winston Churchill and Ernest Bevin and specific topics traditionally linked to the British elites and, as the sociological survey *Public opinion about England* suggested, considered problematic by Czechoslovaks.

While, in the given period, the three communist periodicals published 35 articles dedicated to British domestic policy, British foreign policy was central to 54 articles. The difference corresponds with the fact that while Labour's socialist reforms played into their

[549] For context see Anne Deighton, „Britain and the cold war, 1945-1955," in *The Cambridge history of the cold war, Volume I: Origins*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 112-32.
[550] Pavel Tigrid, „Jak se mi zlíbí," April 26, 1947; „Bevin ustupuje z Moskvy jako zajatec Američanů," *Rudé právo*, April 29, 1947, 2; R. Jelínek, „Anglie v krizi," *Svět v obrazech*, August 16, 1947; „Anglie prodává svou nezávislost za omeletu," *Rudé právo*, January 8, 1948, 1.

cards, the alliance with the US and imperialism had to be diligently opposed in order to take control of the discourse. On the contrary, democratic socialists limited the coverage of the British foreign policy to informative articles and typically avoided any critical analysis. They further weakened their position by denying the existence of the iron curtain[551] and claiming that Britain and the USSR followed the same democratic path.[552]

11.1 Munich still on mind

After the war, the Munich syndrome was conscientiously nurtured by the communist discourse.[553] Frequent comments on Britain's role in the events of September 1938 and the persisting influence of individuals and mentality that stood behind the "treason" were part of the strategy aimed at weakening of Czechoslovakia's relations with the West. The editors of *Rudé právo* made the effort and counted how many Conservative MPs, who once "voted for Munich," were re-elected in summer 1945.[554] In late September, *Svět v obrazech* marked the seventh anniversary of Munich and dedicated special attention to the British establishment. Lord Runciman and Neville Chamberlain dominated the pictorial supplement of the material titled *Už nikdy Mnichov* (No Munich ever again.)[555] Anniversaries served as a popular pretext for waking up Munich-related grievances in general. *Rudé právo* cited the speech of Chamberlain from 18 March 1939 on the eight anniversary of the German occupation of Czechoslovakia. The daily reminded readers that Britain cowardly wriggled out of the pledge to guarantee the borders of the country based on Slovakia's proclamation of independence a day before the invasion. On the contrary, the Soviet Union heroically refused to recognize the incorporation of Bohemia and Moravia in the German Third Reich.[556] The commemoration of the Battle of Britain in 1947 got an interesting twist as well. In the communist interpretation "British blood atoned for British guilt," – meaning guilt for Munich.[557]

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[551] „Železná opona u nás neexistuje," *Svobodné noviny*, July 13, 1946, 1; Pavel Tigrid, „Jak se mi zlíbí," *Obzory*, April 26, 1947; „Po Churchillově řeči," *Dnešek*, March 27, 1946.
[552] „Ruské a britské pojetí demokracie," *Obzory*, April 20, 1946, 245-6.
[553] See Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism*, 104-17.
[554] „Jak byli byli ‚mnichované' v anglických volbách," *Rudé právo*, August 12, 1945, 2.
[555] „Už nikdy Mnichov," *Svět v obrazech*, September 29, 1945.
[556] „V nouzi poznáš přítele," *Rudé právo*, March 18, 1947, 2.
[557] „Výročí bitvy o Anglii," *Rudé právo*, August 8, 1947, 1; compare to „O smlouvu s Británií," *Vývoj*, May 28, 1947.

Yet Munich did not only resonate during anniversaries. Almost any occasion seemed good to remind the people about the British "betrayal". Churchill's speech in Fulton was an obvious opportunity. Gustav Bareš vehemently rejected Churchill's worries regarding the escalation of the disagreements between the West and the East and called the moment, "when the decision of our fate was placed in the hands of England" the most tragic in history of the country.[558] *Svět v obrazech* reprinted a reaction of the American politician Henry Wallace who looked for conciliatory policy towards the USSR and wrote that Churchill was "on the hunt for a new Cliveden set," bringing up the group of prominent upper-class British who promoted the policy of appeasement before the war.[559] The hateful articles that blamed the British for failing to treat the Germans harshly enough were informed by deliberate effort to provoke hatred towards Germans. Communist press criticized the management of the British Zones in Germany and Austria, wheat deliveries to Germany, and invitations of German children for curative stays in Britain.[560]

