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Dizertační práce

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**The role of sculpture in the official art of
totalitarian regimes:
GDR and ČSR 1948–1968 compared**

**Role sochařství v oficiálním umění totalitních režimů:
komparace NDR a ČSR 1948–1968**

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V Praze, dne 4. listopadu 2017

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Anotace

Práce se věnuje dosud málo probádané problematice oficiální sochařské tvorby mezi lety 1948-1968. Disertace se pokouší na široké bázi uměleckohistorických historických, kulturních a ideologických determinant dospět k co možná nejucelenějšímu porozumění vnitřních procesů kulturní mašinerie socialistických států ve vztahu k sochařství a sochařům. Komparativní povaha práce notně přispívá k vyjasnění některých stěžejních otázek umělecko-historického výzkumu tohoto období – například (ne)původnost místních variant Socialistického realismu a jejich vztah k sovětskému modelu, datační vymezení Socrealismu, zapojení modernistických umělců, principy vztahu mezi státem a umělci nebo druhý život sochařských prací Socrealismu.

Klíčová slova

Sochařství, Socialistický Realismus, Socialistická kultura, Padesátá léta, Totalita, Karel Pokorný, Vincenc Makovský, Fritz Cremer, Waldemar Grzimek, ČSSR, SSSR, NDR

Abstract

The dissertation is dedicated to the under-researched subject of the official sculpture in the DDR and ČSR in the time-frame 1948-1968. By evaluating the material on a broad background of the art historical, historical, cultural and ideological determinants, the dissertation endeavours to provide an accurate insight into the internal processes of the cultural machinery of the Socialist states with regard to sculpture and sculptors. The comparative character of the dissertation contributes to the understanding of the critical questions of art historical research of the period – such as the (in)authenticity of the local varieties of Socialist Realism and relatedness to the SSSR Socrealism, dates of the Socrealism existence, engagement of modernist sculptors, principles of the state/artist relationship or the second life of the Socrealist sculpture.

Keywords

Sculpture, Socialist Realism, Socialist culture, Communism, Fifties, 1950s, Totalitarianism, Karel Pokorný, Vincenc Makovský, Fritz Cremer, Waldemar Grzimek, CSR, USSR, GDR

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Introduction

Bohemian and subsequently Czech art was always heavily dependent on the nurturing and reviving springs, flowing richly from the western regions of Europe and originating especially in the geopolitical spheres of today's France, Germany and Italy. In the course of time, Bohemian, Czech and eventually also Czechoslovakian artists and intellectual elites were bound by profound and affectionate ties to communities and institutions in the west and leveraged inspiration from their artistic genius and skill. The Czech art stood on the verge of the twentieth century as a dignified companion to the western art, taking pride in the variety, advanced level and development of distinctive local styles and characteristics.

Both the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the newly born First Czechoslovak Republic were not overly restrictive towards the freedom of the artist and the art development was following its natural pathways. The Second World War could not entirely extinguish this promising development, as many of the foremost artists of their generation remained active despite the German Occupation. Artists expressed frustration and crisis of the times in their works which in many cases are among the strongest testimonies to the horrors of the dark period of Czech history. The end of the war in 1945 raised all the hopes of renewal of the pre-war cultural life and unrestricted artistic creativity.

The exhaustion of resources, destruction and desolation after the war stood in the way to achieve the renewal of normality yearned for in a short time. The demand for art was in the economically impoverished Czechoslovakia lower than ever and many artists struggled to survive. In these dismal times the Communist Party, gaining strength and support of the public, promised all people longed for: peace, stability, work, food and also the utopian vision of the classless society, achievable allegedly only through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Communists were well prepared for the takeover. Instructed in Moscow, they used democratical means to achieve their ultimate goal and grasped the power in what became known to the Communist historiography as the "Victorious February". Communist coup d'état of 1948 and consequent changes in the cultural sphere had far-

reaching and devastating effect. Only today's researchers begin to comprehend the whole impact of the watershed moment. The relative freedom of artistic expression would be readily and effectively circumscribed, the ties with the West radically cut, as the natural inclination of artists to follow modern adventures of the western art was deemed undesirable. Its promoters were marked as the adversaries of the State, as the advocates of bourgeois aesthetics. They were mercilessly pursued until they either capitulated and subdued, or were stripped of their artist status and heavily persecuted.

It was noted repeatedly, that the sculpture, which existed for generations as a mature and developed art branch in Czechoslovakia, experienced after the coup d'état gradual and continuous decline of the rich figural tradition. It is an indisputable truth that the era of the 1950s – 1960s, dealt a deadly blow to the independent evolvement of arts and plunged the Czech sculpture into the state of unprecedented decay. It is obvious enough, the natural and fluent development which would otherwise follow the progressive adoption of western examples on the way to self-contained local style, was abruptly halted and replaced by a conglomerate of ideological clichés, pseudo-academic form and antiquated local tradition, merged into the form of Socialist Realism. The inspirational role, vacated by the western art, was to be replaced by the example of the “greatest of all arts”, art of the Soviets.

For the first time in history, Czech painters, sculptors and architects were required to draw their inspiration predominantly from the East. Ideological sculpture of both the DDR and the ČSR was implemented into the local tradition as an alien tendency. As such, it posed great difficulty to the local artists, who strived to fulfil the official commissions and who were aware of the schematism the imported patterns presented. Therefore, we may observe the effort of the artists to modify the imported models and to instill in their art works local attributes – derived from the local schools they came from, or, simply, from a surviving local tradition.

The Czech research on the art of the 1950s – 1960s during the first twenty years after the Velvet Revolution in 1989 was dedicated mostly to the artists, who defied the regime or who created in spite of it, privately, or abroad. Only recent decades experienced interest in the official art of the Communist regime. A subject scrutinised countless times

abroad, was lagging behind in one of the most affected countries. By evaluating the sculptural production of both the DDR and the ČSR, this dissertation is comparative and synthetical, but at the same time, attempts to unravel the intrinsic aspects of tendencies observable in the sculptural production of both countries.

A dissertation, dedicated to the sculpture of this period, fills the empty space in the research, to this day in Czech Republic mainly dedicated to comprehensive works. It is the author's strong conviction that addressing the area of the official pro-regime sculpture is legitimate and valid scholarly interest, providing much needed background to the evolvement of more progressive postmodern art. It is surely more thrilling to explore the adventures of the persecuted artists, to relish in their skill and grieve at their often concerning fate. Yet how can their sacrifice be understood in its entirety, if we do not dispose of a detailed understanding of what regime offered to the artists and what was to be gained by those, who would not be strong enough to resist?

As the title *The role of sculpture in the official art of totalitarian regimes: GDR and CSR 1948–1968 compared* suggests, the sculpture is in this dissertation treated and understood not in the conventional sense, that is as a representation of artist's creative genius and his will to create, but rather as an ideological tool, complementary to other artistic branches such as painting, architecture, film, literature, which were employed by the regime. As such, it is to be explored and scrutinised with this utilisation on the mind, not from the formalist perspective, rather from the perspective of cultural and social-political history with corresponding emphasis laid on the circumstances of the creative process. On the grounds of contemporary texts, articles, congress papers and directives, works of art, accounts of contemporaries and modern studies, following text will endeavour to provide a structured and methodical account of the Socrealist sculpture. This will allow to take into account problems, such as steering of the artists through the institutions subordinated to the Party, their tools and methods devised to enforce compliance of the artists, or behaviour of the artists with regard to the State.

The Part I. is dedicated to the *Prerequisites and Presuppositions of the Socrealist Sculpture* and basic tenets of *the Communist Historiography of Art*. It is offering insight into the understanding of the National Art History Narrative under the Communist perspective, so as to create a basis for further description of the Communist relation towards art and its function. The same vantage point is used to present an overview of phenomena, related through theme, subject or tendency to the emerging Socialist Realism – the work-oriented sculpture, the New Classicism, Social Art, Social Civilism and the New Monumentality. The chapter works on the presumption, the Communist art historians would assimilate any subject or tendency, even remotely relatable or comparable to the Socrealist current, to achieve the necessary justification and legitimisation of the artificially imposed artistic doctrine.

The Part II., called *The Sculpture of Socrealism in the Mirror of Cultural Politics and Art* incorporates cultural politics, theoretical background and development of the Socrealist sculpture in the full scope of the selected time-frame. The section is divided by chronological structure, respecting the major political changes that strongly influenced the development in the sphere of the cultural politics. The contemporary cultural politics and theoretical shifts in the followed time frame are therefore intermittently woven into the text, taking notice of the formative moments and also the engaged and active sculptors, who would take part in the steering of artistic unions and official institutions. The indispensable ideological basis and theoretical background of the Socialist Realism deals with the question of the ideological directives of the art style in the context of the paradigm shift of the art theory in the post-war period with a subsequent effort to grasp the Socialist Realism through the means of aesthetical and semiotical analysis.

The Socrealist sculpture in DDR and ČSR in the selected time-frame forms substantial subject of the Part II. and attempts to create a comprehensive overview of the most important sculptors and evolvement of the project of the One Party to turn them into the providers of ideologically accurate and convincing art works. As the centralist principles would rule over arts in all its forms, the employment of action tasks, contests, collective exhibitions, awarding of the official prizes and honorary titles would present a

distinctive feature of the Communist state, deserving special attention. The level of success of the Socialist artists is efficiently and accurately measurable by the number of official and honorary prizes and titles they would acquire. The attention dedicated to the individual artists in this text is therefore mostly granted according to their distinctions and achievements.

Both in DDR and ČSR the local tradition in sculpture (similar to painting and other arts) outlived the foundation of totalitarian art in the form of purely ideological Socialist Realism. As well as in the pioneering SSSR, in ČSR and DDR, the “revolutionising” efforts were unable to erase at once what was gradually instilled in people (in the form of a spontaneous local tradition) and close to the conservative opinion of the general public. As the capacity to address the crowds was of paramount importance to those in power, very soon was the local tradition merged with the enforced Stalinist example to create a branch of works, distinguishable from the non-differentiable and insignificant mass production. The goal of this chapter is therefore not only to provide a summary of the sculptural production of ČSR and DDR in the followed time-frame, but also to endeavour to reveal, how was the local tradition combined with the forced import.

The Part III. discuss the *Promotional Methods and Tools of the Regime*, including action tasks and contests, official prizes and honorary titles, contributing to the smooth running of the cultural megamachine. The political monument, within this text perceived as a distinctive category, addresses some of the most high-profile commissions, namely two Prague realisations - *the Stalin's Monument in Prague* and the *National Monument at the Vítkov Hill*, the DDR production represented by the *Buchenwald Monument*. A separate section called Exhibitions and Iconographic Analysis provides a closer look at the exhibitions and provides also a case study of iconographic motives at several high-profile exhibitions.

The Part IV. is dedicated to the *Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism sculpture* and works on the presumption that a clear structure is feasible by systematic summoning and sorting of the accessible material. A coherent structure allows in turn to devise a theory of the typological, iconographic and semiotic principles. The highest rank belongs to the personality cult sculpture of Soviet and regional leaders, followed by

the monuments to the Red Army, followed by the heroes of the resistance movement, national and working class history, personalities and movements, including 15th – 17th Century “Pioneers of the Class Conscience” and the 19th century “Communism Revivalists.”

The Part V. deals with a subject very acute and intricate – the fate of the Socrealist sculpture in the public space in the present day. The majority of the most controversial sculptures and statues were removed at the first opportunity the alleviation of the political pressure offered, yet till the present day a large number of Socrealist statues and sculptures still survive in the public space, museums and depots. The second life of the remnants of the vanquished ideology is a constant reminder of the volatility of history and to many it remains subject highly ambiguous. The last chapter is therefore dealing with the fate of the monuments to the defeated ideology and dead statesmen, stirring passions long time after they're gone.

The Appendix serves to provide additional informations about the artists, related in some respect to the production of Socrealist sculpture. The list of artists is selective and divided into the Czechoslovakian and German representatives. Included are some of the predecessors – intentional or unintentional. The second category is presenting monographical information on indispensable personalities, entirely unrelated to the Socrealist current, yet often serving as an inspiration.

Before this work is approached by the kind reader, several remarks are to be made. Firstly, the time frame 1948-1968 was devised perhaps atypically, as the Era of the Socialist Realism is most often thought to end with the Stalin's cult decomposition in 1956. Yet the Socrealist production would continue for several more decades, some of the most bizarre examples are dated to the era of Normalisation in 1980's. Albeit the year of 1968 is set as the closing line, delineating roundly the two decades, it is impossible to cut the line so straightly. Contentually are the milestone dates perceived rather loosely and many references are made to works of much older and younger dates.

Secondly, the dissertation follows exclusively the figuralist traditions and evades intentionally the abstract tendencies in the works of many of the most distinguished

Socialist Realists. Lastly, due to external circumstances, obstructing the possibility to leverage the German resources to the fullest, larger emphasis is put on the research of the Czechoslovakian situation. Nevertheless the conviction is such that the relevance and coherence of the comparative conclusions would not be impaired by this complication.

It is the author's honest intention to contribute to the scrutiny of the subject, that is not looked upon by many with fondness, yet offers a valuable insight and contributes to the universal knowledge of the twentieth century art. The dissertation is not written on the grounds of any sympathy with totalitarian regimes, Communist or other. It is also necessary to state that a judgmental stance, if applicable, is within this dissertation reserved for the assessment of artistic quality only, not to serve as a tool of moralism over any individual, assuredly inappropriate in a work concerned with art historical subject.

Method and research theory

The research of the Socrealist sculpture poses specific challenges with regard to the theoretical and methodical approach. An elementary analysis and subsequent comprehension of the gathered material afforded to premeditate the optimal methodical approach in the early stages of the research. The perceived need to construct method entirely individual and material-specific was soon confirmed through a thorough study of the gathered material and scrutiny of art historiography and current art theory. This critical process turned out beneficial and would help avoid possible pitfalls and hopefully lead to the enhancement of the level of general expertise.

The initial stage and ground stone of the method construction laid in the determination of the true character of Socialist Realism – especially with regards to the question of its “art status”. The key to this conundrum is in the understanding of the meaning of the “art” itself. In the sense of the humanist tradition is it the product of artists' creativity, emerging in the atmosphere of relative creative freedom, albeit often influenced by the patronage and other factors. Ever since antiquity were artists perceived as endowed with genius mind, a concept, especially cherished in the Renaissance, where artists acquired an aura of charismatic individuals gifted with extraordinary attributes.

The history of art would ever since be seen and perceived by the Humanism historiographers as a row of exceptional individuals, the true bearers of the evolution in art, moving the development further through their watershed works. This idealistic perspective of art as a product of a unique creative process, belonging to the sphere of ideas, was perpetuated in the comprehensive synthetical works of the Berlin school Franz Rumohr, Carl Schnasse, Franz Theodor Kugler, the Vienna School with Franz Wickhoff and Max Dvořák, to the late conservative works by Ernst Gombrich. Facing strictly humanist understanding of the arts as a product of the creative spirit, embodiment of the ideal and the highest achievement of the human mind, would the majority of the Socrealist sculpture hardly pass as “art”.

The premeditation of the subject was therefore based on the presumption, that

conventional method of art historical study, perceived here as the combination of the form evaluation, artist contextualisation and cultural history analysis, would not by itself yield satisfactory results, when applied to the Socrealist sculpture. The official art form, forged in the 1930s in Russia and subsequently transmitted into the satellite states, was in its core retrospective, outdated and anti-progressive. It comprised of obsolete 19th century forms, which were (and intended to be), in direct opposition to the bold experiments of the Avantgarde. Considering this counter-progressive character of the sculptural production, gathered under the umbrella term of Socialist Realism, the aesthetic categories of style, visual quality, independent formal evolution as well as the concept of organic development, turned out not to be very helpful categories.

The proper method had to be based on the understanding of the societal transition to the authoritative rule of the One Party. Under liberal regimes the freedom of art work is generally unrestricted and the most relevant motivation of the artist in the professional art is the ambition to contribute to the development of the art field in question. Artist, urged by his will to create and fueled by the ambition to live up to his or her ability, ventures, according to his skill to either pioneer an artistic style or let himself to be inspired by the advances of the current art and contribute to a wider artistic movement. This applies also to Czechoslovakian and German artists, who stood shoulder to shoulder with their western counterparts in their effort to employ the most recent achievements of modern art.

The market economy in the pre-Communist era provided artists with the opportunity to seek funding and commissions either in public institutions or in the sphere of private collectors. The level to which artists were making use of the modern forms was largely determined by the conservatism or liberalism of the donating person and on the measure of freedom allowed. Artists were induced to follow the taste and ideas of the patron. It is especially true of sculptors. The materials such as wood, stone or metal are considerably expensive and sculptors were therefore dependent upon the commissions.

Under Communism there was a substantial shift in dynamics, turning the relations described in the previous paragraph upside down. Once the state succeeds in transformation of artistic unions, expels inconvenient and unobliging artists and starts

to enforce the official doctrine through the means of elaborate propaganda, the whole finely tuned equilibrium is demolished. The livelihood of artists starts to crumble, as they struggle either to accustom and survive or to obstinately create under their formal ideals, risking expulsion from the unions and further persecution. Artists become dependent upon the mercy of the state, which they have to oblige by participating in public contests, exhibitions and action tasks.

When the aesthetic quality and artistic innovation is put aside so that the works of art can enter into the service of the Party, artists are bound to follow rigidly set models with little or no possibility of free license. Art, taking pride in the employment of ideological clichés of partisanship, tendentiousness, social engagement and progressive optimism, is to be approached and examined systematically with the specificity of the material in mind. Albeit in every stage of artistic development throughout the history of art would harbour a vast majority of mediocre or even low-level art production and Socrealism is not an exception. As art relinquished its liberal function of world observer and interpreter, it was by steady pressure converted into a complementary appendix of ideological struggle, predestined to serve as a weapon in the hands of the one Party. Art was transformed into a tool of both antagonistic forces of humanisation and dehumanisation imposed upon the crowd by the state machinery.

The official arts, endorsed under the auspices of a Socialist state – in this case of the Czechoslovakia and East Germany - acquired a specific position in the sphere of culture. The Socialist Realism was evolving most often according to the shifts in the cultural politics promoted by the Party and is therefore most of all a witness to the history of politics of the CPSU and KSČ. The product of Socrealist sculpture has to be perceived rather as a cultural artefact – ready-made tool of propaganda, part of the artificially constructed world of the official art, operating by unnatural laws. As the arts within the state lost their original social role, the capacity to reflect the development of artistic talent and ideas, to expand artists' skills in a playful experiment with form, the conventional approach to the construction of the art history lineage is made impossible.

The historiography of art offers several methodical approaches, suitable in an aspect to the examination of such a material. Many of recognised historiographical works were

consulted throughout the writing of this dissertation, in the endeavour to devise the most subject-specific method. Albeit perceived more as mental stimuli, rather than as sources of a fixed methodical procedure, the inspiration by the wide range of pioneers of art history, who date back as far as the 18th century and contributed to the maturation of the methodology of art research, was priceless. Georg Hegel's dialectical principle, Jacob Burckhardt's effort to draw the most vivid picture of the art's socio-political background, Hyppolite A. Teine's contextualist approach,² all of these concepts proved valuable and worthy of examination, as they pointed towards the methods, established in the 20th century.

Very pertinent to the purpose of the dissertation is one of the methods, emerging in the second half of the 20th century – the art sociology.³ This method pays close attention to the history of thought and society in relation to art and does reflect the importance of contemporary politics and ideology. The sociological theory, as promoted by Arnold Hauser brought the idea of hegemony, very suitable concept with regards to Socrealism.⁴ The hegemony is defined as a dominance of one group over the others. The Hegemon imposes through the system of norms, directives, world view and ideology, its interests upon its subordinated groups. This superior elite devises a mythological, religious or ideological background, which becomes the determining core of the arts, dependent upon the power structure.⁵ The understanding of the use of art as an instrument to achieve or maintain social structures by a dominant group, is very relevant for the subject of this dissertation.

² For the basics of the enumerated ideas see:

Georg W.F. HEGEL: *Phenomenology of spirit*. Oxford / New York / Toronto, 1995;

Jacob BURCKHARDT: *Reflections on history*. Indianapolis 1979;

Hippolyte A. TAINE: *Philosophie de l'art*. Paris 1985

³ The genesis of the art sociology method is reflected in the following publications: Jean-Marie GUYAU: *L'art au point de vue sociologique*. Paris 1889; Hanna DEINHARD: *Meaning and Expression: Toward a Sociology of Art*. Boston 1970; Howard BECKER: *New Directions in the Sociology of Art*, in: *ESA colloque in Paris*, April 2003; For a summary of the current state see: John PAUL: *Art as Weltanschauung. An Overview of Theory in the Sociology of Art*, in: *Electronic Journal of Sociology* 2005. ISSN: 11983655

⁴ *Arnold Hauser* (1892-1978), was art and film historian of Hungarian origin, best known for his Marxist perspective. He studied in Budapest and Berlin, taught in Leeds, London and Ohio. He was intrigued with transformation of social structure and its influence on art evolution. He has written notably: *The Social History of Art* (1951), *Philosophie der Kunstgeschichte* (1958).

⁵ Arnold HAUSER: *Sozialgeschichte der Kunst und Literatur*. Leinen 1983 Arnold Hauser: *The Sociology of Art*. Chicago 1982

The core of Hauser's system is firmly anchored in the perspective, that all art is historically determined and inseparable from the contemporary circumstances. His theory takes into account the periods of history, where art entered into the service of the ruling structure and acquired the servitudinal function. He unravels relationship between reality, ideology, artist and artwork, claiming that in different epochs of humanity, the proximity between spiritual creation and material circumstances is varied. The more mature the ideology, the more entangled and bewildering it becomes to the observer. Art is, together with science, religion, law and morals a product of the ever present longing of the humanity to find and retain a world view, consistent with the contemporary stage of their beliefs, opinions and values.

The sociology of art is applicable especially to the analysis of the cultural politics, specifically the problem of the state/artist relationship, as well as to the determinants of the artist's status. This approach allows to understand the nature of reciprocal relationships, crucial for the formation of the cultural machinery. Arnold Hauser's follower and the well known proponent of the Art Sociology, Pierre Bourdieu, contributed to the refinement of the method by contextualisation of social circumstances and division of the social formations into a series of "champs", setting every acteur into the frame of a group, be it artistic, political or economical.⁶ The socio-cultural factors and structuralisation of the social groups are indispensable to the comprehension of the rigid apparatus of the one Party and its subsequent impact upon the sphere of artists.

The more recent postmodernist methods and theories, building upon the iconology, structuralism and reforming their basic tenets in order to find the best approach for the writing of art history of the 20th century, offer some valuable clues as to the more recent

⁶ *Pierre Bourdieu* (1930-2002), was a famous French sociologist, anthropologist and philosopher, whose theories comprised also cultural and artistic spheres. Studied at Paris, at École normale supérieure, taught in Lille, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Collège de France and was a director of Centre de Sociologie Européenne. His work would pioneer concepts of the social order preservation and power transition, diverting from the idealist stances towards materialism as the core of the societal and cultural development. His notable works, relevant for the art historical research: *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (1979), *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993) and *The Rules of Art* (1996). Pierre BOURDIEU: *The Field of Cultural Production. Essays on Art and Literature*. 1993

method employment.⁷ Importantly, one of the relevant and widespread currents further elaborates upon the use of the “context”.⁸ Michael Baxandall would bring a concept of the “period eye,” into the field, emphasising the importance of the relations between artist, art work and its observers, following strictly the period perspective by a thorough analysis of the minutest aspects of the social, economical and cultural sphere surrounding the artistic, creative process and work of art.⁹

The investigation of the interactions between the cultural politics, ideological assignments, obligatory doctrines, tradition and free will of the artist and their reflection in the sculpture of the official production, belongs to the core objectives of this dissertation. Yet the gathered material calls for its systematic and conscientious assortment and subsequent creation of a hierarchical structure, derived from the assessment of the iconographic aspects. Unlike the prevalent 20th century custom of art historians to group paintings, sculptures and applied arts, according to school affinity or arts groups, the Socrealist art is for the most efficient categorisation to be structured into themes and subjects.

This method is sound not only for being most advantageous for the art historical investigation of this specific material, but also because it directly reflects the understanding of the art discipline by the Communist decision makers themselves. The foremost representatives of the Communist Party and related institutions approached art as an assortment of ideological subjects and themes, freely disposable and at the

⁷ For a comprehensive anthology of the 20th century theory see: Charles HARRISON / Paul WOOD: *Art in theory, 1900-2000*

Michael Baxandall (1933-2008), was a British art historian, promoter of the social history of art. Studied in Cambridge and Pavia, taught in University of California, Berkeley. He was a curator in Victoria and Albert Museum in London and later launched long-term association with Aby Warburg Institute. For his most relevant works see below. The term “Period eye” was pioneered in: Michael BAXANDALL: *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*. Oxford 1988; For further reference and intriguing insight into the method of the art historian see: Michael BAXANDALL: *Substance, sensation, perception* (Interviewed by Richard Cándida Smith), in: *Art History Oral Documentation. The Getty: an anthology of changing ideas*. Malden: Blackwell 2003; A pertinent example of current method and terminology: Robert S. NELSON / Richard SHIFF: *Critical Terms for Art History*. University Chicago Press 2003

⁸ Compare: Ladislav KESNER / James ELKINS: *Vizuální teorie: současné angloamerické myšlení o výtvarných dílech*. Jinočany 2005

⁹ Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities. 1998, http://archives.getty.edu:30008/getty_images/digitalresources/spcoll/gri_940109_baxandall_transcript.pdf (retrieved 4. 6. 2017)

ready to contribute to the general instruction of the people. This notion would consequently reflect in the official exhibitions, contests, action tasks. Therefore the scrutiny of the categories of theme and subject, together with the iconographic analysis of the separate groups is indispensable for a thorough understanding of the Socrealist sculpture.

Once the structure is established and material assorted, the need emerged to capture the problem of the reception of the official sculpture of Socrealism, both at the time of its creation and also in the presence. It is my understanding that evaluation of this problem is essential for successful accomplishment of the dissertation, as the reception creates the fourth and non-negliable pillar of the foursome structure state-artist-art work-public. The fitting approach founded on the principles of Semiology, offering the inspiration on the way to find inner characteristics and mutual correlations of various groups and their conscious and unconscious influence on the public psyche. Both contentual and outward characteristics of the examined material were leveraged in order to find the idiosyncratic patterns of the artwork/observer duality. Whereas the problem of the present day relation towards the Socrealist sculpture is easily mappable due to the inexhaustible internet resources and open public discussion, the accessibility of a frank and open opinion of the contemporaries is to be ranked somewhere between scarce and non-existent and pose therefore a great challenge.

State of research

Shortly after the fall of the Communism in Germany, the subject of the culture and official artistic production of the DDR was launched and further cultivated over the following years.¹⁰ Whereas massive anthologies were published shortly after the establishment of the modern day Germany, in the Czech Republic there are not many research papers on the subject until 2002 and those published are often concerned with culture in general.¹¹ Representative anthologies, concerning the sphere of the official art under the totalitarian regime of Czechoslovakia 1948-1989 did not come to fruition till this day.

Before proceeding to the region of the central Europe, the research of the totalitarian art, carried out at international level ought not to be overlooked. A vast amount of literature has dealt with the general phenomenon of ideological and political art. In 1996, a catalogue was published to accompany an exhibition called *Art and Power: Europe Under the Dictators 1930-45*, taking place in the Hayward Gallery, London.¹² This extensive anthology contains various studies and is divided into sections concentrating on three main centres of totalitarian art – Moscow, Rome and Berlin. In this respect the most significant section is concerned with the Stalinist Art of Moscow. It covers a wide scope of arts, including painting and sculpture.

The evolvement of the cultural apparatus of the Communist states is scrutinized by anthologies and monographs, published both in Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Czech Republic and elsewhere. The concept of totalitarian art has been very well researched in

¹⁰ Among others especially: Eckhart GILLEN / Rainer HAARMANN (Eds.): *Kunst in der DDR*. Köln, 1990; Martin DAMUS: *Malerei der DDR: Funktionen der bildenden Kunst im Realen Sozialismus*, Reinbek bei Hamburg, Rowohlt, 1991; Manfred JÄGER: *Kultur und Politik in der DDR 1945-1990*, Köln, 1995; Peter GUTH: *Wände der Verheissung. Zur Geschichte der architekturbezogenen Kunst in der DDR*, Leipzig 1995; Fritz JAKOBI: *Figur und Gegenstand: Malerei und Plastik in der Kunst der DDR aus der Sammlung der Nationalgalerie*. Berlin 1995;

¹¹ Radomíra SEDLÁKOVÁ: *Sorela: česká architektura padesátých let: Národní galerie v Praze, Sběrka architektury. Palác Kinských 14. dubna - 22. května 1994. (Ex. Cat.)* Praha 1994; Tereza PETIŠKOVÁ: *Československý socialistický realismus 1948-1958*. Praha, 2002; DOLANSKÁ, Karolína (et al.): *Socialistický realismus*, in: *České moderní a současné umění 1890-2010*. Praha, 2010;

¹² Dawn ADES (Ed.): *Art and Power: Europe Under the Dictators 1930-45*. London 1995; Also translated into German: Dawn ADES (Ed.): *Kunst und Macht im Europa der Diktatoren 1930 bis 1945*. Stuttgart 1996

Igor Golomstock's *Totalitarian Art: in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy, and the People's Republic of China*.¹³

As the DDR and the ČSR were profoundly related to the SSSR, it is essential to consult resources on Stalinist art, most notably Hans Gunther's *The Culture of the Stalin Period*.¹⁴ This noteworthy anthology presents a collection of studies in the field of popular culture, art, literature and film, originally presented at a Symposium, which took place at the Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Forschung of the University of Bielefeld in October 1986. In the text by Boris Groys entitled *The Birth of Socialist Realism from the Spirit of the Russian Avant-Garde*, the remarkable development regarding the establishment of total realism in Russia is analysed and presented.¹⁵

The significance of this particular question is obvious, as it was also used as a theme by Vassily Rakitin, whose study *The Avantgarde and Art of the Stalinist Era* can be found in the same anthology.¹⁶ The volume also contains Igor Golomstock's study *Problems in the Study of Stalinist Culture*, where some of the conclusions of his monography (mentioned previously) are presented.¹⁷ Golomstock has also ventured to establish three factors of Stalinist culture which can be applied to totalitarianism as a whole: the primary role of ideology, the organisation of artistic life as a whole and the unyielding struggle of the state against artistic freedom. At this present time, when the justification of research into the field of totalitarian art is no longer needed, these studies are to be perceived as the foundation stones of initial research.

The problem of the DDR art was examined in *Auf der Suche nach dem Verlorenen Staat. Die Kunst der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR*, organised by Deutschen Historischen Museum in Berlin in 1994 and followed by an anthology edited by Monica

¹³ Igor GOLOMSTOCK: *Totalitarian Art: in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy, and the People's Republic of China*, London 1990

¹⁴ Hans GÜNTHER: *The Culture of the Stalin Period*. Basingstoke 1990

¹⁵ Boris GROYS: *The Birth of Socialist Realism from the Spirit of the Russian Avant-Garde*, in: Günther, Hans (Ed.): *The Culture of the Stalin Period*, Basingstoke 1990

¹⁶ Vassily RAKITIN: *The Avantgarde and Art of the Stalinist Era*, in: Hans GÜNTHER (Ed.): *The Culture of the Stalin Period*, Basingstoke 1990

¹⁷ Igor GOLOMSTOCK: *Problems in the Study of Stalinist Culture*, in: Hans GÜNTHER (Ed.): *The Culture of the Stalin Period*, Basingstoke 1990

Flacke a year later, which introduced a diverse view of the painting, sculpture and architecture of the DDR from 1949-1990.¹⁸ It covered the important subject of official commissions. Another of representative publication dealing with the phenomenon of the “Auftragskunst“ is voluminous *Enge und Vielfalt - Auftragskunst und Kunstförderung in der DDR: Analysen und Meinungen*, published in Hamburg in 1999.¹⁹ Further examination of this subject was done with remarkable competency also by Hannelore Offner and Klaus Schroeder in 2000 and published in their anthology *Eingegrenzt – ausgegrenzt. Bildende Kunst und Parteiherrschaft in der DDR. 1961 – 1989*.²⁰

Even though the main focus is on Nazi-related art, one exhibition worth mentioning, as it deals with the subject of political sculpture, is the *Politische Skulptur: Barlach / Kasper / Thorak / Wotruba*, presented in Landesgalerie Linz, from Sept. 18 to Nov. 16, 2008. It introduced the relationship and interaction between art and politics before and after 1945. This exhibition presented artists who were creating their work under the influence or at the time of National Socialism in Germany. The intention of this exhibition was not only to follow the intricate lives of the artists, but also to uncover “*the underlying attitudes that had become uniquely interwoven and inseparable for a generation of artists living and working in twentieth century arts and politics*”.²¹ In the search for relevant themes, publications and exhibitions, this one in particular supports the viability of this dissertation.

The art of the DDR is currently being followed by several scholars across Germany. Sigrid Hofer (Philipps-Universität Marburg), in 2008 established an *Arbeitskreis Kunst in der DDR* which, as an independent platform for research in the field, allows specialists to present their research within a wider sphere of DDR culture. This initiative also launched annual conferences in Dresden, which took place from 2008. Various aspects

¹⁸ Monika FLACKE (Ed.): Auf der Suche nach dem verlorenen Staat: die Kunst der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR. Berlin 1994

¹⁹ Paul KAISER (Ed.): Enge und Vielfalt - Auftragskunst und Kunstförderung in der DDR : Analysen und Meinungen. Hamburg 1999

²⁰ Hannelore OFFNER / Klaus SCHROEDER: Eingegrenzt – ausgegrenzt. Bildende Kunst und Parteiherrschaft in der DDR. 1961 – 1989. Berlin 2000

²¹ Martin HOCHLEITNER / Inga KLEINKNECHT: Politische Skulptur : Barlach/Kasper/Thorak/Wotruba; (following the exhibition: Politische Skulptur - Barlach, Kasper, Thorak, Wotruba in der Landesgalerie Linz 18. Sept. 2008 - 16. Nov. 2008). Linz 2008

of DDR art have been explored by Thomas Topfstedt (Leipzig Uni), Christian Saehrendt and Hubertus Gaßner, among others. A growing number of theses and dissertations are being dedicated to the subject of Socialist Realism and the art of the DDR in general.

As mentioned, the sculpture, employed only as one of the several art fields in the service of the totalitarian regime in the DDR and ČSR, tends to lag behind the literature, film, architecture and painting – prominent artistic fields, better suited to deliver the propagandist message to the public. As such sculpture was somewhat neglected when compared to the painting or architecture. The same applies to the situation of the present research, where the sculpture of the followed two decades tends to be of secondary importance. The scholars specializing in cultural history have dedicated a significant amount of research papers, anthologies and conferences to the question of the popular arts. Only a handful of specialists ventured to analyse the question of sculpture and most of them can be named without compromising conciseness of this text.

Peter Guth's Habilitation *Wände der Verheißung* is the first attempt to summarize the architecture bound sculpture in the DDR.²² The same subject was researched by Peter H. Feist in his *Plastik aus Dresden 1945-1984*, in the catalogue *Bildhauerkunst aus der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, published in Bonn in 1988.²³ One of the notable contributions to the research of the sculpture of the DDR is Simone Simpson's *Zwischen Kulturauftrag und künstlerischer Autonomie. Dresdner Plastik der 1950er und 1960er Jahre*, published in 2008.²⁴ Similar to *Auftragskunst der DDR 1949–1990*, this monography begins with a thorough analysis of the state institutions responsible for art commissions. As the title suggests, the main focus is on the sculpture in the city of Dresden. The relationship between state and artists is documented on particular monuments in Dresden, such as Eugen Hoffmann's *Dank an die Rote Armee*. The third and most extensive part is built around the subject of architecture-bound sculpture. Here Simpson demonstrates both the ability to analyse the works of art and to create a

²² Peter GUTH: *Wände der Verheißung. Zur Geschichte der architekturbezogenen Kunst in der DDR*. Leipzig 1995

²³ Peter H. FEIST: *Plastik aus Dresden 1945-1984*, in: *Bildhauerkunst aus der DDR*. Berlin 1987

²⁴ Simone SIMPSON: *Zwischen Kulturauftrag und künstlerischer Autonomie. Dresdner Plastik der 1950er und 1960er Jahre*. Dresden 2008

synthesis of the underlying tendencies. A number of small-scale studies and texts, touching upon the subject of sculpture, are examined in the following chapters.

Compared to the DDR, the official culture and art of the ČSR is notably less researched, although in the recent years the situation is gradually changing.²⁵ Generally, the Socialist Realism of the ČSR was researched more thoroughly in the field of cinematography or literature. One of the few scholars, who pursues continuously the subject of the totalitarian culture in ČSR is Jiří Knapík, who is the author of numerous articles and also of an encyclopaedic overview of the culture and lifestyle in Czech Lands in 1948-1967, written in cooperation with Martin Franc and published only in 2011.²⁶ In 2008 Vladimír Macura published his collection of cultural studies called *Obraz vůdce, in: Šťastný věk*, elaborating upon typical cultural phenomena during the Communism, containing also art historical observations and references.²⁷ Since 2009 studies of the totalitarian culture are released in a series by Publishing House Academia, some of them, concerning cinematography, science and free time activities of the public in the followed time frame.²⁸

Once turning to the visual arts, there was until recently very few studies and documents, consisting mostly of articles in professional magazines and short studies in anthologies.²⁹ The Socialist Realism as a concept was researched by Tereza Petišková in *Czechoslovakian Socialist-Realism 1948–1958*, a catalogue published on the occasion of an exhibition held in the Rudolfinum Gallery from Nov. 7, 2002 to Feb. 9, 2003.³⁰ The

²⁵ There is a number of Academical theses and dissertation related, such as: Jan HOSŤÁK: Zahraniční výstavy v Praze mezi lety 1945-1953. (Bachelor's thesis at KTF UK) 2012; Ondřej CHARVÁT: Naše země je dnes krásná, ale zítra bude ještě krásnější. Vztah socialistického realismu k tématu přírody a krajiny. (Master's thesis at FHS UK) 2012; Vít SCHMARC: Zem ocele a lyr. Subjekty a ideologie v kultuře českého stalinismu (1948-1953). (Dissertation at FF UK) Praha 2012

²⁶ Jiří KNAPÍK / Martin FRANC: Průvodce kulturním děním a životním stylem v českých zemích 1948-1967. Praha 2011; Jiří KNAPÍK / Martin FRANC: Volný čas v českých zemích 1957-1967. Praha 2013

²⁷ Vladimír MACURA: *Obraz vůdce*, in: *Šťastný věk* (a jiné studie o socialistické kultuře). Praha 2008, 101-120

²⁸ This subject was put together especially in: Jiří KNAPÍK: Průvodce kulturním děním a životním stylem v českých zemích 1948-1967. Praha 2011; The Edition Světlé zítřky (Bright Tomorrows) offers for example perspective on free time unde Socialism: Jiří KNAPÍK / Martin FRANC: Volný čas v českých zemích 1957-1967. Praha 2013; on the science: Doubravka OLŠÁKOVÁ: Věda jde k lidu! Praha 2014; on the cinemaography: Pavel SKOPAL: Naplánovaná kinematografie. Praha 2012

²⁹ Such as: Ludvík HLAVÁČEK, Totalitní umění, Výtvarná kultura, 1992, roč. 2, č. 3, 65; Marcela PÁNKOVÁ: Pro zítřek světlejší, in: Výtvarná kultura, 1992, roč. 2, č. 3, 71

³⁰ Československý socialistický realismus 1948 – 1958. Malba, plastika, objekty, dokumenty. 7. 11. 2002 – 9. 2.

exhibition an accompanying catalogue unleashed a heated public debate, not only on the quality of the curatorial performance of the exhibition authors, but more importantly on the interpretation, optimal research methods and ethical aspects of the Socialist Realism study. This debate mirrored in a number of articles, published in the *Atelier magazine* in 2003.³¹

The official art of the fifties is covered also in a summary, written by T. Petišková for the representative five volume anthology, published gradually since 1984, *The History of the Czech Fine Arts*. This, however, contains in general the information from the above mentioned exhibition catalogue.³² The same anthology contains also a study by Vojtěch Lahoda, analysing the traces of the Modernist influence in the painting of the Socialist Realism and Pavel Halík's introduction to the arts of the fifties.³³ More playfully approached is Ivan Adamovič and Tomáš Pospiszyl published anthology *Planeta Eden. Svět zítřka v socialistickém Československu 1948–1978*, dealing predominantly with modern visual arts, comic book illustrations and sci-fi related culture under Socialism.³⁴

Another exhibition, *Socialist Realism Czechoslovakia 1949–1989*, took place from Dec. 3–30, 2009 in the Mánes Gallery.³⁵ The Italian Fondazione Eleutheria also published a catalogue under the same title. Both of the exhibitions mentioned strive to deliver controversially acclaimed socialist art to a wider audience and recover its value as a distinctive art style.

The Socrealist sculpture was after the 1989 never subjected to a comprehensive and systematical research and to date the published works are mostly articles or chapters in

2003, (Ex. Cat.) Galerie Rudolfinum; Tereza PETIŠKOVÁ: Československý socialistický realismus 1948-1958. Praha 2002

³¹ A specialised volume of the *Atelier Magazine* was dedicated to the interpretation of the exhibition and questions related to the subject of the Socialist Realism, see especially: Josef HLAVÁČEK: Několik poznámek k možnostem interpretace, in: *Ateliér*, 9. 1. 2003, roč. 15, č. 1, 4; Marie KLIMEŠOVÁ / Hana ROUSOVÁ: Nikdy jinak? in: *Ateliér*, 9. 1. 2003, roč. 15, č. 1, 4; Jiří ŠEVČÍK: Socialistický realismus. Neodreagované trauma, in: *Ateliér*, 9. 1. 2003, roč. 15, č. 1, 4;

³² Tereza PETIŠKOVÁ: Oficiální umění padesátých let, in: *DČVU V., 1939-1958*. Praha 2005

³³ Vojtěch LAHODA: Plíživý modernismus a socialistické umění 1948-1958, in *DČVU V., 1939-1958*. Praha 2005; Pavel HALÍK: Padesátá léta, in: *DČVU V., 1939-1958*. Praha 2005

³⁴ Ivan ADAMOVIČ / Tomáš POSPISZYL (eds.): *Planeta Eden. Svět zítřka v socialistickém Československu 1948–1978*. Řevnice 2010

³⁵ Praha, Galerie Mánes 3. – 30. prosince 2009. An exhibition of the Eleutheria (non-profit organisation)

monographs, basically without the sole concentration on the Socrealist sculpture. However a number of theses would deal with either person of Socrealist sculptor or would implement a chapter on monumental sculpture, such as Silvie Novotná on Jan Lauda, or Martin Koťa on Konrád Babraj, Vít Jakubíček on Vincenc Makovský in Zlín or *the Perished Socialist Monuments in Plzeň* by Lenka Maroušová.³⁶ An important contribution to the Socrealist sculpture was brought by new media. An online database, launched in 2009 - *www.socharstvi.info* - summons informations of the sculpture in the public space, monuments, architecture bound and sepulchral sculpture and individual statues in all settings.³⁷

In 2014 an illustrated publication mapped sculptures in Ostrava-Poruba, due to the place concerned often with sculptures of Socrealist descent by Marie Šťastná.³⁸ Relevant chapters on the sculpture of the Socrealism are to be found also in Jan Galandauer's study on the Vítkov Hill, published the same year, incorporated among general historical informations.³⁹ The public attention was also drawn to the *project Vetřelci a volavky / Aliens and Herons*, presenting through a comprehensive publication and the online database public sculpture of the Era of Normalisation, mostly dedicated to neutral figurative subjects or organic and abstract motifs, widespread in 1970's and 1980's, containing in lesser degree also the figure sculpture.⁴⁰

Only a minority of artists, active as Socialist Realism authors has modern biographies. Among them is Vincenc Makovský, whose comprehensive biography was written by Jiří Hlušička in 2002, offering an exhaustively comprehensive overview of Makovský's works by Jiří Šebek.⁴¹ This is, however attributable to highly acclaimed Avantgardist

³⁶ Silvie NOVOTNÁ: Jan Lauda. (Masters' Thesis at FF MU) Brno 2010; Vít JAKUBÍČEK: Vincenc Makovský in Zlín (Masters' Thesis at FF MU) Brno 2010; Martin KOŤA: Sochařská tvorba Konráda Babraje (Masters' Thesis at FF MU). Brno 2013; Lenka MAROUŠOVÁ: Zaniklé socialistické pomníky v Plzni (Bachelors' thesis at FF PU) Plzeň 2014

³⁷ The portal is according to the website devoted to sculpture, especially forgotten aspects of the Czech cultural heritage, sculpture in the public space, monuments, sculptures associated with architecture, sepulchral plastics and free sculptures in towns, streets and parks.

³⁸ Marie ŠŤASTNÁ: Porubské sochy a reliéfy. Praha 2014

³⁹ Jan GALANDAUER: Chrám bez boha nad Prahou: Památník na Vítkově. Praha 2014

⁴⁰ *www.vetrelciavolavky.cz*, Pavel KAROUS (ed.) *Vetřelci a volavky: atlas výtvarného umění ve veřejném prostoru v Československu v období normalizace (1968-1989) = Aliens and herons: a guide to fine art in the public space in the era of normalisation in Czechoslovakia (1968-1989)*. Praha 2015

⁴¹ Jiří HLUŠIČKA / Jaroslav MALINA / Jiří ŠEBEK: Vincenc Makovský. Brno 2002

episode and his universally acclaimed artistic skills, more than in his works of Socialist Realism.

The Stalin's Monument, as the most peculiar representation of Socialist sculpture, on the other hand attracted both local and international attention.⁴² As to the international attention focused on the monument – it is perceived most often as a mere part of the overall sphere of the Eastern Bloc and consequently compared to the similar situation in Hungary and Poland. As an example can serve Sergiusz Michalski in his *Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage*.⁴³ Generally speaking the majority of the papers published is not on the art historical field, more often they are oriented on culture and politics. Maruška Svašek analysed the dialectics of materiality and interpretability in the article in *Language and Beyond*.⁴⁴ Another of foreign researchers who attempted to perceive the monument and its history in broader circumstances was Mariusz Szczygieł in his *Gottland*, published in Prague, 2007.⁴⁵

Jan Šindelář had written a diploma thesis on the subject of the Monument in 2009 and brought the most comprehensive summary of the whole process of the contest, building and destruction.⁴⁶ Rudla Ceinar in 2008 used the temptingly tabloid fate of the sculptor of the monument, Otakar Švec, to write a novel, where reality meets fiction in a manner, accessible to the broad public.⁴⁷ Zdeněk Hojda a Jiří Pokorný in 1996 in their *Memorials and Forgetorials* dedicated one chapter to the Monument and for the first time brought together the available archival materials in a comprehensive summary.⁴⁸ Hana Píchová brought together great many resources in her *The Case of the Missing Statue: a Historical and Literary Study of the Stalin Monument in Prague* where she analysed the history and literary reflections of the Monument. Aside from providing the international public with the opportunity to familiarise with the historical case and circumstances, she also set the

⁴² Jiří ŠEBEK: Soupis sochařského díla Vincence Makovského, in: Jiří HLUŠIČKA / Jaroslav MALINA / Jiří ŠEBEK: Vincenc Makovský. Brno 2002, 299

⁴³ Sergiusz MICHALSKI: Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage, 1870-1997. London 1998

⁴⁴ Maruška SVAŠEK: The Dialectics of Materiality and Interpretability: The Case of the Stalin Monument, in: Language and Beyond / Le Langage et ses Au-delà (Studies in Comparative Literature), 37-57

⁴⁵ Mariusz SZCZYGIĘŁ: Gottland. Praha 2007

⁴⁶ Jan ŠINDELÁŘ: Stalinův pomník v Praze. (Master's thesis at PaedF UK). Praha 2009

⁴⁷ Rudla CEINAR: Žulový Stalin: Osudy pomníku a jeho autora. Praha 2008

⁴⁸ Zdeněk HOJDA / Jiří POKORNÝ: Pomníky a zapomínky. Litomyšl 1996

Monument in the interdisciplinary context.⁴⁹

The list of the current research on the subject would not be complete without the incorporation of the online resources, most importantly databases. Having the ambition to summon the visual material (making use of the cheap platform of the internet presentation, compared to the expensive print of the colour publications) they offer priceless benefits to scholars and the general public alike. Moreover are these projects often funded from government bodies or other authoritative institutions, therefore providing a reasonably accurate source of instruction. The databases provide usually both data and photographs, interactive maps of the sculpture placement and art historical context.

Among the most pertinent for the Czechoslovakian sculpture problematic I count the Informational Portal dedicated to the modern and current sculpture in Czech Republic, mapping the public sculpture throughout 19th – 21st century.⁵⁰ The database includes precise coordinates of the sculpture location, as well as lists of basic literature. A public sculpture in the stronghold of Socialist Realism, Ostrava, is analysed in a project called *The Database of Artistic Works in Architecture and Public Space of the Ostrava City*.⁵¹ Concerning the war memorials and monuments, *Society for military and memorial places* launched in 2014 a project mapping the places, monuments and memorials related to the past wars. Albeit not from the art historical perspective, it provides a valuable source of basic informations on the structure and type, as well as individual realisations of the post-war era.⁵² Consequential is also the database of the National Gallery ČR, providing access to its collections, relevant especially to the study of small-scale models for memorials, or interior sculpture.

⁴⁹ Hana PÍCHOVÁ: *The case of the missing statue : A historical and literary study of the Stalin monument in Prague*. Řevnice 2014

⁵⁰ Informační portál věnovaný modernímu a současnému sochařství v České republice, www.socharstvi.info

⁵¹ Databáze uměleckých děl v architektuře a veřejném prostoru města Ostravy, www.ostravskesochoy.cz

⁵² Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa www.vets.cz

**Part I. Presuppositions
of the Socrealist Sculpture
and Communist
Historiography of Art**

The Socialist Realism sculpture, as it evolved in the second half of the forties in ČSR and DDR, was undoubtedly bound to the development of the figural sculpture in the preceding decades. After all, a number of older generation figuralists was recasted to regime obliging providers of ideological art shortly after the 1948 and 1949. Their induced engagement in the strive for the Socialist culture was taken advantage of and paraded as an evidence of the continuity of the deep-rooted affinity of the Socialist Realism to the local tradition.

The following chapters therefore strive to describe, how from the general development of the figural sculpture in the 19th and 20th century would the Communist theoreticians devise an art historical narrative, sanctifying and promoting Socialist Realism sculpture. The theoreticians would in many articles and texts promote the “traditional values” of realism and “Volk / popular spirit“, endeavour to make a convincing *pons asinorum* between the history of art and the current quest to make the Socialist doctrine the only artistic method. The selection of developmental lines and specific subjects is focused chiefly on figural sculpture, that either through content, form or subject allowed the theoreticians to adjust it to the interests of the ideology.

Albeit a multi-layered thought construct, the Communist ideology retrospective was built around the core concept of Marxist-Leninist perception of history – a history of the class struggle. The historical self-justification, quintessential to every authoritarian regime, was achieved through careful composition of past events, compatible with the present ideological efforts and method of dialectical materialism. In this understanding the Communist historiography endeavoured to link the current “revolutionary development“ both to the Hussite movement of the late Middle Ages, French Revolution, or the peasants' revolts of the preceding centuries.⁵³ Linking of the famous and heroic historical events to the present day provided sense of tradition and common cause and helped to stabilise the regime.

⁵³ For more on the purposive modification of the historical narrative in Soviet historiography see: Michael KARPOVICH: *Rewriting Russian History: Soviet Interpretations of Russia's Past*. in: *Studies of the Research Program on the U.S.S.R.*, Nr. 16, Praeger Publications in Russian History and World Communism. New York 1956, 413; Roger D. MARKWICK: *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia: The Politics of Revisionist Historiography, 1956-1974*. New York 2001

The exploration of the art history, scrutinized and used by the theoreticians of Socrealism, brought the necessity to address the 19th century roots, where the focus on manual labour began to emerge together with the onset of the industrial revolution, teamed with revolutionarism and a critique of the societal order. The Paris commune, Realism of Gustave Courbet, caricature of manners by Honoré Daumier, heroised large bronzes of industrial workers by Constantine Meunier, *the Monument to work* by Jules Dalou were all marked as pioneers of the socially aware, working-class oriented art.

The chapter on the legacy of the 19th century Realism is therefore built around the thesis, that Socialist Realism as one of its essential pillars employed the historical and artistic legacy to build steady and reliable base for the new creative method. As well as the revolutionary class struggle in the realm of politics, the realist tradition, extolled by the theoreticians and ideologues as the worthiest of all past art currents, became to their understanding the embodiment of the artistic revolutionism in the 19th century. Realism, after all, was perceived as scathingly critical towards social inequality and that served as a recommendation by itself. The retrospective was, however, treated in highly selective and eclectic manner, as only the visual aspects of the Realism were allowed.

