Abstract

This study concentrates on the understanding of development, reasons and effects of the first post-stalinist interpretation of the political processes with the anti-state Slansky conspiracy centre. Original concept legitimating in Czechoslovakia purges and trials of the early fifties – in particular Stalin’s thesis of constant intensification of the class struggle and belief in presence of the enemy agents in the highest circles of the communist party – was gradually abandoned, making it necessary to create a new explanation. This had to be so because the KSČ and its ruling body particularly did not want to be exposed to doubts about their previous conduct, which would have only led to crisis of identity and caused threat to the performance of power. That is why the new interpretative construction was created between 1953 and 1957 with an aim of reconciling collective memory of party members and new approach to the so-called time of terror. Executed general secretary Slansky did not yet become „victim“ of the regime, but on the contrary he was represented as an instigator of stalinist terror and main perpetrator of arbitrariness, who was justly exposed and punished by party ranks. Contemporary ruling elite thus purified itself from its own antecedent conduct, which was often important component of terror, and on the contrary exalted its fictitious credit for its suppression. This new interpretation was accepted by both officials and rank-and-file members of the KSČ. It constituted important aspect of legitimating ruling power, which stabilized situation in Czechoslovakia even during the turbulent year of 1956. Only on this platform could then happened an important transformation of the very purport of the regime - instead of frenetic achieving of communist ideal its main content became mere reproduction of power.