The democratic socialist take on Munich was much more appeasing. In summer 1945, Eduard Táborský, the former private secretary of Edvard Beneš, advised to be wary of the "Munichers,"[561] yet this was the only instance when democratic socialist press seemed to doubt that Munich was not a matter of past. A year later, former MP for national democrats Josef Hudec wrote for *Dnešek* that with Churchill "new England entered the scene" and Czechoslovakia's relation to it "got back on the old good track."[562] Munich was also picked up twice by *Dnešek*'s correspondent in London Evžen Erdély, who tried to shed a light on the British perspective. He focused on the history of the Cliveden set and provided an original explanation of why "Clivedens" had no chance to advance their interests again. It seemed that Labour-led progressive revolution curbed clientelist practices as well. "The danger of political salons is only great if there is access from them to certain bedrooms and certain offices. And none of the British Cliveden castles have

[558] Gustav Bareš, Československá odpověď Churchillovi," *Rudé právo*, March 24, 1946, 1.
[559] „Wallace kontra Churchill," *Svět v obrazech*, January 25, 1947; compare to Edgar P. Young, „Churchillovo poslední ‚mrtvě narozené dítě,'" *Tvorba* XVI, no. 5; E. Tarlez, „Poučení z války."
[560] „Proč chrání Anglie válečné zločince," *Rudé právo*, February 4, 1947, 2; „Rezervace fašismu," *Rudé právo*, February 26, 1946; „Anglie posílá 70.000 tun obilí do Německa," *Rudé právo*, May 19, 1946; „České děti na zotavenou na Krym. Proč je zvána Hitlerjugend do Anglie?" *Rudé právo*, December 15, 1945, 1.
[561] Eduard Táborský, „Pátý srpen před třemi lety," *Svobodné noviny*, August 5, 1945, 1.
[562] Josef Hudec, „Slovo o přátelství," *Dnešek*, July 11, 1946.

this connection today."[563] On another occasion, Erdély described the shame of the common British that some exiles politely tried to play down.

> The humility of the English was downright embarrassing for Czechoslovaks in England. It was considered among us not only a matter of good taste, but also of political wisdom, never to begin speaking about Munich and Chamberlain. When the English themselves took up the subject, it was a test of diplomacy to gently convey to English friends that Munich was a historical error, and that even the greatest and cleverest nation is not free from error.[564]

Apparently, there was a stark disagreement regarding the interpretation of Munich between communist and democratic socialist press. Communists pushed the country eastwards and, therefore, remained uncompromisingly critical of the role of the West. Democratic socialists still strived for the cooperation with the West and, thus, spread performatively forgiving attitude. The second strategy unfortunately proved less successful as most of the people were not affected by the experience of life among apologetic or extremely friendly British. Also, Erdély's memories on penitent British were not compatible with the dominant interpretation of Britain's contemporary foreign engagements.

11.2 Top hat and loincloth

For Communists, Churchill's Fulton speech from 5 March 1946 represented the first big occasion to attack Britain's international engagement. Even though Churchill was at the time the leader of the opposition, journalist Miroslav Galuška, who later became Czechoslovak ambassador to Britain, was not bothered by differentiating between Conservative and Labour positions. In the end, it was Labour Party which now presided over the British Empire. Galuška's reaction is a peculiar mixture of justified critique and ideological distortion of the text that itself represented a combination of visionary analysis and manipulative simplifications.

[563] Evžen Erdély, „Co se stalo s Clivedenskou klikou?" *Dnešek*, March 27, 1946.
[564] Evžen Erdély, „Chamberlain a Mnichov v anglickém pojetí," *Dnešek*, August 1, 1946.