In the Soviet Russia, where the Socialist Realism and all its key characteristics were devised, the necessity to draw an indubitable and convincing line between the “Classics” and the current art was paramount. The Central Committee perceived itself as a restorer of the Russian arts, who saved the tradition and worthy aspects of national legacy from the snares of the leftist bourgeois decadence. Alexander A. Zhdanov claimed: *“The Party fully re-established the significance of the classical heritage of Repin, Bryullov, Vereshchagin, Vasnetsov and Surikov.”*⁵⁴ The continuity served as an evidence of the viability and legitimacy of the new artistic method, also promoted through the engagement of the older generation of artists. The sculptors such as Nikolay Andreyev, or Sergey Merkurov, helped to bridge the gap between the tradition and efforts of the Soviet state with regards to sculpture, as they both were active in the pre-Soviet era.^{55 56}

⁵⁴ A. A. ZHDANOV: On Literature, Music and Philosophy. London 1950
<http://www.revolutionarydemocracy.org/archive/zhdanovlit.htm> (Retrieved 1.11.2016)

⁵⁵ *Nikolay Andreyevich Andreyev* (1873-1932), a Russian sculptor, stage designer and graphic, who was associated with the Peredvizhniki group of Realists. Refer to: Andreyev Nikolay Andreyevich, in: Bol'shaya

All “non-realist” currents in art, as beginning with Impressionism, were deemed unsuitable for the expression of the new Era in arts, underscoring content, party-mindedness and progressive spirit. The reason for the employment of the realist form was formulated by P. Sysoyev: *“The perfect, highly artistic form activates and expresses profoundly the content - leads to the accentuation of richness of art ideas and uplifts the educational potential.”*⁵⁷ The classics of the Russian painting and sculpture were marked as superior champions of this tendency. Nevertheless, not only Russian Peredvizhniki and their associates were paraded and extolled to demonstrate the continuity. The Communist historiography of art managed to find analogies in art of the 19th century not only in Russia, but also in the western Europe of the 19th century.⁵⁸

The retrospective tendency was elaborated to the new perception of the worthy and noble in the history of the national art. The consequent hand-picking of the artists of the past, who would be considered as “progressive” in the perspective of Communist ideology was an integral part of the process. The Pantheon of National History, comprising of the representatives of intellectual elite, was elevated to the position of authority, providing collection of role-models for the contemporary artists in all fields of artistic effort. They were celebrated in the daily press, monuments were built to their memory, their work was promoted by numerous exhibitions, museums were founded and their patriotic servitude to the country and people was emphasised in the school curriculums. The Pantheon of national artists became thereof an indivisible part of the class-oriented national history, where they found their place next to the Pantheon of the political history figures.⁵⁹ The local legacy and national tradition are in many a case responsible for identifiable and specific style within the confines of the Socialist Realism.

sovetskaya entsiklopediya: PROKHOROV A. M. (Ed.) — 3-ye izd. — M.: Sovetskaya entsiklopediya, 1969.

⁵⁶ *Sergey Merkurov* (1881-1952), was a distinguished Soviet sculptor, honoured by many titles and sinecures, an academic at the Soviet Academy of Arts, and also a director of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (1944-1949). Refer to: R. ABOLINA: *Sergey Dmitriyevich Merkurov*, in: *Mastera sovetskogo iskusstva*, Sovetskiy khudozhnik. 1950, 78

⁵⁷ P. SYSOJEV: *Boj o socialistický realismus v sovětském výtvarném umění*, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. I., 1950, 27-41

⁵⁸ For more see chapter: *Inspirational role of Work-Oriented Sculpture*

⁵⁹ This applies to Socialist Realism in Germany, Poland and Hungary, as the principles of the Socrealist method in all of these countries in many ways overlap.

1870 – 1900

Legacy of the Old Masters and the 19th Century Realists

The narrative of the art history, perceived from the perspective of dialectical materialism and with an emphasis on the revolutionary traditions, directly influenced the style of the official Socialist sculpture. The ever-present effort to ground the present method in the respectable traditions was one of the marking points of the emerging system. The comprehension of this tendency and part of the method is essential for the understanding of the stylistic orientation of the Socialist Realism, which is notoriously unsuitable to be researched through the analysis of the form evolution.

The Socialist Realism and its tireless search for the “progressive traditions” was not an unparalleled tendency. Among Czechoslovakian theoreticians and artists the need to seek confirmation of the national identity in the past achievements, had its peak during the traumatic experience of the Occupation and Second World War. Yet in Czechoslovakia the environment for the emergence of a “national style” was being cultivated already throughout the 1930's and 1940's by theoreticians such as Jan Květ. The recognition of the most worthy national artists he intertwined with the understanding of monumentality and sought, face to face with the jeopardy of national sovereignty, the roots of the national art.⁶⁰ The sculptors would for example mirror this atmosphere by the employment of dramatic “baroque” principles or references to the Myslbekian form.

Renowned theoretician and influential public figure of the Socialist era, Zdeněk Nejedlý, recommended in accordance with the principles described above, to stick to what he called National Realism – style which allegedly sprang from the bourgeois culture, but which was, according to him, due to its quality a noteworthy inspiration for contemporary artists, writers and composers.⁶¹ Among the artists, recognised by the

⁶⁰ Jan KVĚT: K výstavě monumentálního umění, in: Volné směry XXIX, 1940-1941, 38-45

⁶¹ Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: O realismu pravém a nepravém, in: K socialistickému umění. Antologie z české marxistické

regime as Classical national artists, usually counted painters Mikoláš Aleš, Josef Mánes, sculptor J. V. Myslbek, followed by a number of various other artists of the cultural sphere.⁶² Some name also painter Jaroslav Čermák or sculptor Jan Štursa.⁶³

Also the art historian Jaromír Neumann, in his article *Josef Mánes, the Classic of the Czech Painting* named inspiration from the National Classics as one of the key principles of the Socialist Realism.⁶⁴ Neumann by the term perceives the artists of national history, who “realistically reflected life, were connected to the progressive segments of society, and who – through their art – were actively involved in the struggle for the better future of their people.”⁶⁵ In another of his articles he marked Mánes as the artist, who was uniquely bound to the people and its traditions.⁶⁶ Vladimír Šolta in his article on the relation of the army and art written in 1950, described painter Mánes as a “poet of the power of our nation, who imagined the Czech man as a man of great power and who depicted bravery, courage and fighting spirit of our forebearers.”⁶⁷

This contentment with the bourgeois character of the legacy was not endorsed universally. For example in the architecture the dilemma of what the “National architecture” means, was a conundrum almost impossible to solve, as is witnessed in the contemporary press.⁶⁸ Another formulation of this desirable retrospective is to be found in a resolution of the ÚV KSČ regarding the film and its recommended influence over art. It offers an effective advice on the artistic method: “Artists, approaching the People, are learning from it, creating nationally realist art.”⁶⁹ This document also provides details as to the rendering of this method: “We ought to notice the creative methods of our artists – the Classics. Study their composition, drawings, the way they work

estetiky, Ed. Štěpán Vlašín and Pavel Pešta. Praha 1976, 171

⁶² Jiří BURSÍK: Pokrokové tradice v českém výtvarném umění 19. století, in: *Tvorba*, r. 19, 1950, č. 13, 311-312

⁶³ A. KAMENSKIJ: Československé umění na nové cestě, in: *Výtvarná práce* č. 4, roč. 2, 1954, 3

⁶⁴ Jaromír Neumann (1924 – 2001), was a connoisseur of Bohemian art of the Baroque Era. In 1960 he acquired a State Prize of the Klement Gottwald. In spite of his engagement in the Communist regime is his work highly valued by the professional public for his expertise of the baroque painting. For more see: Jaromír Neumann, in: MALÁ Alena (Ed.): *Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců 1950 – 2002*. (IX. Ml - Nou)

This perspective explained also in: Jan LORIŠ: Josef Mánes a dnešek, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1, 1951-1952, 346

⁶⁵ Jaromír NEUMAN: Josef Mánes, Klasik české malby., in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1, 1950, 1-2

⁶⁶ Jaromír NEUMAN: Lidovost Mánesova umění, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1, 1951-1952, 177

⁶⁷ Vladimír ŠOLTA: Z projevu na aktivu výtvarných umělců a armády, in: *Výtvarné umění* 1950, č.9-10, 474-477

⁶⁸ O národních tradicích v naší architektuře, in: *Výtvarná práce* č. 6, roč. 1952, 1

⁶⁹ Usnesení ÚV KSČ o filmu a jeho význam pro výtvarné umění., in: *NA*, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv.

*with pigments etc.*⁷⁰

Zdeněk Nejedlý, who was responsible for the elaboration of the Czech history narrative for the purposes of the Communist ideology, was also behind the construction of the cult of Mikoláš Aleš. He published his biography in 1954 as a follow-up after the large exhibition in 1952, celebrating Aleš's 100 year anniversary, which he also initiated. As a result of his initiative, Aleš became indivisible part of the Czechoslovakian pantheon of national artists. His role was acknowledged by many theoreticians, also in article on Aleš by Vladimír Novotný.⁷¹ He praises him precisely for the same attributes Neumann ascribed to the "Classical Artist" in the quotation above. In the context of artistic skills he praises Aleš's capacity to depict the representatives of people characters such as a peasant, a child or a woman - with a remarkable capacity of generalisation.

V. Šolta extolled Aleš's patriotism and his determination to express the best traditions and history of the Czech nation and quotes his statements, in which Aleš confesses his wish to serve the nation with his art.⁷² The universality of the adoration, expressed to Aleš's unique artistic qualities, was expressed also by Art Historian František Dvořák in his article, referring to the sculpture production of the artistic group Umělecká beseda. On the exhibition of this group was exhibited an *equestrian portrait of a Hussite Leader* by Věra Janoušková. Dvořák, in the laudation of her artistic skill, praises her capacity to create in an Aleš-like manner.⁷³ The idealisation and universalisation in the depiction of general types was a skill, sought for in the Socrealist artist, who was expected to deliver in his work general categories of a contemporary person type, or a general historical figure.

An accurate account of the Communist perception of the history of Czech sculpture is to be found in the description of a newly organised collection of Czech Sculpture – summoned at the National Gallery detached department at Zbraslav Monastery, opened

⁷⁰ Ibidem

⁷¹ Vladimír NOVOTNÝ: Mikoláš Aleš, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 1, 1950, 11
For more on Mikoláš Aleš see note: 966

⁷² Vladimír ŠOLTA: Z projevu na aktivu výtvarných umělců a armády, in: Výtvarné umění 1950, č.9-10, 474-477

⁷³ František DVOŘÁK: Sochaři umělecké besedy, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. II, 1954, č. 2

on 15th October 1954.⁷⁴ Jan Tomeš described the most essential highlights of the exhibition and did not fail to emphasize, the new installation reflects not only the high level of Czech sculpture history, but also holds a cultural-political significance. The purpose of the new exhibition was after all to: *“identify and follow the central evolutionary line of the development... What matters are the typical phenomena.”*⁷⁵ This proclamation serves as a core evidence and a starting point for the examination of the sculpture retrospective, which was carefully constructed in order to support the official interpretation of history.

Josef Václav Myslbek, considered the founding father, the constituting personality of the Czech modern sculpture, the founder of the Department of Sculpture at the Academy of Arts in Prague, is to be marked as a crucial character of the “Czech school” of the end of the 19th century and in the history of Czech sculpture in general.⁷⁶ Being rooted in the tradition of his teacher Václav Levý his first productive years were marked by division of art into two major tendencies – Romanticism and Classicism.⁷⁷ Myslbek, was strongly influenced by the contemporary Czech National Revival, wishing to restore national

⁷⁴ Jan TOMEŠ: Sběrka českého sochařství. (K otevření výstavy Národní galerie na Zbraslavi), in: Výtvarná práce č. 20, roč. 2 1954, 1-2

⁷⁵ TOMEŠ 1954, 1

⁷⁶ *Josef Václav Myslbek* (1848-1922), was the most important representative of the Czech sculpture on the verge of the 19th and 20th century, the founder of the modern sculpture. His artistic style is predominantly related to the realist figural form. In 1872 concluded his studies at AVU as pupil of J. Trenkwald. Between 1885-1896 a professor, 1893-96 a director at UMPRUM. Between 1896-1919 a professor at AVU in Prague, where he promoted the foundation of the first sculpture studio. His artistic style was derived from the Art Nouveau influenced romantic classicism in his figural couples Lumír a Píseň (1888), Libuše a Přemysl (1892), Záboj a Slavoj (1895) a Ctirad a Šárka (1897) for Palacký bridge in Prague, the neo-renaissance Drama (1871) and Opera (1871) for the National Theatre. He also experimented with Art Nouveau and Symbolism principles, most notably in the series of his Music (1912) for the foyer. Myslbek also achieved great ability in the portraiture, as is seen in his psychologically mature portraits of Anna Náprstková (1873), František Palacký (1885), or effigy of Bedřich Schwarzenberg, (1895) in the st. Vitus cathedral. The synthesis and pinnacle of his work is the monument to st. Wenceslaus, that occupied him from 1883 until his death in 1922. Selected bibliography: Karel Boromejský Mádl: Jos. V. Myslbek: Sein Leben und seine Werke, Leipzig 1902, the first monograph of Myslbek, published during his lifetime; Václav Vilém Štech: J.V. Myslbek, Praha 1941, translated into German as V.V. Štech, Josef Václav Myslbek: Der Meister der tschechischen Bildhauerkunst, 1954 (also translated into English and French); Petr Wittlich, J.V. Myslbek a odkaz 19. století, in: České sochařství ve XX. století. Nové Město na Moravě, 1978, 13–22; Zora Dvořáková, Josef Václav Myslbek. Umělec a člověk uprostřed své doby, Praha 1979

⁷⁷ Petr WITTLICH: Sochařství 20. století. Praha 1979, 14

Václav Levý (1820-1870), a Czech sculptor, considered as one of the pioneers of modern sculpture, standing on the divide between Classicism and modern tendencies, teacher of J. V. Myslbek. For more see: Marie ČERNÁ: Václav Levý. Praha 1964

identity, culture and language.⁷⁸

The intention of his mature works was therefore to restore and revive the Czech sculpture by adoption of an integrated approach. To deliver this intention by sculptural means, Myslbek oscillated between two stylistic bases – the Style of Idealism and Monumental Realism. By using the first he achieved remarkable artistic effects, demonstrated on his sculptures for Hlávka's Bridge in Prague. This mannerism was inspired by the thence wide-spread Josef Mánes' lyrism – characteristic in painting, sculpture and applied arts by its very distinctive softness of lines and remarkably decorative features. This style of his was very influential among his contemporaries and mirrored in the works of his pupils, such as Stanislav Sucharda, Jan Štursa or Otakar Španiel, who transformed their master's legacy and became representatives of the Symbolist and Art Nouveau Style.⁷⁹

The generation of sculptors, who helped to shape the Socialist Realism in Czechoslovakia after the 1948, were almost all descendants of J. V. Myslbek. Czech sculpture from the 1910 onwards evolved in two major tendencies. One of them headed towards substantial abstraction and reductionism, whereas the other was marked by mounting interest in more traditional approach, close to the Classicism.⁸⁰ This logical inclination was in direct opposition towards the strongly subjectivist, impressionistic, often melancholic and rawly naturalist art of Art Nouveau followers mentioned previously. Yet again a strong Parisian influence helped to shape this feeling of Czech sculptors such as Otakar Španiel and Jan Štursa, who longed for an apt way to elaborate their works of art according to steady timeless ideals of form. The incentive was yet emphasized with the exhibition of Antoine Bourdelle.⁸¹

⁷⁸ This National revival found numerous followers in the sphere of arts. The artists and their contribution to the Cause are followed by: Antonín Matějček: *Národní divadlo a jeho výtvarníci*, Praha 1954

⁷⁹ *Stanislav Sucharda* (1866 – 1916), Czech sculptor and the Prague School of Applied Arts professor a leading figure in the SVU Mánes. For more see: Martin, KRUMMHOLZ: *Stanislav Sucharda: 1866-1916*. Nová Paka 2006
For more on Jan Štursa (1880 – 1925) see note 124

For more on Otakar Španiel (1881 – 1955), see note 146

⁸⁰ Petr WITTLICH: *Sochařství před první světovou válkou*, in: *DČVU IV/1, 1890-1938*. Praha 1998; Petr WITTLICH: *České sochařství ve XX. století*. Nové Město na Moravě, 1978; Petr WITTLICH: *Horizonty umění*. Praha 2010, 410
For a French account of the Exhibition see: Kateřina FABELOVÁ: *Bourdelle a Prague en 1909 et son rapport aux artistes tcheques et a Auguste Rodin*, in: *Umění* 57, 2009, č. 4, 364–384

⁸¹ Petr WITTLICH: *E. A. Bourdelle a jeho výstava r. 1909 v Praze*, in: *Umění*, 1961, roč. 9, č. 5, 476–484

After the 1948 was J. V. Myslbek put on the pedestal as the founding father and the ultimate role-model to follow in the sphere of Czechoslovakian sculpture. Unlike the pantheon of the Czechoslovakian “national classic painters“, which consisted of variable number of distinguished individuals, the sculpture had its sole highly acclaimed authority in Myslbek, although Jan Štursa also received his Laudatio in several contributions. The claim of the Myslbek's authority is easy to demonstrate on numerous articles in the professional magazines and newspapers and also on the direction and decisions of the art politics.

Another tribute to Myslbek took the form of a lavishly elaborated collection of his works in a permanent exhibition, created by the National gallery of ČSR. 15th October 1954 was festively opened to the public a department of sculpture in the Zbraslav castle, at the time serving as a dignified National Gallery permanent exhibition site.⁸² The collection was bound to contain all the features of Myslbek's art, compatible with the general line.⁸³ Jan Tomeš in his eloquent description of the exhibition, quoted Karel B. Mádl and his comment on Myslbek's art: “*it is Czech - not only through birth, but also by the spirit and the innermost nature.*”⁸⁴ The collection of his works, provided with a generous space in the exhibition, was chosen to demonstrate the endeavour to reconstruct art history anew and lay a foundation stone for the elaboration of the narrative in the following halls.

The Monument of Čáslav – figure of the Hussite Leader Jan Žižka z Trocnova, Myslbek's figural composition for *Hlávka's Bridge*, were all chosen for their ability to fit into the new narrative. According to Tomeš they are “*symbolising the roots of the Nation and in lively allegories are showing characteristics of our Nation.*” The wide array of Myslbek's portrait busts and eventually also the casts and models for the *Monument of the st. Wenceslaus*, (fig. 1) concludes the effort to draw the picture of the famous Realist

⁸² For more on the Zbraslav Exhibition see chapter: *Adherence to the Conservative Line within Sculpture*

⁸³ Antonín PELC: Naše sochařství, věrno slavné tradici, in: *Výtvarná práce* 1, 1953, 21

Jiří KOTALÍK: Sběrka českého sochařství XIX. a XX. století. Praha 1976

Anna MASARYKOVÁ: České sochařství XIX. a XX. století, in: *Národní galerie, č. V.* Praha 1963

⁸⁴ Jan TOMEŠ: Sběrka českého sochařství k otevření výstavy Národní galerie na Zbraslavi, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. 2, 1954, č. 20, 1

tradition beginnings.

The cultural apparatus of the DDR also needed to support the legitimacy of the new method of Socialist Realism by careful selection of the local traditions. The subsequent establishment of the DDR art historiography was set on an entirely new perception of the development of German art.⁸⁵ As well as in Czechoslovakia, also in DDR ruled the tendency to seek the predecessors of the revolutionary socialism, the progressive traditions, finding its ultimate expression in the hand picking of the phenomena, relatable to any aspect of the Communist ideology. The most distant of these traditions were found as far as the early Middle Age, as well as the Peasant Wars of the 15th century, in a process very similar to the reinterpretation of the Hussite legacy in Czechoslovakia.

Whereas the general sphere of historical interpretation is very similar, when assessing the art historical ground for the DDR art, a difference between both countries emerges. Albeit there is a distinct analogy in the effort to root the Socialist Realism in the Realist traditions of the late 19th century is identical, the overall measure of retrospectivity employed distinctly varies. The East German ideologues (unlike their Czechoslovakian counterparts, who would be content with fishing the pioneering personalities in the late 19th century), endeavoured to set the earliest predecessors already into the times of North European Renaissance and named even the 13th century Naumburg and Bamberg Masters, promoted at the same time as the best weapons in the fight against the "amerikanischen Imperialismus."⁸⁶

The cultural antagonism between DDR and the western part of the divided Germany reflected in the constant effort of the SED to win the war on the imperialism, also with the help of the authoritative figures of the past. As an early modern predecessor and

⁸⁵ See especially: Eckhart GILLEN: Ehrt unsere alten Meister: Nationale Erbpflege auf der Dritte Deutsche Kunstausstellung, in: Das Kunstkombinat DDR: Zäsuren einer gescheiterten Kunstpolitik; (Accompanying text to the exhibition "Bernhard Heisig - Die Wut der Bilder") Berlin 2005, 41-50; Maïke STEINKAMP: Die Konstruktion einer "Sozialistischen Kunstgeschichte", in: Das Unerwünschte Erbe, die Rezeption "Entarteter" Kunst in Kunstkritik, Ausstellungen und Museen der SBZ und frühen DDR. Berlin 2008, 338-339

⁸⁶ Kurt MAGRITZ: Die Ideen des Klassischen Humanismus und die Malerei die Deutschen Renaissance, in: Bildende Kunst 4, 1953, 27-37; Ingrid SCHULZE: Das Erbe alter Meister, Sonntag, Nr. 38, 18.09.1977, 6

pioneer of principles, united later under the flag of the Socialist Realism, was marked Albrecht Dürer.⁸⁷ His portrait would be reprinted on the cover of the newly launched magazine *Bildende Kunst* in 1953 and the first theoretical conference on the fine arts in 1952 would help to canonise the position of Dürer in the pantheon of national artists.⁸⁸ Through the means of conscientiously selected quotes and works would he be tweaked and twisted into the Socialist Realism predecessor.⁸⁹ The accentuation of Dürer apparently was one of the tools in the struggle with western imperialism, specifically fitted to undermine the authority and reverence of Grünewald, idolised by Expressionists.⁹⁰ Dürer was seen as the first artist, who successfully merged features of Realism, accurate observation and wish to raise and educate the people in the understanding of beauty.⁹¹

The legacy of the acclaimed German Realists of the 19th century was another greatly promoted inspirational source for the aspiring Socrealists. According to Cay Brockdorff, the German Realist tradition allowed to approximate to the desired Soviet Vorbild, without abandoning the local artistic heritage.⁹² To protect and honour this heritage was also perceived as the superior approach, as compared to the western abandonment of figuration and national artistic values. The Leipzig would become one of the important centres, where the artists would be trained and indoctrinated to employ the style of the Old Masters and were stemmed also a number of purely Socrealist works.⁹³ Hans Mayer-Foreyt, exhibited there a painting, called *Ehrt unsere alten Meister* (1953), inspired by a composition and style of Wilhelm Leibl (1844-1900).⁹⁴ It was Leibl, who together with

⁸⁷ See: BArch, DC 20/21986, Dürer-Ehrung.- 500. Geburtstag von Albrecht Dürer.- Festveranstaltung;

⁸⁸ BA Potsdam, DR 1/5802, Stenographische Mitschrift der Rede Herbert Gutes, Bl. 1. As quoted in Bernd LINDNER: Künstlerbrigade Rammenau. Herber Gute und der Sozialistische Realismus, in: *Deutschland Archiv. Zeitschrift für das vereinigte Deutschland*, 32. Jg. 1999, Heft 2, März/April, 188

⁸⁹ Peter H. FEIST: Die sozialistische Nationalkultur - Erbe der Kultur und Kunst der frühbürgerlichen Revolution, in ULLMANN (E.) ed., *Kunst im Aufbruch...*, Leipzig, 1972, p. 173-189, 964

⁹⁰ E. ULLMANN / G. GRAU / R. BEHREND: Albrecht Dürers Werk – seine Bedeutung für sozialistische Nationalkultur in der DDR, in: *Albrecht Dürer – Zeit und Werk. Eine Sammlung von Beiträgen zum 500. Geburtstag Albrecht Dürers*, Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig 1971, 173-178

⁹¹ GILLEN 2008, 41 Compare: Heinz LÜDECKE and Susanne HEILAND (Eds.): *Dürer und die Nachwelt. Urkunden, Briefe, Dichtungen und Wissenschaftliche Betrachtungen aus vier Jahrhunderten*. Berlin 1955

⁹² Cay BROCKDORFF: Der Realist Wilhelm Leibl, in: *Bildende Kunst*, 2/1953, 20

⁹³ Joachim UHLITZSCH: Leipziger Maler auf der III. Deutschen Kunstausstellung, in *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, 15.3.1953

⁹⁴ *Wilhelm Leibl* (1844-1900), was a German realist painter. From 1864 studied at the München Akademie under

the most prominent representative of the Realist current in Germany – Adolph von Menzel (1815-1905), who was implanted into the directives, articles and speeches and through the promotion served as the role models for young artists.⁹⁵ The interpretation of the Realists as the first social critics, whose goal was to educate the People, either intentionally or unintentionally deformed the true aims of these painters, who in reality were predominantly focused on sharp observation of reality and its perfect and truthful rendition of paintings.⁹⁶

Heroisation of Labour in Sculpture

One of the pillars of the Communist art historical narrative were the social thematics in the 19th century art. The interest in modern life, manifesting in the organic interest of sculptors in the thematics of the working class was on the verge of the 20th century spreading to the eastern parts of Europe and Czechoslovakian artists reacted to it. The following text seeks both to present the organic tradition of socially engaged art as well as the retrospective tendencies of the Communist ideologues, who made use of the alleged parallels between the socially perceived art of the 19th century and ideologically constructed Socrealist art.

The necessity to build the narrative of the national sculpture around the emergence of social thematics in the late 19th century, was bound to the effort to find a suitable early representatives of this tendency. The first among them was František Hergesel junior,⁹⁷ a generational peer of J. V. Myslbek, who, according to Tomeš, as historically first

Carl Theodor von Piloty. He was occupied himself mainly with portraits and scenes of peasant life. His works mirror fascination with Dutch masters and inspiration by Gustave Courbet. For more see: Armin JÜNGLING / Klaus MÜLLER-BRUNKE: Wilhelm Leibl – Bilderreise durch ein Leben. München 1986

⁹⁵ *Adolph von Menzel* (1815-1905), was a German realist painter, together with Caspar David Friedrich considered to be the most notable painter of the 19th century Germany and most successful painter of his time. Studied briefly at the Preußische Akademie der Künste. His versatility together with his large-scale history paintings earned him great recognition at his time. For more see: Anja GREBE: *Menzel, Maler der Moderne*. Berlin 2015

⁹⁶ GILLEN 2008, 49

⁹⁷ *František Hergesel junior* (1857-1929), a Czech sculptor, painter and restorer, author of monumental, usually allegorical sculpture, generational peer to J. V. Myslbek. For more see: František Hergesel, in: Anđeľa HOROVÁ (Ed.) *Nová encyklopedie českého výtvarného umění*. Praha: Academia, 1995. 1103

sculptor took interest in the thematics of the lower classes.⁹⁸ He created a figural composition called *To give water to the thirsty, to satiate the famished* for an almshouse in Prague.⁹⁹ For a *Jubileal Exhibition* in 1891 he created among others *allegories of metallurgy and mining industry*. He earned the greatest distinction in 1900 with his sculpture *Our daily bread*, which was cast in bronze and distinguished by a prize at the *World Exhibition in Paris*.¹⁰⁰ This sculpture was marked by Tomeš as “*the first very important representation of the interest in the social thematics in Czech sculpture,*” which is not to be yet considered as a sign of a conscious socialist perception, nevertheless pointing to the direction of the development toward Socialist Realism.

In order to unravel and accentuate the continuity, the history of European art was examined and freely made use of. The history of France provided some of the most often employed examples of art, relatable to the Communist ideology through the revolutionary or social context. The revolution of 1848 is presented as the watershed moment for the emergence of the new perspective and artists such as Gustave Courbet, and Honoré Daumier are praised as its proponents. Another of the often named instances is the Paris Commune of 1871, highlighted as the first historical instance of the rule of the working class.¹⁰¹ The artists who were influenced by its revolutionary efforts, are marked by the Communist theoreticians as one of the pioneers of the progressive and socially engaged art.¹⁰² They extoll the awakening interest in the life of the common people and praise the diversion from the blunt, academical convention.¹⁰³

As to the French sculptors among the pioneers of the Realist current, they are less often named in the texts on the presuppositions of the Socialist Realism. Javorská mentioned

⁹⁸ TOMEŠ 1954, 2

⁹⁹ Nová encyklopedie českého výtvarného umění. Praha : Academia, 1995, 1103

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.prostor-ad.cz/pruvodce/praha/vuva/kmost/ivo/hergesel.htm> (retrieved 12. 11. 2016)

¹⁰¹ *Gustave Courbet* (1819-1877), a French Painter, foremost personality of the Realist movement. Recognized by the ideologues of the Socrealism as a pioneering figure, see: N. JAVORSKÁ: *Revoluce 1848 a francouzské umění*, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. I., 1950, 137-171; Miroslav MÍČKO: *Courbetův boj za mír*, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. I., 1950, 171; Adolf HOFFMEISTER: *Louis Aragon: Courbetův vzor*, in: *Výtvarné umění* roč. IV., 1954, 128nn
Honoré Daumier (1808-1879), was a French caricaturist, painter, printmaker, and sculptor. Often critical over social and political life in France. For more see: Marcel LECOMTE: *Daumier sculpteur, Les figurines et autres sculptures*. Paris 1979

¹⁰² Jaroslav BOUČEK: *Pařížská komuna v dějinách výtvarného umění*, in: *Výtvarné umění*, 1950, 133 ff.

¹⁰³ N. JAVORSKÁ: *Revoluce 1848 a francouzské umění*, in: *Výtvarné umění*, 1950, 137-171

François Rude as one of the predecessors, who already in the pre-revolutionary France paved the way to the realist expression, who however in his nature still belonged to the transitional stage between Neoclassicism and Romanticism.¹⁰⁴ A French sculptor Jules Dalou, on the other hand, is to be labelled as one of the true representatives of what the theoreticians of Socialist Realism called the “progressive art.” He not only had an interest in the depiction of everyday life, as he proved in his lifelike figures of French peasant women, but also personally participated in the Paris Commune.¹⁰⁵

Dalou was exiled in London, where he took part in the constitution of an art movement New Sculpture, occupied with the revitalization of British sculpture and preference of nature, rather than Academic tradition.¹⁰⁶ After his return to Paris in 1879 he created his most renowned *Triumph of the Republic*, erected in the Place de la Nation.¹⁰⁷ From the perspective of the Communist historiography is the most relevant Dalou's contribution his model for the *Monument to the Workers*.¹⁰⁸ (Fig. 2) This assemblage of thirty-nine figures, representing manual labour professions, is topped by a large figure of sower on a decorated pedestal. The monument was never realized, but it is the first homage to the working class labourers and their contribution to the life of the society in a form of a multi-figural composition.

One of those proponents of the Realist sculpture, who made their way into the Communist historiography of art as a legitimate and a dignified predecessor of Socialist Realism, was Belgian sculptor Constantine Meunier, the first sculptor to project the fascination with the effects of industrialisation into monumental bronze statues.¹⁰⁹ His

¹⁰⁴ JAVORSKÁ 1952, 162

François Rude (1784-1955), a French sculptor, representative of the transitional stage between Neoclassicism and Romanticism, author of the monument to Godefroy Cavaignac, who fought at the barricades in 1830. In its rendition he dropped the classical form in favour of more Realist expression. For more see: Alexis BERTRAND: *Les artistes célèbres : François Rude* (1888). Whitefish 2010

¹⁰⁵ Maurice DREYFOUS: *Dalou, sa vie et son œuvre*. Paris 1903, 26-47

Jules Dalou (1838-1902), A French sculptor, pupil of Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux and one of the most skilled sculptors of Realist expression, exiled in England for the participation in Paris Commune. Refer to: Maurice DREYFOUS: *Dalou, sa vie et son œuvre*. Paris 1903

¹⁰⁶ DREYFOUS 1903, 28-91

¹⁰⁷ *Ibidem*, 82-108

¹⁰⁸ The original French title: *Le Monument aux Travailleurs*

¹⁰⁹ *Constantine Meunier* (1831-1905), was a Belgian sculptor, painter and engraver, pupil of Louis Jehotte and Charles-Auguste Fraikin. Since 1882 professor at the Louvain Academy of Fine Arts. Co-founder of the Société

sculptures and paintings, depicting labourers, miners and workers, are characteristic by their observational and reporter-like effect, at the same time delivering a sense of compassion, heroism and monumentality. As well a J. Dalou, Meunier made a generous project for a *Labour Monument*, but unlike J. Dalou's, his project was realised. After great many obstacles, it was erected in 1930 in Bruxelles.¹¹⁰ (Fig. 3)

The monument is a celebration of the people and its professions of industrial Belgium by the end of the 19th century and is Meunier's true opus magnum, where all his previous efforts are united in a work of exceptional impact. The composition has a rectangular shape. In front of the monument is placed an allegory of maternity, a bronze depicting a woman and her children, symbolizing the future. At the centre of the monument in the axis of Maternity, is elevated larger-than-life figure of the Sower, who personifies the agriculture and the production. At the angles of the composition are placed individual figures: The Ancestor, old man representing the past and the tradition, The Miner for the coal mines and The Blacksmith for the metallurgy. The high-reliefs on the sides, associated with the four elements, represent: L'Industrie (the fire), which depicts workers, Mine (earth), which represents miners at a coal seam; The Harvest (the air) that embodies a family harvesting; The Port (water) that shows dockworkers at work.

Both the reliefs and bronzes are treated in the realist style, giving an impression of strength, hardness and dignity. Meunier personally witnessed horrific working conditions of the workers in the industrial areas, and was not unaffected by the suffering. Whereas in many of his smaller-size works would compassion and profound sympathy towards the subjects of his sculptures result in a compassion arousing expression, in the case of monuments Meunier resolved to make the miserable the heroes of his time, endowing the depicted with monumentality and a sense of greater purpose.

Also in Germany would Meunier's example have a profound role and would help to

Libre des Beaux-Arts. Refer to: C. LEMONNIER: Constantin Meunier, sculpteur et peintre, Paris 1904; Walther GENSEL: Constantin Meunier. Bielefeld 1907; André FONTAINE: Constantin Meunier. Paris 1923; P. BAUDSON: Les trois vies de Constantin Meunier, Bruxelles, 1979;

¹¹⁰ The original French title: Le Monument au Travail, compare: Erhard FROMMHOLD: Constantin Meuniers Denkmal der Arbeit. Dresden 1954

establish the working thematics into the bronze statue.¹¹¹ The professional public would undoubtedly be familiarised and inspired by Meunier's exhibitions in Vienna (1898) and Dresden (1897). Bernard Hoetger (1874-1949), German Expressionist sculptor, would after 1900 during his Paris stay elaborate upon the subject with his *Rope Puller* (*Der Tauzieher*, 1902), *Coal Bearer* (*Der Kohlenträger*, 1902) with various degree of Rodin influenced surface rendition.¹¹²

Another native sculptor, who would not only set the social and working thematics to the centre of his creative endeavours, but would also get persecuted as a result, was a German sculptor Fritz Koelle.¹¹³ He would author a number of public space statues of manual labour professions, influenced by Meunier and formally close to the Soviet Socialist Realism. *The Iron Rolling Worker* (*Eisenwalzarbeiter*, 1926) or *Rafter at Isa Channel* (*Isarflößer*, 1939) would resemble the Soviet sculpture so explicitly, Koelle's art would be marked as having a "Bolshevik conception", by the Nazi state. This would earn him a prison sentence in the concentration camp in Dachau in 1934 and a professorship promised him at the Munich Academy, was withdrawn. Eventually he would be released, only to be engaged in some state commissions in 1937 and 1942. After the war he was rehabilitated and received a professorship at *the Hochschule für Angewandte Kunst in*

¹¹¹ Katalog: Die Entstehung der modernen Plastik in Deutschland, in: TÜMPEL, Christian (Ed.): Deutsche Bildhauer 1900-1945. Entartet. Zwole 1992

¹¹² *Bernard Hoetger* (1874-1949), was a Dortmund-born German sculptor, painter and handicrafts artist. He studied at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. Predominantly lived and worked in the West of Germany. He is an example of an artist who sympathized with Nazism, joined the party, moved to Berlin only to realize, his Expressionist visions are in opposition to the official art policy. Emigrated to Switzerland. Resided also in France, where he was inspired by August Rodin. The staple of his art is archaic morphology (Mycenae), interest in animal motifs, in different branch of his works he would explore the simplification of form and surface. 1912 he designed buildings and decorations in Böttcherstrasse, Bremen, including the Atlantis House, inspired by the theories of Nazi ethnographer Hermann Wirth. The house was decorated with reliefs and sculptures on the theme of ancient German ancestry, allegedly affiliated to the mythical Atlantis. Inside was the Institute for the Study of German History. For more see: Maria ANCZYKOWSKI (Ed.): Bernhard Hoetger - Skulptur, Malerei, Design, Architektur. Bremen 1998

¹¹³ *Fritz Koelle* (1895-1953), a German sculptor, married to the painter Elisabeth Koelle-Karmann. Renowned for his sculptures of manual labour professions (a miner, block roller, furnace worker), imprisoned in the in the concentration camp in Dachau for his art conception, described as bolshevik. After release he would acquire state commissions within the Nazi state (A Horst-Wessel bust, the Saarbergmann with pitlight, 1937 and the Steinbrecher, 1942). In 1946 was Koelle rehabilitated and in 1950 acquired a professorship at the Applied Arts College in Berlin-Weißensee. For more see: Ursula FRENZEL: Dokumente zu Leben und Werk des Bildhauers Fritz Koelle: (1895 - 1953); 4. Sonderausstellung d. Archivs für Bildende Kunst; (Nationalmuseum Nürnberg, 15. April - 4. Juni 1978)

Berlin-Weißensee.¹¹⁴

Meunier's contribution was not left unnoticed by the Czechoslovakian sculptors and theoreticians, who were familiarised with his work through exhibitions in Vienna (1898) and Dresden (1897), articles with pictures in Czech magazine *Rudé květy*, one print of *Volné směry* was dedicated to him in 1904 and in 1906 Krasoumná jednota hosted an individual exhibition of Meunier's work, compiled as a post mortem collection of his life-work.¹¹⁵ Theoretician Miroslav Míčko in 1954 dedicated an article to the sculptor, where he acclaims Meunier's capacity to express "*indefatigable strength that is in the people, power and pride of these creators of the values of life, robbed of the results of their own creativity, yet not humiliated*".¹¹⁶

Meunier's example left a profound impression on sculptors such as Josef Mařatka, Bohumil Kafka, later on also Karel Pokorný, who at some point of their career drawn inspiration from the source of the life of the peasants and workers.¹¹⁷ The gradually increasing interest in the working class was materialized in *a I. Working-class Exhibition in Prague* (1902), an event that was to promote cultural level of the workers and familiarise Prague citizens with the hard work of the lower classes.¹¹⁸ The sculpture

¹¹⁴ Eva-M. PASCHE: Fritz Koelle – der Gestalter des Arbeiters – Monographie und Werkverzeichnis. Essen 2001, 34

¹¹⁵ The most authoritative text on Meunier, printed in *Volné směry*, was written by classical archaeologist and curator of the sculpture collection at the Albertinum G. Treu, see: Georg TREU: Constantine Meunier. *Volné směry* 1904, 85-104 / Mánes 1905

For a more detailed account on Meunier's reception in ČSR refer to: Ivana JONÁKOVÁ: Sochaři a proletáři, in: Eva BENDOŤ / Ivana JONÁKOVÁ / Roman PRAHL (Eds): Na okraji davu: umění a sociální otázka v 19. století. (Západočeská galerie v Plzni, výstavní síň "13", 21.2.-4.5.2014), Plzeň 2014, 69-79

¹¹⁶ Miroslav MÍČKO: Constantine Meunier. K padesátému výročí jeho úmrtí, in: *Výtvarná práce* 4, roč. 3, 25. 2. 1955, 5

¹¹⁷ This influence is especially pronounced in *The Miner* (Horník, 1928), *The February* (Únor, 1958) and the *Ostrava* (1936) for more on Pokorný's inspiration by C. Meunier see pages 72-73.

Bohumil Kafka (1878-1942), was a Czech academical sculptor, pupil of S. Sucharda at UMRUM, as an assistant took part in the construction of the Monuments to František Palacký (S. Sucharda) and st. Wenceslaus (J.V. Myslbek). In 1904 receives Hlávka's scholarship and travels to Paris, where he becomes member of the Salon d'automne and private artistic Societé l'art et litteraire, with Rodin as its chairman. There he also held his first Paris exhibition. In France he also acquired Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur. Author to many monumental realisations, as well as portraits of E. Beneš, E. Destinová, T. G. Masaryk, B. Smetana, etc.

Selected bibliography: Petr WITTLICH: Bohumil Kafka. Praha 2014

¹¹⁸ Katalog I. dělnické výstavy v Praze (15th August – 8th Semptember 1902) at Pražské výstaviště, Praha 1902

The exhibition analysed by: Eduard BURGET / Milan KUDRYŠ: „Bud' práci čest!“ První dělnická výstava v Praze 1902, in: *Dějiny a současnost* 22, 2000, č. 3, 20-24

attained a respectable place in the hierarchy of the arts at the exhibition – Meuniers head of a miner adorned the catalogue cover.¹¹⁹ Ladislav Šaloun or Stanislav Sucharda here exhibited works, unique with their critical, engaged tone. L. Šaloun exhibited several sculptures of miners and steel workers, pursuing the interest he exhibited in his *Man of work* (Muž práce, 1900), an expression of forlorn and tiresome work.¹²⁰ (Fig. 4) For the newly built Prague gaswork plant Šaloun created so called *Allegory of gaswork* (Alegorie plynárenství, 1926) in the Czechoslovakian environment never appeared a sculptor, who would set the social and working thematics to the centre of his creative endeavours, a number of sculptors on the verge of the century experimented with the new subject.

1908 – 1940

New Classicism and Return to Order

The Neoclassicism, experiencing several revivals well into the 21st century, is in its pure form to be understood as an effort to express sculpture as a human figure of pure shapes and realist form, cleansed of individualist features in order to deliver a timeless impression of eternal beauty.¹²¹ This understanding of sculpture as an allegory of ideal corporeal form, led to perfection in the first decades of the 20th century by Aristide Maillol, helped to form a golden standard of Czechoslovakian sculpture and inspired greatly also the German sculptors. It is therefore not surprising, theoreticians of Socialist Realism valued so highly the traditional approach to the human figure. In their perspective, it delivered the anti-Avantgarde features of comprehensible humanist understanding, purged of all the allegedly bourgeois features of the western artistic currents of Cubism, Expressionism and other –isms.

¹¹⁹ JONÁKOVÁ 2014, 71-72

¹²⁰ WITTLICH 1978, 127

¹²¹ For a detailed account of the Neoclassical revivals see: Allison Lee PALMER: Historical dictionary of neoclassical art and architecture. Lanham 2011, 157

J. V. Myslbek and Adolph von Hildebrand as the first flag bearers of the art history narrative, exceptionally skilled Štursa or Academical sculptor Wilhelm Gerstel as the representatives of the continuity of this narrative – both through their schools generated good adepts to the conversion to regime obliging artists, well versed in the Classical style and therefore methodically and technically apt saturate the demands of the Socialist Realism.¹²²

J. V. Myslbek, the giant of Czech sculpture and professor at the Academy of Arts, whose school had the greatest influence over the sculptural production on the verge of the century, retired in 1919.¹²³ He was replaced by one of his most talented pupils, Jan Štursa (1880-1925),¹²⁴ whose kind, conscientious and encouraging teaching methods influenced a large number of young sculptors, including Jan Lauda, Josef Wagner, Otakar

¹²² *Wilhelm Gerstel* (1879 - 1963) was a German sculptor and medalist of classical, academical style. 1894 he began his training as a stonemason and stone sculptor in Pforzheim, 1898 to 1903 he studied in the sculptor class with Hermann Volz at Akademie der Bildende Kunst in Karlsruhe, where he briefly taught after the war. 1921 moved to Berlin to teach at Kunstgewerbemuseum free sculpture. His pupils were among others were Cay von Brockdorff, Fritz Cremer, Ruthild Hahne, Gustav Seitz and Waldemar Grzimek. He was criticised for his Academism by the representatives of Modern art. For more see: Hans H. HOFSTÄTTER (Ed.): *Wilhelm Gerstel: 1879 - 1963; plast. u. graf. Werk* (Augustinermuseum Freiburg 29. September - 28. Oktober 1979, Städt. Museen Heilbronn, Deutschhof, 1. Febr. bis 9. März 1980). Freiburg 1979

Adolph von Hildebrand (1847-1921), was a leading German sculptor and medal maker of his day. He received his education at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Nürnberg. The instruction in the most fashionable sculptural style he acquired at Kaspar von Zumbusch at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in München and subsequently at Rudolf Siemering in Berlin. His long term residence in Florence, San Francesco, had a profound influence on his artistic understanding, exemplified in his *Wittelsbacher Brunnen in München* (1893-1895). Beside his successful career as a sculptor, Hildebrand would also actively participate in cultural life and authored theoretical work *Das Problem der Form in der Bildenden Kunst*, published in Straßburg 1893. For more see: Sigrid ESCHE-BRAUNFELS: *Adolf von Hildebrand*. Berlin 1993

¹²³ *Josef Václav Myslbek* (1848-1922) was a Czech sculptor and medalist, one of the most remarkable figures of the Czech sculpture in general.

Selected bibliography: Karel Boromejský Mádl: *Jos. V. Myslbek: Sein Leben und seine Werke*, Leipzig 1902, the first monograph of Myslbek, published during his lifetime; Václav Vilém Štech: *J.V. Myslbek*, Praha 1941, translated into German as V.V. Štech, *Josef Václav Myslbek: Der Meister der tschechischen Bildhauerkunst*, 1954 (also translated into English and French); Petr Wittlich, *J.V. Myslbek a odkaz 19. století*, in: *České sochařství ve XX. století*. Nové Město na Moravě, 1978, 13–22; Zora Dvořáková, *Josef Václav Myslbek. Umělec a člověk uprostřed své doby*, Praha 1979

¹²⁴ *Jan Štursa* (1880-1925), a Czech sculptor, one of the founding figures of Czech Modern sculpture. 1904 concluded his studies at AVU as a pupil of J. V. Myslbek. 1916 acquired professorship at AVU. A member of the Czech Academy of Arts and Sciences and Societé Nationale des Beaux Arts in Paris, as well as of the SVU Mánes. Refer to: Petr WITTLICH: *Jan Štursa*. Praha 2008.

Švec, Břetislav Benda, Hana Wichterlová or Bedřich Stefan.¹²⁵ The impact of Štursa on the continuation of the figural tradition is eminent and the pupils who went through his instruction are often called Štursa's school.¹²⁶ Together with his contemporaries he arrived no later than 1908 to the exploration of the recently rehabilitated Classicism, exported from France, where it was resurged by Rodin's pupil Antoine Bourdelle and his generational peer Aristide Maillol.¹²⁷ This new perception of Classicism, stripped of the residues of Academism was reborn as a movement of orderly, architectural construction of statues, with clear shapes and logical composition, grounded solidly on the eternal principles of visual clarity.

In Czechoslovakia promoted by articles of F. X. Šalda,¹²⁸ lively contacts of Czechoslovakian artists with Paris and affirmed by the visiting lecture and exhibition of the highly regarded Bourdelle in 1909.¹²⁹ The impressionist psychologism and melancholical introspectivity of the Fin de siècle production was replaced by the opposite and explored further in the quest for monumental shapes and in the inclination

¹²⁵ *Josef Wagner* (1901-1957), was a Czech sculptor, engraver and illustrator. 1922-1926 studied as a pupil of J. Štursa and J. Mařatka at AVU. Professor at UMPRUM. Proponent of the *taille directe*, sculpted many of his works in limestone or marlite. Raised a generation of modern sculptors Eva Kmentová, Vladimír Janoušek, Miloslav Chlupáč, Zdeněk Palcr or Olbram Zoubek. For more see: Jan TOMĚŠ: *Sochař Josef Wagner*. Praha 1985

For detailed information on *Břetislav Benda* (1897-1983), *Hana Wichterlová* (1903-1990), *Bedřich Stefan* (1896-1982) see note 143 and 144

For detailed informations on *Jan Lada* see note 171, for *Otakar Švec* see note 467

¹²⁶ Petr WITTLICH: *České sochařství ve XX. století*. Nové Město na Moravě, 1978, 185nn

¹²⁷ *Antoine Bourdelle* (1861-1929), a pupil of Jules Dalou and Auguste Rodin, he was a prolific French sculptor. His inspiration with archaic Greek sculpture remains the most distinguishable characteristic of his art. He influenced countless other sculptors, including Czechoslovakian sculptors Otto Gutfreund, Jaroslav Horejc and many others.

For more on the visit in Prague see: FABELOVÁ, Kateřina: Bourdelle a Prague en 1909 et son rapport aux artistes tcheques et a Auguste Rodin, in: *Umění* 57, 2009, č. 4, 364–384; more on the pupils of Bourdelle: STAUBOVÁ, Helena: Bourdelle a jeho žáci Giacometti, Richier, Gutfreund [Ex. cat.] *České muzeum výtvarných umění*. Praha 1999

Aristide Maillol (1861-1944), was a pupil of Jean-Léon Gérôme and Alexandre Cabanel. His mature work is almost exclusively the female nude, elaborated with an emphasis on Classical forms, smooth surface and monumental, fleshy shapes.

For the first monograph of the artist in Czechoslovakia see: Jiří MAŠÍN: *Aristide Maillol*. Praha 1960, followed by Jiří MAŠÍN: *Aristide Maillol: rozhovory o umění*. Praha 1965

¹²⁸ For the first time in: Felix Xaver ŠALDA: Úvod, in: *Moderní francouzské umění, Katalog V. výstavy SVU Mánes (Kinského zahrada 30.8. – 2. 11. 1902)*. Praha 1902; For more on Šalda see note 135

¹²⁹ Petr WITTLICH: E. A. Bourdelle a jeho výstava r. 1909 v Praze, in: *Umění*, 1961, roč. 9, č. 5, 476–484; SVU Mánes published in 1909 on the occasion of Bourdelle's visit to Prague an anthology of his works. For a French account of the Exhibition see: Kateřina FABELOVÁ: Bourdelle a Prague en 1909 et son rapport aux artistes tcheques et a Auguste Rodin, in: *Umění* 57, 2009, č. 4, 364–384

to the classical. A whole generation of artists was attracted to the classical legacy to derive from it their unique individual style, in accordance with the Parisian inspiration.

Jan Štursa's contribution to the new quest for timeless form was a significant one and influenced many of his pupils and followers. Štursa's early works, characterized by inclination to the thence prevalent sense of lyricism and melancholy, marked his first period of highly esteemed production, peaking with the psychological, yet impressionist *Puberty* (Puberta, 1905) and iconic *Melancholic Girl* (Melancholická dívka, 1906).¹³⁰ The new direction in his creative effort went hand in hand with an important career advancement - his recently acquired position as an assistant of J. V. Myslbek at the Academy of Arts in Prague in 1908.¹³¹ From thence he could direct more of his attention to public sculpture - of architecture bound sculpture and monuments.

In 1908 he took part in the decoration of *Pavillion of Trade and Industry at the Anniversary Exhibition of the Chamber of Commerce and Trade* (1908), where he made use both of his travel excursions and current parisian impulses to deliver archaic stylisation of figures, quite in accordance with contemporary return to primitivism and ancient Greece inspiration.¹³² The artistic vision was, according to theoretician Miloš Marten, Štursa's generational peer, to be the result not only of passive lyrical impression, but also of active expression of the essence of life and beauty.¹³³ The same message of modern primitivism and pursuit of the universal beauty, embodied in a solidly build, steady figure of a slightly larger than life-size bronze, also declared Štursa's quest for synthetical stylisation in his *Eve* (Eva, 1908).¹³⁴

F. X. Šalda's contrariety to the surge of Avantgardist current in the artistic scene mirrored in several articles in *Národní listy* and his text, called *Neoclassicism*, published in 1912.¹³⁵ His theories and subsequent stylistic suggestions were often compatible to

¹³⁰ For more on Jan Štursa see note 124

¹³¹ Petr WITTLICH: Jan Štursa. Praha 2008, 83

¹³² WITTLICH 2008, 83

(CZ) Pávilon obchodu a průmyslu na Jubilejní výstavě Obchodní a živnostenské komory

¹³³ Miloš MARTEN: Imprese a řád. Praha 1983, 80. Cited in: WITTLICH 2008, 83

¹³⁵ *František Xaver Šalda* (1867-1937) was an influential Czech public figure of cultural scene, literary critic, writer and journalist, co-author of the Czech Moderna Manifesto. Since 1925 editor-in-chief of the magazine *Tvorba*,

Štursa's artistic efforts at the time, such as is seen in his greatly acclaimed *Resting Dancer* (Tanečnice, 1913), following series of Štursa's intimate young girl nudes in refined, sensual positions, which is masterly contribution to the classical perspective. His mature works, characteristic with voluminous shapes and monumental effect were motivated by his own endeavour to find the most fitting expression to his visions of an empowered human figure. This goal was accomplished in the multi-figural composition for the Hlávka's bridge, two six-figured sculptures presented *Work* and *Humanity* (Práce a humanita, 1913), exhibiting Štursa's thence maturing ability to deliver a monumental impression through the means of voluminous shapes of robust figures. (Fig. 5) Their characteristic heftiness and tense, muscular vigour, combined with rather natural detail and plastically rendered volumes reminds of Bourdelle, yet does not depart from the basic tenets of the New Classicism.¹³⁶

Albeit active for the most part of his career already after the 1900, Jan Štursa is readily accepted by Communist theoreticians as Myslbek's successor in the tradition of realist sculpture.¹³⁷ He is called his greatest pupil and follower, who contributed to the preservation of the worthiest characteristics of the “national style.”¹³⁸ The Zbraslav collection accentuated for obvious reasons the most conservative examples of his work, intentionally creating an evolutionary line from his early works to the peak of his creativity, where he allegedly “*understood artistic effort as the highest cultural service to the People and to the Nation and found in himself a profound resource of objectiveness.*”¹³⁹

Štursa's short, yet fruitful career brought beside the Hlávka's bridge statues some works, that could have been used for the reconstruction of Štursa's career as a predecessor and

after 1937 of so-called Šaldův zápisník. He published mainly essays on art, literature and culture in general, poems and political journalism. The essays, relevant to the subject of this dissertation are especially: F.X ŠALDA: Mor pomníkový, in: Šaldův zápisník 1, 1928, č.1, 265-269; ŠALDA, F. X.: Básnický typ Jiřího Wolkra. Šaldův Zápisník 1, 1928–1929, č. 5/6, 174–187; For more on Šaldův's contribution of the culture of the followed period see: František GÖTZ: F. X. Šalda. Praha 1994

¹³⁶ Compare to: Petr WITTLICH: Jan Štursa. Praha 2008, 114

¹³⁷ Jiří HLUŠIČKA: České sochařství 1900 – 1950 ze sbírek Moravské galerie v Brně. Katalog výstavy, Brno Leden-Srpen. Brno 1977, 5-6; Anna MASARYKOVÁ: České sochařství XIX. a XX. století, in: Národní galerie, pátý díl. Praha 1963, 34-35; Jan TOMEŠ: Sběrka českého sochařství k otevření výstavy Národní galerie na Zbraslavi, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 2, 1954, č. 20, 1-2; Antonín PELC: Naše sochařství, věrno slavné tradici, in: Výtvarná práce, č. 21, 1952

¹³⁸ TOMEŠ 1954, 2

¹³⁹ Ibidem, 2

pioneer of Socialist realism. Not only he employed several times motive of working people. He participated in the pre-war contest for the equestrian *statue of Jan Žižka z Trocnova*, one of the most popular figures of the Communist history perspective.¹⁴⁰ He also devised a model for the *Monument to the Peasant Revolt in Dolní Újezd* (1914), figure of the exaggerated muscularity of the determined fighter for freedom, rather too mass heavy to be considered a model for the Socrealists, yet at least thematically suitable.¹⁴¹ Also Štursa's post-war monument *The Burial in the Carpathian Mountains* surely helped Štursa's implementation into the official narrative of the history of sculpture, for with its clear, smooth volumes it points to the future development.

