

Annotation

The Master's thesis "The Life Afterwards. The Return of Czechoslovak Political Prisoners to Society" is concerned with the topic of the re-integration of Czechoslovak political prisoners of the 1950s back into society after their release from prison. In the conceptual framework I provide the political and historical background of the Communist Czechoslovakia during the 1950s. I discuss the concept of political prisoner and describe the living conditions in prisons and labor camps. As observed from their narration, I also briefly outline the various strategies employed by political prisoners in their attempts to deal with imprisonment.

Although the descriptions of the respondents' arrests and events that had led up to them are topics not directly concerned with the primary topic of my thesis, they are included, because they are vital in understanding the existential and other re-integration-related problems these prisoners faced.

In my research, I employ the qualitative method of oral history. I focus on the time period when the interviewees were released from prison and try to describe the numerous issues they faced and had to deal with. More specifically, I focus on family and friendship relations, which had been often disrupted and the issue of seeking a new employment, an area of life in which the respondents were stigmatized the most. In my conclusion, I do not attempt to put forward any general truths, but rather present the various insights that arose from the life stories of the interviewees. I try to offer their context and interpretation which can serve as a contribution to knowledge already gathered in this area of study.