> The basic thesis of Churchill's soulful sermon is the assertion that the USSR, which has subjugated Eastern Europe, threatens freedom, the true bearer of which is the chosen Anglo-Saxon race […] Churchill lists the blessed lands under the motherly stewardship of the British government and pathetically exclaims: 'These are the foundations of liberty, a liberty that must be at every hearth.' […] The USSR, as Churchill says, has put down an iron curtain in its territories and does not want to let anyone in. According to our reports anyone can visit Eastern Europe; however, the British will not let anyone into their occupation zone in Germany. Also, Bevin vigorously opposed the Ukrainian proposal in the Security Council to send an allied commission to Indonesia to investigate why 50,000 Indonesians were killed by British shells. Why are these Indonesians resisting with all their might the British who build them that free and cosy home hearth?[565]

Galuška did not cite Churchill's speech with precision. Churchill did not speak about "Anglo-Saxon race" but "English-speaking world/people."[566] If he used the former expression one could, indeed, raise eyebrows. Yet the latter phrasing lacked any racist or imperialist undertones. Also, Churchill never mentioned "hearth" in connection with liberty.[567] He spoke about liberty for "all the homes and families of all the men and women in all the lands" – again quite neutral choice of words even though liberty was certainly not available for all citizens of the British Empire. The tiny manipulations helped to portray Churchill's speech as more hypocritical than it really was. Yet the idea that Britain was not in the best position to reprimand the Soviet Union was still convincing. Galuška aptly pointed to the atrocities that were at the time happening in Indonesia and on which the British were participating.[568]

Communists did not only criticize British imperialism but also Britain's strategic support of fascist regimes in Southern Europe.[569] They closely followed Britain's backing

[565] Miroslav Galuška, „Paradox Mr. Churchilla aneb včely, jež vyrábějí med pro sebe," *Tvorba* XV, no. 12; compare to „Churchill chce válku, my chceme mír," *Rudé právo*, March 17, 1946.
[566] „The sinews of peace (‚iron curtain speech'), International Churchill Society, accessed April 15, 2023, https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1946-1963-elder-statesman/the-sinews-of-peace/.
[567] Ibid.
[568] See Geoff Simons, *Indonesia: The long oppression* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), 142
[569] R. Jelínek, „Anglie v krizi."; M. Porfyrogenes, „Řecká krize trvá," *Rudé právo*, February 5, 1947; „Britská voják a americký business," *Rudé právo*, March 5, 1947, 2; „Jak dlouho ještě?" *Rudé právo*, January 8, 1947, 2.

of Greek monarchists and trade relations with Franco's Spain.[570] "Is the Labour government prepared to sell the principles of democratic foreign policy for Spanish sherry, oranges and onions?," cried *Rudé právo* in April 1947 and hurried to make sure that the British working class was excluded from the critique. "The British people realize to an ever-greater extent that the interests of British imperialism are not identical with the interests of the development of England and peace around the world."[571]

The World Youth Festival organized by the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Prague in summer 1947 provoked a media confrontation over the legacy of the British rule of India. The event was, indeed, unique. Only two years after the end of the war, some twenty thousand foreigners and forty thousand Czechs and Slovaks participated in a transcultural dialogue. Observers agreed that the festival, that the US boycotted for its leftist orientation, was a tremendous success of the Soviet propaganda. *New York Herald Tribune* wrote that communism won this round hands down and young British conservatives complained that "all we got was Communism stuffed down our throats for breakfast, lunch and dinner."[572] The display titled *After 200 years of English rule of India* prepared by the delegation of communist Indians drew attention of both communist and democratic socialist press. Apart from pictures capturing the impact of leprosy and famine on Indian population, the display also worked with statistics that suggested British negligence of the depended territory. While the mortality rate in Britain was 12,0 per 1,000 individuals per year, India's rate was 24,1. The difference in the availability of health care was even bigger. There was one doctor per one thousand British and one doctor per seven thousand Indians.[573] For *Rudé právo*, those numbers were self-explanatory. Two weeks after the daily informed about the display, British India was partitioned. Over the next two years, around one million people lost life due to religious cleansing and related refugee crisis. When first information about the clashes in Indian subcontinent reached Czechoslovakia, *Obzory* recalled the Indian display at the World Youth Festival.

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[570] For context see David J. Dunthorn, „The Prieto–Gil-Robles Meeting of October 1947: Britain and the Failure of the Spanish anti-Franco Coalition, 1945–50," *European History Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (January 2000): 49-75; John Sakkas, *Britain and the Greek civil war 1944-1949: British imperialism, public opinion and the coming of the cold war* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013).
[571] „Britská pomoc Frankovi," *Rudé právo*, April 9, 1947, 2; compare to „Budoucnost britského lidu není zaručena dolary," *Rudé právo*, July 22, 1947, 3.
[572] Jöel Kotek, *Students and the cold war* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), 117 and 123.
[573] „Výstava světového festivalu mládeže čili hodiny politického zeměpisu," *Rudé právo*, August 1, 1947, 2; compare to Karel Kreibich, „O anglosaském pokrytectví," *Tvorba* XV, no. 25.