The modified narrative of Štursa's artistic contribution allowed Štursa to join the pantheon of extolled artists. The extent of his distinction is to be judged by the frequency with which is he mentioned in the magazines and art historical articles. Another evidence of his merit is to be derived from a note on the reproduction of famous works of art in the magazine *Výtvarná práce*. Štursa's best known works are mentioned together with Myslbek's, as to be replicated in cheap copies for the universal enjoyment and instruction of the masses.¹⁴²

Even in the 1930's Štursa's ethos was not to be so easily forgotten - it mirrored in the works of Karel Lidický, Josef Kubíček or Karel Kotrba, who maintained in the core of their artistic creativity the classically rendered female nude. Another of Štursa's pupils, born on the verge of the 20th century, namely Mary Durasová, Břetislav Benda, Hana Wichterlová or Bedřich Stefan,¹⁴³ also exhibited sustained interest in the employment of

¹⁴⁰ For more on Žižka's monuments see chapter *National Monument at Prague Vítkov Hill*

¹⁴¹ WITTLICH 2008, 120-121

¹⁴² ANONYM, Reprodukce plastik našich klasiků, in: *Výtvarná práce* roč. III, č.1, 1954, 7

¹⁴³ For more on Karel Lidický see note 458

Mary Duras together with Hana Wichterlová and Marta Jirásková were the first women to study at the Academy of Arts as pupils of Jan Štursa. Internationally active artist, who emigrated twice from Czechoslovakia. Representative of figural tradition.

Břetislav Benda (1897-1983), was a Czech sculptor, pupil of J. V. Myslbek and J. Štursa. From 1923 member of the SVU Mánes. One of the followers of Štursa's neoclassical legacy, who employed the classical form in a series of female nudes and belongs to the distinguished sculptors of the 20th century. For more see: Jiří KOTALÍK: *Břetislav Benda: přehled sochařovy tvorby*. Praha 1982, 68; Ilona KRBCOVÁ: *Břetislav Benda, Sochař republiky*. Praha 2015, 76-100

Hana Wichterlová (1903-1990), pupil of J. Štursa, one of the most distinguished artists of Avantgarde between the wars, who was inspired by Constantine Brancusi, but engaged also in cubism or neo-classicism. From 1931

neoclassical perspective, even in the 1930's - albeit in the 1920's the Gutfreund's example led many to temporarily explore the Social Civilism. In many a case their contributions yielded valuable results with a varying degree of versatility and individualism.¹⁴⁴

Otakar Španiel (1881 – 1955),¹⁴⁵ was another of proponents of the New Classicism, whose attention was diverted from the painterly impressionism, apparent in his medal works of 1906-1910. Being stationed in Paris, he found his way from the intimate lyricism through the influence of Antoine Bourdelle and Charles Despieu. One of the finest examples of this transformation is a *portrait of Antonín Matějček* (1910). From thence distinct contours, and clearly defined volume plays the key note in his portrait reliefs and busts, where are also to be found motives of distinctively organized drapery, inspired by Bourdelle.¹⁴⁶ Another Štursa's generational peer, who fully embraced the Neoclassicism and projected his creativity, especially into portraits and nudes, was *Ladislav Beneš* (1883-1956).¹⁴⁷

However, the new tendency was not only appropriated by the perceptive young artists, but also by the older generation representatives. The humanism of the neoclassical formula rendered it convenient for the employment in architecture bound decorative

member of the SVU Mánes. For more see: Eva JŮZOVÁ / Michal JŮZA (Eds). *Sochařka Hana Wichterlová. Galerie výtvarného umění v Litoměřicích*. 2000

Bedřich Stefan (1896-1982), was a Czech sculptor and medal maker, pupil of Josef Drahoňovský, Bohumil Kafka, Otakar Španiel and Jan Štursa, husband to Hana Wichterlová. In 1924 became co-worker of Otto Gutfreund, was skilled both in abstract, Cubist inspired sculptures, as well as in the more tradition figurative expression. For more see: Jiří ŠETLÍK: *Bedřich Stefan*. Praha 1961

¹⁴⁴ *Mary Duras* (1898-1982), was a German speaking sculptor active in Czechoslovakia, with two years of studies in Dresden to her advantage, whose understanding of monumental shape was convincing even in the small scale figures of terracota. Her capacity to render a two-figured composition, such as in her series of *Two Girls* (1932), a harmonious unity of closed form and harmony of horizontal and vertical, is one of her distinctive features. For more see: Ivo HABÁN: *Mary Duras*. Řevnice 2014

¹⁴⁵ *Otakar Španiel* (1881 – 1955), a significant Czech sculptor, wood carver and medalist. 1901 graduated from the Vienna Academy of Medals at prof. Josef Tautenhayn, 1902-1904 a pupil of J. V. Myslbek at AVU. 1917 professor at UMPRUM, 1918 at AVU. 1902 - 1949, he was a member of the Mánes Fine Artists Association, in 1919 became as his chairman. Appreciated especially for his medal making skills. For more on Španiel, as perceived year after his death see: Jiří MAŠÍN: *Otakar Španiel: 1881-1955: životní dílo: (exhibition catalogue)* Prague, September-October 1956

¹⁴⁶ WITTLICH 1998, 321-322

¹⁴⁷ *Ladislav Beneš* (1883-1956), pupil of S. Sucharda and C. Klouček, member of the „Umělecká beseda“ and the SVU Mánes. Representative of the sculptural Cubism, also created monumental works. His distinctive subject were figures dancing.

sculpture and influenced the Symbolist sculptor Josef Mařatka (1874-1937),¹⁴⁸ who created monumental sculptures for the façade of the New Town Hall (1911), gigantic figures of markedly Classicist countenance.¹⁴⁹

In DDR the narrative and anchor to the emerging “SBZ art history” begins with the personality of Adolph von Hildebrand (1847-1921) and followers of the Neoclassical tendency. The return to figuration after the division of Germany would be in the Eastern part determined by the need to overshadow and oust out the Avantgarde tendencies, especially the influential Expressionism. Therefore the late 1940's and early 1950's would in SBZ be mostly dedicated to the extollation of the classical heritage in Hildebrand, mirrored also in his followers and independent representatives of Neoclassicism, such as Karl Albiker, Georg Kolbe, Wilhelm Gerstel, who in turn were teachers to the Socrealist sculptors of the next generation, such as Heinrich Drake, Eugen Hoffmann, Fritz Cremer, Gustav Seitz or Ruthild Hahne.¹⁵⁰

Adolph von Hildebrand (1847-1921), would in many a respect parallel J. V. Myslbek, as he would also strive for renewal of statutory principles in the figural sculpture, initiated a new current and through his adherence to the essentials of sculptural profession would become a role-model for many direct and indirect followers.¹⁵¹ At times of neo-baroque flourishing, represented especially by sumptuous multifigural compositions of his Munich-based teacher Caspar von Zumbusch, he would pioneer the return to the canon and order, inspired by the Italian Renaissance.¹⁵²

The newly found interest in the classical understanding of sculpture would yet again

¹⁴⁸ *Josef Mařatka* (1874-1937), pupil of C. Klouček and subsequently J. V. Myslbek, member of the SVU Mánes. Briefly worked in the Auguste Rodin's studio. Worked in the Symbolist and Art Nouveau style. For more refer to: Anna MASARYKOVÁ: *Josef Mařatka*. Praha 1958; Jaromír PEČÍRKA: *Josef Mařatka*. Praha 1942

¹⁴⁹ Petr WITTLICH: *Sochařství před první světovou válkou*, in: PETRASOVÁ, Dagmar / LORENZOVÁ, Helena: *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění*. IV/1, 1890-1938. Praha 1998

¹⁵⁰ For more on Eugen Hoffmann see note: 474; for Fritz Cremer see note: 471; Gustav Seitz see note: 624; for Ruthild Hahne see note: 476

Peter H. FEIST: *Plastik in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*. Dresden 1965, 10

¹⁵¹ For more on Adolph von Hildebrand see note 122

¹⁵² *Caspar von Zumbusch* (1830-1915), was a German sculptor and medal maker, active mainly in Austria. Studied at Polytechnische Schule in München under Johann von Halbig. After a study trip to Rome, 1866 – 1872 he created the bronze memorial of King Maximilian II of Bavaria in München. From 1873 onwards he worked in Viennawhere he would execute notable monuments: Beethoven Monument (1873-1880) and the Monument to Maria Theresa (1888). For more see: Maria KOLISKO: *Kaspar von Zumbusch*. Wien 1931

find a wide following. The majority would dedicate their efforts to the eternal subject of human nude, portrait and increasingly often also biologically accurate elaboration of either individual or human accompanied animal statues. Beside Hildebrand's pupils such as Theodor Georgii, Hermann Hahn, who would follow their master in his key principles, also Louis Tuaillon would revive the dignified and classical as guiding principle of their public sculpture.¹⁵³ The neoclassical public sculpture of the day would encompass stern, monumental giants of Hugo Lederer, over muscular male nudes by Georg Kolbe, Fritz Klimsch, Karl Albiker to the animal sculptures by August Gaul, Philipp Harth, Renée Sintenis or Fritz Wrampe.¹⁵⁴ Some artists would venture to search for a fusion of neoclassical and modern principles, such as Wilhelm Lehmbruck with his

¹⁵³ For more on the Hildebrand's pupils Theodor Georgii, Hermann Hahn see: Birgit JOOSS: Die Münchner Bildhauerschule. Figürliches Arbeiten im Zeichen der Tradition, in: Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums. Nürnberg 2010, 135 – 169

Louis Tuaillon (1862-1919), Tuaillon was a distinguished German sculptor, medal maker and professor. 1879-1881 attended the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Berlin. 1882-1883 assisted in a workshop of the sculptor Reinhold Begas 1884-1885 resided in Vienna and was employed in the workshop of Rudolf Weyr. 1886-1903 lived in Rome, where he arrived to his characteristic style in depiction of athletic nudes and animals. In 1906 returned to Germany, where he would participate in the public life by joining board of Deutsche Künstlerbund and in 1906 becoming a professor at Berliner Kunstakademie, having his own sculpture atelier. In 1912 he acquired Order Pour Le Mérite. Tuaillon belonged to the pioneers of the Berlin school, one of the best recognised representative of the classic approach to sculpture. For more see: Gert-Dieter ULFERTS: Louis Tuaillon: (1862 - 1919), Berliner Bildhauerei zwischen Tradition und Moderne. Berlin 1993

¹⁵⁴ *Fritz Klimsch* (1870-1960), was a German sculptor and medal maker, member of the Klimsch artist family and brother to painter Paul Klimsch. He studied at Königlich Akademischen Hochschule für die bildenden Künste in Berlin under Fritz Schaper. In 1898 was he the founding member of the Berliner Secession. 1912 was Klimsch awarded the membership at Preußischen Akademie der Künste. During the Third Reich was Klimsch highly regarded and important commissions were ascribed to him, such as the Mozart-Denkmal für Salzburg. Inspired by R. Begas in his early career, he transitioned to the influence of A. Hildebrand to the later also to A. Lehmbruck. For more see: Sophia DIETRICH (Ed.) Die Bildhauer August Gaul und Fritz Klimsch: (Ausstellung "Die Bildhauer August Gaul und Fritz Klimsch" im Museum Giersch in Frankfurt a.M. vom 3. Oktober 2010 bis 30. Januar 2011) Petersberg 2010

s

Karl Albiker (1878-1961), was a German sculptor and lithographer. Received his education at Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Karlsruhe, 1899 - 1900 he attended the studio of Antoine Bourdelle and the Académie Julian in Paris. In 1919 appointed a professor at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Dresden. A member of the Badisches Secession, founded in 1927 and the Neue Münchener Secession. During the Third Reich he would belong to the author of monumental public sculpture, including the sculptures for the Berlin Reichsportsfeld. For more see: Sigrid WALTHER: Karl Albiker: 1878 - 1961; Plastik - Zeichnung; (Ausstellung 9. November 1996 bis 5. Januar 1997 im Georgenbau des Dresdner Schlosses) Dresden 1996

August Gaul (1869-1921), was a German sculptor and medal maker. 1884 was a pupil at Königlich-preußischen Zeichenakademie in Hanau. In 1888 relocated to Berlin to apprentice in the atelier of Alexander Calandrell. As a contemporary of A. Hildebrandt and Louis Tuaillon, he would at first work under the style of Reinhold Begas, whom he assisted with the elaboration of lions sculptures for Kaiser-Wilhelm-Denkmal, after his stay in Italy 1897-1898 he leaned towards the Classical form, an artist of interim stage between historicism and modern art. Gaul would created a largely varied group of animal sculptures, ranging from bissons, boars, but also ducks and asses to lions and eagles. For a relevant bibliographical resource see note 153.

elegantly elongated figures or Symbolist Max Klinger, who would introduce coloured marble and new perspective of female portrait, departing eventually from the classical.¹⁵⁵

The power and masculine dynamism would predestine especially G. Kolbe, F. Klimsch and K. Albiker, to become one of the „Gottbegnadeten“ artists under the Nazi regime, as they would most successfully deliver in their sculptures the strength and dominance of the Aryan race, a staple of Nazi ideology.¹⁵⁶ Flirt with the Nazi regime would later on cast shadow on many East German artists, who were not so unwilling to meet the demands of the newly established Socialist state. Arguably the willingness to embrace the Socialism would be valued higher than immaculate past. Had some of the former Third Reich artists exhibit satisfactory results in the style of Socialist Realism, the controversial parts of their curriculum would be simply omitted.

Many critical voices would be raised in the early years of the DDR establishment, pointing out the uncanny similarity of the counter-progressive, obsolete Socialist Realism to the high Nazi art. The similarity lay not only in the neo-classical form, but also in the unsettling pressure, imprinted into the sculptures, serving the desire of the regime to raise and educate the New Man. The endeavour to make the public space sculpture, regardless whether allegorical figures of workers, soldiers and families or monument sculptures, to express the key ideological points through the formal language of neoclassicism, would in any situation fail entirely. It could be argued that Neoclassicism does not attempt to deliver the impression of psychologisation or introspection, and therefore it is impossible to achieve with it any sense of heroism. This was apparently understood by the theoreticians of Socialist Realism as well, by their insistence on the implementation of the sense of “revolutionary romanticism” in the works of art. At that moment the neoclassical formula is transformed into an entirely different concept.

¹⁵⁵ Franz Roh: *Geschichte der Deutschen Kunst von 1900 bis zum Gegenwart*. Munich 1958, 9-26; Dietrich SCHUBERT: *Deutsche Bildhauer 1900-1933*, in: *Weltkunst: Zeitschrift für Kunst und Antiquitäten* 47 (1977), 15. März, 546-547

Wilhelm Lehmbruck (1881-1919), was a German sculptor, studied at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf and was influenced by Auguste Rodin. His work mirrors also Naturalist and Expressionist tendencies. For more see: Hans-Peter WIPPLINGER (Ed.): *Wilhelm Lehmbruck : Retrospektive*. Köln 2016

¹⁵⁶ (DE) Gottbegnadeten

Social Art in Sculpture as Alleged Precursor of Socialist Realism

This chapter is dedicated to the emerging focus on the human figure as an entity, grounded in its social environment and utilitarian transformation of this tendency into the prerequisite of the Socialist Realism. Surge of interest in the social thematics after 1914, relatable to the gruesome experience of the First World War as well as to the later crisis of Avantgarde, had the core principle in the focus on motives, thematic and contentual orientation and gradual abandonment of the exclusive preoccupation with the form experiment. The everyday aspects of life, railway stations, suburban areas with their murky courtyards, staircases and windows, the poetics of the ordinary world in 1920's and 1930's find solid ground in the artistic efforts of the new generation, resulting in art currents such as Social Civilism, activities of Skupina 42 in Czechoslovakia and Neue Sachlichkeit in Germany.¹⁵⁷ The whole category of Social Art eventually acquired even broader meaning, as it incorporated civilist, socially critical and observational art.

The elevated interest in the everyday life and the outspoken critique of the inequality, poverty and bleakness of life in the industrial suburbs initiated an episode in Czechoslovakian and East German art, highly relevant for the ideologues of Socialist Realism.¹⁵⁸ The retrospective into art history was integral to the effort to find a justification and artificially construct the genesis of the Socialist Realism.¹⁵⁹ Certain artists, who dedicated their efforts to the Social art, such as Käthe Kollwitz, would be explicitly chosen for their relevance and deformed to fit into the official narrative of the revolutionary art history.

¹⁵⁷ For more on Skupina 42 see: Eva Petrová (Ed.): Skupina 42. Praha 1998; For a more recent contribution to the subject see: Marie KLIMEŠOVÁ: Věci umění, věci doby - Skupina 42. Řevnice 2011

¹⁵⁷ For detailed account of the Neue Sachlichkeit (The New Objectivity) as an artistic movement see: Sabina BECKER: Neue Sachlichkeit. (A Dissertation at Universität des Saarlandes, 1997) Köln 2000; For a wider picture of the post-Expressionist art, written in English see: Dennis CROCKETT: German Post-Expressionism: the Art of the Great Disorder 1918-1924. Pennsylvania 1999

¹⁵⁸ Miroslav LAMAČ: Pracující člověk v českém umění dvacátých let, in: Výtvarné umění 1954, roč. IV., 337

¹⁵⁹ The Social Art was in the fifties addressed especially by: Jiří KOTALÍK: K problematice umění dvacátých let XX. století, in: Výtvarné umění IV., Svaz československých výtvarných umělců, 1954

One of the watershed moments, impacting profoundly the sphere of Czech sculpture in the first years of the existence of the independent Czechoslovakian republic, was the untimely death of J. Štursa, who died tragically in 1925, only three years after his teacher J. V. Myslbek. The abrupt loss of the two prominent figures struck the realm of Czech sculpture. This era brought an unprecedented surge of interest in social thematics, both in literature and fine arts.¹⁶⁰ This upturn reflected in painting, sculpture and graphics, mirroring development in literature and becoming one of the rare examples of a universal artistic current.¹⁶¹ At the core of the Social art after the 1920's stood painters Jan Rambousek, Karel Holan, Pravoslav Kotík, Miloslav Holý and sculptors Otto Gutfreund, Jan Lauda, Karel Kotrba, Josef Kubíček and Otakar Walter.¹⁶²

Also Karel Pokorný would employ the Social perspective and one of his early successes, was an individual work of art, elaborated shortly after the conclusion of his studies with J.V. Myslbek, called *A Row for Bread* (*Fronta na chleba*, 1916).¹⁶³ The relief shows a row of famished men, women and children, waiting to receive a share of bread. The quiet resignation and exhaustion, mirroring in the postures of the figures of elderly women, delivered in sketchy, yet realistic form, shows efficiently authors compassion and

¹⁶⁰ Jaroslav SEDLÁŘ: Sociální umění dvacátých let v Brně, in: Padesát vítězných let: sborník prací z vědecké konference filosofické fakulty University J. E. Purkyně k 50. výročí vzniku Komunistické strany Československa. Brno: Universita J.E. Purkyně, 1973, 151-155

¹⁶¹ For a Socialist perspective and anthology on working class poets see: Miroslav FLORIÁN / Jiří BRABEC: Moderní čeští básníci: Stanislav K. Neumann, Karel Toman, Josef Hora, Konstantin Biebl, Jiří Wolker, Vítězslav Nezval, František Halas, Jaroslav Seifert, Vilém Závada, František Hrubín. Praha 1960

¹⁶² Fedor SOLDAN: Sociální umění. Praha 1980, 10;

For more on the Social group (originally called Ho Ho Ko Ko) see: Vojtěch LAHODA: Civilismus, primitivismus a sociální tendence v malířství dvacátých a třicátých let, in: Dagmar PETRASOVÁ/ Helena LORENZOVÁ: Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V., 1939-1958. Praha 2005

Jan Rambousek (1895-1976), a Czech painter, at AVU pupil of J. Preisler and V. Nechleba, 1921-1922 on a scholarship of French government at Paris Ecole des Beaux Arts. Later assistant at M. Švabinský and F.T. Šimon. Active mainly as an illustrator and journalist for Czech press and publications. For a bibliography see: SOLDAN 1980

Karel Holan (1893-1953), a Czech painter, graphic designer and figuralist, at AVU pupil of V. Bukovac, M. Pirner and K. Krattner. Member of SVU Mánes, later on of SVU Myslbek. Helped to provide theoretical background for the Social group. For a bibliography see: SOLDAN 1980

Pravoslav Kotík (1889-1970), a Czech painter, graphic designer. Studied at UMRUM by E. Dítě, K. Mašek aj. Schikaneder. Member of SVU Mánes and Umělecká beseda. Experimented with modern art currents, including fauvism, expressionism, cubism and neoclassicism. For a bibliography see: SOLDAN 1980

Miloslav Holý (1897-1974), a Czech graphic designer and figuralist, at AVU pupil of V. Bukovac, J. Obrovský, J. Preisler. Member of SVU Mánes and Umělecká beseda. 1947–1958 professor at AVU 1950–1954 also rector of the institution. Awarded with titles of Distinguished artist (1964) and also Order of work (1967). For a bibliography see: SOLDAN 1980

¹⁶³ Jiří KOTALÍK: Karel Pokorný a jeho škola. Praha 1983, 25

concern. The same heaviness and exhaustion, provoking unease in the observer is achieved in his *Monument to the Fallen* (Památník padlým, 1920), placed in the st. Vitus Cathedral.¹⁶⁴ Relief depicts a single figure of an elderly woman in a barren countryside, who in the form of her dignified figure reminds of early Renaissance relief, at the same time leveraging the primitivism tendencies. The desired effect of the relief, inciting in the spectator the contemplation of the human sacrifice in the quest for freedom of the nation, is convincingly delivered.

One of the subcategories of Social Art, distinctive in the Czech environment and having no direct parallel in European sphere, was the so-called Social civilism.¹⁶⁵ Although having no substantial influence over the European art, this Czechoslovakian contribution was an integral part of the contemporary effort to seek a way out of the crisis of art. The originality of this style, sometimes underestimated as mere genre, was characteristic by inclination to distinct eclecticism and simplification, smooth shapes and naivety. The style allowed to express optimism and positive expectations of the newly established Czechoslovakian republic, celebrating interpersonal relations and everyday subjects. The enthusiasm and vivacious expansion of national culture provided ample opportunities to give the artistic capacity to the service of the rehabilitated culture.

The pioneer of this original approach was Otto Gutfreund, who dealt with the trauma of the world war by turning to simplicity and searching for the roots of the world and divinity by employing humble and modest forms.¹⁶⁶ After coming back from Paris, where he spent some time as a pupil of Antoine Bourdelle, he developed an unparalleled and unique artistic style, employing almost genre-like motives, encountered in the daily life, often using glazed ceramics as a medium. His civilist expression found its way into a series of portrait busts and depictions of work, where the figures are often equipped

¹⁶⁴ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Karel Pokorný: výbor z díla. Praha 1971. nepag.

¹⁶⁵ For more on Social Civilism see: Vojtěch LAHODA: Devětsil a sociální civilismus. Umění 1987

¹⁶⁶ *Otto Gutfreund* (1889 – 1927), was a distinguished Czech sculptor of international renown. 1905-1909 studied at UMRUM. 1909-1910 studied at Antoine Bourdelle. 1926 attained professorship at UMRUM. Best known especially for his Cubist sculptures, in the context of this study noted for his pioneering role in the Social Civilism. For more see: Jiří ŠETLÍK: *Otto Gutfreund – Zázemí tvorby*. Praha 1989; Jiří ŠETLÍK (ed.): *Otto Gutfreund, (Exhibition catalogue) Národní galerie v Praze, 1995-1996*; Michal NOVOTNÝ: *Jistý pan G.* Praha 2000 Richard WEINER: *Vzpomínka na Gutfreunda*, in: *Volné směry: Měsíčník umělecký*. č. 25 (1927-1928), 172-174

with tools or machines. His best known Social Civilist works include *Autoportrait* (Autoportrét, 1919), *Man at the Selfactor* (Muž u selfektoru, 1921), group sculptures *Trade and Industry* (Obchod a průmysl, 1923), in a decorative relief also in the *Homecoming of the Legions* (Návrat Legií do vlasti, 1921) for the building of the Prague Legiobank.¹⁶⁷ (Fig. 6)

After the premature death of J. Štursa, many of his pupils followed Gutfreund's lead and experimented with the style of Social Civilism - one of the limited options in the after-war period that would allow them to engage in the revival of the art scene.¹⁶⁸ The Social Civilism was with variable commitment and individual insight employed by Otakar Švec, Jan Lauda, Karel Kotrba, Bedřich Stefan, Karel Pokorný, Břetislav Benda, Vincenc Makovský, Josef Jiříkovský, Josef Kubíček, Otakar Walter and others.¹⁶⁹ Among these predominantly figural sculptors were many of those, who later on joined the union of the Socrealist artists.

The sculptors of Social Civilism took interest in a wide array of everyday subjects. The choice of subject and rendition, together with the premeditated purpose of the work would determine, whether it would remain in the realm of trivial genre, or would venture to express more profound, socially critical subject. As is the rule of thumb with the sculpture of the preceding centuries, the smaller scale works are more suitable medium for experiments and offers more substantial material to the analysis of the developmental currents than public sculpture, often commissioned and therefore restricted in the sense of artistic freedom. Otakar Švec mirrored contemporary fascination with speed and motorism in his celebrated bronze *Beam* (Paprsek, 1924), Karel Pokorný expressed his concern for the miserable in his socially critical *Memorial to*

¹⁶⁷ WITTLICH 1978, 128-129

For more on Gutfreund and his Social Civilism period see: Viktor NIKODÉM: Souborná výstava soch. díla Otty Gutreunda. Praha: SVU Mánes 1948; Václav ERBEN: Gutfreundův civilismus, in: Otto Gutfreund. Praha, Národní galerie 1995

¹⁶⁸ Karel SRP: Sochařství dvacátých a třicátých let. In: DČSVU, Praha, Academia, 1998

¹⁶⁹ SOLDAN 1980, 81-84

For detailed informations on the individual artists see their biographical notes: Otakar Švec note 468, Jan Lauda note 171, Karel Kotrba note 176, Bedřich Stefan note 143, Josef Jiříkovský and Otakar Valter note 183, Josef Kubíček note 186

the Buried Miners (Pomník zasypaným havířům, 1925) and *Soil* (1928).¹⁷⁰ The majority of the works of Social Civilism is dedicated to the depiction of manual labour professions: mine workers and steel workers, potters, founders, working-class women such as seamstresses or destitute mothers.

Jan Lauda, pupil of Jan Štursa, a renowned sculptor, who became eventually a professor at AVU, was one of the authors, whose life work contains a substantial number of works in Social Civilism style, shared since 1921 atelier with Otto Gutfreund.¹⁷¹ Aside from that, or perhaps due to this intense connection, these men shared common perspectives in their artistic world-view. Lauda was the author of some of the most remarkable examples of the Social Civilism. One of his most positively received works was *the Washer* (Myčka, 1923), one of his earliest mature works. (Fig. 7) This touching depiction of hard work, the figure of a woman, which in a rigid posture brushes the floor, was praised highly not only by his teacher J. Štursa, but is considered to be one of the finest examples of the socially engaged art of the twenties.¹⁷² Also Otakar Švec yielded to the temptation of Social civilism with his most notorious work *Motocyclist/Beam*, (Motocyklista/Paprsek, 1924) where he employed the fascination with speed and motorcycles to create a bold and dynamical statue.¹⁷³ The figure of a motorcyclist driving fast to a bend, was executed in smooth and eclectic shapes, giving way to the

¹⁷⁰ Petr WITTLICH: Otakar Švec. Praha 1959, 6

Jiří KOTALÍK: Karel Pokorný a jeho škola. Praha 1983, 9

For an account of Pokorný's social art see: Václav PROCHÁZKA: K tvůrčímu přínosu Karla Pokorného sociálnímu umění dvacátých let, rukopisný sborník k šedestým narozeninám Jiřího Mašína. Praha 1983

¹⁷¹ Jan Lauda (1898-1959), was a Czech academical sculptor, professor at AVU and UMPRUM. Born in Prague as a son of bank attendant. His first experience with the craft of sculpture was under Stanislav Sucharda, later he joined ceramic workshop of the st. Vitus Cathedral where he acquired professional experience. 1913-1916 pupil of Josef Drahoňovský at UMPRUM until was enlisted in 1916. After his year long military experience he entered Jan Štursa's workshop at AVU, with whom he later cooperated as an assistant. His friend was Otto Gutfreund, whose atelier he shared since 1921. Two following years he traveled abroad to gather inspiration. In 1923 was he among founding members of the group Nová skupina. An acquisition of a monumental commission for J. A. Komenský monument that was discontinued after the death of Jan Štursa, resulted in his obtaining a studio. In 1937 he became professor at UMPRUM and almost decade later, in 1946 also prestigious professorship at AVU. He died in 1959 in Prague.

Selected bibliography: A modern contribution to the study of Jan Lauda see: Silvie NOVOTNÁ: Jan Lauda. (Masters' Thesis at FF MU) Brno 2010; For a traditional literature see: Jiří Mašín: Jan Lauda. Životní dílo (Ex. Cat.) Praha 1961; Prokop H. Toman: Vracíme se k Janu Laudovi, in: Svět v obrazech XVII, 1961, č. 41, 18-19; Jan Tomeš: Životní dílo Jana Laudy, in: Výtvarná práce IX, 1961, č. 20, 2-3; Vojtěch Volavka: Za Janem Laudou, in: Výtvarná práce VII, 1959, č. 5, 5; Petr Wittlich: Životní dílo Jana Laudy (1898 – 1959), in: Umění X, 1962, č. 3, 294-298

¹⁷² MAŠÍN 1959, 6

¹⁷³ In its form very similar to the Futurism sculptures in Italy in early twentieth century.

Modernism in its most elegant form and it was praised highly both by his teacher Jan Štursa and expert public.

The disproportionate, puppet-like, peculiarly shaped figures, introduced with such a success by O. Gutfreund after 1919 became the vantage point of a Social Civilist sculptural style. Its accessible, comprehensible form, assimilated by majority of the named artists, the decorative and architecture bound sculpture was demanded by the rapid post-war construction.¹⁷⁴ A great number of public institutions, banks, industrial and agricultural companies constructed new buildings and their facades required appropriate decoration. As is the case with sculptural production in general, the public space commissions of the twenties were the realm of more conservative expression. The resulting production is for the sake of comprehensibility divided in the following text into two major groups - allegorical figural sculpture and reliefs. These two most often demanded tasks became in the twenties the daily bread of sculptors of younger and older generation alike.

The allegorical figures, familiar in the environment of the public sculpture for centuries, were a suitable motive of decoration for the awe-inspiring proportions of the new Prague palaces. The allegories, most often epitomizing workers of various professions, were equipped with the attributes of their occupation. From the considerable number of such realisations only some will be named to demonstrate characteristic features of the production.

The early phase of the Social Civilism is observable at several realisations for the Prague buildings' facades. Symptomatically disproportionate statues are easily recognisable through the smooth rendition of detail-reduced surfaces, short and sturdy extremities. Karel Dvořák (1893-1950), who created four limestone *figures for Trade Academy*

¹⁷⁴ For an account of the post-war situation in architecture see:

Rostislav ŠVÁCHA: *Architektura čtyřicátých let.*, in: Dagmar PETRASOVÁ / Dagmar LORENZOVÁ: *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V.*, 1939-1958. Praha 2005, 31-74; A contemporary account of the situation in urbanism is described by: Karel HONZÍK: *Úvaha o výrazu českého stavebnictví*, in: *Architektura ČSR VII*, 1948, 250-252; Bohuslav FUCHS: *Industrialismus, urbanismus, architektura*, in: *Blok II*, 1947-1948, 69-92 A detailed information on the subject of sculptural decoration of First Czechoslovak Republic's administrative buildings in: Marek ČERVENÝ: *Stavební plastika administrativních budov první Československé republiky* (Master's thesis at FF UK). Praha 2011

Vinohradská (Obchodní Akademie, 1925) employed these principles in fullness, adorning his figures with rather dominant attributes of the depicted occupation, organically woven into the mass of the sculpture.¹⁷⁵ (Fig. 8) Also Karel Kotrba received a commission for two individual sculptures and one central group *of figures for the Credit Union Legio-Centro* in Myslíkova street (1924). (Fig. 79) He too remains indebted to the gutfreundian rendition, as the figures have excessively large heads, out of proportion to the rest of the body, short and hefty extremities, squared in strenuous effort.¹⁷⁶

Artists of Social Civilism were from the perspective of the Communist ideologues the easiest adepts to the conversion into the Socialist Realism forbearers, as they were inclined to follow social thematics and the motives of manual labour, tended to sympathise with the working class and returned in their form elaboration to the Classicist origins, instead of following the path to further abstraction.¹⁷⁷

The post-1925 branch of public sculpture, albeit influenced by the Socialist Civilism in simplification of shapes, is heading towards conservative elaborations of neoclassical style, more conventional and suitable for monumental tasks. The deformation of shapes in favour of the gutfreundian physiognomy of figures is reduced in favour of steady traditionalist appearance. For example Josef Mařatka, one of the best regarded sculptors of the First Czechoslovak Republic – was commissioned to create *four allegorical figures of professions* (Mine worker, Metal worker, Glass worker, Builder), for the facade of the former Accident Insurance Company (Úrazová pojišťovna, 1927-1928). This commission,

¹⁷⁵ Location: Vinohradská 38

Karel Dvořák (1893-1950), engraver by original profession, pupil of J. Drahoňovský at UMRUM, later on pupil of J. V. Myslbek and after the war of J. Štursa. Member of the SVU Mánes. His artistic character changed throughout his career, as he experimented with renaissance influences, Social Civilism, New Classicism and Historism. Created several multi-figural monuments. For more on Dvořák see: Jaromír PEČÍRKA: *Karel Dvořák*. Praha 1948; Kamil NOVOTNÝ: *Katalog souborné výstavy sochaře Karla Dvořáka. Práce z let 1913-1936*. Praha 1936

¹⁷⁶ *Karel Kotrba* (1893-1938), pupil of O. Španiel at medal department at AVU, legionnaire of WWI. Firstly member of Umělecká beseda, later on, together with other members of the Social Group entered SVU Mánes, from which he was later expelled. Author to several monuments and decorative sculpture. For more see: *Sochy Karel Kotrba, obrazy Josef Multrus: (Katalog společné výstavy, Praha 1985. Praha: Středočes. galerie) Praha 1985*

¹⁷⁷ Jiří KOTALÍK: *K problematice umění dvacátých let XX. století*, in: *Výtvarné umění IV.*, 1954, 332

being one of his scarce public space realisations is a good example of this tendency.¹⁷⁸ Similar realisations are to be encountered in various places in Prague. Břetislav Benda created for the Czechoslovakian army *statues of artilleryman, infantryman, army engineer and aircraft mechanic*, placed on the facade of the Ministry of Defence (Ministerstvo obrany, 1925).¹⁷⁹ (Fig. 9)

An expedient medium for the application of the Social Civilism formulas was the relief - the complex scenes of minute figures constituted the ideal environment for its employment, more convenient than large-scale figures, as it did not force the artist to solve the trouble of monumentalisation of the style, designed for smaller-scale works. Karel Dvořák created two horizontal reliefs *Industry* and *Agriculture* for Brno Bank, Jindřišská 15 (Průmysl a Zemědělství, Brněnská banka, 1922), reminding with its single-plan perspective and unsophisticated naivety of Romanesque reliefs. Refined reliefs for Tobacco Directorate by Josef Jiříkovský and also Václav Nejtek in his reliefs *Agriculture, Textile industry, Brewing, Beet processing* (Budova Tabákové režie, zemědělství, textilní průmysl, řepařství).¹⁸⁰ The regional sculptors such as Leoš Kubíček focused on the subject of the agricultural work *Ploughing in the mountains* (Orba v horách, 1925).¹⁸¹

In the second half of the twenties a gradual return to the classical proportions, natural surface elaboration of the figural sculpture is evident also in the works of social art. One of the artists, who launched gradual return to the myslbekian form, was Karel Pokorný, the last Myslbek's pupil.¹⁸² Two individual sculptures of *The Miners* (Havíři, 1928) are

¹⁷⁸ For more on Josef Mařatka see note: 148

¹⁷⁹ For detailed information see: Realizace pro Ministerstvo Národní obrany, in: Michal BURIAN / Aleš KNÍŽEK / Ilona KRBCOVÁ: Břetislav Benda, Sochař republiky. Praha 2015, 76-100

For more on Břetislav Benda see note: 143

¹⁸⁰ CZ: Tabáková režie (Present day Municipal Court in Slezská street)

Also Jan Lauda created sketches for this commission, showing less Social Civilism features and more of classical rendition.

Václav Nejtek (1899-1958), a Czech sculptor. 1925 concluded his studies at UMRUM, a pupil of J. Mařatka, B. Kafka. 1928 concluded his studies at AVU, as a pupil of B. Kafka. His field of occupation was especially monumental and small-scale sculpture. For more see: Slovník českých a slovenských umělců, sv. 9, 1950-2002. Ostrava 2002.

¹⁸¹ Leoš Kubíček (1887-1973), a Czech wood-graver, sculptor, pupil of J. Drahoňovský at UMRUM, older brother to Josef Kubíček. Active mainly in the East Bohemia region in the Rychnov nad Kněžnou district. For more see: Leoš Kubíček: plastiky, kresby: (Ex. Cat. Rychnov nad Kněžnou 2. 9.-4. 10. 1987, Hradec Králové 8. 10.-22. 11. 1987) Hradec Králové 1987

¹⁸² WITTLICH 1978, 224-225

one such an example. Most highly acclaimed is his *Ostrava* (1937), very distinctly influenced by Constantine Meunier. (Fig. 10)

This tendency to objectivize the heavy manual labour began to resurface especially after the 1928 and it is observable in the works of Otakar Walter – *The Blacksmiths and Founders* (Kováři a slévači, 1929), Josef Jiříkovský – *A Steel Worker and a Miner* (Ocelář a Havíř), Augustin Paukert – *A Miner* (1928), Josef Fojtík – *A Miner* (1930).¹⁸³ A tradition of mining industry depiction unfolded in works of Ostravian sculptors and sculptors active mainly in Ostrava, Antonín Ivanský and Augustin Hanzel.¹⁸⁴ Also Jan Lauda contributed to the evolvement of this work-oriented sculpture in his *The Creation of Coal*, (Stvoření uhlí, 1939-1941) a large relief of twenty meters length, made of granite, situated on the facade of the former Directorate of Ostrava-Karviná Mines (ředitelství Ostravsko-karvinských dolů) in Moravská Ostrava.¹⁸⁵ (Fig. 165)

Josef Kubíček, who indulged his interest in the working class environment of Ostrava, created a number of realistic works from the everyday labour of mine and steel workers.¹⁸⁶ He successfully adopted reporter-like style, reminding strongly of

¹⁸³ Otakar Walter (1890-1963), sculptor, pupil of J. Drahoňovský and S. Sucharda at UMPRUM. Active mainly in the west Bohemia region, Pilsen. From the Impressionism he arrived to Realist modelation. For more see: Otakar Walter, in: TOMAN 1993

Josef Jiříkovský (1892-1950), sculptor and medal maker, pupil at UMPRUM, later studied at J.V. Myslbek and J. Štursa at AVU. Member of Devětsil, Umělecká beseda and SVU Mánes. Highly esteemed are his Social civilist works. After 1948 member of The Action Board of the Czech Artists. For more see: Josef Jiříkovský, in: TOMAN 1993

Josef Fojtík (1890-1966), apprenticed as a stone mason in Hořice, later at UMPRUM as a pupil of B. Kafka. He acquired there a teaching position and remained there until 1945. He received a gold medal at international exhibition of decorative arts in Paris for his set of monumental works. For more see: Josef Fojtík, in: TOMAN 1993

Augustin Paukert (1879-1960), sculptor and medal maker, pupil of S. Sucharda at UMPRUM. Studied also at Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma. Paukert was concerned mainly with portraiture, decorative and architecture-bound sculpture. Three times acquired Schmidt's prize for medal makers. Created also monuments to resistance and to the Fallen in Choceň (1925), In Most he created decoration of Miner House. For more see: Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců, sv. 11, 1950-2003. Ostrava 2003

¹⁸⁴ For more on the sculptors see note: 1286

¹⁸⁵ Jan Lauda, Stvoření uhlí, in: <http://ostravskesochoy.cz/dilo/495-Zrozeni-uhli-Stvoreni-uhli> (Retrieved 31.1.2017)

¹⁸⁶ Josef Kubíček (1890-1972) sculptor, wood-graver, pupil of J. V. Myslbek, younger brother to Leoš Kubíček. A distinguished personality of realist art current in the first half of the 20. centuries. His works mirror wide range of tendencies – social, folk and lyrical, concerning thematics of work, war and family. For more see: Jiří HLUŠIČKA: České sochařství 1900 – 1950 ze sbírek Moravské galerie v Brně. Katalog výstavy, Brno Leden-Srpen. Brno 1977, 7

Compare: Jiří HLUŠIČKA: České sochařství 1900 – 1950 ze sbírek Moravské galerie v Brně. Katalog výstavy, Brno

Constantine Meunier. Among other works *The Founder* (Slévač, 1930), *The Miners working* (Pracující horníci 1931), *The Shift* (Směna, 1929) (Fig. 11) His contribution to the establishment of a realistically rendered figure of mine workers was praised by the Communist art historians, because he “set a beautiful and very lively type of worker in capitalism with his true scenes from the work environment. This worker, albeit not the hero of work, is transformed into the determined fighter for new, more just world order.”¹⁸⁷

Unlike in Czechoslovakia, the most relevant works of German art focused more on the socially critical rather than civilist aspects, yet both tendencies are present. The civilist tendencies, relatable to the Czechoslovakian Social civilism, have the characteristics of deminution, disproportionate size of head and puppet-like appearance. These traits would for example appear in some works by Christoph Voll, *Worker's Wife with a Child* (Arbeiterfrau mit Kind, 1922) or Eugen Hoffmann *Standing* (Stehende, 1925) and witness broader interest in the mundane and civil among the European artists, as one of distinct tendencies of the 1920's sculpture.¹⁸⁸ Interestingly, though, some of the artistic experiments of Czechoslovakian artists resemble greatly typical features of the German “Vereinfachung“ of form – Zdeněk Beneš' in civilist terracotta sculpture the Balloon Trader (*Balonkář*, 1928). (Fig. 12)

Artists often explored through artistic means the questions of humanity, suffering of the people and exposed mercilessly the horrific conditions of the war-stricken nation and poverty of the working class. The revolutionary and working class oriented art was produced by artists such as Ernst Barlach (1870-1938) or Käthe Kollwitz (1867-

Leden-Srpen. Brno 1977, 7

¹⁸⁷ SOLDAN 1980, 102-103

¹⁸⁸ Reproductions of these works in the catalogue part of the publication: Christian TÜMPEL (Ed.): Deutsche Bildhauer 1900-1945. Entartet. Zwolle 1992, 160-161

Christoph Voll (1897-1939), was a son of a sculptor, who followed his father's steps. Apprenticed in Dresden Kunstgewerbeschule under Selmar Werner. From 1920 a member of the Dresdner Sezession Gruppe 1919. In 1924 he exhibited at Großen Berliner Kunstausstellung. In 1925 he became professor and a head of the Staatliche Schule für Kunst und Handwerk in Saarbrücken. In 1928 he moved to Karlsruhe. He is associated with Expressionist movement and his art was selected for the Entartete Kunst exhibition. Died prematurely from an illness as a result of the persecution. For more see: Jürgen FITSCHEN (Ed.): Christoph Voll - Skulptur zwischen Expressionismus und Realismus (Ex. Cat. Ausstellung im Gerhard-Marcks-Haus 26. August - 11. November 2007). Bremen 2007

For more on Eugen Hoffmann see note 475

1945).¹⁸⁹ Barlach's stay in Russia in 1906 would result in several works of unsettling effect, *a Russian beggar with a bowl* (Russische Bettlerin mit Schale, 1906), *Russian beggar* (Russische Bettlerin II, 1907), and would precede a number of similar themes – *A Refugee* (Der Flüchtling, 1920), *A Sitting Old Woman* (Sitzende Alte, 1933).¹⁹⁰

The war belonged to the most often employed subjects – at Fritz Cremer in his *Gestapo* (1936), *Mothers* (Mütter, 1939), *The Dying Soldier* (Der Sterbender Soldat, 1937). Some of the most moving works were produced by K. Kollwitz. She was also concerned with the war related subjects, her personal experiences with the shattering loss of her son to war would provide her with unparalleled empathy and capacity to impersonate the innermost feelings of despair and anguish, as well as resiliency and braveness, in her *The tower of Mothers* (Turm der Mütter, 1937-1938) and *Mother with the Dead Son* (Mutter mit den toten Sohn, 1937-1938). Her strong inclination towards the working-class led Kollwitz to capture her observations in her etchings, depicting the scenes from peasant revolts and their everyday labours.

Kollwitz belonged to the most heavily promoted artists in the DDR. To her advantage played not only the inclination the working class thematics, but also the fact, she died at

¹⁸⁹ *Käthe Kollwitz* (1867-1945), Kollwitz was a German painter, engraver, sculptress and draughtswoman, a member of the Berliner Secession group and the first woman to become a member of the Prussian Academy of Arts. Born in Königsberg, she was interested in the working class, her father was a socialist and her grandfather was a Protestant preacher. 1888-90 studied at Münchner Künstlerinnenschule with Ludwig Herterich, at Akademie Julien and in Florenz as a Villa-Romana prize holder. She had spent most of her productive life in Berlin. She was critical of the bourgeoisie and married a doctor who helped the poor in Berlin. For the first time of the war, her son Peter died. She was persecuted by the Nazis and resorted to Moritzburg at the end of her life. Inspired by Max Klinger's engravings, she made engraving her preferred artistic method. In many engravings and sculptures she depicted misfortunes and the horrors of war, the suffering of mothers and children. Her most famous cycles: *The weavers*, based on the view of the theatre play, created a cycle about the rebellion of Silesian weavers in 1844, exhibited at Gross Deutsche Kunstausstellung. The proposal to award the gold medal was rejected by Wilhelm II. 1902-1908 - *The Civil War*, her top engraving work.

For an international reception of Kollwitz see: August KLIPSTEIN (ed.): *The Graphic Work of Käthe Kollwitz: complete illustrated catalogue*. New York: Galerie St. Etienne, 1955; For the DDR perception of Kollwitz see especially: Friedrich Ahlers-Hestermann (Ed.): *Ich will wirken in dieser Zeit*. Berlin 1952; Otto NAGEL: *Käthe Kollwitz*. Dresden 1963

¹⁹⁰ *Ernst Barlach* (1867-1945), was a German sculptor and printmaker. 1888 – 1891 he studied at Kunstgewerbeschule Hamburg and subsequently at Kunstakademie in Dresden as a pupil of Robert Diez. 1895-1897 in Paris at the Académie Julian, 1906 a formative trip to Russia, where he encountered poverty and need of the poor. In 1919 acquired membership of the Preußische Akademie der Künste, 1925 of the Akademie der Bildenden Künste München. From 1928 authored a number of anti-war sculptures. One of the most prominent representatives of the “Degenerate art,” prosecuted during the Nazi Era. For more see: Catherine KRAHMER: *Ernst Barlach, mit Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten*. Rowohlt / Reinbek 1984

the end of the Second world war and could be easily, effortlessly converted into the prototype of the Communist female artist. Moreover, due to her demise the ideologues would be spared any troublesome interferences by the said artist into the construction of her cult.¹⁹¹ Ever since her death, exhibitions, TV programs were dedicated to her and a honorary Prize for artists was launched under her name.¹⁹² Her critique of war and poverty and her leftist inclinations would allow the interpreters of her legacy to emphasize her right class conscience.¹⁹³ Her struggle would be seen as an inspiration to the staple of the Communist ideology – fight against western imperialism.

The cultural exchange and maintenance of the brotherly connections within East bloc countries resulted also in the promotion of Käthe Kollwitz as a representative of the most positive values within East German culture in Czechoslovakia. In 1954 an exhibition of Kollwitz' collection of original graphic works was exhibited by the joint efforts of the Committee of Czechoslovakian Women and Association of artists Purkyně, realised in Prague, 1.10.-21.11.1954.¹⁹⁴

An article in *Výtvarná práce*, published on the occasion of the exhibition, summarises the features of Kollwitz' work. Praised and admired by the Communist magazine for her moral strength and greatness, she is described as a fighter and in the best sense of the word “tendentious” artist, whose voice *„must be heard today, when the sabre rattling of the western imperialists threaten to cause hunger to children not only of K. Kollwitz country, but all over the world.”*¹⁹⁵ Kollwitz, with all her true determination to discourage wars, is shown and perceived as the ultimate fighter against western imperialism.

¹⁹¹ For an international reception of Kollwitz see: August KLIPSTEIN (ed.): *The Graphic Work of Käthe Kollwitz: complete illustrated catalogue*. New York: Galerie St. Etienne, 1955; For the DDR perception of Kollwitz see especially: Friedrich AHLERS-HESTERMANN (Ed.): *Ich will wirken in dieser Zeit*. Berlin 1952; Otto NAGEL: *Käthe Kollwitz*. Dresden 1963

¹⁹² For Cinema and TV Programs see: *Käthe Kollwitz im Fernsehen und Kino der DDR*, Retrieved from: <https://www.berlin.de/kunst-und-kultur-pankow/einrichtungen/galerie-parterre-berlin/archiv/2017/artikel.603046.php> (Retrieved 4. 7. 2017); A shorth history and purpose of the Käthe-Kollwitz-Preis at: http://www.adk.de/de/akademie/preise-stiftungen/Kollwitz_Preis.htm (Retrieved 4. 7. 2017);

¹⁹³ Otto NAGEL: *Käthe Kollwitz*. Dresden 1971, 96-97

¹⁹⁴ Jaroslav MERVART / Jaroslav Immanuel JANEČEK (Eds.): *Käthe Kollwitz: Soubor původní grafiky (Ex. Cat. Sdružení výtvarníků Purkyně a Výbor čs. žen v Praze 1.10.-21.11.1954)*. Praha: Sdružení výtvarníků Purkyně, 1954

¹⁹⁵ V. D.: *Grafika Käthe Kollwitzové*, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. II, č. 22, 12.11.1954, 6

Josef Krása contributed to the appreciation of Kollowitz with more proficient analysis in a recension to a German publication, dedicated to the artist. He would emphasize another relevant feature of her works – her willingness to create accessible and comprehensible art – another indispensable trait of Socialist Realism and art preceding it.¹⁹⁶ Whereas the contents determined the substance of the work of art, the form elaboration often varied and oscillated between Cubism, Neoclassicism, Expressionism and Realism.¹⁹⁷ In 1954 a Czech monography of Kollwitz was published in Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, hudby a umění.¹⁹⁸

With regards to structural understanding, in what we learned to call the Social sculpture, would the figure either acquire an “active role“ or a “passive role“. The active role would pose the object as a conscious, willing participant in the internal societal processes. The sculptor strived to capture the life in its authenticity, focus often on the lower classes and aspects of their everyday life, a profession, an activity. The psychologically constructive approach makes this “positive“ social art, focused on the active and agile, the tendency, most convincingly relatable to Socialist Realism. The analogy would not be missed by its theoreticians, who would readily make use of it to merge it with revolutionary spirit and progressive optimism in the exertion for the true Socialist art.

The passive role of the figure would be on the other hand expressed by the employment of the principle of the reception of suffering. The object/figure is a passive element, swayed by the fate, left at the mercy of the powers larger than his. Artists would often address the unsettling subjects of a destitute refugee, grieving mother, wounded soldier, prisoner or reviving some of classical religious themes such as „Pietà“ in new, civilist form. The mercilessness of fate and the horrors of war would unite both German and Czechoslovakian sculptors in the employment of expressionist principles. The horror and grief, inducing usage of specific artistic means, would lead to works, evoking a

¹⁹⁶ Josef KRÁSA: Gerhard Strauss: K. Kollwitzová, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. II, č. 5, 12.3.1954, 3

¹⁹⁷ SEDLÁŘ 1973, 151

¹⁹⁸ As the resume claims, an extensive monograph on the life and work of a prominent German graphic artist gives an image of her artistic life, origins and development. *"Her art is not just a document of the time, it is the answer to all the hot questions that have occurred at the turn of the social epoch, it is consciously classical and its revolutionary character is putting the significance, size and artistic mastery into the gallery of the greatest art of its time."*

strong emotional response in the observer.

In both German and Czechoslovakian spheres are several works, that would in comparison bring up some noteworthy parallels. This applies especially to the forms, close to the Czechoslovakian Social civilism, that would in some of its examples resemble the German simplified forms. The Karel Pokorný's *Catastrophe on the Mine Nelson* (Katastrofa na dole Nelson, 1925) with the figures of mourning parents reminds very distinctly K. Kollwitz' *Mourning Couple* (Trauerndes Ehepaar, 1932), the memorial to Kollwitz's son, Peter. In both instances the parental pairs are captured in silent contemplation of the tragical loss, a subject that induces the evocation of silent grief and despair.

The socially critical art would not be omitted from the Communist art historical narrative, because it would be very easily converted into the testimony to the resented imperialist and nazi principles, Socialist bloc promised to vanquish.

In Czechoslovakia the establishment of Social Art as a Vorbild, was set by exhibitions such as *the Social Themes in Czech Modern Graphics*,¹⁹⁹ summarised in the Art Magazine in 1950 in the words of Jan Rambousek, one of the distinguished representatives of Social Art. The reporter-like and observational tendencies of the graphics of the period are readily proclaimed to be the evidence of the steadiness of the local tradition, with regard to the depiction of the working class representatives. As he says: *"the young generation, who entered the cultural domain after the First World War, positioned the Social graphic into the centre of the artistic happenings and forged, therefore, as is proven in this exhibition by the whole scope, the weapon of tendentiousness in the struggle for the better future of the working class."*²⁰⁰

The quotation proves that not only the ideologues, who sought to leverage the legacy of socially oriented artists for the purposes of the art ideology construction, but also some of the artists themselves comprehended the analogy and did not hesitate to concede it.

¹⁹⁹ Sociální náměty v české moderní grafice (Exhibition Cat.) Březen - duben 1950. Praha 1950

²⁰⁰ Jan RAMBOUSEK: Vzpomínky na českou sociální grafiku, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 6, 1950, 134-139

As Rambousek emphasizes (in accordance with the obligatory rhetorics of the Party), the new age of Socialism requires the artists to overcome the tragical features of pessimism, connected to their former work, as they are now in the service to the people.

The developmental line description was a part of every one of the collective exhibitions from the 1950's onwards. One of the descriptions *Czech Sculpture 1900-1950 from the Collections of Moravian Gallery*, mirrors this trend to consider Social Art as an initial stage of Socialist Realism.²⁰¹ The “social responsibility” of those sculptors, who allegedly did not waver in their awareness of the social reality, reflected in their works from the twenties to the fifties, was used as a *pons asinorum* to bridge the gap between the living tradition and the artificially constructed method of Socialist Realism.²⁰² Social art was also subjected to a number of exhibitions, some of them dedicated solely to the phenomenon.²⁰³

In the words of Jan Tomeš, describing Jan Lauda's work of the twenties: *“Thence the realist creativity, resisting the onslaught of Formalism, could become at the historical moment the ground stone of the artistic effort to achieve Socialist Realism.”*²⁰⁴ Otto Gutfreund, who is today perceived as the founding personality of the Czech Cubist sculpture, was marked by Josef Čiřarovský in 1962 as *“the first Czech sculptor, who belongs with his work to the Socialist Epoch.”*²⁰⁵ He would, of course, be criticised for his juvenile experiments, but his contribution to this ideological line was such, his works of Social Civilism were named one of the prototypes to the emergence of Socialist Realism.²⁰⁶

The effort to detect the most typical features of the development was endeavoured also

²⁰¹ Jiří HLUŠIČKA: *České sochařství 1900 – 1950 ze sbírek Moravské galerie v Brně*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Brno, Leden-Srpen. Brno 1977

²⁰² (CZ) Oslí můstek

²⁰³ Blanka STEHLÍKOVÁ: *České sociální umění*. Hluboká nad Vltavou 1971; Marcela PÁNKOVÁ: *Dvacátá léta I.: sociální tendence* (Exh. Cat., Roudnice nad Labem, January-February 1983, Liberec, February-March 1983). Roudnice nad Labem 1983; Jiří VYKOUKAL: *České sociální umění* (Exh. cat. Cheb, February - April 1988), Cheb 1988

²⁰⁴ Jan TOMEŠ: *Jan Lauda*. Praha 1952, 12

²⁰⁵ Josef ČIŘAROVSKÝ: *Oto Gutfreund*. Praha 1962, 9

²⁰⁶ *Ibidem*

by Tomeš, who unintentionally provided precise insight into the workings of the regime obliging art historian's mind. He placidly proposes his intention to build the genetic line of Czech sculpture on the objective understanding and readily acknowledges his goal to provide a narrative, based on the Marxist-Leninist understanding of the art development.²⁰⁷ The Zbraslav permanent exhibition offered Gutfreund's and Lauda's socially engaged works, together with the portraiture production. Again, it draws a connective line between these Social Art works of the twenties and the “peaking creativity” of authors in the fifties, represented by Karel Pokorný, Josef Malejovský, Karel Lidický, etc.

New Monumentality

The European nations would undergo rapid changes that would after the First World War result in a widespread need to find an expression of growing national conscience and social cohesion. In Czechoslovakian republic and Weimar Germany the awakened nations would require the ideals and perspectives of their confidence to be materialised in the form of representative architecture and art. Therefore, many of the celebrated public figures of the national history were to be honoured and the question of monumentality would emerge as an indispensable feature of the art and architecture related discussions. Both German and Czech theoreticians would be preoccupied with the problem and pose questions, defining the debate for the following decades.

The necessity to devise a viable national narrative mirrored already in the surge of monument building, resulting in the Bohemian region of the Austrian-Hungarian empire in *monuments to František Palacký* (1912), *František L. Rieger* (1913), *st. Wenceslaus* (1913) and *Jan Hus* (1915) etc. The preparatory stages of the monument building were usually accompanied by the contests of large attendance, considerable attention of the

²⁰⁷ TOMEŠ, 1954, 1-2

press, professional and general public.²⁰⁸

An indivisible component of this upspring was the question of the modern understanding of monumentality.²⁰⁹ In Germany Fritz Schumacher and Peter Behrens would already before 1910 focus on the questions of monumentality, especially related to the architecture, urban planning and structuralisation of the public space. Their key objective was to design and build in unity and cohesion.²¹⁰ The diversion from the Neo-baroque in favour of closed, smooth forms and large proportions, would appear already during the period of Wilhelminism in Germany. The way to the rehabilitation of the monumental principles in sculpture were yet again open.

This “Renaissance” of monumentality within the time-frame is applicable most of all to the sculptures of Hugo Lederer and Franz Metzner. Their talent for the expression of dignified, orderly and awe-inspiring, would help to reestablish Hildebrandt's legacy of the Neoclassical in the form of a monument.²¹¹ The most monumental example of this tendency is 35 metres tall *Bismarck's monument* in Hamburg by Lederer. The cult of this great statesmen resulted in the installation of 250 sculptures all over Germany and provided the occasion for an employment of stern, reserved and classical features, based on the official ideological orientation at the time.²¹²

²⁰⁸ Petr WITTLICH: Sochařství na přelomu století, in: Vojtěch LAHODA / Mahulena NEŠLEHOVÁ / Marie PLATOVSÁ / Rostislav ŠVÁCHA / Lenka BYDŽOVSKÁ (ed.): Dějiny českého výtvarného umění 1890/ 1938, IV/ 1, Praha 1998, 95. The tradition of the monument building sprang from the 19th century. For the Prague monuments of the 19th century see: KUTHANOVÁ, Kateřina / SVATOŠOVÁ, Hana: Metamorfózy politiky : pražské pomníky 19. století. Praha 2013

²⁰⁹ See note below, for further reference see: B. CETYNA: Monumentalita v umění, in: Černá země XIV, 1937 – 38, 143-144; Pavel KROPÁČEK: Budoucnost monumentálního umění, in: Volné směry XL, 1947-1948

²¹⁰ Peter BEHRENS: Was ist monumentale Kunst?, in: Kunstwerbeblatt, nr. 20, 1909, 45 - 48; Robert BREUER: Die Wiedergeburt des Monumentalen, in: Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration 14/2 (Nov. 1910), 139-148

²¹¹ Franz ROH: Geschichte der Deutschen Kunst von 1900 bis zum Gegenwart. Munich 1958, 16-17; For more on the Nationalism and Monument building see: Lothar MACHTAN: Bismarck und der deutsche National-Mythos. Bremen 1994, 207;

Hugo Lederer (1871-1940), was a German sculptor and medal maker. 1885-1890 he trained pottery crafts at the School of Ceramics in Znojmo and Erfurt Arts and Crafts Workshops. 1890-1892 he worked in J. Schilling's sculpture workshop in Dresden. He studied also at the Ch. Behrens in Wroclaw. From there he came to Berlin, and in 1893-1895 working on the Luther monument in Berlin. From 1915 he worked as a teacher and from 1920 to 1936 as a professor and head of a sculpture studio at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. For a Czech contribution to Lederer see especially: Libor ŠTURC: Hugo Lederer (1871–1940). Sochařské dílo ve sbírce Jihomoravského muzea ve Znojmě (Diploma's Thesis FF MU). Brno 1997

²¹² For an anthology of texts, related to the Bismarck as a mythical figure, transformed into the authoritative historical hero see: Lothar MACHTAN: Bismarck und der deutsche National-Mythos. Bremen 1994, 207

The monuments became the most visible materialization of the growth of national conscience and confidence from the verge of the 20th century onwards. The Weimar Republic was no different in the need to promote its interests through the means of the monumental art and architecture. *Das Nationalpolitische Denkmal*, dedicated to the great historical personalities and events, would provide an opportunity to elaborate what would later become the root of the Nazi architecture sobriety – the universal artistic language of classicism, smooth form and orderly structure. The official sculpture, bound to the “Gesamtkunstwerk” of monuments and architecture, would not deviate from the figural tradition and would achieve monumental impression, fit to express the noble values of the national political traditions and personalities.²¹³

In order to contribute to the discussion of monumentality in Czechoslovakia, Jan Květ published an article on an exhibition of monumental art in Mánes, whereas Josef Wagner and Zdeněk Kudělka attempted focused analysis of the monumentality as a semiotic category.²¹⁴ J. Květ comprehends monumentality in art as a capacity to deliver a successful combination of meaningful content – illustration of an event, thought or person and a large, sound form. He sought, face to face with the jeopardy of national sovereignty in the war years, the roots of the monumental national art in the enthusiastic admiration of the most worthy national artists and artistic legacy of previous decades.²¹⁵

The enthusiasm of the early phase of monument building would arguably result in overindulgence in pathos and pomp. The psychologism and emotional charge, merged with the excessive employment of allegory in a multi-figural compositions, was criticised by F. X. Šalda in his essay called “The Plague of Monument Building” in 1929. *The Monument to Palacký* (1912) from the duo of Stanislav Sucharda and Alois Dryák, as well

²¹³ Reinhard ALINGS: *Monument und Nation: das Bild vom Nationalstaat im Medium Denkmal: zum Verhältnis von Nation und Staat im deutschen Kaiserreich 1871-1918*. Berlin 1994, 44

²¹⁴ Jan KVĚT: K výstavě monumentálního umění, in: *Volné směry* XXIX, 1940-1941, 38-45; Josef WAGNER: Monumentalita v sochařství, in: *Volné směry* XXXIX, 1947, 172-202; Zdeněk KUDĚLKA: Monumentalita v sochařství a malířství, in: *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity*. C, Řada historická. 1955, roč. 4, č. C2, 109-117

²¹⁵ KVĚT 1940-1941, 38-45

as *Monument to Jan Hus* (1915) from Ladislav Šaloun, Šalda scathingly criticised for their pretentiousness, “confectionery” style and diversion from the needs of the modern life.²¹⁶ The period between the late 1920s and 1930s witnessed another surge of monument building, as is described in the following chapter.

J. Květ by accentuating both the neoclassical style as the most suitable to deliver a monumental impression. He claims, “*the traditions of the great monumental style were not altogether lost*,” naming both Štursa's statues for Josef Hlávka's bridge and Ladislav Kofránek's sculptures for the Municipal Library in Prague. The sculptural tasks of the *decoration of the st. Vitus Cathedral entrance* gate with the reliefs by Otakar Španiel, *monuments to F. Palacký* by S. Sucharda, *Jan Hus monuments* by Šaloun and Bílek and *Wenceslaus* by J. V. Myslbek, all serve him as an evidence of the national continuity, materialised in monumental form. He values highest the capacity to deliver balanced unity of artistic professions in the quest for monumentality, mentioning *National Theatre decoration* as a notable example of such endeavours.

Devoid of Květ's perspective of monumentality as a component of national art, Josef Wagner focused solely on sculpture, attempting to devise a universal system of understanding of this notoriously elusive term. Introducing the analysis by stating that not the largeness nor particular style is a determinant of the monumental impression, he states that the ability to achieve the monumental effect is dependent upon several factors - scale corresponding to the chosen place of the setting of the sculpture (taking in consideration height, width and surrounding buildings, harmony and inner correlation of parts of the sculpture), natural sensibility of the author to experience and feel.

²¹⁶ For more on the Monument to Palacký see: Stanislav SUCHARDA: *Historie pomníku Františka Palackého v Praze*, Praha 1912;

For more on the Monument to Jan Hus see: Jan GALANDAUER: *Pomník Mistra Jana Husa. Český symbol ze žuly a bronzu*, Praha 2008;

The Monument role in the public space in the Austrohungarian as well as Czechoslovakian perception was adressed by F.X ŠALDA: *Mor pomníkový*, in: *Šaldův zápisník* 1, 1928, č.1, 265-269. For a recent contribution to the disussion see: HOJDA Zdeněk / POKORNÝ Jiří: *Pomníky a zapomníky*, Litomyšl 1996

Zdeněk Hojda a Jiří Pokorný for “Memorials and Forgetorials” summoned some examples of „monument building enthusiasm“ in Czechoslovakia and noted for example the Jan Žižka Monument.

For an Exhibiton on the subject of the Prague monuments of the 19th century (Clam-Gallas Palace 25th September – 5th January 2014) with an accompanying catalogue see: Kateřina KUTHANOVÁ / Hana SVATOŠOVÁ: *Metamorfózy politiky: pražské pomníky 19. století*. Praha 2013

According to him, the monumental impression from works as contradictory as Maillol's and Rodin's proves the point, and least naturally felt capacity of the author to achieve monumentality.

Attributes of a scholarly paper make Kudělka's text the most serious contemporary attempt to analyse the monumentality as a semiotic category.²¹⁷ Taking into account previously mentioned contributions by other theoreticians, he considers the most substantial aspects of this category in a more systematic way. According to Kudělka, in order to achieve monumentality, the theme or subject must have an importance of currently relevant or timeless message, devoid of narrativism and episodic character, retaining immediate comprehensibility by showing the typical in the phenomenon. Notwithstanding the need to deliver timeless message, the depicted figure needs to exhibit presence in time and psychologization of the endeavoured action. Monumentality is therefore easily relatable to pathos, defined as indefatigable inner strength, subjugating its spectators. The greatest effect is achieved by embodiment of a chosen subject in a human figure. The subject ought not to appear lyrical and intimate, as it stands in direct contradiction to inner power, emanating from monumental works. The formal aspects need to incorporate visual clarity, optical unity of parts. Albeit largeness, according to Kudělka, does not guarantee the monumental effect, the proportions ought not to be less than life size.

The theoretical discussions allowed greater liberty of spirit than the eventual realisations, in which the artists' progressive thoughts were mostly curtailed by the decision makers. The discrepancy between the ideas of the governing bodies and visions of the artists is demonstrable on the contest for the *Monument to Jan Žižka at Vítkov*.²¹⁸ Albeit already before the First World War, the contest (1912-1913) is an evidence of strife for monumentality, regardless whether the artists and architects employed Cubist or New Classicist approach. They also attempted to create an organic fusion of architecture, sculpture and landscape design, aware of the synergic effect of such an approach.

²¹⁷ Zdeněk KUDĚLKA: Monumentalita v sochařství a malířství, in: Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. C, Řada historická. 1955, roč. 4, č. C2, 109-117

²¹⁸ For more see chapter: National Monument at Prague Vítkov Hill

In the 1930's the traditional monument as the heart of the urban landscape fell in danger of being swept away by radical urban planners and architects, who sought new ways of the architecture and Urbanism understanding of the modern cities.²¹⁹ Lewis Mumford published *The Death of the Monument* (1937), where he demanded abandonment of the obsolete form of memorials and monuments, which are characteristic of the “death-oriented civilization” and in his words “*the very notion of a modern monument is a contradiction in terms: if it is a monument, it cannot be modern and if it is modern it cannot be a monument.*”²²⁰

The progressive theoreticians such as in Siegfried Giedion in *The Need for a New Monumentality*, called for an implementation of the modern perception of space and shape, as promoted in the works of Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger or Joan Mirò.²²¹ In *Nine Points on Monumentality* (1943) S. Giedion together with Josep Lluís Sert and Fernand Léger suggested, what steps were to be taken in order to implement the monumentality of architecture into the life of the modern society.²²² Considering the interest of the people, they emphasize the need for the buildings to represent the social and communal life and provide more than mere functionality. They call, moreover, for the incorporation of the architecture and monument into the urban landscape, refuse its perception as an isolated unit. By accentuation of the synergistic potential of artistic professions they state: “*A monument being the integration of the work of the planner, architect, painter, sculptor and landscapist, demands close collaboration between all of them.*”²²³

²¹⁹ “The last hundred years have witnessed the devaluation of monumentality. This does not mean that there is any lack of formal monuments or architectural examples pretending to serve this purpose: but the so-called monuments of recent date have, with rare exceptions, become empty shells. They in no way represent the spirit or the collective feeling of modern times”, in: Siegfried GIEDION / Josep Lluís SERT / Fernand LÉGER: *Nine Points on Monumentality*. Harvard 1943, nonpag.

²²⁰ Lewis MUMFORD: *The Death of the Monument*, in: *Circle; An International Survey of Constructive Art*, 1937, 263-7; as quoted in: Eric Paul MUMFORD: *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960*. Cambridge 2002, 150; for an account of the Czechoslovakian discussion of the subject see: Rostislav ŠVÁCHA: *Architektura čtyřicátých let.*, in: DČVU V. 1939-1958. Praha 2005, 31-74

²²¹ Siegfried GIDEION: *The Need for a New Monumentality*, in: *New Architecture and City Planning*. New York 1944, 549-568

²²² GIEDION / SERT / LÉGER 1943, nonpag.

²²³ Ibidem

1920 - 1945

After the First World War the New Classicism with its architectural construction of statues, consisting of clear shapes, organized according to the rules of logical composition and grounded on the principles of order and restraint, could not but find its way into the highest discipline of sculpture – the public monument – both in Czechoslovakia and Weimar Germany, albeit the latter would often leverage the Avantgarde tradition and legacy of Expressionism. The greatest consequence to the subject of our theme is the figurative tradition of monument building.

The goal is to present the sculptural production to provide a context for the monumental sculpture description of the period 1948-1968 and to introduce some of the emerging sculptors, for whom would their success in the First republic Era open the doors to the official commissions after 1945. Moreover, in some cases would the realisation of monuments span several decades and the tradition of the 1920-1945 monumental sculpture had therefore an indispensable role in the emergence of the Socrealist official sculpture.

In Czechoslovakia and Weimar Republik the period between the late 1920s and 1930s witnessed a great surge of monument building, for the sake of generalisation divided in two categories: a) War monuments and memorials - dedicated to the victims and heroes of the war and b) Political monuments - statues devoted to figures or events of national history. Both these categories are understood as the embodiment of a common will of the Czechoslovakian and German populations (represented by their leaders) to share the universally endorsed values, or values the current leadership wished to spread among the population. Both these categories contain relevant examples of representative official monuments and regional small-scale produce, without making any claims on comprehensiveness - the subject is treated with emphasis on the common principles in Czechoslovakian and German sculptural production.

War Monuments and Memorials

The war monuments and memorials, dedicated to the war heroes or victims, were ever since the late 1920s one of the most often employed sculptural subjects. The sculpture traditionally presented sought after artistic medium in the aftermath of any great war, won or lost. The tradition of war monuments was well established, especially in Germany.

The soldiers, who would in large numbers fall on the battlefield, were buried in graves far away from their motherland. The communities of their origin demanded a dignified tribute to their fallen and monuments and memorials sprang up all over both countries, either to adorn the areas of soldier graves, or to commemorate their sacrifice in the big cities, where the largest numbers of survivors lived and where the state ideology was the strongest.

Typically, the monument would be installed in a public space, but very often in the local church or convenient place nearby. The great majority of memorials would be a simple marble or stone plaque, bearing the names of the fallen, installed on the walls of a church or a public building. With varying degrees of quality, the statues of soldiers made their way into the public spaces of squares, memorials and burial grounds in all corners of both states and provided needed employment opportunities for sculptors of all regions. Those, adorned with figurative sculpture are of the greatest consequence and especially the large-scale realisations placed in the cities.

The ultimately victorious *Einigungskriegen* (1864-1871) would inspire a large number of monuments, conveniently used during the jubilaums to promote the interests of the Wilhelmine regime and to build a German patriotic mythology.²²⁴ The ultimate expression of this tendency was the colossal tower-like *Monument to the Battle of Nations* (Völkerschlachtdenkmal, 1913), located in the outskirts of Leipzig with its 91

²²⁴ See: Reiner ROTHER (Ed.): Die letzten Tage der Menschheit. Bilder der Ersten Weltkrieges. (Ex. Cat.) Berlin, 1994

metres, is the ultimate example of the German war monument building.²²⁵ On the other hand, the monuments, growing from the dreams of the Czech independence on the Austro-Hungarian Empire, would emerge no sooner than in the late 19th century and the nationally understood war monuments therefore would not appear sooner than around the First World War. In any case, there are no comparable examples of the war monument in the 19th century, that would be built on the perspectives of national mythology, as the Czech nation was bound by the imperial ideology of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire.

In Germany would the 1920s be marked very distinctly by the national trauma of the lost war. The fourteen years of the Weimar Republik existence (1919-1933) would in many ways bring change into the understanding of public monument and resulted in distinct transformation of this field, when compared to the era of the Wilhelminism. What would be famously slighted by F. X. Šalda as “the Monument Plaque” in the critique of the bombastic and “confectionery” style of the 1910s monuments, would be in similar words expressed by Alexander Heilmeyer already in 1915, in the discussion on the character of the post-war monument building. The scathing criticism of the “kitsch and pomp,” typical in his opinion for the monuments to the *Einigungskriegen*, would need to make place for more restrained, sober expression.²²⁶

As a result of the discussion, as well as dialectical development from the one extreme position to the other, would the public and professionals call for the employment of a different approach. They demanded usage of the artistic means, that would emphasize all horrors and terror of war (through the naturalist means) and at the same time pay tribute to the glorious dead through a dignified commemoration. The moderate approach would represent a middle ground between the call for Avantgarde or downright Classicist approach.²²⁷ What was subsequently applied by many sculptors,

²²⁵ Eduard BACHMANN: Die Völkerschlacht, das Völkerschlachtdenkmal und sein Erbauer Clemens Thieme, Leipzig 1938; Katrin KELLER / Hans-Dieter SCHMID (Eds.): Vom Kult zur Kulisse. Das Völkerschlachtdenkmal als Gegenstand der Geschichtskultur, Leipzig 1995

²²⁶ Alexander HEILMEYER: Der Gesellschaft der Freunde der Plastik. Ein Ausruf, in: Plastik 1915, 47, quoted in: Ursel BERGER: Immer war die Skulptur die Kunst nach dem Kriege., in: Reiner ROTHER (Ed.): Die letzten Tage der Menschheit. Bilder der Ersten Weltkriegeres. (Ex. Cat.) Berlin, 1994, 423-433

²²⁷ A number of convincing works of Expressionist style emerged, such as Bernhard Hoetger's Denkmal für die

was a combination of naturalistic and ideal principles – an achievement of a publicly acceptable combination of realism and neoclassicism. For this reason would the most often employed subject be an individual uniform-clad soldier figure, mastered in Germany, especially by Herman Hossaeus, who authored 40 such monuments, adorned with the unpretentious soldier figures.²²⁸

In 1925 would be revealed in Munich a *War Monument in Hofgarten* (Kriegerdenkmal im Hofgarten, 1925).²²⁹ The mass of ponderous limestone cubes hides a tomb-like cellar with a lying figure of a soldier by Bernhard Bleeker. Remarkable common features of the form elaboration call for a comparison with the Czech production. When approached from the legs, as seen in a contemporary photographs, the figure is showing form accentuation, in the Czech lands commonly associated with the Myslbek school. One of the superior Czechoslovakian war monuments, very well documenting the similarity of the war monument understanding, was erected in Prague in 1932 under the *title Prague to its Victorious Sons*.²³⁰ (Fig. 13) The multi-figural composition was created by Josef Mařatka, one of the renowned sculptors of the First Czechoslovakian republic, in cooperation with the author of the urbanistic remodelling of the surrounding area, architect Bohumil Hübschmann.²³¹ The seven bronze figures of soldiers are gathered around a broken 16 metre tall obelisk, provided by president T. G. Masaryk. Between armed soldiers of Italian, French and Russian nationality, distinguished by their uniform, is a female figure – allegory of Prague.

Athletic figures in heavy raincoats deliver in their monumentality sober, yet clearly observable sense of heroism. Realistic and detailed rendition of surfaces, notable

Gefallenen der Räterepublik (1922).

²²⁸ BERGER 1994, 429

²²⁹ For more on the Munich Kriegerdenkmal im Hofgarten see: Benedikt WEYERER: München 1933–1949. Stadtrundgänge zur politischen Geschichte. München 1996

²³⁰ (CZ) Praha svým vítězným synům

Refer to: Anna MASARYKOVÁ: Josef Mařatka. Praha 1958, 58nn; Jaromír PEČÍRKA: Josef Mařatka. Praha 1942, nepag.

²³¹ Bohumil HÜBSCHMANN: Regulace okolí Emauz, in: Styl III., 1922-1923, 9-16

Bohumil Hübschmann/Hypšman (1878-1961), Czech architect, member of SVU Mánes, worked in studios of B. Ohmann in Prague, later studies at the Academy of Arts in Vienna. From historicism and geometrical secession he arrives to classicist functionalism. Hübschmann's work has wide scope, projected public, residential, industrial buildings.

especially in the detailed elaboration of the uniform components, contributes to the immediate and reporter-like impression. In contrast to the veristic details stands the idealisation of facial features of the figures, rendering them ideal soldiers rather than individuals. This is the characteristic where the Czechoslovakian production meets the German. The celebration of bravery and determination of the defenders of peace by combination of above stated visual traits and components is a technique, employed later also by the sculptors of Social Realism. Mařatka's legionnaires are - unintentionally and guiltlessly, yet very convincing predecessors of this tendency.

In Czechoslovakia the atmosphere was, although the losses were great, that of optimistic expectations with regards to the existence of the newly established Czechoslovakian republic. The analogy presented allows to comprehend the need of the postwar central Europe – both Czechoslovakian and German nations, to find the expression of grief and the sense of justification of the bloodshed. Interestingly, the approach to the monument as a tribute to the brave and patriotic men would be rather similar. Czechoslovakia could very well celebrate the final victory and the monuments would rightfully commemorate the brave, who sacrificed their lives in the fight against the aggressor, the Germans would in no small degree install these monuments - with the same formulations, focused on the heroic servitude to the motherland.

Whereas the Nazi regime enforced its positions, Karel Dvořák, most fruitful in the inter-war period, paid tribute to the legionnaires with *his Monument to the Fallen for a cemetery Père Lachaise* (Pomník padlým na hřbitově Père Lachaise, 1934) in Paris and unrealized design for a Monument in Ležáky.²³² Unlike Mařatka's monument, Dvořák is more allegorical and also distinctly more expressively emotional. The triangular composition consists of a figure of falling, fatally wounded soldier on the left and a closed group of three figures - allegories of France and Czechoslovakia together with a ghostly figure of a head-covered old woman on the right, representing the soldier's mother. Whereas Mařatka delivered a sense of heroism, braveness and determination, Dvořák remained faithful to the funeral setting of the monument with the notion of profound compassion and tragedy of human fate, conjoined with a timid, yet unwavering

²³² WITTLICH 1978, 154-155

Compare to: Jaromír PEČÍRKA: Karel Dvořák. Praha 1948, nepag.
For more on Karel Dvořák see note: 175

hope in the future of the Czechoslovakia, secured by the self-sacrifice of the dying soldier.

The capacity to achieve the monumental effect was not limited to the monument only. Karel Pokorný, succeeded to deliver it also in relief, as he proved in his commission on the interior *decoration of the Vítkov Memorial*.²³³ His attention was again focused on the fate of a common soldier, a subject he successfully utilized in his post-First World War monuments.²³⁴ In a series of four large marble reliefs he conveys the essence of war by choosing the typical phenomenon, under the categories of “Defence”, “Assault”, “Dying” and “Death” understood as a sacrifice. (Fig. 14) These diagonal compositions depict an individual figure of a soldier, arranged in complicated, unnatural position to fit the rectangular shape of the relief.²³⁵ Albeit essentially realist, the modification of shapes does remind strongly of expressionism.

A similar subject of a dead soldier figure by Ewald Mataré, was employed in a war monument titled *Display of the Fallen Heroes* (Aufbahrung des Helden 1933-1934), was installed near the church in Kleve.²³⁶ The comparison with the Vítkov reliefs present a very pertinent example of how an Expressionist understanding of the war monument could be presented on one hand in a highly dynamical and on the other in a quietly monumental way. Both artworks present a figure of a soldier, whose death is accentuated by the head, tilted loosely backwards in a disturbing fashion. Mataré's soldier, covered with a shield, is a compactly set closed form with distinct Formvereinfachung, still and monumental. Pokorný's “Death” the soldier's head is tilted backwards in a violent convulsion, as his hands loosely thrown to the sides just dropped the gun. The disquieting effect of the reliefs is a triumph of Pokorný's ability the draw spectator into the depicted scene, that is both monumental and graphic.

²³³ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Karel Pokorný : výbor z díla. Praha 1971, nepag.

²³⁴ For more see page: 67

²³⁵ Compare: Vladimír NOVOTNÝ: Karel Pokorný. Praha 1956; Jiří MAŠÍN: Karel Pokorný, souborná výstava sochařského díla k umělcovým sedmdesátinám: květen – červen 1961. Praha: Svaz československých výtvarných umělců, 1961; Jiří HLUŠIČKA: Karel Pokorný: Sochy, Kresby. (Kat. výst., April-August) Brno 1985, 5

²³⁶ *Ewald Mataré* (1887-1965), was a German painter and sculptor. 1907 studied at Preußische Akademie der Künste under Julius Ehrentraut and Lovis Corinth. In 1932 acquired a professorship at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. A large number of his works is dedicated to animals. During the Nazi Era persecuted as one of the degenerate artists. Briefly director of the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, teacher to Joseph Beuys. A large number of his works is dedicated to animals. For more see: Sabine M. SCHILLING: Ewald Mataré. Das Plastische Werk. Köln 2017

National History Monument

The pathos of the Czechoslovakian political monument, observable in the 1910s began in 1920s gradually make way to more moderate, republican approach, progressively ceasing to use complex and refined allegorical or symbolist multi-figural composition in favour of a dignified, realistically rendered individual figure. Individual form, restrained and unpretentious rendition of the statue, symptomatic of the new approach to the sculptural monument, influenced the development of the monument for several decades to come, including the post-1948 sculptural production. Some of the works, began in the 1930s would be due to the war and turbulent political changes materialised no sooner than 1950s, partly because some of realizations for monumental, bronze-cast statues took often many years to finalize – due to high price of the material.

Germany would have in the beginning of the 20th century already a remarkable tradition of the “Nationaldenkmal“, reaching to the first half of the 19th century.²³⁷ Observable in both architecture and sculpture, the Romantic notion implemented into the allegorical or political figure, would support the nationalist perspective of German greatness. This ground principle would connect the German regimes throughout the political changes and helped to reinforce the national coherence and unity. Often large, monumental and pompous statues of large proportions, such as *colossal Hermann Monument* (Hermannsdenkmal, 1838-1875), from Ernst von Bandel, *Bismarck Monument in Hamburg* (Bismarckdenkmal, 1906), over the truly neo-baroque *Monument to the Emperor Wilhelm* (Kaiser-Wilhelm-Nationaldenkmal, 1897) from Reinhold Begas, all would despite the varying form retain the dignified character and monumentalism.²³⁸

Return to the origins of the modern Czech monument, as employed to honour national heroes, was attempted already by Jan Štursa, in his tribute to *Bedřich Smetana for Litomyšl* (1923-1924), where he diverted from thence common intricate composition

²³⁷ Sergiusz MICHALSKI: *Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage, 1870-1997*, London 1998, 56

²³⁸ For more on the Hermannsdenkmal see: H. Thorbecke: *Zur Geschichte des Hermannsdenkmals*. Festschrift 1875, Detmold 1875; Günher ENGELBERT (Ed.): *Ein Jahrhundert Hermannsdenkmal 1875-1975*, Detmold 1975; for more on Bismarck monument in Hamburg see: Lothar MACHTAN (Hrsg.): *Bismarck und der deutsche National-Mythos*, Bremen 1994; For more Reinhold Begas see note on Louis Tuailon, 153

with allegorical figures, employed for example in his *Monument to Svatopluk Čech* (1918-1924).²³⁹ The dignified, naturally modelled bronze brings to mind J. V. Myslbek's *Monument to František Rieger* (1913),²⁴⁰ characteristic with self-confident, yet unrefined, civil and unostentatious posture.²⁴¹ Albeit Myslbek's statue delivers through the sturdy bodily volume more of natural monumentality, body of Štursa's Smetana is too slender to appear monumental. Nevertheless, Štursa succeeds to convey the gravity of the revered composer with the convincing modelation of the head. This renewed interest in portrait became one of the typical traits of this new perspective.

The inclination towards more sober, civil expression, as opposed to the pompous monuments around 1910, is reflected also in the post-1920s works of Ladislav Šaloun, who is best known for his Art Nouveau *Monument to Jan Hus*, the inclination to sobriety is evident.²⁴² His *Monument to Miroslav Tyrš* (Pomník Miroslava Tyrše, 1926), is placed on a reduced pedestal, founder of the Sokol Movement standing in a civil, yet manly posture with lowered rapier in his right hand.²⁴³ The pedestal reduction Šaloun applied again in his *monument to Otýlie Sklenářová-Malá* in Čelakovského sady (1933), another of sculptural tributes, dedicated to a famous actress, rendered in white marble.²⁴⁴ The figure of the poet, dignified and gazing beyond the spectator, monumental in the drapery rendition, reflects strongly return to myslbekian tradition. The highly decorative features of Šaloun's earlier works, conforming to the Art Nouveau aesthetics gave way in

²³⁹ WITTLICH 2008, 168-169

²⁴⁰ WITTLICH 1978, 148-149

The tribute to František Rieger appeared not once in Myslbek's career. Aside from the monument, he created a bust for the Pantheon of National Museum. Compare to: Zora DVOŘÁKOVÁ, Josef Václav Myslbek. *Umělec a člověk uprostřed své doby*, Praha 1979 , 231

²⁴¹ The tribute to František Rieger appeared not once in Myslbek's career. Aside from the monument, he created a bust for the Pantheon of National Museum. Compare to: Zora DVOŘÁKOVÁ, Josef Václav Myslbek. *Umělec a člověk uprostřed své doby*, Praha 1979 , 231

WITTLICH 1978, 148-149

²⁴² For more on Ladislav Šaloun see note: 1205

²⁴³ *Miroslav Tyrš* (1832-1884), was a Czech national revivalist, aesthetician and critic, art historian, professor at UK and ČVUT in Prague. Famous for his participation in the establishment of the organized physical education movement. Chairman of the artistic department of Umělecká beseda and also member of the commission for the sculptural decoration of the National Theatre. For more see: Robert SAK: *Miroslav Tyrš: sokol, myslitel, výtvarný kritik*. Praha 2012

²⁴⁴ *Otýlie Sklenářová-Malá* (1844-1912), was a distinguished Czech theatre actress. Her pleasing appearance, sound voice, impressive recitation skills, paired with her prowess in performance of tragical and dramatic parts, won her the title of one of the greatest actresses. For more see: Ljuba KLOSOVÁ (Ed.) *Listy z dějin českého divadla: Sborník studií a dokumentů. 2. díl*. Praha 1954

The first was J. Štursa's monument to Hana Kvapilová, revealed in 1914.

these realizations to less refined, more stately style. Both monuments, due to their conservative elaboration seal Šaloun's affiliation to the older generation of sculptors, who, after concluding their experiments, gravitated yet again to the atemporal legacy of J.V. Myslbek.

The monument to Otýlie Sklenářová-Malá was not the only sculptural recognition of the distinguished women, who excelled in their artistic profession as well as in their patriotic stance. Also the poet and writer *Eliška Krásnohorská* was honoured with a statue of her own.²⁴⁵ The larger-than-life figure was revealed at Karlovo náměstí in 1931. The author was Karla Vobišová, historically first professional female sculptor in Czechoslovakia.²⁴⁶ Vobišová achieves an immediate effect of humanization, as her statue stands in the middle of a park in unpretentious and amicable posture. The post-Civilist rendition of drapery and dress, greatly reduced in detail and realism, is paired with pseudo-realistic facial features and expression. The statue witnesses different understanding of the discipline of public sculpture, bringing personality of the depicted closer to the observer through the act of de-mythologization.

The pathos reduction, lack of allegorization and promotion of the individualism in the monumental sculpture, reflected in the works of Bohumil Kafka.²⁴⁷ *A Monument to Karel Havlíček Borovský for Havlíčkův Brod* (1924), monumental five meters tall statue of the national revivalist is one such example. Albeit rather slender in the bodily volume, according to the author intentionally used to express Havlíček's fiery, temperamental attitude, the sculpture delivers the impression of powerful, strong-willed personality. This tendency is yet again discernable in the *Monument to Josef Mánes* (Pomník Josefa Mánesa, 1940), where the visionary glance in a proudly held head is paired with negligent, yet determined stance of the long-limbed body. In 1928 Kafka took part in the contest for the sculptural component of the planned *Monument to Milan Rastislav Štefánik for Bratislava* (Pomník Milanu R. Štefánikovi, 1936), which he has seen realized

²⁴⁵ *Eliška Krásnohorská* (1847-1926), a Czech national revivalist, writer, poet, librettist, one of the first activists for the women's rights. As such she engaged in wide array of emancipation efforts, including journalism and promotion of various initiatives. For more see: Drahomíra VLAŠÍNOVÁ: *Eliška Krásnohorská*. Praha 1987

²⁴⁶ *Karla Vobišová* (1887-1961), pupil of Quido Kocián at the sculptural school in Hořice, at UMPRUM studied under J. Drahoňovský and S. Sucharda. 1924-1926 spent in Paris, in studio of A. Bourdelle. She was the chairwoman of the Circle of the Female Artists and Art Society Mánes in Brno. For more see: Karla Vobišová: 1887-1961: sochařské dílo. (Ex. Cat. Praha 15. 7.-20. 9. 1987 Praha, Středočes. galerie) Praha 1987

²⁴⁷ For more on Bohumil Kafka see note: 117

no sooner than eight years from the commencement of his work on the monument.²⁴⁸ Statue of more than seven meters height, represents one of the founders of the Czechoslovakian state in full, aviator's uniform. The simple contrapposto and arms hanging loosely at the sides classifies the monument as one of the examples of humanism and de-mythologisation, typical for the republican monument.²⁴⁹

Bohumil Kafka, as probably the most proficient monumentalist of his generation, achieved recognition of indisputable qualities in the field of monumental sculpture already through his *monuments to Karel Havlíček* and *Milan Rastislav Štefánik*. His capacity to deliver awe-inspiring statues in larger-than-life proportions, destined him to become the most suitable candidate for the ambitious equestrian portrait of Jan Žižka.²⁵⁰ (Fig. 15)

Otakar Švec' commissions for monumental public sculpture were in their beginnings affected by his search for the optimal - that is monumental - expression. His first major commission was the *Monument of Liberty* (Pomník svobody, 1924) in Domažlice. (Fig. 16) Inspired by Štursa's group sculptures for the Hlávka's bridge, this group of figures is nevertheless lacking the voluminous forms and remains more of a petite sculpture in large proportions, too fragile and diminutive, though psychologically varied. Compared to the group sculptures of his teacher Jan Štursa the figures are less interconnected and dynamic. The apparent effort to construct a consistent core of the sculpture by the group of figures, surrounding the central axis falls short of the intention – the figures are too slender and fragile to deliver the monumental effect. This is partially true of the *Monument to Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk*, the first Czechoslovakian president, whose large, 3 meters tall bronze statue by Švec was erected in 1930 in Louny. The figure was

²⁴⁸ Ján FUSKA (Ed.): Pamätník Milana Rastislava Štefánika v Bratislave : vznik a znovupostavenie. Bratislava 2010, 45

Milan Rastislav Štefánik (1880-1919), Slovakian politician, astronomer and general of the French army, considered as one of the founders of the Czechoslovakian republic. 1918-1919 the Minister of the Warfare in the government of Karel Kramář. For more see: Dušan LACKO: Milan Rastislav Štefánik: slovenský astronom, meteorolog, diplomat a generál. Rosice 2014

²⁴⁹ An interesting example, showing the difference between the new understanding of the monument and the more conservative employment of multi-figuralism and allegory, demonstrating the difference between Štefánik's monument in Bratislava by B. Kafka and a monument, dedicated to Štefánik in Trenčín (1938) by J. Pospíšil. Trenčín's bronze statue of Štefánik is placed on a pillar and flanked by stone multi-figural allegorical groups. The sculpture was destroyed in 1953 for ideological reasons.

²⁵⁰ See chapter National Monument at Prague Vítkov Hill

dressed in a long, buttoned-up cloak and has a hat. As to the artistic quality, the figure was in great extent lacking the dynamic quality and the long cloak only prolonged the already very high figure, so that it has lost the substantiality. It is impossible to fully appreciate and assess the impression of the monument, as the statue was destroyed during the Protectorate.

Otakar Švec' created *a monument* to his namesake, hero from Zborov, *Josef Jiří Švec*. The monument was situated in the Prague Hradčany district in Pohořelec on 29. 9. 1934. The competition for the statue was won by Otakar Švec together with the author of the pedestal, Friedrich Feuerstein.²⁵¹ The elevated figure of J. J. Švec shows confident military leader with his partisan coat negligently slung over his shoulders, hanging in heavy folds. This effective elaboration of the drapery motive adds both monumentality and dignity to the persona of the depicted. The impression is unpretentious yet respectable, both natural and festive, awe inspiring in the scale and providing the desired sense of heroism to the celebrated personality of the regimental commander.²⁵² In the chapter on the O. Švec will be explained the development from the classical realist form to Švec' most famous realisation, *the Stalin Monument*.²⁵³

Another distinctive sculpture current of late 1930's, deviating from the dispassionate realism, sprang up as a result of the stringent atmosphere of the approaching war. In the 1940's the dismal fate of the nation often mirrored in Baroque reminiscences, typical with emphasis on the dramatic light and shades, effective drapery and deeply pocketed surface.²⁵⁴ Inspirational effect of an exhibition called Prague Barock, in the spring-summer of 1938 served as an accelerator of this newly awakened focus on artistic historical ancestry. As an influential new tendency it reflected also in the monument building. As the inspirational role of the New Classicism was exhausted and started to falter, the origins of psychological, more expressive and emotional approach began to intrigue the artists. In this atmosphere, the comprehensive exhibition revoked famous

²⁵¹ Jan VLASÁK: Obnova pomníku plukovníka Josefa Jiřího Švece. Dokument městské části Praha 1, č.j. 125100/2015 (7.9. 2011)

²⁵² The monument was unfortunately removed in 1941 in the era of the Protectorate during the surge of the occupational terror. In the recent years it is planned to renew it – various charitable trusts wish to return J. J. Švec his former glory with a replica of the original monument. A model was cast in 2013 according to O. Švec's original work. <http://www.sporilov.info/view.php?cisloclanku=2013010002>

²⁵⁴ For more on Barockisation see page: 98

tradition of the baroque sculpture and induced wave of interest in the artistic approach, visual traits and contentual aspects of the style, named as *barockisation*.²⁵⁵

The formative effect of the atmosphere is evident already in Karel Lidický's *Václav Budovec z Budova* (1936) or Jan Lauda's designs for the *Jan Amos Komenský Monument* (1932).²⁵⁶ The historicism reflects most consistently in the intimate work of Josef Wagner, who made use mostly of the inner lyrical capacities of the nude. The commission, where the emotional and excited quality acquired immediate expressionist form and most exalted barockisation, were reliefs with *scenes from the life of st. Wenceslaus* (*Scény ze života svatého Václava*, 1941-1942). The emphasis of expressionist approach was in the 1930s and 1940s pursued also by Vincenc Makovský and Karel Lidický.²⁵⁷

Sculptor, whose work also reflects the barockization is Karel Dvořák, who beside his Monument to the Fallen for a cemetery Père Lachaise also had the opportunity to contribute to the national history accentuation and belongs to the most active historical monument sculptors of the period. Between 1934-1940 worked on *the Monument to Jan Neruda* (*Pomník Jana Nerudy*), between 1928-1938 on a multi-figural *composition of Cyril and Metoděj* for the Charles Bridge (1938), replacing destroyed baroque sculpture. The intricate task, requiring the use of current artistic approach without violating the unity of highly esteemed baroque statues, took almost ten years to accomplish.²⁵⁸ The historization and dynamisation of form manifested in the *equestrian statue of Jan Žižka* (*Jezdecký pomník Jana Žižky*, 1940) in České Budějovice is a good example of the inspiration by the legacy of baroque. The heroic Hussite leader bearing a powerful gesture of raised fist, proudly gazes beyond horizon. The pathos, dramatic modelation of the coat, falling in the blowing wind from his shoulder, contributes to the momentous impression. The features of dramatism and pathos add to the departing from the Classicist rendition.

The effort to find a steady ground in the rich tradition of the baroque sculpture is only a different facet to the same principle, alive in Germany since the First World War,

²⁵⁵ WITTLICH 1978, 209-218

²⁵⁶ WITTLICH 1978, 157

²⁵⁷ Ibidem, 214

²⁵⁸ Jaromír PEČÍRKA: Karel Dvořák. Praha 1948, nonpag.

inspired in turn by the Gothic Mittelalter and recast into the modern Expressionism.²⁵⁹ The Expressionist tendencies in Germany harbour many often varying visual expressions. For example, in Bernard Hoetger's *Volkshausfiguren* (1927) baroque principles are not only used, but even surmounted – figures are forced into disturbing deformation. A substantial group of sculptures belongs to the so-called “Ausdruckplastik“, which is formally close to the open, sketchy tendency of form and surface elaboration counts to the tendency of renewed influence of Rodin and Maillol, comparable to the certain works of Karel Lidický. The restored legacy of the great figurativists would mirror in the liveliness of posture and heterogenous surface, very often to emphasize monumentality and deliver a sense of drama, such as in Georg Kolbe's *Falling Man* (Stürzender, 1924), (fig. 17), *Pietà* (1928) or his *Liberated* (Befreiter, 1945), Gerhard Marcks would return to the figuration with his *Kneeling Antaios* (Kniender Antäus 1926).²⁶⁰

The development in Germany would be struck hard in the second half of the 1930s by the Nazi determination to eliminate the Avantgarde with all its supposedly twisted and incomprehensible art.²⁶¹ Whereas many of the distinguished Czechoslovakian artists, active in the 1930s embraced the undertaking of the monument design, the German artists were from the early 1933 slowly sliding down into the tentacles of the oppressive regime.

Georg Kolbe belonged to the artists, whose capacity to deliver finely elaborated human figure recommended him both to the Weimar Republic representatives, as well as to the post-1933 leaders.²⁶² His abilities earned him the title of the most successful sculptor of

²⁵⁹For more see: Peter van der COELEN: Exkurs: Die Interpretationgeschichte von Hoetgers “Volkshausfiguren“, in: Christian TÜMPEL (Ed.): *Deutsche Bildhauer 1900-1945. Entartet*. Zwolle 1992, 170-171

²⁶⁰Der erneute Einfluss von Maillol und Rodin, in: Christian TÜMPEL (Ed.): *Deutsche Bildhauer 1900-1945. Entartet*. Zwolle 1992, 154-155

Gerhard Marcks,

²⁶¹David ELLIOT: *Das Ende der Avantgarde. Malerei und Plastik*. in: ADES, Dawn (Ed.): *Kunst und Macht im Europa der Diktatoren 1930 bis 1945*. Stuttgart 1996, 195-198; For more on the process of the Avantgarde art elimination in Third Reich see: Fritz KAISER: *Degenerate Art: The Exhibition Guide in German and English*. Burlington. 2012

²⁶²*Georg Kolbe* (1877-1947), was a German sculptor and medal maker. He studied at Kunstgewerbeschule in Dresden and Kunstakademie in München to become a painter. In 1897 he had spend a semester at Académie Julian in Paris. 1898 - 1901 in Rome would lead him to sculpture, which he explored under Louis Tuaillon. 1904 moved to Berlin and 1905 became member of the Berliner Sezession and became one of the first bearers of the stipend for Villa Romana in Firenze. In 1912 he would become known with his *Tänzerin*. 1919 named a member

the period and his talents thrived under any political and circumstances. The highlights of his career would span from his movement-inspired the *Dancer* (Tänzerin, 1913) and the *Monument to Heinrich Heine* (Heinrich-Heine-Denkmal, 1912-1913) over an Expressionist experiments in 1920s, to the Classical and markedly less dynamic rendition of the human figure, peaking in the monumental male nudes of the Nazi era. His allegorical *Beethoven Monument* (Beethoven-Denkmal, 1927) in Frankfurt am Main, is an example of his brand-style, combining the muscular Tuailloesque nudes with aspects of Lehmbruck's elongation of limbs and necks, introducing the slender-waisted statutory figures of heavy-limbed mature men. The values, aligned with the requirements of the Nazi regime, epitomizing masculinity and power, would reflect in Georg Kolbe's *Monument in Stralsund* (Stralsunder Ehrenmal, 1935).

As the Nazis would promote conservative values with regards to art, the figurative sculpture would be employed as one of the synergical tools to build the German übermensch. Some of the representatives of classical tradition, such as Arno Breker or Joseph Thorak, Richard Scheibe or Adolf Wamper would assist in that endeavour.²⁶³ Introducing form-hyperbolised paraphrase on the German figural traditions, pioneered by Georg Kolbe or Louis Tuaillon, they would invent heavily muscular semi-gods, which they would adorn with attributes of power and stiffen their bodies by archaic

of the Preußischen Akademie der Künste. For more see: Julia Wallner (Ed.): Georg Kolbe. Köln 2017

²⁶³ *Arno Breker* (1900-1991), 1916-1920 attended Kunstgewerbeschule in Elberfeld. 1920-1925 studied at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. In 1924 visited for the first time Paris, where he made many relevant acquaintances, including Maurice de Vlaminck or Charles Despiau. He would call Paris his home until the 1934, when he would return into substantially changed situation in Germany. He would quickly become the most valued artists of the Nazi regime. 1938-1944 he would receive the most consequential commissions in collaboration with Albert Speer. He created sculptures and reliefs for the New Reich Chancellery and other public buildings. He would remain active as a successful sculptor also after 1945. For more see: Eckhart GILLEN: Arno Breker: Dekorateur der Macht und Sündenbock der Deutschen: [Anmerkungen zu einer Rezeption in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland nach 1945]. Berlin 2015

Josef Thorak (1889-1952), an Austrian sculptor and medal maker, belonging to the most popular sculptors in the Third Reich. 1910-1914 studied at the Wiener Kunstakademie under Anton Hanak, Josef Müllner and Josef Breitner. He finished his studies in Berlin, where he became the assistant to Ludwig Manzel. His first success he achieved through his sculptures in Wachs. Already in 1928 was Thorak awarded the Prussian Academy of Arts Prussian State Prize. During the Nazi Era he acquired a number of high profile commissions, such as the 1937 groups of figures in front of the German Pavilion at the Paris World Exposition. The same year he began to teach at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste München. In 1944 he would be included in the Gottbegnadeten Liste, aside from that would be named also in a special list with the twelve most important "irreplaceable" artists of the Third Reich. For more see: Martin HOCHLEITNER / Inga KLEINKNECHT: Politische Skulptur: Barlach/Kasper/Thorak/Wotruba; (following the exhibition: Politische Skulptur - Barlach, Kasper, Thorak, Wotruba in der Landesgalerie Linz 18. Sept. 2008 - 16. Nov. 2008). Linz 2008

postures.²⁶⁴ Whilst the regime obliging artists busied themselves with catering to their providers, the versatility and richness of German sculpture plummeted, as many sculptors died, left the country or was forced to join the army.²⁶⁵

Whereas artists such as Karl Albiker, Bernhard Bleeker or Georg Kolbe were valued highly in the Third Reich, only Arno Breker was perceived by the Führer Adolph Hitler as the greatest sculptor of his time.²⁶⁶ The peculiar combination of Classicist features, hyper-muscular body shapes and intrepid facial expressions, characteristic for Breker's sculptures, would suit the need for ideological art. The allegorical figures would represent the values and virtues of the Nazi regime and the monumentality would yet again be employed to deliver the ideas of the regime's virulence, evoking in Germans greater belligerence and toughness. These characteristics met at the largest commission for the monumental sculptors, the *Reichssportsfeld* where a number of regime-obliging artists, including Georg Kolbe, Karl Albiker, or Josef Wackerle found the opportunity to present their skills.

The Czechoslovakian artists would all throughout the 1930s explore in the public sculpture various modifications of the local tradition, reaching as far as the distinctive baroque legacy and often returning to the time-tested and timeless Myslbek. Whereas the Czechoslovakian sculptors busied themselves over the numerous commissions, dedicated to the historical and political personalities of the republican pantheon, the German sculptors would since 1933 face the necessity to navigate through the ever tighter net of regime-bound culture. Meanwhile the Avantgarde sculptors were shunned from public life, sculptors emerged, who understood the longing for the monumentalism and expression of the new ideology.