> Independent India is making sure that an exhibition titled "India after a few weeks of Indian freedom" can be organized as soon as possible. […] The 200,000 dead in Punjab show all people what the English and the English government meant in India for 200 years and not only that: what the white man's law and order means, law and order based on Christianity and its command to care for those who are not able to take care for themselves, for the land of coloured people-children.[574]

Such statement was, at the time, still not considered very controversial, yet it also did not represent a central position anymore. The idea that the colonies had the right to strive for emancipation and ultimately independence was part of wider post-war consensus, of which predominantly leftist Czechoslovakia was part of. Therefore, ignoring the dark sides of colonialism seemed a rather flawed strategy o to contain communism. On the contrary, overlooking the stabilizing effect the British rule might have in the country divided by religion and sectarianism seemed like a minor problem. The cause of the emancipating Third world countries perfectly fit into socialist ideology and, when celebrated without aggression and vulgarity, it had a great chance to resonate in various geographical environments. The article by Walter Storm published by *Rudé právo* in January 1948 speaks for itself.

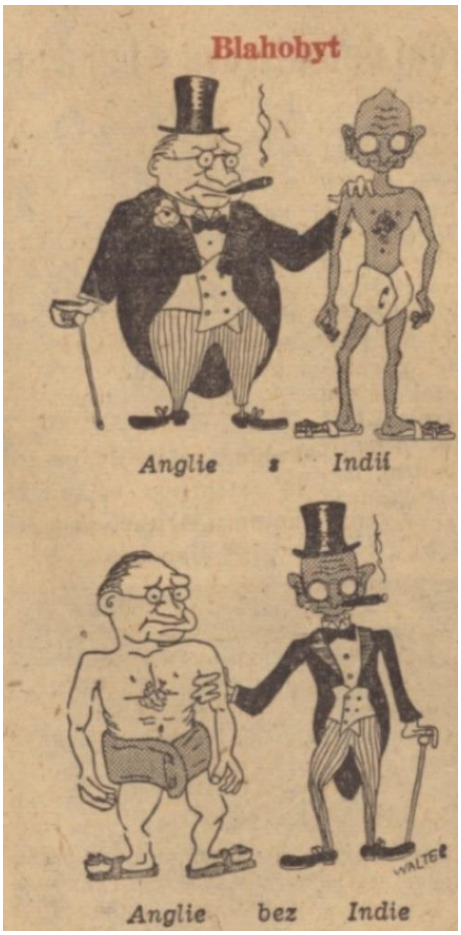
> The period of British rule in India is over. Colonels drowning in whisky, white sahibs treating every Indian as their servant, British civil servants trained in Oxford, generals and Bengali horsemen are going home [...] India used to be called the jewel in the crown of the British Empire, but now it has finally been recognized that this jewel is stolen property.[575]

The article was accompanied by a caricature called *Welfare*. "England with India" was depicted as Winston Churchill in a suit and a top hat and Mahatma Gandhi in a loincloth. "England without India" was portrayed as Churchill in a loincloth and Gandhi in a suit and a top hat. It is interesting to notice how Communists tried to further "liberate" the top hat that exiles claimed was for "everyone." It was put on the head of Gandhi to show Britain's hypocrisy. Yet it also unintentionally revealed the hypocrisy of Communists

[574] „Po pár týdnech indického panství," *Obzory*, September 13, 1947, 540-1; compare to František Kafka, „Jak jsem viděl Anglii," *Cíl*, January 16, 1947.
[575] Walter Storm, „Bengálští jezdci se vracejí domů," *Rudé právo*, January 25, 1948.

who were engaged in both celebration of Indian emancipation and, as shown in the previous chapter, the British royalty.

Appendix no. 4: Caricature *Welfare* that accompanied article *Bengálští jezdci se vracejí domů* (Rudé právo, January 25, 1948)



Apart from the inconsistency on macro level, Communists also tended to work creatively with translations as shown on the example of Miroslav Galuška's critique of the Fulton speech. Yet what secured their image of the British foreign policy victory over that of democratic socialists was the fact that they stood on the "right" side of history. Preservation of legal as well as figurative inequality between nations and races became unacceptable everywhere where the leftist discourse had chance to take root. That applied both for the Munich "treason," that seemed to go nowhere, and colonial subjugation. While on legal level the injustices were rectified – Munich Agreement was renounced and India became independent – their memory was more alive than ever, in Czechoslovakia mostly thanks to the discourse promoted by the communist press. As other countries, the post-war Czechoslovakia needed to reinvent itself. Turning away

from what looked like the source of the war trouble – the West – was logical and lethal at the same time. Democratic socialists unfortunately did not understand this logic. They were burdened by exile-linked loyalty to the country that treated them well and had a hard time to imagine that someone else might have had a different experience. The conciliation of conservatism and socialism that they devised during the war and further promoted when it ended did not help either. It only prepared ground for Communists, who were able to reinvent Britain as a normal Other – an equal partner with virtues and flaws rather than a special Other with superior qualities Czechoslovakia could hardly ever match. It was, indeed, unfortunate that the lived experience of the exiles, who turned the once imagined Anglo-Czechoslovak closeness into a real one during the war, did not play a bigger role after it ended. It was a great example of how relations between countries of unequal power can flourish without being ruled by feelings of inequality or dominance.

Conclusion

Even though most of the events described in the thesis took place in Britain, they primarily impacted Czechoslovakia. Another paradox is that for half of the 1940's, the period that the thesis examines, Czechoslovakia as a country did not even exist. German annexation erased it from the maps shortly before the onset of the decade. When it re-emerged, it was unable to maintain its independence and soon became a vassal of another neighbour. The period was marked by changes of political systems, border changes and mass migration. What was also dramatically transforming were people's mental maps. Within a few years, a large part of the population demanded introduction of democratic socialism. To shed a new light on the critical period of Czechoslovakia's modern history and within it on the leftist shift of the public mood I chose to focus on the discursive relationship that has so far earned little scholarly attention.

Like the Czechoslovak relation to Russia, the exile image of Britain was formed by various historical and geopolitical factors and by multiple individual actors who projected into it their own agendas. Yet unlike the image of Russia, respectively the Soviet Union, there was never a need to inspect the image of Britain more closely. Munich caused a temporary blow to trust but it did not affect the generally admiring gaze in long-

term perspective. The post-February longing for the West kept Britain shrouded in the mist of the Second World War heroism and nobly sounding notions of prudence and tradition. Thus, Britain's evident idealization was never defined as something harmful. As the thesis proved a lack of understanding of appelative Othering can be dangerous. It distorts one's own image and makes orientation in the world more difficult. I tried to fill in the hole linked to the Czechoslovak idealization of Britain by documenting the circumstances of its Second World War rise and subsequently demonstrating its detrimental effects on the political development of the Third Republic.

I made two major claims. Firstly, I claim that the Anglo-Czechoslovak closeness, established during the war, was an authentic phenomenon. Exile Anglophilia was only marginally affected by the government-in-exile's political strategy. It represented an essential feature of the exiles' war experience. It is true that it partly worked as a kind of self-fulling prophecy. The exiles needed to feel fond of the British as their hosts could help them feel safe in the unsafe world and believe that they are not outcasts as the German Others wanted them to believe. Yet at the same time Anglophilia was sustainable only thanks to numerous individual positive experiences. The specific war environment created amicable atmosphere that made both the exiles and the British more open to strangers than ever before. In this way even Munich related bitterness on the side of the Czechs was mostly overcome.

Secondly, I claim that the exile Anglophilia helped Communists to get to power after the war. While in the war circumstances Anglophilia could shield Czechoslovaks from the uncertainties and dangers of the outside world, the magic stopped working when they returned home. Formerly exiled intellectuals failed to realize that they do not automatically possess a key to “truth” anymore despite of arguing from the position of experience and authority. In August 1947, democratic socialist weekly *Dnešek* reflected on what it considered a global way of thinking.