²⁶⁴ For more on Georg Kolbe see note: 262, for Louis Tuaillon see: 153

²⁶⁵ For more on the NS-Zeit Monuments and memorials see: Christian WELZBACHER: *Monumente der Macht. Eine politische Architekturgeschichte Deutschlands*. Berlin 2016

²⁶⁶ Christian TÜMPEL (Ed.): *Deutsche Bildhauer 1900-1945. Entartet*. Zwolle 1992, 89

Part II. Sculpture of Socrealism in the Mirror of Cultural Politics and Art Theory

The subsequent analysis presents the detailed genesis of the Socrealist sculpture from the first signs in the second half of the 1940s to its gradual decline in the 1960s, when the grip of the artistic unions relaxed and sculptors began to yield to the modernist temptations. The sculpture is perceived and understood as an integral part of a systemic cultural strategy, assessed with greater emphasis on the interconnectedness with trends in socio-political situation and cultural politics, rather than as an independent phenomenon.

The sculpture was under Communism subjected to the same degree of ideologisation as the other, more influential fields of art such as cinematography or literature, which were regarded as the most consequential platforms for the spreading of the Communist ideas.²⁶⁷ Dedicated to the representation of thoughts and ideas, sculpture of Socialist Realism reached beyond the individual, representing shared values and attempting to promote universality of the given thought construct, was employed to disseminate the value system and ideology.

Sculpture as one of the complementary art branches of Socialist Realism was bound to serve purposes that did not surmount the historical function of this medium. As is true of other branches of art, the regime leveraged and put to use all successful patterns of art-audience relation. The essential task to connect life and art was in the case of sculpture effectuated by the modification of the urban and industrial landscape, by instilling of common values, education and propagation of desirable ideas and thoughts through the permanent medium.

The sculpture under the Communism was divided into the categories of public space sculpture (architecture-bound or free in a form of a monument), institutional and exhibitional sculpture (individual works of art installed for a short period of time in exhibitions and in the long-term in museums), private sculpture – intended to adorn private spaces with limited access. The public sculpture constitutes for its undeniable impact the most important component of the sculpture production of the period. The feature of monumentality, demanded and more or less successfully attempted, was

²⁶⁷ Usnesení ÚV KSČ o filmu a jeho význam pro výtvarné umění, in: NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv.

recognised as one of the highest merit of the medium.²⁶⁸

The formal elaboration of the art works of Socialist Realism was supposed to deliver a balanced combination of the conservative (Realist) form, inspired by the national Classics, together with an ideal representation of the promoted concept. The representation was derived in the Classicist way from the living examples, creating thus the universal allegories of the chosen phenomenon.²⁶⁹

1946 - 1948

The unique role of the SSSR in the liberation of the Czechoslovakia and establishment of the German Democratic Republic had complex circumstances, rooted deeply in the unprecedented character of the war and in the considerable strategic significance of the region to the Allies and SSSR alike. The highest levels of both American and Russian politics were engaged in the solution of the problem, how to part the Central Europe, so as to preserve the optimal distribution of power and equilibrium that would allow to retain peace.

The grief of war and exhaustion of resources, hand in hand with the unceasing wish to finally restore the tranquility led to hopeful expectations of the Czechoslovaks, regarding the SSSR. Stalin was perceived by many as a restorer of piece, ally and charismatic leader. He was expected to provide the eastern nations with the protection from the dreaded Nazi tendencies and contribute to their ability to regain their former freedom.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ For more on the discussion on monumentality in the post-war situation see chapter *New Monumentality*

²⁶⁹ The same monumental gravity was to be achieved, that would fit a Greek hero or a god.

²⁷⁰ For a detailed analysis of the political situation see: Vladislav MOULIS: *Podivné spojení: k československo-sovětským politickým a hospodářským vztahům mezi dubnem 1945 a únorem 1948*, Praha 1996; František ČAPKA: *1948: Vítězný únor: cesta k převratu*, Brno 2012; Karel KAPLAN: *Kronika komunistického Československa. Klement Gottwald a Rudolf Slánský*, Brno 2009

For an English account of the situation refer to: Josef KORBEL: *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia 1938-1948: the Failure of Coexistence*, Princeton / Oxford 1959

Following the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences in 1945 the defeated Germany handed the governmental power over to the Allies, whose common goal - the denazification and demilitarisation was the only point of joint interest. The former Third Reich was divided into the western part, occupied by France, Great Britain and USA, whereas the eastern part was seized by the SSSR.²⁷¹

The Soviet Union exercised its influence in the satellite countries through the net of allied groups and individuals with the socialist background and history of pro-Communist stances – as was the case both with the Communist politicians in Germany and Czechoslovakia.²⁷² The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia found in 1921, was gradually gaining support of the working class throughout the twenties and thirties.²⁷³ Some of the most active Czechoslovakian Communists, with Klement Gottwald in the forefront, were exiled in Moscow after the ban of the Party in 1938 and remained there throughout the war.²⁷⁴ Thence they acquired valuable contacts with the proponents of the Soviet Communist regime and scrutinised the state machinery and its mechanisms. The ideas of Panslavism, alive in the intellectual sphere since the Czech National Revival, now enhanced by the liberating role of the Soviet army, contributed to the pro-Russian sentiments and subsequently to rise of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which was openly supportive of the Communist regime in the SSSR.²⁷⁵

²⁷¹ Manfred GÖRTEMAKER: *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Von der Gründung bis zur Gegenwart*, München 1999, 171

For an analysis of the political situation see: Michael LEMKE: *Einheit oder Sozialismus? Die Deutschlandpolitik der SED 1949–1961*, Köln 2001; Michael LAUSBERG: *DDR 1949–1961*, Marburg 2009

²⁷² One of the best contributions to the understanding of the totalitarian cultural machinery is Igor GOLOMSTOCK, *Totalitarian Art, in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy, and the People's Republic of China*, London 1990; More recently Matthew LENOE, *Closer to the Masses: Stalinist Culture, Social Revolution, and Soviet Newspapers*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004.

²⁷³ Václav ČADA: *KSČ v období 1921-1948 : strategie a taktika*, Praha 1988, 374

For a comprehensive bibliography of the history of the KSČ see: Slavěna ROHLÍKOVÁ: *Výběrová bibliografie k dějinám KSČ, Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, v.v.i 2012*. The Institute for Contemporary History also under the guidance of doc. PhDr. Jiří Kocian, CSc. prepares synthesising overview of the history of the KSČ. He and his team also will publish selective edition of related documents. For detailed informations see: <http://www.dejinyKSČ.usd.cas.cz>

²⁷⁴ ČADA 1988, 388-389

For more on Klement Gottwald (1896-1953) see note: 1090

²⁷⁵ ČAPKA 2009, 19

The Communist Party of Germany (KPD), established in the aftermath of the First World War, followed a very similar path.²⁷⁶ Walter Ulbricht, the leader of the KPD, was during the Weimar Era exiled both in Paris and Moscow, whereas Ernst Thälmann – later to be executed by the Nazis – led the KPD to become the largest Communist party in Europe.²⁷⁷ The senior members of the Party with W. Ulbricht and Wilhelm Pieck in the forefront, were spared the highly organised and efficient persecution, only to return with ever stronger ideas of the „Soviet style“ politics and governing.²⁷⁸

After the end of the war the Communist Parties in both East Germany and Czechoslovakia emerged more ambitious than ever and reinforced its political position by establishing the organisational structure, mimicking in details and in the whole the Soviet example. Shortly after the war, in Czechoslovakia the Communist rhetoric together with the fear of the Fascism contributed to the growing numbers of sympathisers. In 1946 general elections the KSČ had become the largest party and Klement Gottwald, the party chairman, became the first Communist prime minister.²⁷⁹ The power of the 1946 government rested upon the so called National Front, a remnant of the pre-war structure of independent political parties unity, where Communists held now $\frac{3}{4}$ of the seats and only $\frac{1}{4}$ was represented by other parties.²⁸⁰

In 1946 Germany the political relations between the western and eastern zone grew

²⁷⁶ For a detailed information on the KPD in the Weimar Era see: Ossip K. FLECHTHEIM: Die Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands in der Weimarer Republik. Offenbach 1948 For an English account see: Eric D. WEITZ, Creating German Communism, 1890-1990: From Popular Protests to Socialist State. Princeton 1997

²⁷⁷ *Walter Ulbricht* (1893-1973) A Communist politician, who was directly engaged in the Weimar Era emergence of the Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands. He was the first secretary of the Socialist Unity Party (1950-1971) and also the head of state until his death in (1960-1973). For more see note 1092

Ernst Thälmann (1886-1944) A Communist politician, the leader of the KPD during the Weimar Republic (1919-1933). In 1933 arrested by the Gestapo and held in prison for more than decade, being shot in 1944 in Buchenwald. For more see: LEO, Annette: Deutschlands unsterblicher Sohn...". Der Held des Widerstands Ernst Thälmann, in: Rainer Gries / Silke Satjukow (Ed.), Sozialistische Helden. Eine Kulturgeschichte von Propagandafiguren in Osteuropa und der DDR. Berlin 2002, 101-114

²⁷⁸ Günther HEYDEMAN: Die Innenpolitik der DDR, München 2003, 13-14

Wilhelm Pieck (1876-1960) was a German Communist politician, who became the first President of the German Democratic Republic. Rolf BADSTÜBNER / Wilfried LOTH (Eds.): Wilhelm Pieck. Aufzeichnungen zur Deutschlandpolitik 1945–1953. Berlin 1994

²⁷⁹ ČADA 1988, 400

²⁸⁰ For a detailed analysis of the political situation see: MOULIS 1996; ČAPKA 2012. For an English account of the situation refer to: KORBEL 1959 An individual study of the National front by: KAPLAN, Karel: Národní fronta 1948-1960, Praha 2012

ever more tense. United States of America, Great Britain and France agreed upon unifying their respective zones into the single state of West German Republic.²⁸¹ As a countermeasure to the Soviet Union endeavoured to establish the East German Republic, independent from the western Allies. The closely controlled formation of anti-fascist parties in the Soviet occupied zone brought the emergence of the KPD, Social Democratic Party (SPD), Christian Democratic Party (CDU), Liberal Democratic Party of Germany (LDPD).²⁸² In order to strengthen the position of the Soviet loyal Communists, the SSSR promoted the establishment of the Socialist Unity Party (SED),²⁸³ which constituted of the SPD and KPD. It was, aside from the title, de facto a mature Communist party of the Soviet type, where W. Pieck and W. Ulbricht acquired leading positions. It was a party, which was to become the decisive power in the newly created East German Republic, retaining its powerful position for more than forty years.²⁸⁴

²⁸¹ HEYDEMAN 2003, 10 For more on the political circumstances of the „Teilung Deutschlands“ see: Peter GRAF KIELMANSEGG: *Nach der Katastrophe – Eine Geschichte des geteilten Deutschland*. Berlin 2000; Matthias UHL: *Die Teilung Deutschlands. Niederlage, Ost-West-Spaltung und Wiederaufbau 1945–1949*. Berlin 2009

²⁸² Dietrich STARITZ: *Geschichte der DDR*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, 18-21

For more on the subject see: DIETRICH, Gerd: *Politik und Kultur in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands (SBZ) 1945-1949*, Bern 1993

²⁸³ Socialist Unity Party

²⁸⁴ HEYDEMAN 2003, 6

Postwar Cultural Politics

The scholarly research of the previous two decades attempted to answer several pressing questions, regarding the culture and arts of the DDR after the Communist takeover and in the course of the following decades. Firstly, the boundaries of official and unofficial art were scrutinized. The relationship of artist and central power was examined as well as the measure of artistic freedom under the regime. Secondly, the indisputable role of the SSSR in the transmission of cultural and artistic influence was assessed. As was noted by I. Golomstock, the totalitarian states all operate within the same pattern of political and social oppression.²⁸⁵ This ensures striking similarity of the culture in SSSR to every single state of the sphere of its influence. The intricate relationship of Modernist artists and the establishment of the culture machinery was also subjected to a close scrutiny.

This chapter therefore demonstrates common roots of the post-war strengthening of the Communist parties in Czechoslovakia and future DDR and its subsequent influence over the cultural sphere. The exile of the key Communist representatives of both states in Moscow and their allegiance to the Soviets paved way to the abolishment of the liberal currents in society. The exiled Communists, well in advance prepared for the complex task to grasp the power, were instructed to make use of the democratic principles to achieve their objective. Their strategy was tailored to fit the public longing for return to the atmosphere of stability and freedom. In the early years they promised all imaginable liberties, teamed with social security and equality and succeeded in the persuasion, not only of the general public, but also in a not negligible portion of the cultural life representatives.

The war struck the realm of art mercilessly – artists who had been usually dependent upon the commissions from wealthy individuals or institutions, were in a dire economical situation.²⁸⁶ From a memorandum, addressed to the President of

²⁸⁵ GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 24

²⁸⁶ NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Sl. Organizace výtvarnictví 1946-1948, Panu Dr. Edvardu Benešovi, Presidentu

Czechoslovakia, Dr. Edvard Beneš by the Central Council of the Czechoslovakian Artists (SČSVU) in 15th November 1947, we can get an accurate insight into the struggle of the artists in Czechoslovakia after the war.²⁸⁷ *“The Currency reform, blocking of the bank deposits, reduced pensions of the majority of the intellectual elite, hand in hand with the general need to buy consumer goods only – all that put together causes that artists find themselves out of the sudden without any source of income.”*²⁸⁸ In this situation of widespread need and worry, it is easier to comprehend the readiness of some artists, who together with the general population began to listen to the appeal of the Communist Party.

A year sooner than the mentioned memorandum, the first official presentation of the cultural programme of the Communist Party held by Václav Kopecký at VIII. Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (28. 3. – 31. 3. 1946), two months before the most successful elections for the Communists to date, already provided answers and solutions to the crisis.²⁸⁹ It is obvious that the VIII. Congress intentionally addressed the sore problems artists daily encountered after 1945. Communists were at the ready to provide a “miracle solution“.

The Communists presented their programme for the cultural sphere in agreement with a certain part of the intellectual elite. The intellectuals, who were aware of the challenges in the art sphere of the day considered in many cases Communist cultural politics as

Československé republiky

O krizi výtvarníků. Je to krize jen hospodářská?, in: Zpravodaj umělecké besedy. Roč. 1, 1947, č.3, 1-3

Otto ZOUPALNA: Kdo na místo mecenášů? Současné hospodářské problémy, in: Dnešek, roč. 1, 1946-1947, č. 7. 137-139

²⁸⁷ (CZ) Ústřední blok umělců Československých. NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Sl. Organizace výtvarnictví 1946-1948, Panu Dr. Edvardu Benešovi, Presidentu Československé republiky

Edvard Beneš (1884-1948) a Czech politician, who served as a Minister of Foreign Affairs (1918-1935), Prime minister (1921-1922) and twice as a President of Czechoslovakia (1935-1938 and 1945 – 1948). For more on Beneš in German and English: Daniel NEVAL: *Vorsehung und Auftrag. Politik und Geschichte bei Edvard Beneš*. Edition Kirchhof & Franke, Leipzig / Berlin 2003; Zbyněk ZEMAN / Antonín KLIMEK: *The Life of Edvard Beneš 1884–1948: Czechoslovakia in Peace and War*, Oxford 1997

²⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, 1.

²⁸⁹ NA f, KSČ - Ústřední výbor 1945 - 1989, Praha - Václav Kopecký (KSČ - ÚV - 100/45).

Václav Kopecký (1897-1961) was a Czechoslovak Communist, politician and journalist chief ideologue and propagandist of the KSČ, who served as a minister of Informations (1945-1953) and as a Minister of Culture (1953-1954). The only comprehensive account of Václav Kopecký's life and career to date see: Jana PÁVOVÁ: *Demagog ve službách strany: Portrét komunistického politika a ideologa Václava Kopeckého*. Praha: Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů, 2009

reasonable. This reflected in a declaration, signed by 841 cultural elite representatives, *Májové poselství kulturních pracovníků českému lidu* and published before the elections into the Czechoslovakian National Assembly.²⁹⁰ The formulations of the declaration point clearly to the perception of the KSČ as the most progressive force, one and only to deliver the forward-looking perspective, agreeable to the artists and cultural workers alike.²⁹¹

One of the proponents was also the Director of the National gallery and avid collector of Modernist painting Vincenc Kramář.²⁹² He commented with obvious optimistic expectations on the directives presented. His paper *Cultural-Political Programme of the KSČ*, published in the same year demonstrates hopes of those intellectuals, who were on the side of moderate progress both in society and culture and who perceived Communist Party to be the most likely to deliver the promised changes.²⁹³

Václav Kopecký at the VIII. Congress promised not only to ensure “*a complete liberty of artistic process*”, „*support to the representatives of all progressive art forms*“, but also denounced enforcement of any tendentiousness in art or social engagement of the artist.²⁹⁴ Albeit he expressed this soothing and liberal notion, he also articulated his hopeful wish, that artists, always in the “*avant garde*“ of the evolution of the human cultural progress, will not stand aside when the new society is built. He called for more national art, bound to the folk traditions, accessibility of art, patient and constant

²⁹⁰ The Declaration was signed on 26th May 1946 and published in several newspapers and magazines, firstly in *Rudé právo*, followed by publications in *Tvorba*.

²⁹¹ *Májové poselství kulturních pracovníků českému lidu!*, in: *Rudé právo* č. 122, 25. 5. 1946, reprinted in: Dagmar DUŠKOVÁ/ Pavlína MORGANOVÁ/ Jiří ŠEVČÍK: *České umění 1938 – 1989, programy, kritické texty, dokumenty*, Praha 2001

²⁹² *Vincenc Kramář* (1877-1960): An art connoisseur, theoretician and historian, avid collector of Cubist paintings and Director of the Pinacoteque of the Patriotic Friends of Art (the future National Gallery of ČSR). For more on his contribution to Czech culture see: Daniela BŘÍZOVÁ: *Vincenc Kramář a studium středověkého umění*. (Bachelor' Thesis KTF UK). Praha 2011

Vincenc KRAMÁŘ: *Kulturně-politický program KSČ a výtvarné umění*, Praha 1946

²⁹³ For more on Vincenc Kramář see: Jaromír NEUMANN: *Vincenc Kramář, historik a teoretik umění*, in: *Život* 21. 1948, 2–21; Luboš HLAVÁČEK: *Uměnovědný odkaz Vincence Kramáře*, in: *Umění* 15, č.5. 1977, 377–399; KESNER Ladislav: *Vincenc Kramář, Život v umění*. (kat. výst.) Národní galerie v Praze, 28. 5. 1992 – 16. 8. 1992. Praha 1992

²⁹⁴ How these formulations resonated and influenced Czech press is analysed in: BEDNAŘÍK, Petr: *Český tisk v letech 1945–1948*, in: Končelík, Jakub – Köpplová, Barbara – Prázová, Irena – Vykoukal, Jiří (eds.): *Rozvoj české společnosti v Evropské unii. III, Média, Teritoriální studia*. Praha 2004, 132–144

promotion of these values among the broad public.

Kramář, in pronounced opposition towards “Reactionaires” – denouncers of progress and cosmopolitan influences in art - praises the Communists for their openness to the ideas of artistic freedom, respect towards various art forms and their scientific approach towards the building of the new, socialist society, where every single worker will have the chance to educate himself and cultivate his soul (which is according to Kramář already primed by the high cultural level of the Czech Nation).

Kramář's text is a valuable testimony to the desinterpretation and misunderstanding of the pre-February processes in the Communist Party by a portion of the intellectual elite. It renders the question, why so many professionals from the sphere of culture were misguided by the presented conclusions, easily comprehensible. In 1946 Kopecký thus already promoted Socialist Realism, when he declared Modernism as “old fashioned”, but neither he nor the Party wisely dared to use more radical rhetoric (not yet) and as is proven by the analysed text of V. Kramář, they succeeded with this strategy.²⁹⁵

Communist coup d'état in 1948 marked the end of democracy and launched gradual development towards tough centralisation and restriction of most citizens' freedoms and rights. A thorough transformation of all spheres of social life invaded most violently also in the sphere of culture.²⁹⁶ The fine arts presented only one of the many fields of culture, which were to be subordinated to the Central Committee and to the collaborating ministries of Informations and Education. The cultural programme, so warmly welcomed by Kramář, was reformulated from scratch in accordance with the most tough directives from Moscow, which turned all optimistic and basically promising attitudes of the pre-February Communist programme upside down.

The same process as was explained on the example of Czechoslovakian transition

²⁹⁵ Ibidem

²⁹⁶ The most acclaimed scholar with the specialisation in the cultural politics in Czechoslovakia is Doc. PhDr. Jiří Knapík Ph.D., who is the author of numerous articles and also of an encyclopaedic overview of the culture and life-style in Czechoslovakia in 1948-1967, written in cooperation with Martin Franc and published in 2014. The overview of his books and articles is to be found in the Bibliography section.

towards the postwar rhetoric, already in the unmistakable direction towards the state-induced art, was even more profound in the area of the emerging East Germany. It is to be attributed to the distinctive position of the SSSR as an occupying power in the Besatzungszone.²⁹⁷ The political situation in the SBZ after the 1945 would not evoke very successfully the illusion of independent decision making the elite and intellectuals in ČSR might have experienced (though largely due to their nescience of the shifts in the geopolitical situation). The Communist politicians of Germany, exiled in Moscow throughout the war, were only to subordinate to the military administration of the SBZ, once they arrived back in Germany – had they wished to profit from their close relations with the Soviets. In that context, there could be no second opinion on the true nature of the power tenure over Germany.²⁹⁸

Albeit in the aftermath of war the Soviet power allowed the emergence of antifascist, democratic parties in the Bezatzungszone, it soon enough sought to forge a new political power, which would remove the factual leader of the political spectrum, the SPD, by merging it with the KPD in April 1946.²⁹⁹ The establishment of SED resulted in rapid gains in the positions of Communist related politicians and subsequent predominance of the Communist perspective on both general political and cultural sphere.³⁰⁰

The Soviet Military Administration (SMAD) that governed the Bezatzungszone from the May 1945 until the establishment of the East German Republic in 1949, was well prepared for the task to enhance the Soviet orientation in the sphere of culture and arts.³⁰¹ The promotion and revival of arts of all forms were in the best interest of the

²⁹⁷ Dietrich STARITZ: Geschichte der DDR, Frankfurt am Mein 1996, 14ff

²⁹⁸ Eckhart GILLEN: Das Kunstkombinat DDR: Zäsuren einer gescheiterten Kunstpolitik, Berlin 2005, 30

For a detailed analysis of the situation in English see: David PIKE: The Politics of Culture in Soviet-Occupied Germany, 1945-1949, Stanford 1993

²⁹⁹ Protokoll des Vereinigungsparteitages der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (SPD) und der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands (KPD) am 21. und 22. April 1946 in der Staatsoper „Admiralspalast“ in Berlin 1946. Retrieved form: <http://storage.lib.uchicago.edu/pres/2009/pres2009-0522.pdf> (1. 8. 2016)

For an analysis of the development see: Bernd FAULENBACH (Ed.): Sozialdemokraten und Kommunisten nach Nationalsozialismus und Krieg. Zur historischen Einordnung der Zwangsvereinigung, Essen 1998

³⁰⁰ Anne HARTMANN / Wolfram EGGELING: Sowjetische Präsenz im kulturellen Leben der SBZ und frühen DDR 1945–1953. Berlin 1998

For more on the subject see: Gerd DIETRICH: Politik und Kultur in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands (SBZ) 1945-1949, Bern 1993

³⁰¹ Jan FOITZIK: Sowjetische Militäradministration in Deutschland (SMAD). 1945–1949. Struktur und Funktion,

new administration. The leadership of a special Department of Culture within the SMAD was given to a Soviet scholar, Alexander Lwowitch Dymschitz, who tirelessly sought surviving artists, writers and actors with leftist inclination and endeavoured to turn them into obliging proponents of the new regime.³⁰² Also the KPD was shortly after 1945 at the ready to present their cultural programme and implement it into the joint effort of the reconstruction of Germany. Its main tenets, described in *Kulturpolitik und Volksbildung* were devised already in 1944 as a part of an Action Programme, published in Moscow as a plan for the aftermath of war.³⁰³ The then leader of the Cultural Commission, Johannes R. Becher, expressionist poet, exiled in Moscow, already premeditated founding of a *Kulturbund*.³⁰⁴

The Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands, approved by SMAD, was founded on 4 July 1945 with the programme of revitalisation of Germany, obliteration of the Nazi tendencies, promotion of democraticism and peaceful efforts.³⁰⁵ The initial form of the Kulturbund was strategically devised to summon all anti-fascist intellectuals and artists, regardless of their political denomination, as long as they embraced the above stated principles. These were also promoted throughout the 1946-1949, during the I. Kulturtag der KPD in 1946, I. Kulturtag der SED in 1947 and also through exhibitions, where the theoretical constructions could be exercised.³⁰⁶

Berlin 1999

For more on SMAD see: Horst MÖLLER, Alexandr O. TSCHUBARJAN (Ed.): SMAD-Handbuch. Die sowjetische Militäradministration in Deutschland 1945–1949, München 2009

³⁰² Karl Max KOBER: Die Gesellschaftlichen Grundlagen, Hauptzüge und wichtigsten Ergebnisse der Entwicklung der bildenden Kunst in den Jahren 1945 bis 1950 in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, in: Zur Bildenden Kunst zwischen 1945 und 1950 auf dem Territorium der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Karl-Marx-Universität, Leipzig 1978, 3

³⁰³ Aktionprogramm des Blocks der Kämpferischen Demokratie (of the Moscow KPD Leadership), in: Peter ERLER (Ed.): Nach Hitler kommen wir. Dokumenten zur Programmatik der Moskauer KPD-Führung 1944/45 für ein Nachkriegsdeutschland, Berlin 1994, 290

³⁰⁴ Magdalena HEIDER: Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands. In: Martin BROZAT, Hermann WEBER (Ed.): SBZ-Handbuch: Staatliche Verwaltungen, Parteien, gesellschaftliche Organisationen und ihre Führungskräfte in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone. München 1993, 714

³⁰⁵ Ibidem, 714

For more on Kulturbund see: Magdalena HEIDER: Politik - Kultur - Kulturbund. Zur Gründungs- und Frühgeschichte des Kulturbundes zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands 1945–1954 in der SBZ/DDR, Köln 1993

³⁰⁶ Reden auf der Ersten Zentralen Kulturtagung der KPD in Berlin am 3.2. 1946. In: Wilhelm PIECK / Anton ACKERMANN, Unsere Kulturpolitische Sendung. Reden auf der Ersten Zentralen Kulturtagung der KPD in Berlin am 3.2. 1946, Berlin 1946

Also see: Ulrich KUHIRT: Die Gesellschaftlichen Grundlagen, Hauptzüge und wichtigsten Ergebnisse der

The devising of the early ideological constructions with regard to the artistic creation was to a great degree in accordance with the general line of the Soviet-exported ideology, as described on the example of Czechoslovakia – in that respect are both areas interchangeable. The East German sphere acknowledged as its key premise the anti-fascism and tireless fight against all remnants of the Nazi tendencies, aware of the fact, that the eradication of these in the minds of a substantial portion of the population will require continuous effort.³⁰⁷

Compared to the Czechoslovakian postwar rhetorics of the KSČ, the core of the argumentation is alike, exhibiting the common inspirational source that is mirrored not only in the general ideas but even in the formulations. In the Erste Zentrale Kulturtag der KPD in 3 – 5 February 1946, recommendations for the artists were laid evenly next to the effort to build the world anew upon the ruins and find again the lost continuity and peaceful future.³⁰⁸ A Communist politician Anton Ackermann³⁰⁹ during his speech at the Kulturtag presented several substantial ground stones of the future development of the official doctrine with regard to arts and at the same time presented the kind of utopian Socialist vision that would become the daily bread of the Communists for decades to come.³¹⁰

„Freiheit für Wissenschaft und Kunst bedeutet, daß dem Gelehrten und Künstler kein Amt, keine Partei und keine Presse dreinzureden hat, solange es um die wissenschaftlichen und künstlerischen Belange

Entwicklung der bildenden Kunst in den Jahren 1945 bis 1950 in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, in: Zur Bildenden Kunst zwischen 1945 und 1950 auf dem Territorium der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Karl-Marx-Universität, Leipzig 1978, 39

³⁰⁷ David PIKE: *The Politics of Culture in Soviet-Occupied Germany, 1945-1949*, Stanford 1993, 457

The state ideology of antifascism in DDR is a significant occurrence of the German post-war development and therefore it was subjected to the professional interest of scholars. Refer to: Manfred AGETHEN / Eckhard JESSE / Ehrhart NEUBERT: *Der missbrauchte Antifaschismus. DDR-Staatsdoktrin und Lebenslüge der deutschen Linken*. Freiburg 2002\

³⁰⁸ Wilhelm PIECK: *Um die Erneuerung der deutschen Kultur*. Rede auf der Ersten Zentralen Kulturtagung der KPD in Berlin am 3.2. 1946. In: Wilhelm PIECK / Anton ACKERMANN, *Unsere Kulturpolitische Sendung. Reden auf der Ersten Zentralen Kulturtagung der KPD in Berlin am 3.2. 1946*, Berlin 1946

³⁰⁹ *Anton Ackermann* (1905 – 1973) was a East German Communist, member of the Central Committee, candidate of the Politbüro and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (1949-1953).

³¹⁰ For more on the development of art politics in SBZ see: Ulrike NIEDHOFER: *Die Aufgabe des „eigenen Weges zum Sozialismus“ und dessen Auswirkungen auf die Kunstpolitik*, in: *Die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Expressionismus in der bildenden Kunst im Wandel der politischen Realität der SBZ und der DDR 1945 – 1989*. Frankfurt am Main 1996

geht. über dieses Recht soll der Gelehrte und Künstler uneingeschränkt verfügen.“

“Unser Ideal sehen wir in einer Kunst, die ihren Inhalt nach sozialistisch, ihrer Form nach realistisch ist. Wir wissen aber auch, daß diese Kunst erst in einer sozialistischen Gesellschaft zur Geltung kommen kann und selbst dann noch lange Zeit zu ihrer Entwicklung braucht... Die Freiheit der Kunst ist auch in diesem Sinne unabdingbare Notwendigkeit.“³¹¹

Ackermann's appeal to allow artists due time to arrive to the desirable artistic expression of socialist content and realistic form belongs to the moderate proclamations that would not make the impression the artists are being obligated to drop all their efforts up to date in favour of the unitary style. Even more conspicuously he emphasizes the necessity to provide artists and scholars with the liberty to follow their professional calling and create in accordance with their inner need.³¹² The calling for the liberty of expression belongs to the carefully crafted formulations, elaborated to mask the true intentions. The moderation of these statements would be directly contradicted by the official politics of SED no later than three years onwards.

³¹¹ Anton ACKERMANN: Rede auf der Ersten Zentralen Kulturtagung der KPD in Berlin am 3.2. 1946. In: Wilhelm PIECK / Anton ACKERMANN, Unsere Kulturpolitische Sendung. Reden auf der Ersten Zentralen Kulturtagung der KPD in Berlin am 3.2. 1946, Berlin 1946

³¹² GILLEN 2005, 32

Paradigm Shift of the Art Theory

In the aftermath of the Second World War the future direction of Czechoslovakian art was broadly discussed in the press.³¹³ The universal longing for an equilibrium both in society and arts resulted in a search for new orientation that would help to build a better world on the remnants of the war-torn Europe. The strengthening of left wing political parties with the Communist Party in the forefront accentuated the focus on the working class needs and brought into the public discourse the demand of corresponding changes in the purpose, accessibility and comprehensibility of art. The tactic of the Communist party, mentioned in previous chapters, which utilised the awakening political consciousness of the working class to deliver their goals, helped to shape the post-war rhetorics.

In 1940 the poet Kamil Bednář proclaimed in his statement, dedicated to young artists the end of the Avantgarde.³¹⁴ His contribution to the discussion was at the peak of previous debates on the future possibilities of the artistic movement. Preceding tendency to question the possible outcomes of the present state of modern arts was also deliberated by the leader of the interwar Avantgarde, Karel Teige.³¹⁵ His essentially Avantgardist position led him to consider the viability and perspective of the Avantgarde as potentially threatened, nevertheless, capable of retaining its power or even achieving immortality in the long run.³¹⁶

The postwar searching for the new aim and purpose of artistic creativity extended the pre-war and inter-war period, already strongly suggestive of the shift in the main theoretical current. Theoreticians such as František Kovárna, Pavel Kropáček and importantly also Jindřich Chaloupecký contributed to the modification.³¹⁷ In their

³¹³ Petr BEDNÁŘÍK: Český tisk v letech 1945-1948, in: KONČELÍK, Jakub; et al. (ed.) Rozvoj české společnosti v Evropské unii III, Média, Teritoriální studia, Praha, 2004. 132-144

³¹⁴ Kamil BEDNÁŘ: Slovo k mladým, reprinted in: Dagmar DUŠKOVÁ / Pavlína MORGANOVÁ / Jiří ŠEVČÍK: České umění 1938 – 1989, programy, kritické texty, dokumenty, Praha 2001, 31

³¹⁵ Hana ROUSOVÁ: Konec Avantgardy? in: Hana ROUSOVÁ / Lenka BYDŽOVSKÁ / Vojtěch LAHODA / Milan PECH (eds.): Konec Avantgardy? Od Mnichova ke komunistickému převratu. Řevnice 2011, 19

³¹⁶ Karel TEIGE: Výbor z díla II. Zápas o smysl moderní tvorby. Studie z třicátých let. Praha 1969, 642

³¹⁷ František Kovárna (1905-1952) was a Czech art historian and theoretician, specialist in Czech painting, who

understanding, the analytical and adventurous character of the Avantgarde art depleted all the possibilities of the “Form experiment” and inevitably had to be replaced by an art current, that would yet again find the relation of artistic product to the human being.³¹⁸

The Modernism began to lose its standpoint and momentum, making way for critical voices. Communist theoreticians on the pages of newly established revues and magazines questioned the very foundations of the modern arts.³¹⁹ They challenged individualism and incomprehensibility, intellectualism and elitism as the most acute faults of the “obsolete” art. They blamed the Modernist artists of distancing themselves from the present-day world, escaping to mindless experimentation with form and disregard of public needs.³²⁰

Under the current geopolitical circumstances and social changes a core argument in Czechoslovakia evolved around the question of cultural orientation. That is, whether Czechoslovakian art ought to rely more on the Frankophonic and Anglophonic inspiration sources, as it had in the past and therefore belong to the “Western” cultural domain, or to the “East” i.e. Soviet sphere, which was now approximated by the acknowledgement of political alliance and emphasis on ancestral ties.³²¹ The discussion filled pages of cultural magazines and revues during the 1946 and peaked in the Exhibition of Soviet painters in 1947, described in greater detail in the chapter *Theory of Socialist Realism as Imported in ČSR and SBZ*.³²²

Václav Černý was the first theoretician, who pointed out the necessity to solve this

emigrated after 1948 on the grounds of his National Socialist political denomination.

Pavel Kropáček (1915-1943) was a Czech art historian and theoretician, participating in the establishment of the Skupina 42. Died in Auschwitz.

Jindřich Chaloupecký (1910-1990) was an influential art and literature theoretician, concerned especially with contemporary art.

³¹⁸ ROUSOVÁ 2011, 19

³¹⁹ Magazines such as *Tvorba*, *Blok*, *Skutečnost*, *Kultura*

³²⁰ Jiří HÁJEK: *Umění čisté a užitkové*, in: *Tvorba* 1946, 20. 2. 106, č. 8., 125; Alois DOLEŽEL: *Co jest umění*, in: *Skutečnost*, *Časopis lidové výtvarné kultury* 1946, č. 1, 7; B. HOCHMANN: *Umění a stát*, in: *Blok*, *Časopis pro umění*, 1946-1947, roč. 1., 1-2

³²¹ The Eastern orientation was even constituted in the Governing Programme of Košice, where was stated that “the Slavonic orientation in our cultural politics will be emphasised... The relation towards SSSR will be built on entirely new foundations.”

³²² ROUSOVÁ 2011, 11

conundrum. On the pages of the *Kritický měsíčník*, he presented an article on the position of a poet in the Socialist society.³²³ In it, he unfolded his concern with the fate of the culture of the nation, when the natural inclination to the western arts could be hindered or even made impossible. The pertinence of Černý's observations instigated numerous reactions, among which is of interest especially the reaction of Gustav Bareš.³²⁴ The vicious tone, the avid and grandiloquent effort to discredit every Černý's argument, discloses more accurateness of Černý's criticism than credibility of Bareš's assertions. The line of reasoning consists of a combination of defensiveness and belligerence. Bareš mocks allegations of the unilateral orientation of the Communists to the SSSR by denouncing the relevance of the division between East and West as illusory. He endeavours to label the Moscow as the new cultural centre, the bearer of the progressive socio-aesthetic current, where even great western artists are heading to relish the new, dynamic atmosphere.³²⁵

Jan Mukařovský in his article *K otázce takzvané orientace* presents the slavonic nations as historically able and capable to engage in mutual exchange of cultural influence, promoted and maintained by psycho-social kinship – contrary to the western influences, which were usually not based on an exchange but rather on a one-way reception. The mutual and equal exchange is to Mukařovský ideal model of present international cultural relations. This notion unconsciously gives way to the direction of Czech culture to the snares of the Soviet influence, albeit Mukařovský concludes his article by casting doubt on the legitimacy of the division of both cultural spheres.³²⁶

Even in the described atmosphere there was even a certain optimism among some, regarding the future of the arts. Vincenc Kamář, who published in 1946 his *Kulturně-*

³²³ *Kritický měsíčník*, (1938-1942, 1945-1948) was a revue for the literature and arts, banned in 1948 for political reasons.

Václav ČERNÝ: Básníková trnitá cesta do socialistické společnosti. K problematice socialistické kultury u nás, in: *Kritický měsíčník* č. 9-10, 1946

³²⁴ Gustav BAREŠ: O cesty naší kultury. Otevřený dopis redakтуру Kritického měsíčníku, Dru Václavu Černému, in: *Tvorba* 1946, č. 15, 16.1. 1946, č. 3, 33-34

Gustav Bareš (1910-1979), 1946-1952 the leader of the Department of Culture and Propagation of the ÚV KSČ and one of the most influential Party ideologues of the early phase.

His career is described in: Jiří KNAPÍK: *Kdo spoutal naši kulturu: portrét stalinisty Gustava Bareše*. Přerov 2002

³²⁵ BAREŠ 1946, 33-34

³²⁶ Jan MUKAŘOVSKÝ: *K otázce takzvané orientace*, in: *Tvorba* 1946, 6. 3. 1946, č.r. 19, 148

politický program KSČ a výtvarné umění, is a first example of an Intellectual, who perceived the question of Modernist art in the emerging Socialist state in a perspective of opportunity.³²⁷ His faith in the capacity of the new state to provide the best possible outcome for arts and artists is evident and almost on the verge of naivety. He praised the cultural plan published by the Communists as a blueprint for the future development, commenting with obvious joy on the benevolence and optimism of these early proclamations, where the liberty of artistic expression was still held in high esteem.

Kramář differs from Chalupecký, whose article is described in following paragraph, in the understanding of the mental capacity of the working class and their ability to perceive art. He reposed his trust in the ability of the state to provide widely accessible arts education among the population, which would, according to his view, facilitate unprecedented surge of the cultural level of the people. Unlike Chalupecký, Kramář was unwaveringly convinced of the superior value of modern art and believed in the capability of the common people to understand it, if provided with sufficient instruction. Kramář is therefore an example of a theoretician, who unfalteringly believed in the continuity of the Modernist tradition, even under the circumstances of emerging socialist state.

Influential theoretician Jindřich Chalupecký in his article *Konec moderní doby* (The End of the Modern times), published in the same year, pertinently articulated analysis of the discussion and elaborated on the role of art in the life of the society.³²⁸ Contemplating the character of the Modernist art and the present situation, he declares Modernist art no longer capable of relating to the people, the newly emerging and self-conscious working class which will inevitably require art, closer to its feelings and needs. The Modernist art, he states, remoted itself from life, became highly “aristocratical”, accessible and intelligible only to those, endowed by unique sensibility and/or education. He notes the impossibility of a particularly popular notion of some Intellectuals, that the role of Czechoslovakian art ought to be to create a bridge between East and West, that would unite both Western and Eastern principles. Chalupecký

³²⁷ Vincenc KRAMÁŘ: *Kulturně-politický program KSČ a výtvarné umění*, Praha 1946

³²⁸ Jindřich CHALUPECKÝ: *Konec moderní doby*, in: *Listy* 1., č. 1., 1946, 1-23

represents the group of intellectuals who acknowledged the need to search for new ways to employ art and make it accessible to the public, in spite of the fact, it could mean abolishing of the Modernist tradition, albeit it was close to his personal preference.

In 1946 there was therefore an apparently mistaken notion, widespread among the Czechoslovakian Intelligentsia, that the problem of belonging to one or the other domain is a matter of choice, decided consciously by the cultural elite. Nevertheless, this question was resolved already at the moment of liberation by the Soviet army, as the East European nations became part of the Soviet sphere of influence. The debate of the sort indicates the inability of the portion of intellectuals to assess and distinguish the inevitable future development.

Regardless of the field of their profession, most intellectuals acquiesced the pivotal situation and endeavoured to find a stance, relevant both to their values, opinions and morals. Whereas some believed in the capacity of Modernism in arts to persist, others were already turning their gaze to the SSSR, where the new ideology, art methods and entirely different position of arts in society was already in operation from as early as 1920s. Had they comprehend the true scope of the Soviet reality with regard to arts, there would perhaps be less expectations and a far greater apprehension of the upcoming changes. In any case, the tendency to give prominence to the question of the art, that would be both related to and appreciated by a wider audience, sprouted in the after-war years with new vehemence.

The elevated effort to endue the audience with clearly comprehensible, aesthetically clear-cut work of art, characterised by the employment of classical form, can be related both to the crisis of Modernism as to the political shifts after the 1930s. B. Groys noted, that the emergence of the Socialist Realism is in correlation with other outcomes of the Avantgarde die-off, such as the art of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy or American regionalism, which sprang to life in similar time-frame as the Socialist Realism in the Soviet Union.³²⁹

³²⁹ Boris GROYS: The Birth of Socialist Realism from the Spirit of the Russian Avant-Garde. In: Günther, Hans (ed.): The Culture of the Stalin Period, Basingstoke 1990, 123

Principle	Russian Avantgarde	Socialist Realism
Dualism of artist and spectator (Producer and consumer)	Struggles to abolish the conventional dualism of producer-consumer, artist and spectator, in order to achieve restored harmony in the world. ³³⁰	The regime endeavours to apply the principle by engaging the public in action tasks and bridging the abyss between the artist and the spectator.
Work of art vs. Object of utility	Consciously denies the difference between the work of art and object of utility and strives to unite them, in order to create an instrument, used as a part of an integral plan. ³³¹	Art is also denied exclusively aesthetic function, as it is constructed and expected to be a part of the cultural programme, devised and executed with the aim to promote the official ideology.
Portraying Vs. Shaping	Art is supposed not to be mimetic, but instead ought to shape and influence the reality.	Art both portrays the “real” and shapes the reality, it is not mimetic, because it depicts “ideal reality” and is therefore “surreal” ³³²
Total project Vs. Total control	Productivism, aimed to unify art, technology and politics in one total art project. ³³³	The totality of existence, complex control and unity of purpose, application of the creative method in all fields of culture.
Totalitarianism	Political and administrative powers should be used to impose attributes of the Avantgarde art project onto the masses. ³³⁴	Political and administrative powers are effectively used to impose the Communist ideology onto the masses.
Materialism	Materialism in the understanding of the human psyche and its modification. The human subconscious is directly	The effort to rebuild and modify human psyche to make it more perceptive to the imposed ideology of Communism.

³³⁰ The Avantgarde theoretician Osip Brik noted: “The proletarianization of all labour, including artistic labour, is a cultural necessity.” as quoted in GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 22

³³¹ *Pavel Filonov* (1883-1941), an Avantgarde painter and theoretician wrote: “Just like heavy industry and the Red Army, art must be organized and made into effective instrument that can be used as part of an integral State plan,” as quoted in GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 23

In this perspective Socialist Realism is more of a tendency to return to “order”, that happened as a result of the Avantgarde cessation than a purely sociologically implicated phenomenon.³³⁵ All of these art currents demonstrate similar outward signs, but Socialist Realism is unparalleled by its totality.

The decline of Modernism and Avantgarde are also a vantage point to the question of the Avantgarde role in the Socialist Realism construction. It was noted, that certain characteristics and strategies of the Avantgarde were readily adopted by the Soviet ideologues when creating the method. Following chart demonstrates the principles, where the Avantgarde preceded or inspired Socialist Realism.³³⁶

The legacy of the Russian Avantgarde and its characteristics, which were transformed into the Socialist Realism, create an indispensable background to the emergence of the method in 1930s. As is demonstrated in the chart, there is a wide scope of principles, which were adopted and modified by Soviet theoreticians. It was noted, that although the Soviet art boasted of creating art for the masses, closer to its tastes and preferences, both the method and art produced within its frame, was constructed according to directives given by educated intellectuals – the authors of Socialist Realism.

The Avantgarde contributed with its daring utopian visions of the recreation of the world according to a total plan and acknowledged the need to employ all necessary measures to secure the desired outcome. The Marxist idea of a superstructure, where the human being and its subconscious relies on a strictly materialist basis to develop

³³² Boris GROYS: *Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin: rozpolcená kultura v Sovětském svazu; Komunistické postskriptum*. 2010, 71

³³³ Productivism was a post-revolutionary art movement founded by Constructivist artists. The core idea of the group was, that art should be organically interconnected to industrial production and therefore fulfill socially engaged role. They were most often participating in stage design, typography, advertising and propaganda. The leading personality was Aleksei Gan, together with Alexander Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova.

³³⁴ *Nicolai Punin* (1888-1953), editor in chief of the Futurist journal stated: „We would not refuse, if we were offered the use of the power of the State in order to realize our ideas.“ as quoted in GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 22

³³⁵ *Ibidem*

³³⁶ Based on: GROYS 1990, GOLOMSTOCK 1990

and express its potential, is present in both Avantgardist and Socrealist theories. The Avantgarde also pioneered the notion of the utilitarianism in arts, preceding the universal effort of Socialist Realism to invade every field of human culture and daily life. Another of key inspirational principles is the idea of the mimetic function of the arts. The history of art is intertwined with the eternal wish to imitate nature as flawlessly and accurately as possible. The Avantgarde, however, came to the conclusion, that the ultimate aim of art ought not to be to imitate nature, but to shape and influence the human reality. There is no other more influential principle of the Avantgarde arsenal, that made its way into the Socrealist theory in such a manner.

Leftist cultural groups and organisations promoted since the 1920s elevation of the cultural level of the working class.³³⁷ They were most often, as was customary for young rebellious artists, both in contemporary western Europe as well as Russia at the beginning of the 20th century, supporters and campaigners for the most progressive art. Among these were Czechoslovakian societies such as Devětsil, connecting artists of a working class orientation. Some of the artists, active in the inter-war period were later woven into the official history of the working class movement in Czechoslovakia, such as poets Vítězslav Nezval or Jiří Wolker. Several artists, writers and theoreticians published in the course of 1920s and 1930s articles on the perspectives and future of socialist art and became the acknowledged forebearers of the Socialist Realism, whose articles were reprinted and quoted as a proof of the continuity and tradition of the Socialist art concept in the 1950s.³³⁸

Jindřich Honzl, Josef Hora, Jiří Wolker, Stanislav K. Neumann, Kurt Konrad are most often named among those artists and intellectuals, who were considered by the ideologues and theoreticians of the Socialist era as pioneers of the Socialist Realism theory.³³⁹ Theoretical essays by Jiří Wolker,³⁴⁰ Stanislav Kostka Neumann³⁴¹ in the

³³⁷ For a detailed explanation of this phenomena see: Ladislav CABADA: *Komunismus, levicová kultura a česká politika 1890-1938*. Plzeň 2005

³³⁸ For an anthology of the texts of the forbearers and representatives of the Socialist realism see: Štěpán VLAŠÍN / Pavel PEŠTA: *K socialistickému umění. Antologie z české marxistické estetiky*, Praha 1976

³³⁹ Štěpán VLAŠÍN / Pavel PEŠTA: *K socialistickému umění. Antologie z české marxistické estetiky*, Praha 1976

³⁴⁰ *Jiří Wolker (1920-1924)*, was a Czech Poet, representative of the working-class poetry, who was after his early death used for the purposes of the Communist propaganda. For more see: Jiří WOLKER: *Dnešek je jistě nesmírný*

twenties were followed by the Marxist theoretician Bedřich Václavek.³⁴² Václavek was among those, who believed in the capacity of the Socialist Realism art to be expressed by the fusion of traditional and Avantgarde features. The ambivalence lasted until the elections of 1946 and kept on until 1948.

In the second half of the 1948 the pressure from the SSSR was mounting and the gravitational tendency of the powerful state was more pronounced. The illusion of moderation with regards to artistic freedom was a successful strategy, it belonged, however, to transitional phase only. The artistic freedom was almost entirely eliminated, once the directives of Moscow imposed on artists the imperative to create in accordance with the Socialist Realism.³⁴³ It became clear that the progress towards more authoritative and centralised control over the cultural sphere will have to accelerate, otherwise would be the leadership of the Party subjected to the criticism of Moscow.³⁴⁴ Aside from organisational and structural measures the attention of the Party was set upon the media. Newspapers and broadcasting were from now on instructed to promote with greater insistence the engagement of the artists in the building of socialism. This was even accentuated by adoption of the “Zhdanov doctrine”,³⁴⁵

As was noted by Boris Groys, the Avantgarde was in many totalitarian regimes in the 20th century exploited in order to seize power.³⁴⁶ Once this was achieved, the Avantgarde artists began to be persecuted and the modern art was replaced by the most conservative tradition, merged with the propagandist content.³⁴⁷ The soothing and non-violent formulations of the pre-February declarations of the Party were firstly inwardly

zázrak. Praha 2006; F.X. ŠALDA: Básnický typ Jiřího Wolkra. Šaldův Zápisník 1, 1928–1929, č. 5/6, 174–187.

³⁴¹ S. K. NEUMANN: Ať žije život!: volné úvahy o novém umění, Praha 1920

Stanislav Kostka Neumann (1875 – 1947), Czech journalist and writer, theoretician of art and literature, translator of leftist political orientation. One of the regime promoted authors.

³⁴² *Bedřich Václavek* (1897-1943) was Aesthetician, literary critic, member of the Devětsil group and later on theoretician of the Socialist Realism in Czechoslovakia; For more see: CHVATÍK, Květoslav: *Bedřich Václavek and Development of Marxist Aesthetics*. Praha 1962

³⁴³ GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 29-38

³⁴⁴ KNAPÍK 2011, 22

³⁴⁵ *Ibidem*

³⁴⁶ Boris GROYS: *The Birth of Socialist Realism from the Spirit of the Russian Avant-Garde*. In: Günther, Hans (ed.): *The Culture of the Stalin Period*, Basingstoke 1990; Boris GROYS: *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-garde, aesthetic dictatorship and beyond*. Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin. Princeton 1992

³⁴⁷ GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 29-38

linked with the effort to pull the majority of these leftist intellectuals on their side before the coming elections and secondly were caused by internal ambiguity in the Party itself, where two fractions struggled to promote either the rigorous soviet style or more lenient alternative approach, adapted to specific Czechoslovakian circumstances.³⁴⁸

In the Czechoslovakia was the Socialist Realism as a new artistic world-view for Czechoslovakian artists, presented for the first time by Václav Kopecký at the IX. Convention of the KSČ and subsequently at the Convention of National Culture 10.4. – 11.4. 1948.³⁴⁹ Ladislav Štoll, Václav Kopecký and Zdeněk Nejedlý here proposed the ideas of the “New Art” and declared Socialist Realism as the most suitable way to “*express the modern age of humanity*“.³⁵⁰ Among the most influential theoreticians were Z. Nejedlý, F. Wollman, J. Mukařovský and E. F. Burian, who contributed the most to the raising of awareness among professional and general public with regards to the new rules for art produce.³⁵¹

The doctrine of Socialist Realism was firstly discussed by Maxim Gorky and Andrei Zhdanov on 25 May 1932 in private Stalin's circle.³⁵² The result of this backstage

³⁴⁸ KNAPÍK 2006, 41

³⁴⁹ Sjezd Národní kultury. For the First declaration of the new course see: Kupředu, zpátky ni krok – Svobodné noviny 25.2. 1948

³⁵⁰ NA, f. Archiv ÚV KSČ, Předsednictvo ÚV KSČ 1945–1954

For the first declaration of the new course see: Kupředu, zpátky ni krok – Svobodné noviny 25.2. 1948. Zdeněk Nejedlý was a Communist politician, avid Stalinist and close peer of the first Communist president Klement Gottwald. 1945-1953 he was a Minister of Informations and had therefore substantial influence over the establishment of cultural politics.

Ladislav Štoll (1902-1981), a Marxist literary critic, one of the proponents of the Zhdanov doctrine in Czechoslovakian culture and Communist politician. For more on Štoll see: KNAPÍK, Jiří: Kdo byl kdo v naší kulturní politice 1948-1953 : biografický slovník stranických a svazových funkcionářů, státní administrativy, divadelních a filmových pracovníků, redaktorů. Praha 2002,

³⁵¹ SYSOJEV 1950, 27-41

Frank (František) Wollman (1888-1969) was a literary critic, specialised in Slavic studies, who aside from attributing to the development of the Slavic studies research in Czechoslovakia acquired a Order of the Work. For more see: MERHAUT, Luboš (ed.): Lexikon české literatury: osobnosti, díla, instituce. 4/II. U–Ž, Dodatky k LČL 1–3, A–Ř. Praha 2008,1648–1651.