> Having a clear and sound opinion about what is happening in the world does not mean judging everything that they are doing in the world and judging whether they are doing it right or wrong and how they should do it […] Thinking globally does not mean enthusiastically praising or harshly

> condemning anyone in the world. Thinking globally means looking for a place in the world for your nation.[576]

It seems that at least some democratic socialists were aware of the danger that distorted images of the Other bear. They knew that global thinking did not mean reckless praise. Yet as it often happens, the practice lagged behind the theory.

When they came to Britain, the future prominent democratic socialist intellectuals praised it because that was expected from someone given refuge. Then they observed the epic battle Britain got into with the Other that destroyed their country and forced them to flee. The common cause and life shared together resulted in more sincere and nuanced praise. Yet once it was clear that the war was drawing to an end, the object of the exiles' praise became a highly problematic role model for the future. The exiles fancied contradictory qualities – British traditionalism, conservatism, stability and prudence as well as social progressiveness. Inability to realize that those could not be transplanted to a different place led to a clash with reality after the war. The exiles' fellow nationals, who spent six years under German rule, did not perceive the world in the same way they did. They maybe liked listening to the BBC war broadcasting or reading about English princesses but were not interested in moralizing based on the idea of British superiority. As they did not personally know any British, it was much harder for them to bury the memories of the Munich "treason."

Where former exiles groped in the dark, Communists had a clear idea of what is going on. They also appropriated Britain for their own needs. Their Britain was an equal partner – not a teacher, and apart from virtues it also had flaws. By construction of this image, they maintained the illusion that they are devoted to the principles of democracy. It seemed as if the future they planned for Czechoslovakia did not radically differ from the one sketched by the democratic socialists. Failure to draw enough attention to this manipulation represents a sad epilogue of the exile Anglophilia, which once secured exiled Czechoslovaks a safe place in the world.

The strong discursive relation obviously did not cease to exist with the February *coup d'état*. As hinted above, Czechs kept looking fondly at Britain during the decades of the communist dictatorship. Together with the United States, it was an essential part of the mythical West that people longed to visit or at least to have as much mediated contact

[576] „Světově," *Dnešek*, August 28, 1947.

with as possible. Gazing in the direction of the West allowed people to dream when the reality felt grey and uninspiring. After the Velvet revolution, the relation became more diverse as many more people could get a first-hand experience of something they used to only hear or read about.

By mentioning a few examples of the Anglo-Czechoslovak "encountering" after the Second World War, I would like to draw attention to the niche that still awaits to be filled. In recent years I have had a chance to research also other topics related to Czech falling for British culture, institutions, and politics. The first concerns the reception of the BBC series Forsyte Saga in early 1970's Czechoslovakia. After more than fifty years, contemporaries, whom I currently interview, still remember details of watching the show, talking about it with their colleagues and friends and rooting for different characters. Today, they still like watching British costume dramas and consider the depiction of the British life in the shows credible as they did when watching Forsytes.[577] What does it say about the transformation of the Czech othering of Britain? And isn't the image less nuanced than it was eighty years ago?

The second topic, which concerns the peculiar popularity of the British royal family among Czechs, generates similar questions. The uncritical attitude towards the British monarchy was exceptionally well apparent during the coronation of King Charles III in May 2023. Czech president Petr Pavel told media that when the King heard "Czech Republic" at the pre-Coronation party at Buckingham Palace his eyes sparkled.[578] Commentator Lída Rakušanová wrote for Czech Radio that "when he rides in the golden carriage from Westminster, it will be a bit like "our king," hinting on Charles' multiple visits of the Czech Republic during the presidency of Václav Havel.[579] Both statements were surely part of the global elation that surrounded the festive event. Yet as the thesis established, it is always interesting to look at what happens on the subconscious level of seemingly harmless praise of the Other.

[577] The ongoing research project *Travelling of Forsytes across the Iron Curtain: Domesticity as a common value of Cold War societies* was supported by Sylff Research Grant in 2022.
[578] Cited in Tereza Ulrychová, „Komentovaný korunovační online: Harry při pozdravu z balkonu chyběl," Seznam Zprávy, May 6, 2023, https://www.seznamzpravy.cz/clanek/zahranicni-kralovska-rodina-korunovace-karla-iii-online-230334.
[579] Lída Rakušanová, „'Náš pan král' Karel III," *Český rozhlas*, May 5, 2023, https://plus.rozhlas.cz/lida-rakusanova-nas-pan-kral-karel-iii-8986260.

The last related topic that I researched concerned the position of Margaret Thatcher as a neoliberal political leader on the mental map of Václav Klaus.[580] From positions of Minister of Finance, Prime Minister, President and now former President Klaus has promoted a highly idealized image of Thatcher. The biased depiction of her policies and legacy took up media space for topics that would put Conservative rule of Britian into a different light. Also, it contributed to the vilification of the Czech democratic left after 1989.

All three topics share conservatism as the agent of admiration. The absence of any significant leftist agent in the post-1948 Czech "encountering" with Britain is striking. It is very likely linked to the aversion to the topics that used to be promoted by the regime propaganda before 1989. Among those were certainly anti-imperialism and critique of bourgeoise and capitalism. Consequently, the popular coverage and, at the same time, interest in contemporary Britain struggling with its colonial past and with deepening social crisis is, at the moment, indeed, marginal. One can only hope that writing and talking about incomplete or biased images can help us foresee threats that our ancestors missed.

Summary

The thesis focuses on the image of Britain in discourses of Czechoslovak exile during the Second World War and describes how it affected the post-war development of the country. It lies on the intersection of the history of mentalities, political history, and imagology. It follows the postmodern interpretive turn and applies critical discourse analysis on articles of seventeen periodicals published between 1939-1948. The thesis examines what people projected into Britain as the significant Other and the way they manipulated it. Both actions had impact on the development of the societal mental maps. The empirical part of the thesis is divided into two parts. First follows the exile discourses, the second focuses on the Third Republic discourses.

The key finding of the first part is that the appelative othering of Britain was shaped by both the objective needs of the exiles and their lived experience. At the beginning, exiles struggled with communication troubles and the shadow of the Munich

[580] Kłusek, "Porevoluční ideové diskurzy Václava Klause: Socialismus, kapitalismus a nové lepší zítřky à la paní Thatcherová."

"treason." Yet the obstacles were soon surmounted by hospitality of the British. The Blitz of 1940 and 1941 only strengthened the ties. The thesis further explains how lived Anglophilia coexisted with the lukewarm diplomatic relations between the Foreign Office and the Czechoslovak government-in-exile. It claims that senior officials helped to deepen the ties through support of cultural activities and humanitarian campaigns and through construction of the story about strong Anglo-Czechoslovak historical ties. But the key driver of the affinity proved to be the unmediated interactions between the British and the exiles.

While the development of Anglophilia during the first years of the war brought significant benefits in form of discursive liberation from the German Other and provision of a safe space in the world brutalized by the war, later years witnessed the rise of the detriments. The exiles wished that Czechoslovakia could adopt both "conservative" and "socially progressive" qualities of Britain after the war. Hence, they devised a discursive conciliation of seemingly contradictory tendencies. That proved unfortunately naïve in the face of the Central European post-war geopolitical reality. In the end, the pressures pulling the country in the Soviet direction turned out to be too strong.

The second part of the thesis keeps following the post-war development through the lens of the perception of Britain. The discourse of former exiles, now democratic socialists, was challenged by a new player on the scene – Communists. The "newcomers" appropriated the image of Britain to fit their own needs. In many aspects, the two images overlapped. Both sides admired British bravery during the war, rooted for the new Labour government and fancied the British royal family. Yet in the decisive topics, the discourses diverged. The thesis draws attention to the sociological survey that examined public opinion about Britain in 1946 and demonstrates how the two topics for which Czechs criticized Britain most – Munich related unreliability and imperialism – were utilized by the communist press. While Britain of democratic socialists was still portrayed as superior to Czechoslovakia, communist Britain was depicted as an equal partner with virtues and flaws. Communists kept bringing up memories of Munich and criticized Britain for the support of monarchists in Greece, Franco's regime in Spain, and the exploitation of former colonies. The inability of democratic socialists to admit that the great Other was not perfect resulted in their discursive defeat even before the infamous February *coup d'état*. The lived experience of the exiles, who turned the once imagined Anglo-Czechoslovak closeness into a real one during the war, did not play a bigger role

after it ended as it wildly differed from that of the Czechs who spent six years under the German occupation.

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