Jan Mukařovský (1891-1975) Czech literary critic and Aesthetician, renowned especially for his theory on structuralism, member of the Prague Linguistic Circle. For more see: MERHAUT 2008. For a regime conformist texts, see Mukařovský's essays on partisanship in science and art: Jan MUKAŘOVSKÝ: Stranickost ve vědě a umění. Praha 1949

Emil František Burian (1904-1959), Czech Poet, Playwright and the member of the Devětsil group. For more see: Jaromír PELC: Meziválečná avantgarda a Osvobozené divadlo. Praha 1981

³⁵² GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 86

meeting was presented in August 1934 at All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers by Andrei Zhdanov, who was one of the Joseph Stalin's inner political sphere, distinguished leader of the army of the Soviet Union during World War II., and who since the thirties managed several pogroms in Soviet culture.³⁵³ He was the most influential ideologue of the Party, the leading theoretician of the SSSR, who was to become, through the export of the ideological directives, the mentor of the Czechoslovakian artists as well.³⁵⁴

Zhdanov's speech at the first All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934, where the Socialist Realism received its initial form, is one of the foundational stones of the doctrine. With his speech, he proclaimed famous proletarian author *Maxim Gorky* the leader of all writers of the Soviet Union and so marked the direction of the future efforts in the field of literature and subsequently culture as such.³⁵⁵ This watershed speech translated into the “Zhdanovshchina”, the uncompromising notion of the subordination of all arts to the purpose of the state.³⁵⁶

“Socialist Realism, being the basic method of Soviet imaginative literature and literary criticism, demands from the artist a truthful, historically specific depiction of reality in its revolutionary

Maxim Gorky (1868-1936) was a politically active Russian and Soviet writer, founder of the method of Socialist realism in literature. He was nominated five times for the Nobel Prize in Literature. After his return to SSSR in 1928 he helped to constitute the Zhdanov doctrine. For the basic statements of Gorky on Soviet literature and subsequent emergence of Socialist Realism see: Gorkij, Maksim. Čtyři stati o literatuře. Praha 1951; Maxim GORKY: Speech to All Union Congress of Soviet Writers, August 1934, in: Robert V. DANIELS: A documentary history of communism. Hannover / New England / London 1984, 244-247

Andrei Zhdanov (1896-1948) was a Soviet politician, author of the Zhdanov Doctrine. 1939-1940 Head of the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Central Committee, 1946-1948 Chairman of the Soviet Union.

³⁵³ GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 86

Andrei ZHDANOV: Soviet Literature - The Richest in Ideas, the Most Advanced Literature. In: Gorky, Radek, Bukharin, Zhdanov and others “Soviet Writers’ Congress 1934”, London 1977, 15-26

The consequences of the ground-breaking speech for the Soviet literature in: L. PLOTKIN: A. A. Ždanov a otázky literatury, in: Marie SCHLIFOROVÁ: Lenin – Stalin - Kalinin – Ždanov a jejich význam pro literární vědu. Sborník statí sovětských autorů. 1953

³⁵⁴ For the evidence of this on the verge of 1950 see especially: Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: O úkolech naší literatury. Praha 1949; Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: O nové výtvarnictví, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 6, 1950, 241-251; Václav JÍCHA: Na novou cestu, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 1, 1950, nepag.

³⁵⁵ Andrei ZHDANOV: Introduction, in: Gorky, Radek, Bukharin, Zhdanov and others “Soviet Writers’ Congress 1934”, London 1977, 15-26

For more on the development of literary theory toward Socialist realism see:

Hans GÜNTHER: Die Verstaatlichung der Literatur. Die Entstehung und Funktionsweise des Sozialistisch-realistischen Kanons in der Sowjetischen Literatur der 30 er Jahre. Stuttgart 1984

³⁵⁶ Alternatively Zhdanovism is a term for cultural policy outlined by Zhdanov, which intruded into every part of culture and even spheres such as philosophy or medicine. It consisted of anti-westernism, cosmopolitanism and promoted tough control of all spheres of creativity.

*development. At the same time this truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic depiction of reality must be combined with the task of the ideological moulding and education of the working people in the spirit of socialism.*³⁵⁷

Zhdanov calls for revolutionary romanticism, tendentiousness, instructiveness and optimism in the toil for the better future. He is not hesitant to concede, the Socialist Realism is not and ought not to be objective, because it has the heroic task to promote the goals of the victorious proletarian class.³⁵⁸ Quoting the famous formulation of J. Stalin, who in turn borrowed the thought from the Avantgarde, Zhdanov used the term “engineers of human souls” for the writers, who were expected to participate in the creation of a New Man.³⁵⁹

To support the legitimacy of the new “creative method”, the theoreticians of the SSSR forged elaborate theoretical construct, based on Marxist-Leninist worldview and preceding efforts of Avantgarde and synchronised it with the political goals of the Communist Party. It was intended to serve both total control over artistic produce, its thematics, rendition and ideological background and most importantly to the indoctrination of the population.³⁶⁰ The emerging art of the new era was perceived by its theoreticians as the most advanced art, because it was highly engaged and was aligned with the interests of the Socialist society. The ultimate Stalinist theory of Socialist Realism as publicly promoted by Gorky and Zhdanov and sanctified by Stalin therefore sought to establish criteria for artistic produce in all spheres of culture. To ensure viability and observation of the doctrine, the regime hand picked the conformist artists of reputation and skill, who were willing to promote the goals of the Party in exchange for honours and sinecures and persecuted those, who refused or failed to yield satisfactory results.³⁶¹

³⁵⁷ Quote from bylaws of the Union of Soviet writers by: Herman ERMOLAEV: *Soviet Literary Theories 1917-1934: the Genesis of Socialist Realism*, Berkeley / Los Angeles 1963, 187

³⁵⁸ ZHDANOV 1977, 15 ff

For more see: Dmitrij Fedorovič MARKOV: *Geneze socialistického realismu*, Praha 1973

³⁵⁹ Andrei ZHDANOV: *Soviet Literature - The Richest in Ideas, the Most Advanced Literature*. In: Gorky, Radek, Bukharin, Zhdanov and others “*Soviet Writers’ Congress 1934*”, London 1977, 15-26

³⁶⁰ Maxim GORKY: *Speech to All Union Congress of Soviet Writers, August 1934*, in: Robert V. DANIELS: *A Documentary History of Communism*. Hannover / New England / London 1984, 244-247

For more refer to: Vaughan JAMES: *Soviet Socialist Realism: origins and theory*. London, 1973

³⁶¹ This mechanism, as applied in local circumstances of Czechoslovakia and East Germany is explored in *Part II. Sculpture of Socrealism in the Mirror of Cultural Politics and Art Theory*

The following paragraphs summarize the assemblage of the Socrealist doctrine, through the analysis of principles, which lay at the core of the theoretical construct. The elaboration of the method was formulated in a direct opposition to the modern currents in art. It is therefore possible to devise an overview of the opposing principles which provide a useful foundation for the following analysis.³⁶²

The dialectical pairs present a category, “The Principle of Socrealist Doctrine”, and the contradiction “The Opposing Principle”

Principle of Socrealist Doctrine	The Opposing Principle
Realism/Truthfulness	Formalism/Naturalism
Party-spirit/Partisanship	Individualism
Typical/Characteristic	Individual/Non-characteristic
Nationalism/Traditionalism	Cosmopolitanism/Internationalism
Tendentiousness	Objectivity
Progressive optimism	Naturalism
Popular spirit/ Instructivity	Intellectualism/Bourgeois tendencies

The requirement of “realism” and/or “truthfulness” in artistic expression is one of the most essential and at the same time one of the most complex to grasp.³⁶³ As often in the Communist terminology, the term falls short behind elaborate thought construction,

³⁶² An overview of relevant description of the method in Czech see: German NĚDOŠIVIN: *Nástin teorie umění*. Praha 1955; P. SYSOJEV: *Boj o socialistický realismus v sovětském výtvarném umění*. In: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1 1950, 27-41; Konrad KONRAD: *Předpoklady socialistického realismu*, in: VLAŠÍN, Štěpán / PEŠTA, Pavel: *K socialistickému umění. Antologie z české marxistické estetiky*, Praha 1976; František KUBR / Ladislav NEJEDLÝ: *Čtení o socialistickém realismu*. Praha 1949; Maxim GORKIJ: *O Socialistickém Realismu*, in: KUBR, František / NEJEDLÝ, Ladislav: *Čtení o socialistickém realismu*. Praha 1949; Štěpán VLAŠÍN / Pavel PEŠTA: *K socialistickému umění. Antologie z české marxistické estetiky*, Praha 1976; Vladimír ŠOLTA: *Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu!* in: *Výtvarné umění, časopis Ústředního svazu československých výtvarných umělců*, Praha 1952; Jan ČUMPELÍK: *Příklad sovětského umění*. In: ŠOLTA, Vladimír: *Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu!* in: *Výtvarné umění, časopis Ústředního svazu československých výtvarných umělců*, Praha 1952

³⁶³ For a detailed account of the Realism concept in Czech see: Ladislav ŠTOLL: *Skutečnosti tváří v tvář*, in: KUBR, František / NEJEDLÝ, Ladislav: *Čtení o socialistickém realismu*. Praha 1949; Vladimír ŠOLTA: *K některým otázkám socialistického realismu ve výtvarném umění*, in: DUŠKOVÁ Dagmar / MORGANOVÁ, Pavlína / ŠEVČÍK, Jiří: *České umění 1938 – 1989, programy, kritické texty, dokumenty*. Praha 2001, 71-81

often rather ambivalent, devised as a part of an all-inclusive ideology. Art was supposed to be “realistic in form and socialist in the content”, as was famously noted by J. Stalin.³⁶⁴ Perceived from the perspective of the 19th century Realism theory, this simple formulation betrays an utter loss of the Realist programme. In Socialist Realism was not only undesirable to depict, without any embellishment, the raw, unvarnished reality, so touchingly reproduced by French Realists. It was positively unwelcome.³⁶⁵ “Naturalism“ and “critical realism“ were perceived as an art form, which was highly proper in the 19th century art, when the artists strove to justly depict the suffering of the people and the atrocities of the regime.³⁶⁶ But at the time of great socialist construction was the endeavour to point out the sore spots of the present day regime comparable only to high treason and persecuted as such. The realism, so highly praised and encouraged, remained in the sphere of a mere material depiction.³⁶⁷ The usage of the exclusively outward signs of the Realism is in accordance with the eclectic mode of classical legacy exploitation and was just one of the pieces of the mosaic of the cultural structure of the Socialist state.

In opposition to the previously described concept of Realism stood so-called “Formalism“. This term summed up all art currents, derived from Modernism and Avantgarde: Futurism, Cubism, Constructivism, Suprematism and all the others. It appears in the arguments on art throughout the existence of the Socialist cultural apparatus as a synonym to the harmful residues of the decadent bourgeois art.³⁶⁸ Formalism was understood as an art devoid of social utilitarianism, concerned rather with colour, form or other outward signs of art.³⁶⁹ As Socialist Realism took pride in its

³⁶⁴ GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 147

³⁶⁵ BRADAC 1950, 102

³⁶⁶ In an article, published in the *Výtvarné umění* in 1950 Javorská praises highly both Jean Francois Millet and Gustav Courbet for their contribution to the development of the „working class“ and peasantry genre, used without sentimental or bucolic atmosphere, see: L. JAVORSKÁ: *Revoluce 1848 a francouzské umění*, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1, 1950, 157-171

³⁶⁷ The vital difference of the realism concept in the original and socialist understanding was elaborated upon by: Jaroslav PECHÁČEK: *Starý a nový realismus v umění*, in: *OL*, 19. 5. 1948, 5

³⁶⁸ Todor PAVLOV: *Proti formalismu v umění*, in: *Slovanský přehled*, roč. 35, 1949, č. 7-8, 53-55; Jaroslav BOUČEK: *Formalistické “umění“ ve službách válečných paličů*, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1951-1952, 343 ff.;

³⁶⁹ For a reference to the understanding of the relation of realism and formalism in the Czechoslovakian press see: Stanislav K. NEUMANN: *Realismus, formalismus a objektivní skutečnost*, in: VLAŠÍN, Štěpán / PEŠTA, Pavel: *K socialistickému umění. Antologie z české marxistické estetiky*, Praha 1976; Josef CÍSAŘOVSKÝ: *Proti formalismu a za odvážnější cestu k realismu*, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1, 1950, 399-426

engaged character, its proponents criticised scathingly this Formalism, they considered to be a product of ever widening gap between individualist artist and his audience.

One of the indispensable characteristics of the Socrealist method discourse was the tireless effort to formulate and describe the “typical”.³⁷⁰ The trickiness of this principle is comparable to the Realism concept, described in previous paragraphs. As well as Realism, the “Typical” was once again greatly remote from the original meaning of the word. Whereas the conventional meaning of the word implies the search for the average, which is to be a contentual summary of the most characteristic features of the given quantity, the Socrealist “typicality” is an entirely different category. As G. Malenkov clarified in the report at the Nineteenth Party Congress, the typical is not what is encountered the most often, but that which most persuasively express the essence of a given social force.³⁷¹ Yet again, the thought construct is bound closely to the political theory and ideology of the Communist party. Malenkov names in one breath also the Party-spirit and realistic art, which are the substrates for the attainment of the *typical*.

As is seen from the chart, the indispensable “Party-spirit”, perceived as a direct contradiction to the individualism, alleged subjectivism of the modern artists.³⁷² Artists were encouraged to create with “partisanship” in mind.³⁷³ Partisan approach to the chosen subject – both in art and literature was to A. Zhdanov an indispensable part of the progressive world outlook and was understood as an effort to depict the most desirable outcome of a given subject. The endeavour was not laid on the depiction of the most characteristic phenomena, but on the desirable substance. In all cases that was the bright future, not the imperfect presence. This could be accomplished by the artist, when he could turn his mind to the requirements of the Party. If he did not succeed to determine the current preferences of the leadership (yielding to changes in political situation), he exposed himself to the danger of being removed.

³⁷⁰ GROYS 1992, 54

³⁷¹ As quoted in: N. DMITRIEVA: Das Problem des Typischen in der bildenden Kunst, in: Kunst und Literatur, n. 1, 1953, 100

³⁷² Compare: Gunther MEHNERT: Parteilichkeit und sozialistischer Realismus. Leipzig 1962; Jan MUKAŘOVSKÝ: Stranickost ve vědě a umění. Praha 1949

³⁷³ A. A. ZHDANOV: On Literature, Music and Philosophy. London 1950; This notion was brought by V. I. Lenin, as seen in his publication: V.I. LENIN: Party Organisation and Party Literature, in: Lenin Collected Works. Moscow 1965, vol. 10, 44-49,

Nationally felt “traditionalism“ as an antithesis to internationalism and cosmopolitanism is another of essential thoughts.³⁷⁴ The theoreticians of the Socialist Realism considered themselves as protectors of the classical art heritage, which Bolsheviks supposedly snatched away from the bourgeoisie in order to hand it into the disposal of the Proletariat.³⁷⁵ Unlike the Avantgarde, Soviets ever since Lenin's intervention into the policy of art preservation intended not only to maintain the legacy of the classical art, but also to make use of it in the favour of the Communist party. The national legacy of the Russian realist tradition of Peredvizniki and Ilya Y. Repin was trumpeted as an essential inspirational source for all fine artists and Communist Party hailed as saviour of the best Russian traditions.³⁷⁶

On the other hand, the tradition was employed in a manner absolutely eclectic. Soviets, unlike Avantgarde, did not feel the necessity to oppose the old world, they rather used the remnants of it as a storehouse of ideas, thoughts and motives to create an eclectic style, that would convene to their needs. The opposing principle, routinely used in the SSSR as a label and often spelled to mark an artist as an enemy of the state, was the inclination to internationalism and cosmopolitanism.³⁷⁷ These categories comprised all outward signs of Modernism, inspiration by the western artistic currents and was considered as equal to the most treacherous grovelling to the American imperialism.

The “progressive optimism“ was one of the principles, essential to the ideological structure of the Socialist Realism. It was understood as the capacity to depict or express the desirable outcome of the present political, social, economical and cultural development. As the whole country entered into the new stage of the Socialist state construction, everyone was expected to gaze into the future with optimism and so

³⁷⁴ Oldřich STARÝ: Boj proti kosmopolitismu je cesta k socialistickému umění, in: Výtvarné umění, 1951-1952, 357 ff.; ČUMPELÍK, Jan / ŠOLTA, Vladimír: Na výstavě našich klasiků, in: Výtvarné umění, 1951-1952, 282 ff.; Vojtěch PAVLÁSEK: Projev náměstka ministra školství, věd a umění, in: KÁRA, Lubor (ed.): II. Celostátní konference Svazu československých výtvarných umělců. Praha 1952, 40-44

³⁷⁵ GROYS 1992, 56

³⁷⁶ Vladimír ŠOLTA: Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu! in: Výtvarné umění, časopis Ústředního svazu československých výtvarných umělců, Praha 1952

³⁷⁷ See Paradigm Shift of the Art Theory

contribute to the reshaping of the society. Artists were encouraged to express this optimism and positive expectation of the future in their art. The era of Socialism indispensably had to be accompanied by art, that would raise the spirits of people, that would provide the public with an encouraging picture of the life in the SSSR.³⁷⁸ The progressive optimism is indivisibly bound to the principles of Party-mindedness and Realism/truthfulness as explained in the previous paragraphs, with which they create an assemblage of the vital characteristics of the Socrealist method. The opposing principle in this instance is Naturalism, i.e. the tendency to depict the raw reality, most thematising the working class, poor, sick or socially disadvantaged in a mercilessly realistic manner, causing discomfort and unease in the spectator. These tendencies were for previously described reasons deemed not only unnecessary or undesirable, but downright subversive.

Another requirement of the Socrealist art was the expression of the so-called “popular spirit“ and achievement of proper level of “instructiveness“ of arts.³⁷⁹ The character of art, that would be close to the hearts of the people, was a subject of lengthy discussions. Lenin himself was known to have rather inferior bourgeois taste himself and he sneered upon some of the Avantgardist suggestions of what should instructive and people-oriented art look like. The conclusion of these debates materialised in the form of the Realist tradition, which exploited purely the formal aspects of its venerated predecessor. The obsolete forms of the academical tradition of national classics, was, however, hardly more widely comprehensible to the general population than Malevich's reductionist black square. So albeit the Soviet theoreticians boasted of the creation of popular national style, that would captivate the attention and win the hearts of the population, they hardly stepped out of the shadow of what they called bourgeois tendencies and intellectualism.

Also the criteria of critical evaluation of art are changed substantially. The assessment of the artistic value shifts to the evaluation of the political suitability of the author. Therefore the appraisal could be changed according to the current agreeability of the

³⁷⁸ P. SYSOJEV: Boj o socialistický realismus v sovětském výtvarném umění, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 1 1950, 27-41

³⁷⁹ František BURIÁNEK: Srozumitelnost umění pro lid, in: ZN, 18. 8. 1945, 3

artist to the regime. The undesirable author, whose works were praised only shortly before, could have been easily blamed for following “Formalist style”. This perspective, perfectly in accordance with the “Zhdanovshchina”, puts on the pedestal the political order instead of any other criteria and allows the regime to misuse the term of Socialist Realism to label any work of art that is subordinated to its will. Aestheticians and art critics, formerly entitled to evaluate works of art are instead appointed to find faults in the artistic produce of a troublesome or defiant artist.³⁸⁰

Albeit the process of the implementation of the Socialist Realism into the Czechoslovakia cultural environment was launched by the said convention, the discussion regarding the inspiration by Soviet art was already in full swing in 1947. *The Exhibition of Soviet painters* at Slovanský ostrov in Prague for the first time allowed Czechoslovakian Intelligentsia to perceive the true character of the official Soviet art. Soviet artists were represented by Aleksandr Gerasimov, Sergei Gerasimov, Aleksandr Dejneka a Arkady Plastov. The participation of the director of the Tretyakov Gallery Aleksandr Zamoshkin, Ambassador of the Soviet Union and representatives of the Czech political scene, including Jan Masaryk made the festive opening a prestigious occasion.³⁸¹ The exhibition, presenting 86 works, had massive attendance and the discussion that followed is highly characteristic of the early onset of Socialist Realism. A publisher Václav Žikeš in 1947 brought together all relevant contributions, reviews, articles and opinions on the exhibition under the title *Střetnutí: Sovětské malířství a současné umění*.³⁸²

This anthology contains the celebratory texts and reviews of Václav Rabas, Stanislav Richter, Karel Hodr or Ctibor Štolovský, almost fully interchangeable in their endeavours to acclaim in flattering words the official Soviet art, extolling its monumentality, optimism, the interconnectedness of the Soviet people and in case of Štolovský also praising the absence of the Avantgarde features in presented works of art.³⁸³ Some of

³⁸⁰ Olga BRADAC: Aesthetic Trends in Russia and Czechoslovakia, in: *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 1950, 100.

³⁸¹ Peter KOVÁČ: Skandály v umění: Polemika o stalinském malířství v Praze na jaře 1947. Retrieved from: <http://www.stavitele-katedral.cz/skandaly-v-umeni-polemika-o-stalinskem-malirstvi-v-praze-na-jare-1947/> (9. 10. 2016)

³⁸² Václav ŽIKEŠ: *Střetnutí: Sovětské malířství a současné umění*. Praha 1947

³⁸³ *Ibidem*

the other contributors vote rather cautious stance, assessing the current Soviet art through the prism of historical development and international situation in art, evading adoration or rejection. It is of interest that some of these reviewers, such as Zdeněk Hlaváček, consider the problem of Soviet artistic orientation as rather remote and only marginally related to the Czechoslovakian experience and future development in art.³⁸⁴

Aside from these contributions, however, the anthology also incorporates highly critical voices of František Kovárna, Otomar Mrkvička, Stanislav Talaváňa, Bohuslav Brouk, František Doležal and others. It is noted by the author, writing under the acronym of "JK" that spectator must not forget the character of Soviet painting, which is dedicated entirely to the aim of the celebration of the regime and state ideology.³⁸⁵ František Doležal claimed:

Judging by the results presented to us, the state in which we find the Soviet art perhaps agrees with the sociological requirements laid on them, meaning it speaks intelligible to the people and depicts the Soviet present-day, but it does not speak by the artistic speech of today, but in the western bourgeois speech, at the end of the past and the beginning of this century, in a manner overthrown by the development in the Western Europe, but also in Russia itself.³⁸⁶

Žikeš does not miss the relevant point of the discussion, the contribution of A. Zamoshkin on modern Czech art in Moscow *Pravda*. Aside from summarising the positive reactions of the Czech public - the working class, but also a number of intellectuals - he objects to the bourgeois tendencies in Czech art and the names Mánes Group and the Academy of Applied Arts (UMPRUM) as the proponents of these "formalist" tendencies. He labels the Mánes Group unworthy of the name of the legendary national artist and the Czech modernist art he labels as provincialist.³⁸⁷ The allegations levelled by Zamoshkin and printed in *Pravda* provoked the students of the UMPRUM to formulate an open letter.³⁸⁸ The scathing reply is a fitting illustration to the

³⁸⁴ Zdeněk HLAVÁČEK: Obrazy národních umělců SSSR, Svět práce, 24.4. 1947, reprinted in: ŽIKEŠ 1947, 63-66

³⁸⁵ „JK“: K výstavě sovětského malířství, in: Právo lidu, 20. 4. 1947, reprinted in: ŽIKEŠ 1947, 38-47

³⁸⁶ František DOLEŽAL: K výstavě sovětského malířství, in: Národní osvobození 18.4. 1947, 19.4. 1947. reprinted in: ŽIKEŠ 1947, 38-47

³⁸⁷ Aleksandr ZAMOSHKIN: Výstava sovětského malířství v Praze, in: Moskevská pravda, 6. 6. 1947, 3. reprinted in: ŽIKEŠ 1947, 186-190

³⁸⁸ Otevřený dopis posluchačů Vysoké uměleckoprůmyslové školy moskevské Pravdě, in: Mladá fronta, 15. 6.

stances of those artists, who believed in the capacity to link the achievements of modern art to the Socialist content.

Žikeš's anthology is probably the first and at the same time also the last most comprehensive overview of the full spectrum of theoretical opinion on the subject of Soviet Socialist Realism. It is probably the only extensive resource of the true opinions of theoreticians, which would not be published from the 1948 onwards. It shows critical and in some cases present most sharply formulated condemnation of the artistic quality of the official Soviet painting. There and only there is to be seen the honesty and frankness in the assessment of the Socrealism, stripped of its alleged heroism and glory and revealed in its true colours.

The most avid proponent of Socialist Realism became Z. Nejedlý who often published his papers in the magazine *Var*.³⁸⁹ He published several texts on the character of the "New Art". In an *article About the tasks of our literature*, published already in 1949, he promoted the nationally perceived history, handled in Marxist perspective. He encouraged artists to join the "*right side of the barricade*" and on the example of national writers of the Czech National Revival he deduced the obligation of all artists to be part of the social progress the same way, as their predecessors, revered authors such as František Palacký, Karel Jaromír Erben or Božena Němcová.³⁹⁰

Perhaps unsurprisingly, one of distinctive obligations, which was repetitively emphasized through magazines, articles, broadcasting, films and television so it became truly omnipresent – the need to "*be inspired by the Soviet Union*". In the realm of fine arts it meant to concede that the Soviet art is the most advanced in the world, acknowledge that the Soviet artists acquired the highest level of mastery and were for that reason the most suitable role-models for the Czechoslovakian artists. This basic postulate, was to become the daily bread of all artists, who strived to create conformist art under the

1047, reprinted in: ŽIKEŠ 1947, 197-201

³⁸⁹ For more on Zdeněk Nejedlý and his relation to cultural politics see especially: Jiří KŘEŠŤAN: Zdeněk Nejedlý: Politik a vědec v osamění. Praha / Litomyšl 2012; Jiří KŘEŠŤAN: Poslední Husita odchází: Zdeněk Nejedlý v osidlech kulturní politiky KSČ po roce 1945. In: Soudobé Dějiny. 2005, Vol. 12 Issue 1, 9-44. 36.

³⁹⁰ Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: O úkolech naší literatury. Praha 1949, 39. For more on the distinguished personalities see: MERHAUT 2008

Communist rule. Only in the 1950s volume of the *Výtvarné umění* one can find more than 12 articles on some aspect of Soviet art – be it Soviet critique, architecture, Russian realist tradition in painting, graphics, Stalin's notes or various translations of articles by Soviet authors. The Soviets were installed in the position of authority, the ultimate judges of the achievements of Socialist Realism in the satellite countries.

In 1952 a brochure, appendix to the *Výtvarné umění* was published, called *Draw the Experience from the Art of Soviet Masters, Masters of Socialist Realism!*³⁹¹ Aside from universalist proclamations by political leaders, serving as an introduction, it contains articles summarising not only the general requirement of the Soviet inspiration, but individually elaborated articles on Soviet sculpture, Soviet inspiration by the classic tradition and chapter on the Soviet artists, their relation to art and society. A pro-regime conformist artist Jan Čumpelík in his *The Example of the Soviet Art*, praises Soviet artists for their capacity to relate to the People as well as excel in the leveraging of the national realist tradition.³⁹² This obligatory inspiration resulted in rather unconvincing outcomes, for artists either tried to implement the “new thematics” to their former pre-Revolutional “Formalist” art work (which met with displeasure of the Party),³⁹³ or followed rigidly the Soviet model with all the outward signs of the forced import of Socialist Realism which final product would inevitably make rather awkward impression on the intended audience.³⁹⁴

In 1947 were presented *Paintings by National Artists of the SSSR*, 12th April – 2nd May 1947, which brought heated discussions on the compatibility of the Soviet and Czech Art.³⁹⁵ This exhibition, parading the high style of the Russian Socialist Realism, awakened very ambiguous reactions. Many theoreticians and artists noted that Czech

³⁹¹ Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu! in: *Výtvarné umění*, časopis Ústředního svazu československých výtvarných umělců, Praha 1952

³⁹² Jan Čumpelík was in turn praised by his Russian counterpart in 1954, when his painting “The Dawn of a February Day” was exhibited on the occasion of the Czechoslovakian exhibition in Moscow.

Jan ČUMPELÍK: Příklad sovětského umění, in: Vladimír ŠOLTA: Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu! *Výtvarné umění*, časopis Ústředního svazu československých výtvarných umělců, Praha 1952

³⁹⁴ This displeasure is reflected on many occasions in texts of both theoreticians and politicians, such as Vojtěch PAVLÁSEK: The Speech of Under-Secretary to the Minister of Culture at the Nationwide Conference of the SČSVU in II. Celostátní konference svazu Československých výtvarných umělců 1952, 9;

³⁹⁵ More on that PETIŠKOVÁ, Tereza: *Československý socialistický realismus 1948-1958*. Praha, 2002

Art experienced rather different development in the previous decades, which was remote from the Academically oriented paintings of Soviet propaganda.³⁹⁶ This uproar was commented by Architect Karel Stráník in the conclusions of the 2nd Congress of SČSVU in 1952, who admitted, that acquaintance with Soviet art, sought for by ideologues of the Party and Party-bound exponents of SČSVU, was expressed more by words than acts, as artists could not perceive nothing else but reproductions. The failure to appeal the professional public was sorely felt by the Party and they sought to make amends by taking in the public by all accessible ways.³⁹⁷ Between 28th April – 29th May 1950 the Union of Artists presented *Soviet Graphics*, in November 1951 an exhibition *Forever with Soviet Union*.³⁹⁸ The number of foreign exhibitions experienced a steady decline after 1950 and dropped significantly after 1952, when only three exhibitions of foreign art were organised.

The East German Erste Zentrale Kulturtag der KPD in 3 – 5 February 1946, already provided recommendations for the artists that pointed directly to the Soviet Union as the foremost authority. The SMAD and KPD made the effort to create ideal circumstances for moulding of public taste and education of the People in the first years, the newspapers and professional magazines, however, contained a wide range of articles on the whole number of subjects, not yet ideologically modified. Anton Ackermann and Wilhelm Pieck during their speeches at the Kulturtag presented several substantial ground stones of the future development of the official doctrine.³⁹⁹

As it turned out in the year of the DDR establishment, the professional public, consisting of artists, art critics and collectors, did not relate to the new thematics as the KPD would want them to do.⁴⁰⁰ Several measures were adopted to achieve desired compliance of the general artistic public. A number of orders such as the Regulation on the

³⁹⁶ 12th April – 2nd May 1947- Obrazy národních umělců SSSR, catalogue: AK 5161 / AK 3446

More on that Tereza Petišková

³⁹⁷ K. Stráník became the President of SČSVU in 1950.

³⁹⁸ 28th April – 29th May 1950 - Sovětská grafika, catalogue: XXII D 4258/6 č. 53, XXII C 4748/1, č. 32 November 1951 – Výstava se Sovětským svazem na věčné časy, catalogue: XXII D 6751 č. 17

³⁹⁹ Wilhelm PIECK: Um die Ernennung der deutschen Kultur. Rede auf der Ersten Zentralen Kulturtagung der KPD in Berlin am 3.2. 1946. In: Wilhelm Pieck / Anton Ackermann, Unsere Kulturpolitische Sendung. Reden auf der Ersten Zentralen Kulturtagung der KPD in Berlin am 3.2. 1946, Berlin 1946

⁴⁰⁰ Ulrich KUHIRT: Die Kunst während der Revolutionären Übergangsperiode vom Kapitalismus zu Sozialismus, in: KUHIRT 1978, 113

Conservation and Development of German Science and Culture issued on 31 March 1949, establishment of the National Prizes (won for the first time by a sculptor Gustav Seitz) and promotion of forums, where artists were to discuss the intricacies of the new tasks.⁴⁰¹ The necessity to bring artists to adoption of the official doctrine was indispensable, if they were to educate the Masses through their artworks.

Several contributions in the Czechoslovakian magazine *Výtvarné umění* by Z. Nejedlý, V. Kopecký, L. Štoll, V. Jícha, J. Rybák, L. Kára and V. Kurzweilová deal with theoretical questions of the creative process and discuss inspiration by national past, problem of Formalism and Idealism, but also more down-to-earth problems of the previous three years, regarding the nature of artistic production, role of artists in society, provisions for artists, engagement of the working-class public in the creation, enjoyment and assessment of art, alleged desinterpretation of the true nature of new art by the bourgeois generation of artists and inability of the aforesaid to grasp fully and wholeheartedly the new thematics.⁴⁰²

Postwar Situation in ČSR and SBZ Sculpture

The proximity and pan-European base of the evolvement of sculpture in Germany and Czechoslovakia, together with a similar political situation are key factors of the resemblance both countries exhibit regarding the after-war development. The most pronounced feature, determining all other characteristics, lays in the fact, that SBZ would since the very beginning rest in the iron grip of the SSSR and the curtailment of the artistic liberty would be manifested faster than in Czechoslovakia. The following text, however, witnesses not only the similarities, caused by the affinity to the same hegemon,

⁴⁰¹ KUHIRT 1978, 114

(DE) Verordnung über die Erhaltung und Entwicklung der Deutschen Wissenschaft und Kultur

⁴⁰² Lubor KÁRA: K otázce úkolové práce v podmínkách lidové demokracie, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 2, 1950, 12-15; Vladimír ŠOLTA: K některým otázkám socialistického realismu ve výtvarném umění, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 2, 1950, 108-132; Václav KOPECKÝ: Zářný příklad sovětského umění, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 5, 1950, 195-198; Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: O nové výtvarnictví, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 6, 1950, 241-251; etc.

but subtle differences caused by the affiliation to the local tradition, which was always naturally endeavouring to resurface.

In Czechoslovakia the war affected artists, who belonged to the heavily prosecuted intellectual elite, in professional, personal and psychological dimension, not excluding economical consequences. Being usually dependent upon the commissions from institutions or collectors, most of them found themselves in a dire economical situation.⁴⁰³ More serious consequences affected artists, such as Emil Filla or Josef Čapek, to name the most prominent, who were interned in labour camps.⁴⁰⁴ Among sculptors, who suffered irreversible loss of health were Rudolf Saudek, Karel Štipl and Jaroslav Šlezinger, Alois Bučánek was among those, who lost their lives in concentration camps.⁴⁰⁵

In Germany the postwar group of active sculptors was reduced by the Nazi prosecution in the previous years, exile and natural generational development. The sculptors, who did not subjugate to the Nazi regime would in many ways suffer the same prosecution as

⁴⁰³ For an archival account of the situation see: NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Sl. Organizace výtvarnictví 1946-1948, Panu Dr. Edvardu Benešovi, Presidentu Československé republiky

⁴⁰⁴ Among prosecuted artists were numerous members of the Jewish community, artists such as Dina Gottlieb, Leo Haas, Petr Kien. Among painters of Czech nationality were persecuted or executed painters František Mořic Nágel, František Zelenka.

Josef Čapek (1887-1945) Czech painter, graphic, illustrator, writer and poet, versatile artistic personality of the inter-war era, brother to the writer Karel Čapek. An editor of the *Volné směry* magazine, later of *Národní listy* and *Lidové noviny*. In 1918 participated in the foundation of the Tvrdošíjn group and in 1924 had his first comprehensive exhibition. Died of typhoid in the camp Bergen-Belsen.

Emil Filla (1882-1953), Czech painter, graphic and sculptor, representative of the Cubist movement. Influential personality of Czech modernist painting and sculpture. Student of the Academy of Arts. Interned in Dachau and Buchenwald. From 1945 professor at UMPRUM. He continued in his experimentative art forms even after the Communist take-over. This set him in the records of the Party as a Formalist. Not even his positively formulated letter to the Action Board of the National Front from the early days of the regime spared him the shame of being forbidden to exhibit his folk songs inspired series to the occasion of his 70th birthday in 1951.

⁴⁰⁵ *Jaroslav Šlezinger* (1911-1955), a Czech sculptor. 1939 concluded his studies at AVU, a pupil of B. Kafka. 1939-1942 interned in concentration camp Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen, later on engaged in the antifascist resistance. 1949 imprisoned for his anti-Communist stances and engagement in resistance movement, 1950 sentenced to 25 years in jail, where he died as a result of his work in the uranium mines. His field of occupation was especially figural sculpture. For more see: Veronika CHROMÁ: *Život sochaře Jaroslava Šlezingera v kontextu dobových událostí* (The life of Jaroslav Šlezinger in the context of historical events). Diploma thesis, Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts. Brno 2016.

Rudolf Saudek (1880-1965), Jewish sculptor, translator, graphic. Student at AVU and also Academy in Leipzig. Highly esteemed for his portraiture qualities. Held in the Terezín concentration camp. For more see: Rudolf Saudek, in: TOMAN 1993

Karel Štipl (1889-1972), Czech architect, sculptor, noted often as an exceptional glass designer. Studied at VŠUMPRUM as a pupil of Josef Drahoňovský (whom he later replaced in a special department for applied sculpture) and Josip Plečnik. In 1959 acquired Order of Work. For more see: Karel Štipl, in: TOMAN 1993

their Czechoslovakian counterparts. The Entartete Kunst representatives such as Oskar Schlemmer, Käthe Kollwitz, Ernst Barlach did not live to see the 1945, dying of natural causes, Otto Freundlich, who was of Jewish descent, died in the concentration camp.⁴⁰⁶ Those more fortunate, such as Rudolf Belling managed to leave Germany for good, others, such as Bernard Hoetger struggled to convince the representatives of the Nazi state of the Expressionism qualities, only to fail and face the oppression anyway.⁴⁰⁷ Some other artists, such as Gerhard Marcks or Gustav Seitz, would remain in Germany, only to find new fame and professional self-realization in the newly built state. Others, as Georg Kolbe, albeit not shunned for their former cooperation with the Nazis, did not acquire the prestigious commissions anymore.

In Czechoslovakia after-the-war paralysis and slow restart of cultural politics in 1945, surge of artistic activity in the refreshing atmosphere of relief and liberty would not take long to manifest. As the war drew to its end, the ban on the exhibiting activities was lifted, but the heavily affected cultural elite with critically undermined social networks, required some time to consolidate. The second half of the 1945 brought several painting, drawing and graphics exhibitions of local authors. The sculpture, undoubtedly due to the logistical challenges and time-consuming preparation, was not exhibited. Also no major exhibition of foreign production took place in 1945, let alone sculpture-dedicated.

Three smaller-scale exhibitions were brought to the public, all of them related to Soviet art, or organized in cooperation with its sympathisers.⁴⁰⁸ Neither first half of the 1946 brought any display of sculpture. The artistic exchange, promoted by the Society for Cultural and Agricultural Liaisons with SSSR, was launched by donation of artistic works by Czech artists to the Red Army on the occasion of its foundation anniversary.⁴⁰⁹ The list contained also sculptures, ranging from the busts of Stalin by A. Novotný and A.

⁴⁰⁶ For a biographical note on Käthe Kollwitz see note: 189, on Ernst Barlach see note: 190

⁴⁰⁷ For a biographical note on Bernard Hoetger see note: 112

⁴⁰⁸ Hitler v sovětské karikatuře (Hitler in Soviet Caricature), Topičův salon, 28th July – 12th August 1945
Sovětský svaz za vlastenecké války (Soviet Union at the Times of the Patriotic War), Topičův salon, 28th August – 23rd September 1945

⁴⁰⁹ Anna MASARYKOVÁ / Jaroslav ŠANDA: Český národ Rudé armádě: Seznam děl výtvarného umění věnovaných českými umělci Rudé armádě z vděčnosti za osvobození a odevzdaných k výročnímu dni založení Rudé armády 23. února 1946 (Czech Nation to the Red Army: A list of fine art, donated by Czech Nation to the Red Army etc.), nepag.

Chromek, over Retreat of Germans from Stalingrad by Karel Opatrný to common genre from many more or less consequential sculptors.⁴¹⁰

The German sculptor was in the immediate aftermath of war facing the necessity to find a new beginning, albeit the end of the war would in the divided country result in much less optimism than in the liberated Czechoslovakia. The post-war discussion would evolve around the suitable character of the new art, ranging from the desire to follow the traditions of the pre-war Modern arts to the requirement for an unprecedented style, springing from the new circumstances.⁴¹¹ The German Expressionists, defamed and persecuted during the times of National Socialism, brought after the end of the war their preferred style back to daylight. They felt, the drastical interruption of the natural development had to be dealt with by tying it together with the present artistic efforts.⁴¹² Partly because of the virulent tradition, partly due to the Nazi oppression, the Expressionism regained fast its popularity and respect among artists and resulted in the efforts for its restoration after the Third Reich was vanquished.⁴¹³

One of the most pronounced theoretical arguments, eventually greatly influencing sculpture and sculptors in DDR, evolved, therefore around the “problem of Formalism“, one of the most essential points in the cultural debate of the early DDR. In Besatzungszone is the launching of this dispute over the modernist art, which resulted in the questioning of the freedom of art, to be ascribed to the SMAD Department of Culture leader, Alexander Dymshitz. An article, published in der *Täglichen Rundschau* on 19 and 24 November 1949 served as an attack on the Modernist artists, whom he blamed for falsifying reality.⁴¹⁴ This article set an avalanche of articles and sparked a debate, from the very beginning destined to end up in a complete victory of SED.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁰ MASARYKOVÁ / ŠANDA 1946, nepag.

⁴¹¹ JACOBI 1995, 90-91

⁴¹² For more on the debate on Expressionism see chapter *Postwar Situation in ČSR and SBZ Sculpture*

⁴¹³ Ulrike, NIEDHOFER: Die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Expressionismus in der bildenden Kunst im Wandel der politischen Realität der SBZ und der DDR 1945 – 1989, Frankfurt am Main 1996, 7

⁴¹⁴ Alexander DYMSCHITZ: Warum wir gegen Dekadenz sind, in: *Tägliche Rundschau*, 31. 1. 1948

⁴¹⁵ Another watershed article was written by High Commissar of the SSSR in DDR, Vladimir SEMOJNOW under the pseudonym N. ORLOW: Wege und Irrwege der modernen Kunst, in: *Tägliche Rundschau*, January 20, 1951, 4; see also: GIRNUS, Wilhelm. Gegen den Formalismus in der Kunst - für eine fortschrittliche deutsche Kultur. Berlin 1951; A thorough explanation of the Realist conception under Marxism by: Hans Jürgen SCHMITT (ed.): Die Expressionismusdebatte. Materialien zu einer marxistischen Realismuskonzeption. Frankfurt am Main 1973

Also in Czechoslovakia the fight against Formalism found its way to the newspapers and professional debates.⁴¹⁶ There is hardly to be found an article on Socialist Realism that would not, in one way or other, criticise formalism of Czech art before the Victorious February and in some cases also afterwards.⁴¹⁷ According to J. Rybák in his *Through Socialist Realism to the Art of New Beauty* the art of Socialist Realism is in direct opposition to “Formalism”, including all modern art since the Impressionism. As he emphasizes, the formalist art, instead of the objective idolizes subjective and remotes itself from the public by obscuring the true meaning of art. He explains Socialist Realism as the art, which strive to create “higher“ art which is be both supremely intelligible and close to the hearts of the People. ⁴¹⁸ The Socialist Realism was to become new, elevated art form, which would unite the tradition with the entirely new concept of progressive perception of Socialism and its role in society.⁴¹⁹ It declares the alienness, hostility and incomprehensibility of the Modernist currents, criticises employment of Expressionism, Naturalism and other undesirable features.⁴²⁰

Postwar Exhibitions

The Soviet Sculpture – Exhibition of Photographs in Topičův salon, 27th May – 16th June 1946 represented another step of the cooperation with the SSSR.⁴²¹ It was a small-scale presentation of the photographs of Soviet sculptural production, the first opportunity for the Czechoslovakian sculptors to familiarize themselves with the artistic concept of

⁴¹⁶ For a relevant articles on the emergence of Formalism debate see: Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: O realismu pravém a nepravém, in: Štěpán VLAŠÍN / Pavel PEŠTA: K socialistickému umění. Antologie z české marxistické estetiky, Praha 1976, 166-174; Jaroslav BOUČEK: Formalistické „umění“ ve službách válečných paličů, in: Výtvarné umění, 1951-1952, 343 ff.

⁴¹⁷ The wide-spread criticism of Formalism in the post-February art was most pronounced as a part of the self-criticism of culture officials and SČSVU representatives after the Slánský's process. It was followed by cleanses of the power structure and resulted in personal changes.

⁴¹⁸ Josef RYBÁK: Socialistickým realismem k umění nové krásy, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 1, 1950, 1-2

⁴¹⁹ GILLEN 2005, 35

⁴²⁰ Orlow 1951, 4

⁴²¹ Sovětská plastika – výstava fotografií (Soviet Sculpture – Exhibition of Photographs), Topičův salon, 27th May – 16th June 1946

Socialist Realism.⁴²² The best Soviet sculptors of the recent three generations were introduced and their works were shown together with their portrait, to provide the human touch to the otherwise remarkably depersonalized exhibition. The scope of the exhibited photographs comprised of all sculptural specialisations, including the official monumental commissions, decorative reliefs, industrial design, portraiture and small-scale realisations.

The first comprehensive display of modern Czechoslovakian sculpture in the second half of the 1946, was prepared by Václav Nebeský. An exhibition called *The Modern Sculpture from Gutfreund to Wagner*, was organised in the Vilímek's Gallery, 27th September – 29th October 1946.⁴²³ Importantly, the catalogue with its introductory note of Nebeský is lacking any inclination whatsoever to the spreading of the Communist perspective. The scope of works comprised of the representative works of Gutfreund, covered most thoroughly of all authors with twenty exhibits, including his well known works of Social Civilism. This style and related tendencies were exhibited in the work of other authors, such as Karel Pokorný, Jan Lauda or Josef Jiříkovský. Largely were included lyrical subjects and nudes by Josef Kaplický, Bedřich Stefan, Karel Kotrba and Hana Wichterlová.

The exhibition was concluded with the work of *Karel Dvořák*, who was profoundly influenced in the late thirties and early forties by the occupation, gave vent to the anxiety and worry in his allegorical sculptures and compositions. His cycle called *Czech rivers* (České řeky, 1940), *Tragedy* (Tragédie, 1938), *Life and Fate* (Život a osud, 1942), *Poetry* (Poezie, 1942), *Ecce Homo* (1942), or *Czechoslovak Genius* (Československý génius, 1942) are the most noteworthy.⁴²⁴ The developmental line of the Czech sculpture in recent decades is drawn with rare objectivity, in the absence of any ideological modification of the narrative. Albeit the socially critical tone and depiction of labour professions or soldiers is present, it is to be understood as an evidence of the organic belonging of the subject in the history of Czech sculpture, not a sign of

⁴²² The ČSR and DDR-SSSR artistic relations are described in a separate chapter, see: *Mutual Contact – DDR and ČSR and Echoes of the Soviet Socialist Realism*

⁴²³ Václav NEBESKÝ: Moderní sochařství od Gutfreunda k Wagnerovi. (Ex. Cat. Vilímkova galerie) Praha 1946

⁴²⁴ Czech Rives, Tragedy, Life and Fate, Poetry, Ecce Homo, Czechoslovakian Genius

ideological deformation.

The opportunity for collectors and sympathizers of the contemporary Czech sculpture to buy works of the young authors was provided by a selling exhibition in Topičův salon, 10th September – 6th October 1946.⁴²⁵ One of the jury members, who decided on the composition of the exhibition portfolio was Karel Pokorný. J. L. Nerad in the introduction to the catalogue delineated situation in the figural sculpture and prophesized renewed longing for monumentality, joined with the endeavour to relate to the current social atmosphere, to the humanity and its numerous facets. The most generously covered were works by Václav Markup, Alois Sopr, Jindřich Wielgus and Ladislav Zívř, whose bronzes, terracotas and plaster casts were offered for purchase.⁴²⁶ Plasters would cost average 15 000 Kčs, some of them would be exhibited in plaster, but offered to be sold in marble for a substantially larger sum.

The foreign art scene, with the traditionally strong position of France, brought to Prague in 1947 also the influential French sculpture. It was presented during an exhibition at Umělecká beseda, under the title *From Rodin to the Present Day*. The exhibition was also the first sculptural display, organized by officials of France, to be exported out of the liberated France. Prague – Umělecká beseda was to be the first stop of this comprehensive exhibition. An introduction to the exhibition catalogue was written by Jean Cassou, director of the Modern Arts Gallery in Paris. Aside from validating universally acknowledged position of Rodin in the history of European sculpture, as well as his most noteworthy followers Aristide Maillol and Antoine Bourdelle, more progressive current of artists were introduced.⁴²⁷ Among these were sculptors such as

⁴²⁵ J. L. NERAD: Mladé české sochařství. Topičův salon (Ex. Cat.) Praha 1946

⁴²⁶ Václav Markup (1904-1995), Czech sculptor, wood carver, studied UMRUM at J. Mařatka and AVU by B. Kafka, whose assistant he became after the conclusion of his studies. A member of SVU. Throughout his long life his works were displayed in more than fifty exhibitions, also in Germany and Poland. For more see: Jiří KARBAŠ: Zasloužilý umělec Václav Markup: výběr ze sochařského díla 1923-1984: (Ex. Cat. Praha 22. ledna - 17. února 1985. Praha: Galérie hl. m. Prahy). Praha 1985

For more on Alois Sopr (1913-1993), see note 442

Ladislav Zívř (1909-1980), Czech sculptor, originally apprenticed as a potter, later studied at UMRUM. His work was influenced by Cubism and Surrealism. Member of the Skupina 42. He experimented with assemblage, often in combination of plaster and natural materials. His work was inspired by many art currents, but his own work is not easily categorized. For more see: Jaromír TYPLT: Ladislav Zívř. Praha 2013

⁴²⁷ Sochařství Francie: od Rodina k dnešku (květen - červen 1947) Umělecká beseda, Praha 1947, accompanied

Constantin Brâncuși, Alberto Giacometti or Germaine Richier, whose artistic efforts diverted from the figurative tradition to enter the field of free experiments, characteristic with versatile, highly individualistic forms.⁴²⁸

The SBZ would not lag behind – a number of exhibitions would be launched, including individual exhibitions to Käthe Kollwitz and Ernst Barlach in 1945. The first collective exhibition with a number of renowned sculptors took place in Berlin, under the title *I. Kunstausstellung der Kammer der Kunstschaffenden* the same year, where artworks of René Sintenis, Richard Scheibe and Gerhard Marcks were included.⁴²⁹ Already in 1946 *Gustav Seitz* was active as a promoter of the first postwar exhibition of sculpture, taking place in Galerie Franz, Berlin, under the title *Plastik und Bildhauerzeichnungen unserer Zeit*. A collective exhibition of works – aside from his - by several sculptors of varying artistic orientation (Paul Dierkes, Karl Hartung, Gottfried Kappen, Renée Sintenis, Louise Stomps, Christian Theunert, Hans Uhlmann).⁴³⁰

The I. Kulturtag of the SED, mentioned in the chapter on cultural politics, was echoed in the autumn of 1946 in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Kunstausstellung* in Dresden, the first and also the last opportunity for the Avantgarde artists to exhibit in a post-war East Germany in a comprehensive and unrestrictive exhibition.⁴³¹ It was organised by

with a fully illustrated catalogue – a collection of reproductions and with an introduction by Jean Cassou.

⁴²⁸ *Constantin Brâncuși* (1876-1957) was an artist of Romanian descent, living in France. Considered one of the most influential Modernist sculptors, who contributed to the evolvement of abstract art and pioneered primitivism and inspiration by non-European cultures. Studied in Bucharest, München and Paris. He exhibited in 1913 at Salon des Indépendants and Armory Show in USA. For more see: Radu VARIA: *Brancusi*. Paris 1989

Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966) was a Swiss sculptor, painter and printmaker. Studied in Geneva and Paris (École de la Grande Chaumière at Antoine Bourdelle) where he familiarized with Cubism and Surrealism. In 1927 had his first individual exhibition. Since 1929 in Surrealist group. In the 1940s he acquires his typical existencialist, weathered, fragile elongated figures. For more see: Yves BONNEFOY. *Alberto Giacometti*. Paris 1998

Germaine Richier (1902-1959) was French sculptor, studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Montpellier and later in Antoine Bourdelle's atelier, where she remained until his death in 1929. Her work is typical by eploment of hybrid biomorphic figures and disturbing deformations. For more see: Helena STAUBOVÁ: *Bourdelle a jeho žáci Giacometti, Richier, Gutfreund* (Ex. Cat. České muzeum výtvarných umění). Praha 1999

⁴²⁹ Fritz JACOBI: *Figur und Gegenstand: Malerei und Plastik in der Kunst der DDR aus der Sammlung der Nationalgalerie; (Ausstellung der Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, 13. August bis 29. Oktober 1995 im Ausstellungszentrum Gut Altenkamp.)* Berlin 1995, 99

⁴³⁰ Christian TÜMPEL (Ed.): *Deutsche Bildhauer 1900-1945. Entartet.* Zwolle 1992, 239

⁴³¹ Kurt WINKLER: *Allgemeine Deutsche Kunstausstellung, Dresden 1946*, in: *Stationen der Moderne - Die bedeutenden Kunstausstellungen des 20. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland* (Exhibition Catalogue, Berlinische Galerie) Berlin 1988, 355

One of relevant studies to the cultural-political background subject of the Exhibition in 1946 is: Kathleen

Landesverwaltung Sachsen with the consent and support of SMAD, represented by the leader of the Propaganda Department Sergei Tulpanow in the forefront. A wide scope of art works was summoned from all corners of the divided Germany.⁴³² Sculptors such as Wilhelm Lehmbruck, Ernst Barlach, Käthe Kollwitz, Waldemar Grzimek could see their works, in the Third Reich branded as *Entartete Kunst*, exhibited besides other works – both Expressionist or Realist.⁴³³

Emerging Elite Figuralists

Those sculptors, both Czechoslovakian and East German, whose pre-war work would provide evidence of their aptitude to deliver superb realist works, would be one step ahead of their competition for the postwar official commissions. Their position would be even better, in case they substantiated in the past some interest in the socially critical thematics or could boast with a personal history of leftist inclinations before 1946. These attributes were shared by as sculptors Vincenc Makovský or Jan Lauda, in Germany Fritz Cremer and Eugen Hoffmann. A substitution of a lacking cadre recommendation could be obtained by entering the Communist Party without hesitation. Those, who would at the same time succeed to emulate retrospective, historicism of myslbekian style and would either have or acquire a satisfactory cadre profile, would secure themselves good expectations.

The official biographical notes in monographs, exhibition catalogues and encyclopedic entries from the ČSR and DDR does provide only limited authentic information on the

SCHRÖTER: Allgemeinen Deutschen Kunstausstellung 1946 in Dresden im Kontext der Kunst- und Kulturpolitik in der SBZ. (Magisterarbeit, Universität Bonn) 2004

An interesting project, reconstructing in virtual environment the exhibition, was endeavoured by students of Fach Medieninformatik at the Technischen Universität Dresden, accesible at: <http://willgrohmann.de/reconstructionexhibition.php?lang=de>

⁴³² Ausstellungskatalog zur Allgemeinen Kunstausstellung Dresden 1946. Dresden 1946, 6

⁴³³ GILLEN 2005, 32

life of the artists.⁴³⁴ The artist under the Socialist regime, as he becomes the interpreter and preacher of the official doctrine, loses much of his individualism and becomes part of the cultural megamachine of centralist state. The biographies became more of a mirror of what characteristics the ideal artist was expected to possess. Therefore, in exchange for material provisions, artists in both DDR and ČSR as well as other satellite countries, gave up a significant part of their personal uniqueness. While reading the biographies of the artists, one is inevitably reminded of the hagiographical literature on the life of saints - only the piety, humility, christian morale and devotedness are replaced by modesty, class-mindedness, partisanship and Socialist spirit.

The flattening of the artist's individual profile as a personality is easily comprehensible in the biographies of all distinguished sculptors. For example, in a monograph on Karel Pokorný⁴³⁵ by Jiří Kotalík compliments Pokorný's modest origin,⁴³⁶ five years experience as a factory worker in Vienna, are highlighted in the laudation of his human characteristics. Also Konečný praises Pokorný's engagement with the working class in Vienna and his decision to "*enter the Social Democratic Party and take part in the strive of Austrian workers against the factory owners.*"⁴³⁷ Mašín in an exhibition catalogue quoted Pokorný, who stressed that his grandfather was yet a corvée labourer.⁴³⁸ An emphasis on Pokorný's alleged interest "in the life of the common people", reflected according to

⁴³⁴ Martin WARNKE: Gibt es DDR Künstler? Anmerkungen zu einem Künstlertypus, in: Monika FLACKE (Ed.): Auf der Suche nach dem verlorenen Staat: die Kunst der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR; Contribution from Symposium "Auf der Suche nach dem Verlorenen Staat. Die Kunst der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR", Deutschen Historischen Museum (13 – 14 Dec 1993), Berlin 1994

⁴³⁵ Karel Pokorný (1891-1962), was a Czech sculptor. In 1914 he concluded his studies at AVU as a pupil of J. Drahoňovský, and four years later in 1917 as a pupil of J. V. Myslbek. Between 1936-1939 taught artistic modelling at ČVUT in Prague. 1945-1962 a professor at AVU, 1948-1950 gain the position of the rector within the institution. From 1920 member of the SVU Mánes. His artistic work was heavily influenced by the Myslbekian realism. The Science (Věda, 1919), for the former building of the FF UK in Prague was marked by the influence of the Otto Gutfreund. In the 1920's and 1930's he yielded to the social tendencies, mirrored especially in his Monument to the Memorial to the Buried Miners (Pomník zasypaným havířům, 1925). His social awareness was further explored in a number of allegorical works, such as the Soil (Země, 1928). A high profile commission during the First Republic was for the National Memorial at Vítkov. After 1945 became more prevalent monumental historicism and portraiture. His postwar legacy is perceived mainly in the light of his conformism of the ruling Socialist Realism. Summoned a number of prizes and distinctions, including the title of National Artist in 1956. For more see: Vladimír NOVOTNÝ: Karel Pokorný. Praha 1956. Dušan KONEČNÝ: Odkaz díla Karla Pokorného. In: Výtvarná kultura 1983. č. 1. Jiří KOTALÍK: Karel Pokorný a jeho škola. Praha 1984.

⁴³⁶ Ibidem, 13. His father was a petty sole-trader, in his youth Pokorný worked in a locksmith's shop.

⁴³⁷ KOTALÍK 1983, 13. Dušan KONEČNÝ: Karel Pokorný : výbor z díla. Výstavní síň Mánes Praha, 1971 Konečný likens Pokorný's years of youth to the life of Maxim Gorky.

⁴³⁸ MAŠÍN 1961, 8

Kotalík in his art since his youth and expressed since 1934 in his art of Social Civilism, could serve as a recommendation by itself.⁴³⁹ As the biographies of artists from the period of their activity are characteristically devoid of life and authentic detail, it is a challenging to endeavour a reconstruction of the life of most of the regime-obliging artists.

The generation of figuralists, born in 1890s, Karel Pokorný, Jan Lauda, Karel Dvořák, Otakar Švec, together with Vincenc Makovský and Karel Lidický, who were both born in 1900, was at the end of the war in the mature stage of their careers and perfectly suitable to prove themselves capable to give their talents at the disposal of the newly built state.⁴⁴⁰ This applied also to the younger generation, represented by Josef Malejovský or Konrád Babraj, who would begin their individual endeavours in the late 1930s and after the war were gaining their independence in the public sphere.⁴⁴¹ The

⁴³⁹ KOTALÍK 1983, 13. J. Mašín also quotes Pokorný, who said: "In Farmers' Rebellion two figures of farmers are depicted striking. I like to do this – these are the childhood memories of the illustrations of Věnceslav Černý in the Little Reader, which I loved dearly. They evoked in me mercy with the oppressed."

⁴⁴⁰ The authors would in a vast majority experiment with a broad set of various artistic currents, so that none of these artists would not be one way or another engaged with modernist experiments before and throughout the war. Vincenc Makovský's organically shaped abstract nudes and torsos of his surrealist era (1930s), unsettling and mysterious Head of Prometheus (1935) would in retrospective be justified by pro-regime theoreticians as the legitimate need of the said artist to eradicate the bourgeois currents by stripping art of the ballast of provincialism and academicism.

Vincenc Makovský (1900-1966), was a Czech academical sculptor, painter, professor at AVU and Brno University of Technology. Born in Nové Město na Moravě, situated in Bohemian-Moravian Highlands as a son of a butcher. Since early age interested in painting. Briefly in the Austro-Hungarian army, from 1919 studied at AVU in the studio of sculptors B. Kafka and J. Štursa, concurrently at the studio of painter Jakub Obrovský and Karel Krattner. 1926-1930 Makovský spent in Antoine Bourdelle studio, due to the stipend from the French government. After returning he had spent several years in Prague and settled eventually in Brno. Throughout the war active in the resistance movement and participated in the foundation of School of Arts in Zlín, related to Baťa company, found to raise up talents in applied arts and industrial design. After the war he became senior lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture at the Brno University of Technology and received there a professorship two years later. In 1946 he was honoured by membership in the Czech Academy of Sciences and Arts. In 1952 acquired professorship at AVU. Received a number of honours and was distinguished a number of titles. Died on 28th December 1966 in Brno.

Selected bibliography: Luboš HLAVÁČEK: Vincenc Makovský, in: *Kultura* 1960, roč. 4, č. 17; Jiří HLUŠIČKA / Jaroslav MALINA / Jiří ŠEBEK: Vincenc Makovský. Brno 2002; Dušan ŠINDELÁŘ: Národní umělec, Vincenc Makovský. Praha 1963

⁴⁴¹ *Konrád Babraj* (1921-1991) Babraj was a Czech sculptor, ceramics maker, occasional painter and illustrator. 1939-1943 studied at Škola umění ve Zlíně (School of Art in Zlín) at Karel Hofman and Vincenc Makovský. Became assistant of V. Makovský at the Fakulta Architektury VUT (Faculty of Architecture at Brno University of Technology). In 1954 he received State Prize Second Class for a sculpture of a Red Army Soldier in Zlín, his best known work.

Selected bibliography: ČUBRDA Zdeněk: Konrád Babraj, *Výtvarná práce*, č. 19. roč. 5 1971/03/02, 4; ZYKMUND,

youngest generation of artists, such as Alois Sopr, Ladislav Zívr, Jindřich Wielgus would launch their careers no sooner than 1940s and most of them would not turn their back on the art works of figuralist and realist expression either.⁴⁴² The capacity of all these sculptors to employ a realist form as well as to sense what the commissioning bodies wished to implement into the stone and bronze, determined them for the monument design and other larger commissions. Other artists, such as Josef Kubíček, who would not join in the post-war shift towards monumentality, would often continue in their former endeavours.⁴⁴³

From the 1945 Karel Pokorný began to sketch his *Fraternization* (Sbratření), the renowned composition of a Red Army soldier and a Partisan, that would take several more years to be cast in bronze and became almost instantly an iconic representation of ideological sculpture.⁴⁴⁴ (Fig. 18) The capacity to embody the ideals of the fervently built cult of national historical personalities, merged them with corresponding outward signs of heroism or pathos and render it in a highly professional fashion, would secure Pokorný foremost place among regime obliging authors.

Pokorný worked upon several esteemed commissions immediately after the war, among them the projects for the monument of *Božena Němcová* and *Alois Jirásek*.⁴⁴⁵ The most notorious contribution to the postwar production by Pokorný, visible in many Prague streets until today, are memorial plaques with inscription *We shall remain faithful* (Věrní zůstaneme, 1945), honouring the countless fallen civilians and partisans, who died in

V.: Konrád Babraj – Obrazy, sochy, kresba, keramika (5. 11. – 28. 11. 1971). Brno 1971; DANĚK, J.: Konrád Babraj: Sochař, který maloval. Praha 2008; KOTA, Martin: Sochařská tvorba Konráda Babraje (Diploma thesis FF MU). Brno 2013

⁴⁴² *Alois Sopr* (1913-1993) was a Czech sculptor and engraver. Student at UMPRUM by J. Horejc, at AVU with B. Kafka and O. Španiel, whose assistant he became after the conclusion of his studies. An artist distinguished by the whole scope of the national prizes and honours.

Selected bibliography: ŠETLÍK, Jiří: *Alois Sopr: Plastika*. Praha 1959; PROCHÁZKA, Václav: *Alois Sopr*. Plzeň 1982

⁴⁴³ Josef Kubíček retained throughout the war and after it his simple, unpretentious genre style of countryside motives. His socially engaged sculptures, undoubtedly affected by the unease of the war situation, such as *Mother* (1942) or *Abandoned women* (1945-1946), are greatly outnumbered by his lyrical nudes, such as *Eva* (1947), *a girl with grapes* (1948), the pattern of preference that would continue further, reaching to the end of his career.

⁴⁴⁴ For more on the sculpture, as well as on other Pokorný's realizations in the period see: MAŠÍN 1961, 8

⁴⁴⁵ For a detailed analysis of this realisation see pages: 372-377

larger cities during the Prague Uprising in 1945.⁴⁴⁶ (Fig. 19) The task to create a bronze hand was given to Karel Pokorný, only after the contest with seventy-four draft proposals failed to yield satisfactory results.

Vincenc Makovský also entered the postwar period with promising prospects, as he impersonated all features, required in an “engaged and progressive” artist.⁴⁴⁷ Throughout the war he was active in the resistance movement as a member of illegal National-Revolutional Intelligence Committee, initiated by the Communists. Already in his youth was he inclined to support the political left by active participation in left-oriented academia group in his native town.⁴⁴⁸ Makovský's experience of acute poverty and need in his student years, influenced his political orientation and resulted in the endeavour to promote social justice and improvement of life conditions of the working class.

After the liberation Makovský entered the Communist party.⁴⁴⁹ The foremost figure of cultural politics, Václav Kopecký, in his memoirs mentioned Makovský in the first place among Communism-sympathising artists, by stating that he cooperated with the left front even before the war.⁴⁵⁰ Ethnographer Z. Chocholáčová on the grounds of this Makovský's pronounced and probably heart-felt inclination to political left recently attempted to discourage the understanding of Makovský's artistic success and conformism as a mere opportunism.⁴⁵¹

Makovský was during the war years engaged in the foundation of the School of Arts in Zlín, related to the Baťa company.⁴⁵² Thus he found his way to applied arts and

⁴⁴⁶ See chapter: *Commemoration of the Fallen in ČSR*

⁴⁴⁷ Luboš HLAVÁČEK: Vincenc Makovský, in: *Kultura* 1960, roč. 4, č. 17

⁴⁴⁸ Národně revoluční výbor inteligence

ŠINDELÁŘ 1963, 15

⁴⁴⁹ HLUŠIČKA 2002, 299

⁴⁵⁰ Václav KOPECKÝ: ČSR a KSČ: Pamětní výpisy k historii Československé republiky a k boji KSČ za socialistické Československo. Praha 1960, 245

⁴⁵¹ Zdenka CHOCHOLÁČOVÁ: Názorová orientace Vincence Makovského, in: 100. výročí narození sochaře Vincence Makovského: sborník z celostátního kolokvia, Nové Město na Moravě, 20. října 2000; Nové Město na Moravě 2001.

⁴⁵² For more on School of Arts in Zlín see: Jana PROCHÁZKOVÁ: Historie vzniku a šesti let trvání Školy umění ve Zlíně (Master's thesis at FF UJEP), Brno 1970

industrial design. After the war he became senior lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture at the Brno University of Technology and in two years gained a professorship.⁴⁵³ In 1946 he was honoured by the membership in the Academy of Sciences and Arts. Many of Makovský's postwar realisations were commissioned in Brno and this career episode is still strongly influenced by the traumatic experiences of the occupation. As well as K. Pokorný in Prague, Makovský created two bronze commemorative plaques, notably the *We shall remain faithful* (Věrní zůstaneme, 1945) plaque for the entry space of Brno hospital and another for Česká spořitelna called *The end of my suffering* (Konec mého utrpení, 1946).⁴⁵⁴

One of Makovský's post-liberation works that would make him visible to the decision makers and subsequently help to establish him as one of the most distinguished Socrealist sculptors, was a statue of the *Partisan* (1947). (Fig. 20) The bronze figure, situated on a low pedestal set in Zlín - Komenského sad, was unveiled festively on the occasion of the anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia by the Red Army in 1947.⁴⁵⁵ The same year he continued in the liberation thematics by creating a plaster sketch for a monument called *Victory* (Vítězství, 1946), consisting of five figures, modelled in Makovský's typical fashion, with crispy, sketchy elongated figures and sharp, anonymised faces. Although was the monument not realized, it is the first example of Makovský's approaching orientation towards triumphalist and pathos-including a rendition of monumental sculpture in the years to come.

In 1948 Makovský delved further into the state-induced thematics of agriculture and technology in his relief for the decoration of the Agricultural Exhibition called *Woman and a Tractor*. In 27th October 1948 Makovský received the state prize for his *Partisan*.⁴⁵⁶ The year 1948 also brought Makovský's most cherished commission - *the J.*

⁴⁵³ For a relevant bachelors' thesis on the engagement of Makovský in Zlín in the interwar period see: Vít JAKUBÍČEK: Vincenc Makovský a Zlín (Masarykova univerzita v Brně, Filozofická fakulta) Brno 2010

⁴⁵⁴ Jiří ŠEBEK: Soupis sochařského díla Vincence Makovského, in: Jiří HLUŠIČKA / Jaroslav MALINA / Jiří ŠEBEK: Vincenc Makovský. Brno 2002, 299

⁴⁵⁵ For more see chapter Red Army, Liberation and Partisan Monuments 1945-1968

⁴⁵⁶ Jiří ŠEBEK: Přehled životopisných dat a nejzávažnějších prací Vincence Makovského, in: Dušan ŠINDELÁŘ: Vincenc Makovský, 1963, 103-107

A. Komenský Monument for Uherský Brod that would take him eight years to conclude.⁴⁵⁷
(Fig. 21)

Also Karel Lidický succeeded in joining the group of consequential sculptors.⁴⁵⁸ His capacity to embody great ideas, demonstrated already in his monumental commissions to date, determined him to become gradually one of the most sought after realisers of the cultural programme, intensely prepared by the Communist party. Already in 1944 he created a multi-figural work called *A burial of a Red Army soldier* (Pohřeb Rudarmějce, 1949), (fig. 33) a four-figured composition of monumental effect, to which V. Diviš in *Výtvarné umění* ten years later ascribed success in fulfilling F. Engels' idea of realism, that is "*beside truthfulness of the detail, capturing typical characters in typical situations.*"⁴⁵⁹

Whereas 1940-1945 Lidický spent at large by cultivation of his remarkable portraiture abilities, after 1945 he plunged into the fervent monument building by participating in contests, such as the *Monument to the Victims of the Prague Uprising* (Pomník obětem Pražského povstání, 1947) and *the Monument to the Executed Students* (Pomník popraveným studentům, 1947).⁴⁶⁰ Albeit his multi-figural compositions, employed in the

⁴⁵⁷ For an account of the typology of the historical sculpture within the Socrealist Era see Part IV. Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture, chapter National and Working Class History Monuments

⁴⁵⁸ Karel Lidický (1900-1976) was a Czech academical sculptor and medal maker, professor at AVU, ČVUT, UMPRUM. He excelled in portraiture and was active also as a medal maker. Born in Hlinsko, situated in Bohemian-Moravian Highlands as a son of a stone mason. He apprenticed 1914-1917 in the craft, as he was supposed to inherit fathers's workshop. His first adult years were concluded by instruction at Hořice school 1922-1925. His talents resulted in him being recommended to AVU, where he from 1925-1931 visited the studio of O. Španiel. There he met Karel Kotrba, who introduced to him Czech artistic scene and work of Charles Despiau. In the beginning of his independent career 1933-1936 exhibited with Nezávislí, which contributed to his being accepted to Umělecká beseda. After the liberation pursued monumental commissions, succeeding in Jan Hus Monument and co-authorship of the Monument in Lidice. Lidický's already representative and versatile collection of works, created between 1940-1947 was presented at a comprehensive exhibition at Aleš's Hall of the Umělecká beseda. This organisation also awarded him Prize of Honour for the 1941 and 1947, as well as Prize of the Czech Land of the same year. Died 21. 5. 1976

Selected bibliography: Vladimír DIVIŠ: Karel Lidický, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 4 č.1-10, 1954, 359; Jiří Kotalík: K souborné výstavě Karla Lidického, in: Karel Lidický (Ex. Cat.) Národní galerie v Praze, Královský letohrádek. Zářij-říjen 1975. Praha 1975; Miroslav MÍČKO: Karel Lidický: výstava sochařské práce. (Ex. Cat.) Výstavní síň Československého spisovatele (Praha); Jaroslav RATAJ: Karel Lidický. Praha 1977; Dušan ŠINDELÁŘ: Karel Lidický. Praha 1958

⁴⁵⁹ Vladimír DIVIŠ: Karel Lidický, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč.4 č.1-10, 1954, 359

⁴⁶⁰ Compare to: Jiří KOTALÍK: K souborné výstavě Karla Lidického, in: Karel Lidický (Ex. Cat.) Národní galerie v Praze, Královský letohrádek. Zářij-říjen 1975. Praha 1975; Miroslav MÍČKO: Karel Lidický: výstava sochařské práce.

examples named above, consisting in both cases of figures, gathered around pylon or and obelisk, did not succeed, sketches witness Lidický's determination to be involved in the post-war reconstruction and point towards Lidický's inclination to monumental sculpture he would persistently pursue.

Lidický's already representative and versatile collection of works, created between 1940-1947 was presented at a comprehensive exhibition at Aleš's Hall of the Umělecká beseda.⁴⁶¹ This organisation also awarded him Prize of Honour for the 1941 and 1947. In the same year he received the Prize of the Czech Land for his funerary relief *Mercifulness* (Milosrdenství, 1947).⁴⁶² The first success with a monument design was for the *Monument to the Victims of War* (1947) in Pardubice, a single figured concept of a female figure, draped in cascading folds of elegant garment, today unobtrusively situated in the garden of the Poděbrady castle. Lidický's greatest success of 1947 was the first place in the contest for the bronze figure of *Jan Hus* (1947), for the inner court of Karolinum.⁴⁶³ (Fig. 23)

Jan Lauda belonged to those artists, whose natural inclination to realist expression was easily convertible into high profile post-war commissions, also due to his membership in the Communist party and ambition to thrive in the post-war world.⁴⁶⁴ In a few years he succeeded in joining the elite of the most distinguished sculptors. He was fully occupied with portraits, public space sculpture, in the first post-1945 years mainly decorative.⁴⁶⁵ He founded together with Karel Pokorný a sculpture oriented workshop at AVU and resumed his work on the J. A. Komenský monument. Already in 1945 he took part in the decoration of Karolinum, by rendition of the *emblems of Czech lands* (1948) for the ceiling of the Great Aula, designed by Jaroslav Fragner.⁴⁶⁶

Otakar Švec was another of the artists, whose artistic expression was not in opposition

(Ex. Cat.) Výstavní síň Československého spisovatele (Praha); Jaroslav RATAJ: Karel Lidický. Praha 1977

⁴⁶¹ Karel Lidický, práce 1940-1947: Seznam výstavy : Alšova síň Umělecké besedy, od 2. do 28. dubna 1947. Praha 1947

⁴⁶² Dušan ŠINDELÁŘ: Karel Lidický. Praha 1958, 14

⁴⁶³ For more see chapter Karolinum Commissions, *Charles University Karolinum and Sculpture*

⁴⁶⁴ For more on Jan Lauda see note 171

⁴⁶⁵ Jan TOMĚŠ: Jan Lauda. Praha 1952, 29-33

⁴⁶⁶ KUNŠTÁT 1998, 314nn

to the new requirements for artistic creativity after the 1946.⁴⁶⁷ The visual motives and principles he used were intelligible both to a wider audience and to the ruling Party. Generally his artistic expression was very well rooted in the tradition of Myslbek, recognisable in the reserved realism, psychologism and true classical perspective, without overtly modernist stylisation. These attributes of Švec's sculptures were largely responsible for his success in the field of monumental sculpture, art branch that made him truly famous. It is obvious both his teachers were at the core of his development into one of the most popular sculptors. The region of South Bohemia became field for Švec' artistic efforts in 1935. His *Monument to the Fallen in Sušice* (1935) achieves the effect of monumentality with better success by using the drapery of the soldiers to add to the volume of the relief.⁴⁶⁸ (Fig. 24)

As a part of the celebrations of the third anniversary of the liberation of Domažlice by the American army another Švec' statue called *The Song of the victory* (Píseň vítězství, 1948) was unveiled.⁴⁶⁹ It is situated in the middle-sized square of Chodsko town and dedicated to the victims of the Fascism. (Fig. 25) It follows the line of the single figure, a concept Švec had already worked upon in the past and which allowed him to concentrate single-mindedly on the psychologism of the individual figure. In this case, the person depicted is a woman, standing with her feet squarely on the basis, rooted deeply therein. She is bending slightly backwards as if singing to the heaven itself the song of victory, having one fist clenched in a gesture of revolt. Although the figure is bare-chested, the statue, this allegorical personification of Liberty, succeeds to convey

⁴⁶⁷ *Otakar Švec* (1892-1955), was a Czech sculptor. In 1911 concluded his studies at UMPRUM as a pupil of E. Novák, J. Kastner, J. Drahoňovský. He continued for another eight years as a pupil of J. V. Myslbek in his figural sculpture studio and medal making studio of J. Štursa, whose assistant he was between 1919-1925. In 1925-1927 took charge of the specialised Štursa's studio. A member of the SVU Mánes. He was attracted most to the portraiture and monumental sculpture. The beginnings of his career were marked by the Social Civilism, as seen his *Beam – Motorcyclist* (Paprasek – Motocyklista 1924) and *Dancer* (Tanečnice, 1926-1027). Also the Avantgarde mirrored in his early work, such as the inventive portrait of Voskovec and Werich (1930) or *Vítězslav Nezval* (1932). Ever since the half of the 1920's he began to explore the field of monumental sculpture. In 1930's he would gradually return to the historicism, that would peak in the era of the Socialist Realism. For more see especially: Petr WITTLICH: *Otakar Švec*, Praha 1959.

⁴⁶⁸ WITTLICH 1959, 7 For more details on the monument see: Jan LHOTÁK / Jaroslav PACHNER / Vladislav RAZIM: *Památky města Sušice*, Sušice 2012, 511-515, 519-520. The foundation stone was laid on 28th October 1932. The author of the architectonic layout was Jindřich Freiwald, one of the most fruitful architects who in the inter-war period designed a number of significant buildings. The relief depicting three soldiers was revealed on 1935.

⁴⁶⁹ Another version of the same motive by Švec is to be found in the National Gallery under the title "Enthusiasm" (1941)

the message of the mingled sadness of the loss and joy of the victory.

Throughout his career O. Švec was intrigued with portraiture and indulged his passion for psychological search for the inner qualities of the depicted. This approach he applied in series of sculptural portraits of very good artistic quality. Some known examples of this traditional portraiture are *portraits of Jan Neruda* (1942) and *Vítězslav Novák* (1948). Generally his artistic expression was very well rooted in the conservative tradition, recognisable in the reserved realism, psychologism, without pronounced stylisation. This artistic tendency, manifested by inclination to traditional realism and classical forms, with certain non-negligible inspiration by J. V. Myslbek, was more pronounced in his mature works.

These attributes were also largely responsible for his success in the field of monumental sculpture. Švec understood the renewed longing for psychologism and monumentality, which followed after the twenties, affected by elevated interest in technical rationality, expressed in the form of Social civilism.⁴⁷⁰ Otakar Švec, who similarly to other artists such as Karel Dvořák spent the war days working on portraiture and tended to historicism as a refuge from the unsettling presence, was approached to participate in the contest to the decoration of Karolinum. His meticulously rendered model for the *Charles IV statue* (1947) fits into the pattern of his recent works, characteristic with busts of national figures such as *Jan Neruda* and postwar portrait of a composer *Vítězslav Novák*. The realistic-historical elaboration, building upon effective drapery and triangular position of the upper part of the ruler's body to deliver dignified and respectable demeanour. (Fig. 26)

In East Germany the situation with regards to the postwar establishment of sculptors, was no different. The group of elite figuralists would emerge after the war, determined already by their pre-war allegiance and orientation. The majority of figuralists would spend the war – had they the opportunity – by immersing into the search of the fusion of modern and classical form. For the most of them would be the most suitable medium the eternal and politically neutral subject of female act. Once the war was over, those artists

⁴⁷⁰ WITTLICH 1959, 7

who were driven to emigration and serving soldiers, would return and claim their place in the newly built Soviet protectorate. The first prestigious commissions consisted of the memorial construction related to the Anti-fascist rhetoric of the post-war years.

Fritz Cremer would become one of the most prominent sculptors and his post-war endeavours would lead him unwaveringly in the direction of ever more prestigious commissions and affluence. Cremer's personal history would contain a number of agreeable characteristics – in the 1930s he entered the KPD and associated with people around the resistance group Die Rote Kapelle. In his professional career of 1930s he addressed social subjects and expressed himself in numerous works against the Nazi regime. His numerous tributes to the fallen soldiers found its embodiment in a deeply emotional and expressive statues of individuals and groups, created around 1935: *Dying Soldier* (Sterbender Soldat I., II., 1935), *Two Falling Soldiers* (Zwei fallende Soldaten, 1935-1936).⁴⁷¹

After the war Cremer would, aside from his teaching position, become one of the most sought-after authors of the memorials and monuments, dedicated to the victims of Fascism. (Fig. 42) His figures of the monuments are grandly schemed, yet haunted,

⁴⁷¹ *Fritz Cremer* (1906 – 1993), was a German sculptor, graphic artist and draftsman, later vice-President of the Academy of the Arts of the GDR. Born in Arnsberg (Ruhr) as a son of a decorator, he lost both parents before his adulthood. 1921-1925 learned stone masonry and sculpture from Christian Meisen, 1925-1929 worked as a stonemason, joining Will Lammert's studio. In 1926 became member of the Communist Workers' Youth. 1930 - 1938 studied as a pupil and later "Meisterschüler" of Wilhelm Gerstel, member of the Prussian Academy of Arts and deputy director of the United State Schools for Free and Applied Art in Berlin-Charlottenburg. 1937 awarded the Great State Prize of the Prussian Academy of Arts for the relief Mourning women (Gestapo) and works in the atelier of Hugo Lederer. 1937-1938 as a bearer of the Great State Prize he stayed at the Villa Massimo. 1946 is appointed a Professor and Director of the Department of Sculpture at the Academy of Applied Arts in Vienna. 1951 acquires full membership of the German Academy of Arts in Berlin and directorship of a master craftsman; Gesamtschau of Fritz Cremer's works in Berlin and Potsdam. 1952 First draft for the Buchenwald monument. 1953 Nationalpreis der DDR II. Klasse. 1962 elected Secretary of the Department of Fine Arts of the Academy of Arts. 1974 awarded the Karl-Marx-Order of the GDR and becomes vice-President of the Academy of Arts of the GDR; Cremer is honored with honorary membership of the Academy of Arts of the USSR. 1976 Awarded the GDR's title "Held der Arbeit", Cremer is one of the signatories of the protest against the expatriation of Wolf Biermann. 1993 on 1 September, Fritz Cremer dies in Berlin at the age of 86. Selected bibliography: LÜDECKE, Heinz: *Fritz Cremer: der Weg eines deutschen Bildhauers*. Dresden: VEB 1956; RÜGER, Maria: *Fritz Cremer: Nur Wortgefechte? Aus Schriften, Reden, Briefen, Interviews 1949–1989*. Berlin 2004; SCHWIND, Karl: *Fritz Cremer (1906 - 1993) - Plastiken und Zeichnungen, Retrospektive* (Ex. Cat. "Fritz Cremer - Retrospektive" in der Galerie Schwind, Frankfurt am Main vom 8. Mai bis 27. Juni 2009) Frankfurt am Main 2009

Diether SCHMIDT: *Fritz Cremer. Leben. Werke. Schriften. Meinungen*. DDR 1972, Abb. 17-24

sallowed, with protruding bones, intended to become eternal and silent yet emotionally eloquent reminders of the Fascist atrocities.

Shortly after the war would Cremer acquire a commission for a *Monument to the Victims of Fascism* (1934–1945) unveiled in a Wien Cemetery in 1948.⁴⁷² The three statues are, similarly to the *Freiheitskämpfer*, greatly indebted to the tall and ghostly figures of Will Lammert, whose work had been ever since his youth his acknowledged inspiration.⁴⁷³ The motif of loose headscarf would become an often employed feature in his figures of mourning women, allowing to express the heaviness of cruel fate. His *Liberated Man* (Befreite Mensch), that dominates the gradual stairs of the Mahnmal is on the other hand retaining some of the bodily volume, associated with works of A. Hildebrand or L. Tuailon, as it is supposed to deliver more of a progressiveness and optimism, rather than passive acceptance of merciless fate.

Eugen Hoffmann, who would in 1946 acquire a distinguished position as a sculptor and professor in Dresden, also belonged to those sculptors, who could expect bright tomorrows. Already in 1923 he entered the KPD, joined within two years by his wife. Moreover, he actively participated in the political agitation by creating graphic materials for agitational posters, leaflets and co-authored the political-satire magazine, later also as a member of the Association of Revolutionary Fine Artists.⁴⁷⁴ He would also promote German art in Moscow as a co-organiser of the *First All-German Art Exhibition* (Erste Allgemeine Deutsche Kunstausstellung) and joined the Society of the Friends of the New

⁴⁷² Jiří MAŠÍN: Pražská výstava Fritze Cremera, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. V, č. 21, 8. 11. 1957, 8

⁴⁷³ Will Lammert (1892-1957), was a German sculptor. 1934-1951 exiled in SSSR. After 1951 moved to DDR, where he acquired full membership of the Academy of the Arts. He died amid his works on Ravensbrück Memorial in October 1957. In 1959 he was awarded the National Prize of the GDR posthumously.

⁴⁷⁴ (DE) Association Revolutionärer Bildender Künstler

Eugen Hoffmann (1892-1955), 1908-1912 while he apprenticed as a pattern designer for wallpaper in Dresden, he concurrently visited evening courses at the Dresden Academy of Arts with Carl Rade. After his engagement in the First World War he studied from 1918 with Robert Diez and from 1919 as a master student of Karl Albiker. In 1920 he became a member of the Dresden Sezession Group. In 1923 he became the member of the KPD. In 1924 he took part in the First General German Art Exhibition in Moscow and in 1929 he co-founded the ASSO in Dresden. In 1938 he emigrated abroad. In 1946 he returned to Dresden, where he became a professor of sculpture at the academy in 1947. Hoffmann died in 1955.

Selected bibliography: Eugen Hoffmann 1892-1955 zum 30. Todestag des Künstlers (Ex. Cat. 30. Juni bis 11. August 1985, Zentrum für Kunstausstellungen der DDR, Galerie Rähnitzgasse 8). Dresden 1985 DALBAJEWA, Birgit (Ed.): Eugen Hoffmann, in: Neue Sachlichkeit in Dresden. Dresden 2011

Russia.⁴⁷⁵ As a result of his activities he would emigrate and return no sooner than 1946, when he would also continue in his pre-war artistic efforts, comprising primarily of female act, encompassing also works on progressive themes, such as the relief *Youth forward* (Jugend voran, 1947-1948).

The only woman among the most high profile DDR sculptors was Ruthild Hahne (1910-2001), who studied at Wilhelm Gerstel.⁴⁷⁶ Albeit of a middle-class origin, she was active as a member of KPD and joined the resistance *Die Rote Kapelle*. In 1941 she received a scholarship for a stay in Villa Massimo in Rome.⁴⁷⁷ Besides being active politically, she would from the early post-war days express her allegiance to the newly forming regime by a *bust to V. I. Lenin* (1946), allegedly the first ever portrait of the great Soviet revolutionary, rendered by a German sculptor. Her political portraiture, forming the core of her official commissions, was followed three years later by a bust, dedicated to *Karl Liebknecht* (1949).⁴⁷⁸

Also Waldemar Grzimek had a history of the sympathies for the political left – in 1938 he would in the circle of Communists launch his antifascist activities, the same year he would make the acquaintance with Fritz Cremer, Ruthild Hahne, Gustav Seitz and Gerhard Marcks, whose mutual friendship would last years.⁴⁷⁹ His postwar years were in

⁴⁷⁵ Gessellschaft der Freunde des Neuen Russland

Eugen Hoffmann 1892-1955 zum 30. Todestag des Künstlers (Ex. Cat. 30. Juni bis 11. August 1985, Zentrum für Kunstausstellungen der DDR, Galerie Rähnitzgasse 8). Dresden 1985, 6

⁴⁷⁶ *Ruthild Hahne* (1910-2001), was a German sculptor, active predominantly in the first years of the DDR existence. From 1930 studied at Hochschule der Bildenden Künste as pupil of Wilhelm Gerstel (together with Fritz Cremer or Cay von Brockdorff), and also of Arno Breker. The year 1941 she spent as a scholarship holder at the Villa Massimo in Rome, where she engaged in her most notable small-scale works depicting children. Convinced Socialist, she joined in 1930s the resistance group Die Rote Cappelle. In 1946/1947 she co-founded the Hochschule für Angewandte Kunst in Berlin-Weißensee, where she also worked as a lecturer for several years. She was very active politically and created a number of political works - a *bust to V. I. Lenin* (1946) or *Karl Liebknecht* (1949), *Walter Ulbricht* (1963). Her largest commission, never to be realised, was the Thälmann-Denkmal (1953-1965).

Selected bibliography: Ruthild Hahne: Plastik; Ernst Jazdzewski: Pressezeichnung: Berlin 1979, Ausstellungspavillon am S-Bahnhof Friedrichstraße. Zentrum für Kunstausstellungen der DDR. Berlin: Zentrum für Kunstausstellungen der DDR 1979; Jörg Fidorra: Ausstellung Ruthild Hahne, Geschichte einer Bildhauerin. Berlin 1995;

⁴⁷⁷ Ibidem

⁴⁷⁸ Ruthild Hahne: Plastik (Ex. Cat.) 1979, Illustr.

⁴⁷⁹ Raimund HOFFMANN: Waldemar Grzimek 1918-1984 Plastik, Zeichnungen, Grafik. (Ex. Cat. Juni/Juli 1989 Neue Berliner Galerie im Alten Museum) Berlin 1989, 8

his own words the era of artistic doubts, yet he would produce several Maillolesque nudes, two of them as a part of a *Monument to the Victims of Fascism in Halle* (1947) where he would after the war reside and teach. The Ehrenmal consists of a fallen figure, only in this case it is not a raincoat-clad figure of a soldier, but rather of a Classical figure of a youth, accompanied by an allegorical figure of distinctly statuesque form.⁴⁸⁰

The row of postwar monuments was enriched also by figuralist of female nudes, *Gustav Seitz*, whose expressionist *Monument in Weißwasser* (Totenmal für Weißwasser, 1946) would employ a paraphrase the Christian theme of Pietà.⁴⁸¹ This traditional subject, widespread among his contemporaries, allowed the most effective fusion of emotional charge and accustomed usage of expressive form. *Walter Arnold* would create a representative monument only in 1949. He would dedicate his creativity mostly to the wood carving of a smooth-shaped female figure, yet he would not resist the societal changes, as he would also create a first work-oriented sculpture in the form of a *Construction Worker* (Bauarbeiter, 1947).

Sculptors in Education

No later than the end of the 1945 the universities were re-opened and some of the prominent Czechoslovakian and East German sculptors acquired influential positions in the art education institutions. The gradual progress toward ideological changes, apparent in all spheres of culture, were necessarily mirrored also in this field. The art education was from thence steered by professionals of essentially realist approach, who were ready and willing to promote their own interest through observation of the required course. The post-war years would therefore lead unerringly towards the forced instalment of the counter-progressive artistic current, later on sealed by the onset of the Zhdanov doctrine.

⁴⁸⁰ HOFFMANN 1989, 15

⁴⁸¹ <http://gustav-seitz-museum.de/portrait.htm> (Retrieved 12. 9. 2017)

Otakar Španiel became the rector of the Academy of Arts in Prague. Both Karel Pokorný and Jan Lauda attained leadership of their own sculptural schools within the institution.⁴⁸² Aside from that, Karel Pokorný was named in the position of the president of SČSVU, following the resignation of the former, pre-February leadership.⁴⁸³ Vincenc Makovský, who would become the most distinguished author of Socrealist sculpture, launched his post-war career by becoming senior lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture University of Technology - VUT in Brno (where he also earned a professorship two years later).⁴⁸⁴ Karel Lidický began to teach at the School of Drawing at Czech Technical University - ČVUT.⁴⁸⁵

In DDR the most consequential sculptor, who would in the years to come occupy influential position in the sphere of art education and management was Fritz Cremer. He served as a soldier, returned after the war to the central Europe and acquired position as a leader of the Sculpture Department at the Akademie für Angewandte Kunst in Wien.⁴⁸⁶ Eugen Hoffmann, member of KPD ever since 1923, emigrated in 1938 to Prague and in 1939 to London, only to spend the rest of the war in various places. After his return he would acquire a position as a Professor of Sculpture at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden and in 1948 he would become the rector at the same institution, replacing the indisposed Hans Grundig.⁴⁸⁷

Another of figuralists would find a place at the institution - Walter Arnold for instance. After his return from the war he would firstly occupy a position of a teacher at Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst in Leipzig and 1949 would transition to Dresden, to become one of the distinguished representatives of the "Dresden school". Also

⁴⁸² Jiří KOTALÍK: Karel Pokorný a jeho škola. Praha 1983, 11

⁴⁸³ NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Zápis o schůzi výboru SČSVU, 8. července 1949. For more see chapter *Sculptors in the Organisational Structures*. The circumstances of the resignation of the former leadership had been a lucky coincidence for the KSČ and its intention to capture as much power over it – the accountant of the SČSVU committed suicide and following audit revealed missappropriation of a significant sum of money. A detailed account of this is accessible in: NA, f. Ministerstvo informací, 1949, inv. č. 27, odd. B/2

⁴⁸⁴ For a relevant bachelors' thesis on the engagement of Makovský in Zlín in the interwar period see: Vít JAKUBÍČEK: Vincenc Makovský a Zlín (FF MU). Brno 2010

⁴⁸⁵ Jaroslav RATAJ: Karel Lidický. Praha 1977, 22

⁴⁸⁶ Heinz LÜDECKE: Fritz Cremer: Der Weg eines deutschen Bildhauers, mit einer Einleitung von Heinz Lüdecke und einer autobiographischen Skizze des Künstlers. Dresden 1956, 5-28

⁴⁸⁷ Eugen Hoffmann 1892-1955 zum 30. Todestag des Künstlers (Ex. Cat. 30. Juni bis 11. August 1985, Zentrum für Kunstausstellungen der DDR, Galerie Rähnitzgasse 8). Dresden 1985, 10

Waldemar Grzimek would find his place in 1946 as a teacher at Kunstschule Halle at Burg Giebichenstein.⁴⁸⁸ Gustav Seitz after his return from the American captivity, took the position of a Dozent at the Technischen Hochschule in Berlin-Charlottenburg and Hochschule für Bildende Kunst. After the war Ruthild Hahne co-founded the Hochschule für Angewandte Kunst in Berlin-Weißensee, where she worked 1946-1950 as a lecturer.⁴⁸⁹

Charles University Karolinum and Sculpture

The fervent building and reconstruction in the postwar Prague offered prestigious commissions to the ambitious sculptors. Approaching 600th anniversary of the foundation of the Charles University in 1948 brought elevated efforts of the Rectorate representatives to re-launch the reconstruction the buildings of Karolinum, the ancient seat of the university. To mirror its ambitions to step into the new era as a traditional, yet progressive institution a series of contests was published, including the artistic decorations.⁴⁹⁰ The process was steered by a Committee for the Karolinum Renewal (Komise pro obnovu Karolina).

The reconstruction is divisible into different phases, of which the most relevant to this narrative is the third (1945-1948) and fourth (1948-1959).⁴⁹¹ The lengthy and complicated process provided an opportunity for artists of various fields and spanned thirty four years. The decoration of the exteriors and interiors was subjected to a contest in 1947. A commission was summoned to determine the artistic value, divided to the two high-profile commissions – *the Charles IV statue for the Great Aula* and *Jan Hus for the Inner Court*. The commission, consisting of the rector of Academy of Arts, prof.

⁴⁸⁸ Raimund HOFFMANN: Waldemar Grzimek 1918-1984 Plastik, Zeichnungen, Grafik. (Ex. Cat. Juni/Juli 1989 Neue Berliner Galerie im Alten Museum) Berlin 1989, 48

⁴⁸⁹ Ruthild Hahne: Plastik; Ernst Jazdzewski: Pressezeichnung: Berlin 1979, Ausstellungspavillon am S-Bahnhof Friedrichstraße. Zentrum für Kunstausstellungen der DDR. Berlin: Zentrum für Kunstausstellungen der DDR 1979, nonpag.

⁴⁹⁰ For more on the reconstruction of Karolinum see: Miroslav KUNŠTÁT: Obnova Karolina a dalších historických budov Univerzity Karlovy, in: František KAVKA / Josem PETRÁŇ: Dějiny Univerzity Karlovy 1348-1900. Praha 1998, 314nn

⁴⁹¹ KUNŠTÁT 1998, 341

Otakar Španiel, the architect of the Karolinum reconstruction Jaroslav Fragner, artists prof. Karel Pokorný, prof. Vincenc Makovský, prof. Václav Vojtíšek, and art historians prof. Josef Cibulka and prof. Jan Květ.⁴⁹²

From the contest emerged victorious Karel Pokorný, Karel Lidický and Jan Lauda. A number of sculptors were summoned to participate also in the contest for the Jan Hus statue for the inner court. Aside from Lidický the selected artists were Karel Dvořák and Vincenc Makovský.⁴⁹³

Already in 1947 Karel Pokorný, launched his work on the future large bronze figure of *Charles IV for the Great Hall* (Velká Aula, 1946-1953). (Fig. 27) Due to the general delay of works, the celebrations of 1948 would need to take place with a model of the final statue in true proportions, as it was cast no sooner than 1950. Pokorný's larger-than-life statue of the late Middle Ages ruler, founder of the university, is rendered with attention to fabrics and accessories, bestowing onto the drapery of the king and emperor, luxuriously sumptuous effect. His contrapposto, paired with a generous gesture of hands, holding coronation jewels, conveys dignified, yet generous look. The humane and friendly, yet elegant and stately, Pokorný succeeded in achieving a stately, dignified effect.

The winner of the contest for the *Jan Hus statue* was Karel Lidický.⁴⁹⁴ Right in 1947, the year when he began to focus more closely on monumental commissions, brought him victory in this contest. The approval, formulated in the expert appraisal by professors Josef Cibulka and Jan Květ, value the Lidický's sketch, because it contains both sides of Hus' personality - as a professor of the Charles University and the church reformer.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹² AUK, f. Akademický senát 1882.1951, k. 114, inv. č. 1593, Zápis o schůzi poroty, která byla rektorem jmenována k posouzení modelů, pro sochu Karla IV.

⁴⁹³ AUK, f. Akademický senát 1882.1951, k. 114, inv. č. 1593, Vnitřní výzdoba Karolina. Socha Karla IV. a M. J. Husa, vypsání užší soutěže, čís. 2597 /1947

⁴⁹⁴ *Jan Hus* (1370-1415), a Czech Master at Charles University in Prague, a priest and philosopher, church reformer and a distinguished predecessor to Protestantism, inspired by John Wycliffe, who pre-dated Martin Luther. His teachings on theological topics such as eucharist and ecclesiology would cause controversy among the Catholic Church representatives, who would get him burned at the stake for heresy in 1415. Hus followers formed what later became a Hussite Movement. For a detailed bibliography and current perception see: František ŠMAHEL: *Jan Hus: život a dílo*. Praha 2013

⁴⁹⁵ Quoted in: KUNŠTÁT 1998, 345

(Fig. 28)

In his model Karel Lidický achieved great monumentality and cleverly referred to the myslbekian monumental sculpture, making use of its most valued features of gravity, measured proportions and realism of surface rendition, together with the idealisation of face. Lidický's approach to the appearance of the figure is entirely different to the conventional understanding of Hus as a seasoned preacher with a goatee, as was often depicted in painting and sculpture in the established tradition of Czech revivalist movement. As such, it contributed to the ideological transformation of Jan Hus and his legacy. This was noted by Diviš in 1954, who wrote in a magazine *Výtvarné umění*:

These works are an attempt, very serious one, for the creation of a new iconographic type, which is, however, not the most important point. More important is that it introduces a new ideal conception, where is Hus perceived as a revolutionary thinker, not as a religious mystic, exaltedly floating above people.⁴⁹⁶

Lidický's innovative concept of Hus introduces him as a young, yet austere and resolute university master, a rebellious fighter for the abolishment of the class stratification and social justice promotion. The sketches of head and figure would be employed in the bronze cast in 1955. Karel Lidický succeeded in the strive for an important official commission and conveyed the result satisfactory as to secure himself a place among the privileged.

One of the preparatory models is today deposited in the property of the Charles University Archive. (Fig. 28) The plaster model differs from the final statue both with the rendition of the figure and head. Albeit the contest took place in 1947, Josef Petráň in the publication *Památky Univerzity Karlovy* states the date of the model mistakenly to 1949, apparently on the grounds of the signature, where the last number of the year is not clearly legible.⁴⁹⁷ (Fig. 30)

⁴⁹⁶ Vladimír DIVIŠ: Karel Lidický, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 4 č.1-10, 1954, 359

⁴⁹⁷ Josef PETRÁŇ: Další uměleckohistorická díla v Karolinu, in: Josef PETRÁŇ *Památky Univerzity Karlovy*. Praha 1999, 265-266

Albeit the author of every each of premeditated works could be but one, the Committee recommended the highest quality models for the rendition, even if not originally intended and part of the budget – this was the case with Vincenc Makovský' statue of Jan Hus and Josef Wagner' Charles IV. From the correspondence with the Ministry of Education is clearly discernible the enthusiasm of the Committee for the realisation of all remarkable models, whereas the Ministry – the funding institution – was markedly less willing to provide finances for all the recommended realisations.

Josef Wagner' plaster model of another Charles IV statue was valued so highly, the Committee succeeded in achieving its realisation above the original budget for the decoration. The statue, intended for the Small Aula (Malá Aula) and sized 150 cm, was, according to a letter to be rendered in marlstone (opuka) rather than bronze. Today is placed in the building of the Charles University directorate, on the platform in front of the Rector's offices.⁴⁹⁸

The artistic design of Jan Hus by Vincenc Makovský was also appreciated by the Committee, who recommended the realisation of the said model for the rector's office. Thence the rector Jan Mukařovský inquired at the Ministry of Education the financial sum for the said realisation for its "*exceptional artistic qualities*".⁴⁹⁹ Makovský's Hus is more of a visionary, whose dramatically raised arm adds pathos and determination.⁵⁰⁰ The Ministry in reaction to the inquiry politely reminded the University of the limited resources and the final realisation did not take place.⁵⁰¹ (Fig. 29)

⁴⁹⁸ AUK, fond Akademický senát, 16. XI. 1948, Komisi pro obnovu Karolina k ruk. předsedy prof. Vojtíška

⁴⁹⁹ AUK, f. Akademický senát 1882.1951, k. 114, inv. č. 1593, č.j. 1038/1948/9, Karolinum - vnitřní výzdoba, socha M.J. Husi,

⁵⁰⁰ AUK, f. Akademický senát 1882.1951, k. 114, inv. č. 1593, a hand-written letter by the Committee, Karolinum: vnitřní výzdoba – Socha M. J. Husi

⁵⁰¹ AUK, f. Akademický senát 1882.1951, k. 114, inv. č. 1593,

Commemoration of the Fallen in ČSR

The continuation of the tradition, established already after the First World War with regards to the monument building, was secured by the large public demand for the commemoration of the fallen. The acknowledged capacity of sculpture to deliver compelling and profound emotional effect on the observer was a desirable feature in a war monument and therefore is an indispensable component of this artistic discipline in the post-war times. Specifically the presence of a figural sculpture contributed greatly to the psychological connection between the message of the monument and the spectator.

The decoration would depend on the resources of the commissioning subject. In case reduced expenses were required, simple ornament or decorative sign would be used. In case the commissioner, be it governmental body, city, veteran association or survivors, could afford to invest more, a sculptural component would be employed in a form of a relief or a statue. Whereas village monuments would often belong to the first category, town and city monuments and memorials would often provide job opportunity for sculptors.

A multi-figural sculptural decoration of monuments, dedicated to the commemoration of the gruesome acts of Nazi army, utilize heart-wrenching effect of war losses to the utmost. The motherly love and subsequent horror from the loss of the soldier-son, or a family tragedy, is employed to its fullest. The desired effect of horror, causing feelings of anguish, pain and determination never to forget the atrocities of the Nazi Germans, would be emphasized by the careful selection of motive and meaning. To leverage the genius loci in order to make a lasting impression on the visitor was the foremost task of the creators.

The murder of twenty-five villagers of Leskovice by the retreating German army in May 1945, is one such an example. The sculptural composition, placed within a low architectural frame, is situated under a patulous tree and represents a village family of Leskovice. The figure of a man, guarding his wife and child - regardless of the anticipated tragical outcome of the event - stands firm and unbroken, resolved to protect his family

to the last breath. (Fig. 31)

One of the most explicit expressions of this emotional strain is present in Životice, place of commemoration of the so-called Životice tragedy. (Fig. 32) In 6. 8. 1944 Gestapo in a retaliation for a pub fight executed thirty-six men from Životice and surrounding villages.⁵⁰² The memorial is adorned by a sculpture of a family by Franciszek Świdr (1949).⁵⁰³ Woman, holding a child close to her body, stands above the body of her husband with her face turned up to heavens. Her expression is blank, yet the reproach of God's injustice and hatred to the executioners is written clearly in her countenance, as well as in her clenched fist. Even more interesting is the presence of expressionist features, observable most clearly in the distortion of the man's spasm-stricken body and agonized face.

The honouring of the countless fallen civilians and partisans, who died in lager cities during the war (especially during the Prague Uprising in 1945), required a decent commemoration.⁵⁰⁴ The question of the employed medium was also dependent on the placement possibilities. The fighters and partisans lost their lives, often in the middle of busy streets. Therefore the spots, where the citizens spontaneously laid flowers in remembrance, could not be marked by a statue. A decorated plaque was a dignified solution and was widely employed throughout the post-war years, as well as later. The most commonly utilized type of plaque would be a marble, stone or bronze desk with very little decoration, usually just a floral ornament and/or national emblem, sometimes nothing at all. Another option was a unified, serial plaque, replicated in many places, with a typified decorative feature, such as a relief or a semi-statue.

A typified plaque was for many commissioners a rational solution. It secured both dignified commemoration and superior artistic quality for a reasonable price. This was the case with the *We Shall Remain Faithful* (Věrní zůstaneme) plaque, placed in multiple

⁵⁰² For a detailed account of the Životice tragedy see: Mečislav BORÁK: Svědectví ze Životic: Těšínsko za druhé světové války a okolnosti životické tragédie. Český Těšín: Muzeum Těšínska 1999

⁵⁰³ Památníky obětem 2. světové války - Životická tragédie, in: <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/mista/obec/7904-zivotice/> (retrieved 12.9. 2017)

⁵⁰⁴ The Prague Uprising from the perspective of the historical continuity: Bohumil KOBLIHA: Šest dní, kdy národ věděl: pražské povstání 1945. Praha 2005

copies in the streets of Prague. (Fig. 19) The idea of a hand, raised in a gesture of oath, was proposed by sculptor Miloslav Baše and architect Karel Řepa. The task to create a bronze hand, raised in a gesture of oath, was given to Karel Pokorný.⁵⁰⁵ The first specimens were revealed in 1947 on the occasion of the Prague Uprising anniversary in Staroměstské náměstí, Trojský most, Pankrác, Bílá hora and at the Czech Radio, considered the most important places, related to the event.⁵⁰⁶ The largest number, more than fifteen plaques were dispersed in the first Prague district, five in the second district and three in eighth, remainder in other districts. Other two types of typified plaques, were adorned by either relief Czech lion on the top, or by a head of a soldier in a semi-profile relief.

Individualised reliefs and semi-statues would be, as to the prevalence, in the minority among the commemorative monuments. Yet their distinctiveness allows one to make conclusions of the artistic and typological character of the production. Conceptually they testify to the desire of the commissioners to utilize the powerful effect of sculpture to achieve more interest of the passers-by, non-inducible by a mere list of names. Decorated plaques were usually installed in a publicly accessible place, such as on the facade or in the interior of a church, school, state or private institutions and companies, whose interest it was to remember fallen fighters, members, colleagues or neighbours. Very often they exhibit great differences with regards to artistic quality, ranging from remarkable realizations to very mediocre.

School, as a formative environment for young minds, was a convenient place for a decorated commemorative plaque. On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Prague Uprising, a school in Praha 5, Preslova 75/25, Smíchov, unveiled a relief (1946), accompanying names of the murdered pupils and professors.⁵⁰⁷ (Fig. 34) Three figures of the rebels, set in rambles of the war frenzy, convey courage and pathos and the victorious posture of the flag-bearer is set in context by allusion to the martyr's death in

⁵⁰⁵ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Karel Pokorný : výbor z díla. Výstavní síň Mánes, Praha, 1971, fig. Památník padlých v pražské revoluci

⁵⁰⁶ Petr TVRDÝ: Bronzové ruce pražských povstalců. 2016 (retrieved from: Csol.cz 6.1. 2017)

⁵⁰⁷ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, located in Praha 5, Preslova 75/25, Smíchov, v budově školy, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/3868-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#3868-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

the inscription. Another plaque, of the same dedication, was set in the school in Praha 2, Na Smetance 1/505, Vinohrady.⁵⁰⁸ This time, the relief represents a rebel with a gun in a profile.

A single figure of a rebel or a soldier occupies majority of the plaques. One of exceptionally detailed plaques by Jan Znoj adorn the building of the Faculty of Law, Charles University, Praha 1, náměstí Curieových 901/7, where is depicted the scene of the murder of partisans, who were thrown into the river Vltava.⁵⁰⁹ (Fig. 35) One of the preferred patterns, is the manly figure as an allegory of a guard, the embodiment of vigilance and determination to protect the liberty, paid for by the blood of the victims. The desired effect is such of power, courage and unwavering resolution to protect the country to the very last breath. This applies to Karel Pokorný's statuette in Praha 1, Senovážné náměstí 978/23, Praha 1.⁵¹⁰ (Fig. 36) Two-figured relief showing a soldier and a partisan facing each other in a wordless understanding of common cause and purpose, is in the building of the former Military Geographical Institute in Praha 6, Rooseveltova 620/23, Bubeneč.⁵¹¹ A figure of a partisan shaking his fist, forms a pendant with a desk, showing relief of a civilian woman in Praha 2, Wilsonova 300/8, Praha Hlavní nádraží, 1st platform.⁵¹² Another partisan figure on a plaque is to be seen in the bustling railway station in Praha 5, Nádražní 279/1, Smíchov.⁵¹³ Countless plaques of below average quality, such as the one in the area of former gasworks, Praha 4, U

⁵⁰⁸ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/10737-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#10737-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

⁵⁰⁹ Marcel FIŠER: Pamětní deska popraveným v květnovém povstání na Právnické fakultě UK v Praze, in: <http://www.socharstvi.info/realizace/pametni-deska-popravenym-v-kvetnovem-povstani-na-pravnicke-fakulte-uk-v-praze/> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

⁵¹⁰ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, Praha 1, Senovážné náměstí 978/23, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/2829-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#2829-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

⁵¹¹ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, Praha 6, Rooseveltova 620/23, Bubeneč, former Military Geographical Institute in Praha 6, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/18052-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#18052-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

⁵¹² Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, Praha 2, Wilsonova 300/8, Praha Hlavní nádraží, I. nástupiště, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/3106-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#3106-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

⁵¹³ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, Praha 5, Nádražní 279/1, Smíchov, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/3341-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#3341-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky>

Plynárny 500/42, Michle, are to be seen all over the republic.⁵¹⁴

Different conception, making use of the emotional dimension of war suffering, is often employed in the depiction of the heroic sacrifice of the soldiers and civilian fighters. The ambition to instigate discomfort, disturbance of mind and consequent contemplation of the observer, is often pressed by the employment of inner pathos, expressivity in the elaboration of form. This is the case with a plaque, honouring fallen employees of the Czech post in Praha 1, Hybernská 2086/18.⁵¹⁵ (Fig. 37) The plaque shows stiffened body of a dead postman with the head tilted backwards, with a rifle and envelopes, symbolising the profession. The last moments of a dying civilist, falling over his rifle commemorate murdered, executed and tortured employees of an insurance company in Praha 1, Jungmannova 31, palace Adria, 4th stock.⁵¹⁶ The utmost exaggeration of the psychological strain is achieved in the famished figure Praha 5, on the wall of the former building of Křížík's factory, in the street Naskové 1189/1, Košíře.⁵¹⁷ (Fig. 38)

⁵¹⁴ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, Praha 4, U Plynárny 500/42, Michle, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/12872-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#12872-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

⁵¹⁵ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, Praha 1, Hybernská 2086/18, budova ČD, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/2280-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#2280-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

⁵¹⁶ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, Praha 1, Jungmannova 31, palác Adria, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/2169-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#2169-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

⁵¹⁷ Vladimír ŠTRUPL: Pamětní deska obětem 2. světové války, Praha 5, Naskové 1189/1, Košíře, the former building of Křížík's factory, in: Spolek pro vojenská pietní místa, <http://www.vets.cz/vpm/3351-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky/#3351-pametni-deska-obetem-2-svetove-valky> (retrieved 6.1. 2017)

1949 – 1953

Cultural Institutions and Art Organisations

In Czechoslovakia after the so-called “Victorious February” on 25 February 1948, fatal blow to the independent artistic sphere was dealt.⁵¹⁸ The most elaborated and efficient machinery of the Communist rule was built so as to reach to all classes and individuals and impose upon them its will and authority. Thence all the hindrances to impose the rule over all spheres of culture fell apart and the Party gradually tightened the loop.

The close western neighbour of the Czechoslovakian state, East Germany after the establishment of the state on 7 October 1949, was subjected to almost identical process of “Sovietisation” of culture and its organisational structures.⁵¹⁹ The procedure of adaptation to the “Vorbild” of the SSSR was gradual and started immediately in the aftermath of war, though it acquired true momentum only after the establishment of the DDR.

In the early days of the existence of both regimes the key practical objectives of the leadership with regards to culture were twofold: restructuralisation of the official institutions and establishment of the professional unions accompanied with the membership cleanses. In both Czechoslovakia and East Germany the construction of the cultural machinery was, especially in the functional structure establishment, very similar. It is remarkable that power in the cultural sphere was in both states divided between the responsible administrative body and the cultural department of the one

⁵¹⁸ For a comprehensive overview of the political situation see: Vladislav MOULIS: Podivné spojení: k československo-sovětským politickým a hospodářským vztahům mezi dubnem 1945 a únorem 1948, Praha 1996; František ČAPKA: 1948: Vítězný únor: cesta k převratu, Brno 2012; Karel KAPLAN: Kronika komunistického Československa. Klement Gottwald a Rudolf Slánský. Brno 2009

⁵¹⁹ For an analysis of the political situation see: Manfred GÖRTEMAKER: Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Von der Gründung bis zur Gegenwart, München 1999, 171; Michael LEMKE: Einheit oder Sozialismus? Die Deutschlandpolitik der SED 1949–1961. Köln 2001; Michael LAUSBERG: DDR 1949–1961. Marburg 2009; A broadly attempted summary of the sovietisation process in satellite countries by: Anne APPLEBAUM: Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe, 1944–1956. New York 2012

Party, who constantly struggled for influence.

In Czechoslovakia it was the Ministry of Informations, fighting with the always more powerful Board of Culture and Propaganda of the Central Committee of the KSČ.⁵²⁰ In East Germany was the role of the leader of the cultural sphere held by Kulturabteilung des Zentralkomitees der SED,⁵²¹ the highest instance, having its counterpart in the Deutsche Zentralverwaltung für Volksbildung (DVV), which was subordinated to the SMAD.⁵²² In 1950 was the DVV transformed into the Ministerium für Volksbildung (MfV).⁵²³ A distinguishable tendency, comparable in both ČSR and DDR, is the fact that ideological course and larger share of power was firmly in the hands of the Party Apparatus, regardless of the efforts other parts of a structure might make.

Action Boards

In Czechoslovakia the Party exercised its will in the early days of the regime through the means of the Action Boards.⁵²⁴ These committees became the prolonged arms of the Party, which took part of excluding politically unsuitable members of professional unions and various professional societies of the corresponding field. As Knapík noted, it took three years to gain full control over the institutions and over all the named fields of artistic production. The Action Board, which overtook the position of authority and which was summoned to revise the membership base, consisted of two branches. One of them was subordinated to the Central Action Board of the National Front and the other was built up of the representatives of the Czech Union of Artists, the umbrella union for

⁵²⁰ Národní Archiv, Ministerstvo informací, Praha, f.č. 861, 1945 – 1953, MI
The Ministry of Informations was in 1969 transformed into the Ministry of Culture.

Národní Archiv, KSČ - Ústřední výbor 1945-1989, Praha, f.č. 1261, KSČ-ÚV-O
A tool for orientation in apparatus of the KSČ: Karel KAPLAN: Aparát ÚV KSČ v letech 1948–1968. Sešity Ústavu pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, sv. 10, Praha 1993

⁵²¹ SAPMO- BArch, DY 30/ IV 2/9.06/ 1 bis 315, 1945-1962

For more see: Beatrice VIERNEISEL: Die Kulturabteilung des Zentralkomitee der SED, 1946-1964, in: Günter FEIST / Eckhart GILLEN/ Beatrice VIERNEISEL (Ed.): Kunstdokumentation SBZ/DDR 1945-1990. Aufsätze, Berichte, Materialien. Berlin 1996

⁵²² later to be renamed to Deutsche Verwaltung für Volksbildung

⁵²³ Bundesarchiv DR 2, Ministerium für Volksbildung

⁵²⁴ NA, f. Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty (ÚAV NF)

Jiří KNAPÍK: Akční výbory na prahu nové doby. Soudobé dějiny 2002, (roč. 9.), č. 3-4, 455-475; Jaroslav MLÝNSKÝ: Únor 1948 a akční výbory Národní fronty. Praha: Academia 1978.

all artists.⁵²⁵ The membership base of societies was scrutinised and some of the members were subjected to fees, membership suspensions or “mere” ostracism, if they failed to meet the required characteristics.

In East Germany the role of the examiner was executed after 1945 through Kunstausschuß of the Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (FDGB),⁵²⁶ after 1948 the competence was directed to the Referat Bildende Kunst belonging to the Hauptabteilung Kunst und Literatur of the MfV, currently under the guidance of Prof. Reinhold Langer (SED).⁵²⁷ The direct responsibility of the Referat consisted of the art education supervision, exhibitions production and examination during the registration of artists. The re-examination of artists, who were stripped of their status of an artist, were subjected to scrutiny by Prüfungskommissionen.⁵²⁸

The most immediate interest after the Czechoslovakian coup d'état was dedicated for strategical reasons to media and broadcasting, considering it always had the most profound influence over the general public.⁵²⁹ Communists in the preceding three years already installed loyal people into the influential positions in the Czechoslovak Radio and press. Theatre and film industry followed, together with highly relevant field of literature, which was also of paramount importance for its propagandist potential. Hobby clubs and societies were banned and their overall number dropped significantly. Often they merged with politically agreeable ones.⁵³⁰

Unlike the spheres of media and literature, the field of fine arts had been infiltrated by Party-loyal Communists to a lesser degree and the organisational changes were thence a matter of gradual progression more than of an abrupt takeover. The Action Board of the Czech Artists was entitled to expel unsuitable members and some of them, including sculptor Zdeněk Pauker and architect Jan Mayer, were ruled off. Otakar Španiel, a

⁵²⁵ NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Sl. Organizace. Orgány svazu. Ustanovení, úvodní prohlášení, nepag.

⁵²⁶ SAPMO- BArch, DY 34, Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund 1945 - 1990

⁵²⁷ Bundesarchiv DR 2, Ministerium für Volksbildung, Bildende Kunst

⁵²⁸ Simone SIMPSON: Zwischen Kulturauftrag und künstlerischer Autonomie. Dresdner Plastik der 1950er und 1960er Jahre. Dresden 2008, 20-21

⁵²⁹ Archiv Českého rozhlasu, AF, č.f. 12

⁵³⁰ KNAPÍK 2002, 455-475

sculptor of great renown was also considered for expulsion.⁵³¹ Only by complying with the regime requirements he could be spared the revenge for his successful career at the times of the First Republic.⁵³² These Action Boards were active until 1950, when the cleanses of the membership base draw to its close.

The sphere of the fine arts, including architecture, graphic art, painting and sculpture was much more complex for the Communists to handle – the most authority in the sphere was held by professors at public education institutions, such as the Academy of Arts (Akademie výtvarných umění) or the School of Applied Arts (Vysoká škola uměleckoprůmyslová) in Prague.⁵³³ These were not readily available to subordinate to the dictate of the Party and regardless of the official statements of some foremost theoreticians and artists such as Emil Filla, Vincenc Kramář, the Communist Party had not been overly confident in the allegiance of these personalities, so well established in the cultural structures of the former regime.⁵³⁴ Their apprehension towards Modernist artists Karel Teige, Václav Sychra, Jan Bauch or František Tichý, who, according to internal files of the Party (even though complying with the general idea of the arts as a tool for the promotion of the Socialism) did not adopt in their artistic works outward appearance consistent with the ideology of the Party, were more or less justified.⁵³⁵

It is of interest that in the SSSR the officials of the Party did not experience these transitory complications – the Imperial Academy of Arts (Rossíyskaya akadémiya khudózhestv) was abolished in 1919 by V. I. Lenin for its explicitly tsarist nature and renewed in 1947 by Stalin to serve as “the highest organ, controlling all areas of the

⁵³¹ NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Ustanovení, úvodní prohlášení, nepag.

For more comprehensive informations see: KNAPÍK, Jiří: V zajetí moci. Kulturní politika, její systém a aktéři 1948-1956. Praha 2006, 19-23, for more on the subject see also: Jiří KNAPÍK: Akční výbory na prahu nové doby. Soudobé dějiny 2002, (roč. 9.), č. 3-4, 455-475

⁵³² According to an interview with prof. Jan B. Lášek, family member of Otakar Španiel

⁵³³ For history studies of the AVU ČSR see: Miloš AXMAN (Ed.) Almanach Akademie výtvarných umění v Praze: k 180. výročí založení (1799-1979), Praha: Akademie výtvarných umění, 1979; For history studies of the UMPRUM ČSR see: Martina PACHMANOVÁ / Markéta PRAŽANOVÁ: Vysoká škola uměleckoprůmyslová v Praze = Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague: 1885-2005. Praha, Vysoká škola umělecko-průmyslová 2005

⁵³⁴ For more *Vincenc Kramář* see note 292

For more on *Emil Filla* (1882-1952) see note 404

⁵³⁵ NA, A ÚV KSČ, f 19/7, a. j. 12

country's artistic education and artistic culture."⁵³⁶ It goes without saying that such renewal presented a convenient opportunity to install all members of the institution from the range of loyal Communists. Thence was appointed Aleksandr Gerasimov as the first president of the Russian Academy. The same fate was inflicted upon all unions of artists in the country. SSSR created highly successful culture machinery by allowing artists to participate on official and state commissions only. By strict adherence to this principle the regime succeeded in destruction of independent art and secured endless row of socialist art, delivered by the obliging artists, who bent over backwards to follow the official doctrine.⁵³⁷

SČSVU and VBK

The Soviet example, employed in the constitution of the structure and organisation of the artistic life was shortly after the February utilized also in ČSR and DDR.⁵³⁸ Former unions of artistic professions were transferred into unions, directly subordinated to the Party apparatus.⁵³⁹ In Czechoslovakia it was the Union of the Czechoslovakian Fine Artists.⁵⁴⁰ SČSVU, establishing new members of the Presidium and reacting to the IX. Convention of the KSČ in 1949, summarised main goals and programme of the union.⁵⁴¹ It was to adopt a strategy, corresponding to the central requirement – *“the right ideological course”*.⁵⁴² Statutes were upgraded and 1st Nationwide Congress of SČSVU was promised to take place shortly thereafter. A new, ideologically oriented magazine for artists was deemed necessary and also the economical questions were amply debated.⁵⁴³ Economically and financially SČSVU belonged to the realm of the

⁵³⁶ Quoted in: GOLOMSTOCK 1990, 142

⁵³⁷ Ibidem

⁵³⁸ For more on Soviet cultural politics see one of the most acclaimed studies by: Boris GROYS: *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-garde, aesthetic dictatorship and beyond*. Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin. Princeton 1992

⁵³⁹ A letter witnessing dissolution of the Artists' syndicate is to be found in: NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Sl. Organizace výtvarnictví. Akční výbor syndikátu umělců Československých, věc: rozpuštění spolku, 20. V. 1948

⁵⁴⁰ Svaz československých výtvarných umělců

⁵⁴¹ Accessible today in a record of a meeting of the Committee of SČSVU.

⁵⁴² NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Zápis o schůzi výboru SČSVU, 8. července 1949, 1-5

⁵⁴³ More on the magazine *Výtvarné umění* and the supervision of Václav Jícha see chapter *Sculptors in the*

Ministry of Education, Science and Arts.

The intricate task of the Central Committee of KSČ to transform artists into the suppliers of ideologically functional art was more complex than expected. Not only it turned out to be impossible to support them all financially, but also the artists themselves seemed to struggle with the new thematics and their elaboration. To overcome their hesitation and indecisiveness, artists were sent to the historical sites, factories and collective farms, delegated to witness everyday life of the working people and convert their impressions into the art with the required progressive Socialist content and Realist style. Increase of the production of the ideologically adequate art was endeavoured through the means of task actions, contests, exhibitions and education of the working class in arts – workshops and training.⁵⁴⁴

One of the newly established and consequential organs of SČSVU was the so called Artistic Board, subordinated to the SČSVU leadership, but consisting of artists - specialists, divided into groups according to their field of specialisation.⁵⁴⁵ The Artistic subgroup for sculpture contained Antonín Kalvoda, Jan Kavan, Karel Lidický, Josef Wagner, Václav Žalud, Jan Jiříkovský, Josef Jiříkovský, Jan Lauda, Václav Markup, Vincenc Makovský and Alois Sopr. This subgroup was supposed to superintend its respective field regarding the membership base – they decided upon the agreeability of the adepts, approved new members – approved or declined requests of artists for stays abroad and were supposed to manage the influx of ideologically suitable sculptures into the central art store, *Tvar* cooperative.⁵⁴⁶ They were also entitled to nominate a potential laureate of the State Prize. In 1948, for example the task to come up with a name was assigned to sculptors Karel Lidický and Vincenc Makovský.⁵⁴⁷

Organisational Structures

⁵⁴⁴ The effort to educate working class to turn them into complying suppliers of the agitational art turned out to be unrealistic – the environment of the factories and collective farms, together with demanding manual labour, did not contribute to contemplative mood associated with artistic creation.

⁵⁴⁵ A file of meeting records of the Artistic Board from the years 1948-1950 is to be found in: NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Sl Umělecká rada.

The categories were divided as follows: Painting and Graphics, Sculpture, Architecture, Industrial Art, Theory

⁵⁴⁶ Družstvo Tvar. The idea to create a cooperative art store was already mentioned in the Memorandum to the President Beneš in 1947, see note 287. It was supposed to serve as a central store, which would buy from artists to provide them with an essential income, in the situation when the privat sector was unable to support them.

⁵⁴⁷ NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Sl Umělecká rada. Zápis 16. 6. 1948

The final transformation of the SČSVU into the mature part of the structure of the Communist machinery with a clearly articulated ideological programme, was ready to be performed in 1949 and the implementation of the Socialist Realism went hand in hand with it.⁵⁴⁸ It was related to the publishing of widely accessible and instructional compilation of Andrei Zhdanov's speeches.⁵⁴⁹ It contributed somewhat to elucidation of the question, how the Socialist art ought to be handled in various fields of culture.

The organizationally challenging process was accompanied by a new revision of the membership base and was concluded by a 1st Nationwide Congress of SČSVU in April 1950. Thence was Karel Pokorný replaced by an architect Karel Stráník as a President, it is noteworthy that the secretary remained Václav Jícha.⁵⁵⁰

The East German parallel to the SČSVU was the Verband Bildender Künstler Deutschlands (VBKD), established 17 – 18 June 1950 as a part of the Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands.⁵⁵¹ The institution had its ideological forbearer in Assoziation revolutionärer bildender Künstler (1928-1933),⁵⁵² numerous group of Communist artists, which was eventually forbidden by the Nazis.

The VBKD, established on 17 - 18 June 1950 at I. Verbandskongress was subordinated to the FDGB and Otto Nagel was elected the first Chairman.⁵⁵³ One of the representatives of the Verbund became sculptor Ruthild Hahne.⁵⁵⁴ It was directly responsible to the

⁵⁴⁸ NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Sl. Organizace. Orgány svazu. Ustanovení, úvodní prohlášení, nepag.

⁵⁴⁹ Andrej Aleksandrovič ŽDANOV: O Umění, Praha 1949

⁵⁵⁰ Poznámky k zasedání I. celostátní konference delegátů Svazu československých výtvarných umělců v březnu 1950, in: Výtvarné umění 2, 1950, 146-156

⁵⁵¹ SAPMO- BArch, B5. DDR/Verband Bildender Künstler

Compare to: Ullrich KUHIRT (Ed.): Kunst in der DDR 1945-1959. Leipzig 1982, 115

⁵⁵² For a description of the ASSO see: BArch, DR 1/10275, VA 275, 50. Jahrestag von ASSO (Assoziation Revolutionärer Bildender Künstler Deutschlands) und BRPSD (Bund Proletarisch-Revolutionärer Schriftsteller Deutschlands) 1978

For an encyclopaedic entry see: Christoph WILHELMI: ASSO, in: Künstlergruppen in Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz seit 1900 : ein Handbuch. Stuttgart 1996

⁵⁵³ *Otto Nagel* (1894-1967) was a politically active painter, living in Berlin. He was a president of the Akademie der Künste der DDR (1956 - 1962), chairman and President of the VBKD (1950 – 1952 and 1953 – 1959)

SAPMO- BArch, B5. DDR/Verband Bildender Künstler - Statut

⁵⁵⁴ For more on Ruthild Hahne (1910-2001) see especially note 476

Verband Bildender Künstler der DDR, 1950-1990, in: Archivdatenbank der Akademie der Künste, retrieved from:

Central Commission of the SED, which was entitled to intervene in any area of the VBK organisation and also in the matters of ideological relevance. The VBK adopted the same time-tested model of democratic centralism, which mimicked in essentials the structure of the one Party Apparatus – introduced the Kandidatenstatus for the approval of the potential member of the Verband.⁵⁵⁵ Together with the full membership in the Verband the artist was allowed to take part in exhibitions, make use of stipends, study trips and readily accessible material, required for the execution of his profession. The most important aspect of the belonging to the VBK was the permission to take part in official commissions, an indispensable condition for the survival of active artist in the socialist state.⁵⁵⁶

The independent local artistic groups that had arisen after the war, such as Die Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sozialistischer Künstler established in Berlin or Das Ufer located in Dresden and harbouring among its members several sculptors, among them Ernst Grämer, Rudolf Löhner and Walter Reinhold.⁵⁵⁷ In Halle was founded Die Fähre und in Leipzig das Künstleraktiv 48 - together with many others - were all engulfed by the VBK in 1952.⁵⁵⁸

<https://archiv.adk.de/bigobjekt/37005> (4.8. 2016)

⁵⁵⁵ Ulrich KUHIRT: Verband Bildender Künstler der DDR. Weg zur sozialistischen Künstlerorganisation – Dokumentation, Berlin 1983, 14

⁵⁵⁶ Ibidem 1983, 14

⁵⁵⁷ Kurt LIEBMANN: „Das Ufer“, Dresdner Künstlergruppe 1947, in: Bildende Kunst 1959, 825ff

⁵⁵⁸ Hallesche Künstlervereinigung "Die Fähre": 1947 bis 1949; Ausstellung vom 17. Oktober bis 19. November 1989, Galerie Marktschlößchen. Halle, Saale 1989

Ullrich KUHIRT (Ed.): Kunst in der DDR 1945-1959, Leipzig 1982, 72

For more on the artistic groups see: Petra JACOBY: Kollektivierung der Phantasie? Künstlergruppen in der DDR zwischen Vereinnahmung und Erfindungsgabe, Bielefeld 2007

Official Sculpture 1948/1949 – 1953

The endeavoured construction of the socialist state needed painting and figural sculpture, that would, together with architecture, celebrate both the national history, revolutionary presence and utopian future.⁵⁵⁹ The process of centralisation of culture and its organisational structures after 1948, restructuralisation of the official institutions and establishment of the professional unions, affected sculptors and the sculptural production the same way as the other fields of culture. The challenges and hurdles on the way to the ideological art were in ČSR and DDR based on the same ground.

The effort of the Central Committee of KSČ to transform artists into the suppliers of ideologically functional art was very relevant to sculptors, who in vast majority depended upon official commissions. The centralized approach was applied to the artistic creativity and the public space provided the most convenient opportunity for the presentation of the regime. The squares, facades of public buildings, factories, all had to be filled with ideological art that would boost morale and instill the message of Socialism in the minds of the People. Unlike painting, the sculpture was more dependent on state commissions and therefore reflects accurately the ideological and political background of the era.

Unlike the cinematography or literature, the sculpture was considered by the Czechoslovakian Communist theoreticians as relatively well established and not requiring a substantial intervention.⁵⁶⁰ In opposition to the painting, sculpture was praised for retainment of a universally high level, following the famous and refined tradition of Czech sculpture.⁵⁶¹ As Antonín Pelc emphasised in his review of the *Second Exhibition of Czechoslovakian Arts* (1952), unlike the figure painting, “... *the sculpture achieved high level of development as to the contents and did not waiver on its confident*

⁵⁵⁹ II. Přehlídka Československého výtvarného umění. In: Výtvarná práce č. 16, 1953,

⁵⁶⁰ Usnesení ÚV KSČ o filmu a jeho význam pro výtvarné umění, in: NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv.

⁵⁶¹ Jan TOMEŠ: Sbírká českého sochařství k otevření výstavy Národní galerie na Zbraslavi, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 2, 1954, č. 20, 1-2; Antonín PELC: Naše sochařství, věrno slavné tradici. In: Výtvarná práce, č. 21, 1952, 1

*journey towards mastery of expression.*⁵⁶²

Whereas painters struggled to mingle their Modernist world-view with socialist content without violating their artistic conscience, the sculptors of state commissions monuments could with little inconvenience revive the most traditional form and apply it to the iconography of Socialism. As the vast majority of sculptors received traditional education, they would be professionally prepared for the emerging tasks. The changed political situation required monumental art forms to flourish.

These circumstances determined the outcome of the official sculptural production after 1948, which in ČSR adopted either the myslbekian form, or through the inertia reflected the Social civilism and neoclassicism of the twenties, or the Soviet style. In Germany on the other hand oscillating between the Expressionist legacy modified usually by Formvereinfachung of the 1930s and again the Soviet model, most often promoted by the Soviet sculptors themselves.⁵⁶³

The instruction to artists and the public was to be delivered through the press. In DDR it was the *Bildende Kunst*, a magazine dedicated to painting, sculpture, graphic art, craftsmanship and industrial design, founded in 1947 and published by Karl Hofer und Oskar Nerlinger.⁵⁶⁴ The general and professional public in Czechoslovakia was acquainted with the new ideological orientation of art through the newly established magazine *Výtvarné umění*. Both magazines would – according to ideologues - endeavour to translate organic needs of the day, a mirror of life in its historical exactitude, educate and change the Man in socialist spirit and leverage incentives for the works of art from the everyday life of the people who invest their effort to build Socialism in the country.⁵⁶⁵

The editorial board of the magazines contributed substantially to the basic formulations of the Socialist Realism in both countries. It summoned and explained all the precise

⁵⁶² Ibidem, 1

⁵⁶³ Raymond COGNIAT: Maillol, sochař Francie, in: Blok, roč. 1946-1947, č. 4-5, 134ff; DT-: K výstavě Karla Lidického, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 1953, č. 16; ANONYM: Naše sochařství věrno slavné tradici, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 1953, č. 21, 1; František DVOŘÁK: Sochaři umělecké besedy, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. II, 1954, č. 2;

⁵⁶⁴ Beatrice VIERNEISEL: Wechselbäder einer Verbandszeitschrift. Die Bildende Kunst, in: Simone BARCK / Martina LANGERMANN / Siegfried LOKATIS (Eds.): Zwischen "Mosaik" und "Einheit". Zeitschriften in der DDR. Berlin 1999. 276–288

⁵⁶⁵ Václav JÍCHA: Na novou cestu. In: Výtvarné umění, roč. 1, 1950, nepag.

directions as to the thematics and motives, iconography, ideological perspective, rendering and form of art works, and examined various problems related both to the theoretical and ideological background of the creative process. They had set the general structure, around which was the theory of Socialist Realism was to evolve in the decades to come.

As is apparent from the selection of article subjects, rhetorics and also from the problems dwelled upon, the SČSVU and the Cultural Board of the Central Committee of the Communist Party were far from satisfied with the artists' results up to 1950. The Magazine *Výtvarné umění* was undoubtedly created to rectify these faults and its authors with Václav Jícha in the forefront, plunged into this task with agile productivity. Unlike the pre-February careful and moderate proclamations of the liberty of the artist and his relative freedom to choose any style, topic and medium desired, the magazine in 1950 already acknowledges in unmistakable terms, what the “true art” according to the Communist ideology is supposed to look like and what characteristics it has to display.

To secure a favourable outcome, exhibitions, action tasks and contests were launched both to provide the artists with the necessary provisions and to encourage compliance with the ideological directives.⁵⁶⁶ The centralized approach towards the action tasks and contests provided the state with advantageous position, allowing it to structuralise the directives and rules, thematics and ideological orientation in such a way that was compatible with its' long term vision in economy, agriculture or employability.

Several exhibitions and serial events were presented to provide artists the opportunity to represent their works, created in accordance with the doctrine. *The Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts* (Přehlídka československého výtvarného umění) at Prague Castle was organised four times in the time-frame 1951 – 1959, as well as *The Art Harvest* (Výtvarná úroda) in 1950 and 1951. The central exhibition series in the DDR was the *Deutsche Kunstausstellung*, organised annually 1949-1988. The demand, placed upon the sculptors was in the depiction of animate life of the *udarniki* and improvers, toiling for higher productivity of industry, labour, expansion and growth of the agriculture in the countryside, the emergence of the new generation of youth in their

⁵⁶⁶ For more see chapter: Action Tasks and Contests

education and in the industrial production, creative relationship of the people to labour.⁵⁶⁷

Beside the central exhibitions the SČSVU and VBK would promote and organize exhibitions abroad, serving to promote the cultural and artistic level of the country and secure both cultural exchange and mutual awareness of the public in the country providing and receiving the output. In Bucharest would be in 1949 presented a selection of the Czechoslovakian sculpture, hosted by the Institutul roman pentru relatiuni culturale cu strainatate.⁵⁶⁸ The exhibition would beside traditionally acclaimed sculptors introduce some of the younger artists – Karel Hladík, Josef Malejovský or Jozef Kostka. Another representative exhibition of the Czechoslovakian sculpture was presented in 1951 in Wien, accompanied by a catalogue with a text by Jaromír Neumann, whose translated text served as an introduction to the situation and character of the Czechoslovakian sculpture. The exhibition would also provide the opportunity to acquire a foreign participation to the future Socrealists Luděk Varvažovský, Tatiana Konstantinova, Zdeněk Kovář and Alexander Trizuljak, born around 1920s.⁵⁶⁹

Another tool introduced to galvanize the artists, was a system of distinctions, prizes and orders. The structure of these merit-based acknowledgements was established to appreciate the regime obliging authors and at the same time present an example for those artists, who struggled to grasp the new thematics. The artists, who were most often awarded, succeeded in the eyes of the Party officials in delivering the required work of art, covering the currently demanded subject and containing an accurate combination of artistic quality and ideological content.

⁵⁶⁷ For more on the subject see chapter: *Exhibitions*

⁵⁶⁸ *Sculptura cehoslovaca: Catalogul expozitiei sculpturi cehoslovace - Bucuresti 1949*. Bucuresti: Institutul roman pentru relatiuni culturale cu strainatate, 1949

⁵⁶⁹ *Ausstellung der tschechoslowakischen Skulptur: Wien - Wiener Kunsthalle 25. Februar bis 19. März 1951*. Wien: Österreichischtschechoslowakische Gesellschaft, Berufsvereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs, 1951
Zdeněk Kovář (1917-2004) was a Czech sculptor and industrial designer. 1943 concluded his studies at the School of Arts in Zlín as a pupil of V. Makovský. In 1947 founded a studio for the Shaping of machines and tools. 1959 professor at UMPRUM. He mostly created portrait, monumental sculpture and works depicting manual labour professions. One of the founders of the Czechoslovakian industrial design. In 1982 received a title National Artist. For more see: *Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců*, sv. 6, 1950-2001. Ostrava 2001
For a biographical note on: Luděk Varvažovský, Tatiana Konstantinova, Zdeněk Kovář and Alexander Trizuljak, see note 597

To promote a greater compliance in the future, ideologues called to assistance the prototype of the Soviet Art, revered and celebrated as the most developed art in the world – not only for the alleged full-blown realist tradition, but also for its supposed interconnection with the interests and needs of the nation.⁵⁷⁰ The final expression of this victory was a conclusion of the 5. Plenum des Zentralkomitee der SED, presented on 17 March 1951 where a fatal decision outlawed all signs of the freedom of artistic expression under the title: *Kampf gegen Formalismus in Literatur und Kunst für eine Fortschrittliche Deutsche Kultur*.⁵⁷¹

In the aftermath of the War the enthusiasm for the building of monuments, which was distinct in the 19th century and also during the times of the First Czechoslovak Republic, returned to Czechoslovakia.⁵⁷² Several contests for the commissions of monument construction dated back to the prewar period and shortly after the end of the war it was perceived as a matter of high importance to secure their production and installation. A colossal *Monument to Jan Žižka* from Bohumil Kafka, the ultimate and most monumental equestrian statue was to be cast into bronze.⁵⁷³ (Fig. 15) Also some monuments, removed during the Protectorate, such as *Karel H. Borovský's statue* by Josef Strahovský at Žižkov, were reinstated, as it was perceived as a matter of national pride to obliterate all traces of arbitrary acts, Nazis inflicted upon the subjugated nation.

It was only a few weeks after the end of the war, 20th September 1945, when the National Committee of the capital city of Prague met to discuss the task to create three new monuments in Prague. The debate on monumentalism was in vogue among

⁵⁷⁰ Alexander ABUSCH: Von der Wissenschaft und der Kunst der Sowjetunion schöpferisch lernen, Berlin 1953, 5nn

⁵⁷¹ 5. Plenum des Zentralkomitees der SED: Bd. 1, BArch, DH 1/13499 For a compilation of related documents see: *Kampf gegen Formalismus in Literatur und Kunst für eine fortschrittliche deutsche Kultur*. EntschlieÙung des ZK der SED auf der V. Tagung 15 .3.– 17.3. 1951, in: Elimar SCHUBBE (Ed.): *Dokumente zur Kunst- Literatur- und Kulturpolitik*. Stuttgart 1984, 178nn

⁵⁷² This preoccupation with monuments is noted by F. X. Šalda in his *Mor pomníkový* (The Plague of the Monument Building), in: *Šaldův zápisník* 1, 1928, č.1, 265-269. The abundance of monuments served as a incentive to Zdeněk Hojda a Jiří Pokorný for „Memorials and Forgetorials“ summoned some examples of this „monument building enthusiasm“ and noted for example the Jan Žižka Monument. For an Exhibiton in Clam-Gallas Palace 25th September – 5th January 2014 with an accompanying catalogue on the subject of the Prague monuments of the 19th century see: Kateřina KUTHANOVÁ / Hana SVATOŠOVÁ: *Metamorfózy politiky : pražské pomníky 19. století*. Praha 2013

⁵⁷³ For a chapter on the importance of monuments in the pre-war and post-war situation see chapters: *War Monuments and Memorials, National History Monument, Commemoration of the Fallen in CSR*

theoreticians already in the pre-war time, but it did not cease to intrigue them even after the war, where the question of monumentality resonated with the political changes in society.⁵⁷⁴ The inclination to present great personalities of national history in formidable proportions was to be employed again, in monument to the late *president Tomáš G. Masaryk*.⁵⁷⁵ Another was to be dedicated to the Czech composer of international renown, *Bedřich Smetana*. The third personality which was chosen to be immortalised in stone or bronze was *Josif V. Stalin*.⁵⁷⁶ Monuments to *Jan Neruda*, *Jaroslav Vrchlický*, *Bedřich Smetana* in Prague were also premeditated.

Besides the need to celebrate national history, the most often employed public sculptural production in the first years after 1945 was dedicated to the war-related monument building, most typically to the Red Army and liberation. The monument would be typically installed in a public space – a square, park or a cemetery, in more generously financed cases would be a part of a memorial, with corresponding urban planning and accompanying landscape design. This was the case especially with regards to the Red Army Monuments, such as the memorial and mausoleum, created in 1946 on the occasion of the first anniversary of the liberation by the Red Army in Ostrava, honoured also in 1946 also by the construction of a *Burial place of the Red Army in Brno* with a dominant figure of a Red Army soldier on a tall column. (Fig. 39)

Even though in Germany the Anti-Fascism was one of the leading ideological concepts, the main line of the monuments exhibited continuity with the sculpture of the National socialism. This divergence between official rhetoric and preferred line of the official monumental sculpture is characteristic for the authoritative regimes, such as those, established in ČSR and DDR. The most conservative tradition becomes the mandatory blueprint, fulfilling in the most efficient manner the role of the instructional and ideological tool. In that respect, the true origin of the chosen artistic tendency was of little consequence. In the situation the artists, whose reputation and artistic independence was tarnished by their allegiance to National Socialism were not refused, but accepted, if they were willing to make amends.

⁵⁷⁴ Josef RYBÁK: Monumentálnost v současném umění, in: Program D 48, r. 11, 1947/1948, č. 4, 119; Miroslav MÍČKO: O monumentálním umění, in: Kytice r.2. 1947, č.7, 467-472

⁵⁷⁵ PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 22

⁵⁷⁶ HOJDA/POKORNÝ 1996, 205

Sculptors in the Service to the Party

The selection of artists, included in this and following chapters, was made on the basis of the official state distinctions, awarded to the authors by the central institutions throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Within the sphere of Czech sculpture will be especially noted artists such as Konrad Babraj, Jan Lauda, Vincenc Makovsky, Josef Malejovsky, Karel Pokorny, Otakar vec, whose realisations stood at the core of the official sculptural production, both in the capital city of Prague and in other regions, such as Moravia's capital Brno and those of industrial tradition, such as Ostrava and Zln (Gottwaldov). The East Germany is represented by Fritz Cremer, Waldemar Grzimek, Ruthild Hahne, Gustav Seitz in Berlin, Walter Arnold in Dresden. The Soviet artists could not be omitted, as they present the authors of several monumental commissions in the early days of the DDR.

Czechoslovakian Sculptors

Vincenc Makovsky, who had risen to prominence after the war, began on the verge of the decade to reap all the benefits of his post war works and political engagement.⁵⁷⁷ His prize received for the Partisan, membership in the Czech Academy of Sciences and foundational role in the establishment of local artist groups in the Moravian region undoubtedly promoted his interests even further.⁵⁷⁸

Makovsky could claim to ascertain his artistic prowess by creating a *bust of marshal Malinovsky*, for Brno in 1949.⁵⁷⁹ (Fig. 40) His decision to emphasize prominent facial features of the celebrated Red Army liberator would help to achieve monumental expression and sense of heroism, while retaining pseudo-realist form for a convincing whole. The unwavering, visionary gaze over the horizon, seen so often in the sculptures

⁵⁷⁷ For previous stages of Makovsky's career see chapter *Emerging Elite Figuralists*

⁵⁷⁸ Jiřı EBEK: Přehled životopisnych dat a nejzavažnejšich pracı Vincence Makovskeho, in: Duřan INDELAR: Vincenc Makovsky. 1963, 103-107

⁵⁷⁹ For a detailed analysis of Makovsky's monumental commissions see especially: Jiřı EBEK: *Soupis sochařskeho dıla Vincence Makovskeho*, in: Jiřı HLUŠICKA / Jaroslav MALINA / Jiřı EBEK: Vincenc Makovsky. Brno 2002; INDELAR, Duřan: *Narodnı umelec, Vincenc Makovsky*. Praha 1963; Jiřı HLUŠICKA: *Sochař Vincenc Makovsky*, in: HLUŠICKA / MALINA / EBEK: Vincenc Makovsky. Brno 2002

of Socialist Realism, found here one of its most typical examples. Albeit Makovský stood the test of political conformity, his privilege to create a bust of president Gottwald did not come to fruition and remained in preliminary models only. As it seems, Makovský's faithfulness to the outward appearance of the depicted was too pronounced to be borne and therefore refused by the commissioner.⁵⁸⁰ However, one of his models for *Gottwald's bust* was cast in bronze in 1950.

Since 1950 Makovský achieved sufficient authority to attract positions in the semi-political art-related structures, as a member of committees. He began to appear in juries of various commissions, or when a selection of sculptural works for a comprehensive exhibition was to be made. His public activity, together with his undeniable artistic qualities resulted in him being named in 1952 professor at the Academy of Arts, a considerable distinction and another consequential boost of his career prospects and affluence. His advances projected also into the export of his works abroad. In the time frame of 1950-1953 his works were exhibited as part of larger scale exhibitions of Czechoslovakian art in Vienna, Sofia, Warsaw and Moscow.⁵⁸¹

Karel Pokorný earned the greatest appraisal in the post-war era by his *Fraternization* (Sbratření, 1949), (fig. 18) depicting a scene of liberation of the Czech lands from the Nazis by the SSSR army. With the highest praise by the comparison to the Myslbek's mastery, was Karel Pokorný and his *Charles IV bronze figure for the Charles University* in Prague (1950), renowned for its precisely elaborated fabrics, elegant bearing and monumental expression. (Fig. 27) After describing in detail the sculptural component of the exhibition, Pelc concludes, that the remarkable skill of the present sculptors springs from the confidence, provided by the reliance on the local tradition and the "Classics". Together with monuments to *Alois Jirásek* (1952) and *Božena Němcová* (1955) it belongs to the clearly Myslbekian group of statues Pokorný had created. This recognisable style of historicism was repeatedly celebrated by the ruling power as a role-model for other artists to follow.⁵⁸²

⁵⁸⁰ HLUŠIČKA 1963, 43

⁵⁸¹ ŠEBEK 1963, 106

⁵⁸² Vladimír ŠOLTA: Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu! in: Výtvarné umění, časopis Ústředního svazu československých výtvarných umělců, Praha 1952
Luboš HLAVÁČEK: Genese sousoší Sbratření K. Pokorného, in: Výtvarná kultura I/19, 1985, 8-11

In the position of the president of SČSVU Pokorný remained until 1949 when he was replaced by architect Karel Stráník. After the cleanses connected to the Rudolf Slánský's case he was reinstated and remained in the position until 1956. As a president, he commented on current exhibitions in *Výtvarná práce* Magazine, presided over commissions and familiarised the public with the conclusions of the key administrative and organisational issues in SČSVU.⁵⁸³ He also received many honours and sinecures, related to his successful and Party-approved artistic activity – 1949 he received the State prize for his sculptural composition *Fraternization*, 1952 he became a Laureate of the State Prize of the First Order for his *Monument to Alois Jirásek*.⁵⁸⁴ (Fig. 41)

Also Otakar Švec understood a renewed longing for tradition and monumentality. His artistic tendencies, yet again gravitating towards realist form, convened to the Party officials. Švec engagement with the Communist regime, regardless of the motivation, is reflected both in the magazines and newspapers. His complete immersion into the forced ideologisation of arts is reflected in the *Výtvarné umění* from 1950 where his statement in “a survey” on the occasion of the 33rd anniversary of the October Revolution called *The Soviet Union, Our Example*. He stated that:

“... In the spirit of the Socialist Realism creates an artist, who in agreement with the mighty expansion of the working class and endeavours, following the example of the Soviet artists to depict all that is beautiful and great, all that fills the bountiful life of us, builders of the Socialism.”⁵⁸⁵

These generic, dehumanised and highly ideological formulations, based upon the core dogmas of the Party, were omnipresent and common in newspapers and magazines in the period. This particular example witnesses Švec's either willing or unwilling involvement in the systematic construction of the ideological substrate on which the tendentious art ought to flourish.⁵⁸⁶ The formulations of all associated artists, published

Bohuslav ŠTANGLER: Program slavnosti odhalení památníku Sbratření v České Třebové dne 9. - 10. června 1951. Česká Třebová 1951

⁵⁸³ For example: Karel POKORNÝ: Výběrový svaz je nová cesta československého výtvarného umění, in: *Výtvarná práce* 23 roč. 1955

⁵⁸⁴ KOTALÍK 1983, 13 For more see chapter: Official Prizes and Honorary Titles in ČSR

⁵⁸⁵ Otakar, ŠVEC: Českoslovenští výtvarní umělci o sovětském umění, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 6, 1950, 344

⁵⁸⁶ Českoslovenští výtvarní umělci o sovětském umění, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 6, 1950, 344

in the Party directed press, are as to the character and meaning of these proclamations fully interchangeable. They witness both the inevitability of the involvement of the artists in the building of the said construction, as well as substantial intervention of the censorship in the editing of the texts.

One of the most distinguished sculptors, whose pre-war successes in figurative sculpture secured him the attention of the decision makers, was *Jan Lauda*. His portrait bust of *Zdeněk Nejedlý* was paraded as the representative example of psychologism in portraiture of the personalities of Soviet and Czechoslovakian class history in the Magazine *Výtvarné umění*.⁵⁸⁷

*"A Portrait of the minister Zdeněk Nejedlý from Jan Lauda is a classical example of the solution of the purpose and form of the sculpture. The audacious, politically significant, manly personality of the pugnative scholar, great through his folksiness and his Socialist self-assuredness, is depicted in a form of a monumental bust, which is comparable only to myslbekian mastery."*⁵⁸⁸

A high recommendation of his personal and professional qualities, illustrating Lauda's privileged position among Communist artists in the early 1950s, was delivered by Jan Tomeš in his 1952 monography. No later than 1945 Lauda created a portrait of V. I. Lenin, a gesture of great importance, regarding his future career.⁵⁸⁹ (Fig. 80) The bust of the revolutionary leader was, according to Tomeš:

*"created by Lauda from human and artistic understanding of Lenin's personality and is one of the first artworks, fulfilling well-known requirement, laid on the works of Socialist Realism. His expression is distinguished with great pathos, expressing revolutionary zeal... By the likeness of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin Lauda reached broad masses. It is one of the works, through which the artist found connection with the people and new purpose of artistic creativity, sought after for a long time."*⁵⁹⁰

Karel Lidický further cultivated his advantageous position, achieved by the acquisition of the Jan Hus monument commission. Beside his always very prominent portraiture works he would focus on the ideological subjects. This is very aptly demonstrated on the

⁵⁸⁷ V.I. Lenin's Portrait. (A reproduction), in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 3 1950, 3

⁵⁸⁸ TOMEŠ 1954

⁵⁸⁹ Antonín PELC: Vzpomínka na Jana Laudu, in: *Výtvarné umění IX*, 1959, č. 4, 146-149; Compare: Jiří MAŠÍN: Jan Lauda. Karlovy Vary. 1962; Luboš HLAVÁČEK: Jan Lauda šedesátníkem, in: *Výtvarná práce VI.*, 1958, č. 6, 3

⁵⁹⁰ Jan TOMEŠ: Jan Lauda. Praha 1952, 29

example of the *The Burial of the Red Army soldier* (Pohřeb Rudarmějce, 1949), a complex composition, thematically elaborating upon a multi-figural concept, already established by Jan Štursa in his monument *The Burial in the Carpathian Mountains* (Pohřeb v Karpatech, 1918).⁵⁹¹ (Fig. 33) Regardless, whether the motive pioneered in the Czech sphere by Štursa was used intentionally or unintentionally, the draft would in many a respect be an antithesis to his work. Lidický would make the drapery and folds of a flag the dominant structure of the monument, creating an open, ruffled shape, reminding strongly of an Art Nouveau style. Faithful to the anxious and pointy character of his sketches and models, Lidický's figures do not help to create the neatly closed form Štursa's composition does, on the contrary, it further emphasises the horizontal heterogeneity.

Josef Malejovský was after the war in his thirties, well versed in the realist style and armed with the membership in the KSČ, which surely helped to open the doors - including the assistant's position at the AVU.⁵⁹² His post-war activity did not deviate from the feverish activity of his contemporaries, who did dedicate their efforts to the commemoration and acclamation of the heroes and fallen. He was profoundly intrigued by the powerful emotional charge of the victorious May of 1945 and elaborated upon the subject on numerous occasions.⁵⁹³ He participated in the contests on the sculpture, dealing with this subject of the liberation, albeit with limited success - most of these works would remain unrealized.⁵⁹⁴ His pre-1989 monographs would naturally accentuate a number of political sculptures such as the *The Barricade Man* (Barikádník, 1949), *Above the friend* (Nad kamarádem, 1949), or *Female mason* (Zednička, 1950). He would also unsuccessfully attempt to win a commission for a *Monument to the Fallen in his native Holice*.⁵⁹⁵ The first of his successes was the commission for the *bronze doors of the Vítkov Memorial* (1952).⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹¹ For more on Štursa's monument *The Burial in the Carpathian Mountains* see page: 60

⁵⁹² Jiří KOTALÍK: K výstavě Josefa Malejovského, in: Josef Malejovský: katalog výstavy, Národní galerie března-květen 1986. Praha 1986, 7-13

⁵⁹³ Hana MANDYSOVÁ: Národní umělec Josef Malejovský: výběr z díla (kat. výst.). Pardubice 1988

⁵⁹⁴ Jan SPURNÝ: Josef Malejovský. Praha 1963

⁵⁹⁵ KOTALÍK 1986, 10

⁵⁹⁶ For more on the Vítkov Memorial see chapter: *National Monument at Prague Vítkov Hill*

New Generation of Socrealists

Albeit the generation of the true bearers of the independent artistic current was already active in the seclusion of their private studios, the official, academical branch would thrive in the middle of the 1950s. The two most prolific studios in the sense of the sculptural education belonged to Karel Pokorný and Vincenc Makovský. The Prague school of Pokorný at AVU attracted the largest number of attendants, whose conversion into successful, publicly active sculptors was the highest. Among them were Socrealists, of the late 1950s and 1960s, some of them active up until 1980s of both Czech and Slovak nationality: Tibor Bartfay, Svata Hajerová, Jan Hána, Ludvík Kodym, Sylva Lacinová-Jílková, Věra Merhautová, Alexander Trizuljak, Luděk Varvažovský, Vendelín Zdrůbecký etc.⁵⁹⁷

The great majority of the named artists would acquire the basics of the craft by attending a specialised secondary schools, which inevitably influenced the orientation and technique of the artists. They could choose from sculpture, woodcarving, ceramics, or stone masonry, sometimes even interior design, the options covered by the secondary education institutions available. A substantial number of the sculptors born around 1900 would study at the State Industrial School of Sculpture and Stonework in Hořice, including Jan Štursa, Josef Wagner and Karel Lidický.⁵⁹⁸ This was, however, not the case with the artists born twenty years later. Beside Jaroslav Bartoš, Arnošt Košík, Luděk Varvažovský, the great majority would choose either directly sculpture or applied arts

⁵⁹⁷ *Sylva Lacinová* (1923), was a Czech sculptor. In 1950 he concluded his studies at AVU as a pupil of K. Pokorný. She was concerned mainly with portraiture, decorative and small-scale sculpture. For more see: Bronislava GABRIELOVÁ: *Sylva Lacinová*. Brno 1996

Věra Merhautová (1921-1996), was a Czech sculptor. In 1951 she concluded hier studies at AVU as a pupil of K. Pokorný, J. Lauda. She was concerned mainly with portraiture Fo more see: Marie HALÍŘOVÁ MUCHOVÁ: *Věra Merhautová: výběr ze sochařského díla*. Praha 1987

Luděk Varvažovský (1923 - 1950), was a Czech sculptor. In 1949 he concluded his studies at AVU as a pupil of K. Pokorný. Concerned especially with monumental sculpture. For more see: *Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců*, sv. 19, 1950-2008. Ostrava 2008.

Vendelín Zdrůbecký (1923 -1986), was a Czech sculptor. In 1945 he concluded his studies at UMPRUM as a pupil of J. Lauda, 1951 at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague as a pupil of J. Lauda and K. Pokorný. A member of the Group Říjen, in 1955 member of the Army's Art Studio. In 1982 received a title of the Distinguished Artist. For more see: *Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců*, sv. 21, 1950-2010, Ostrava 2010.

⁵⁹⁸ Státní průmyslová škola sochařská a kamenická in Hořice

specialties.⁵⁹⁹

The sculpture as a distinct discipline was taught with the greatest success at the School of Applied Arts.⁶⁰⁰ In the atelier of Jan Lauda prepare the candidates for the UMPRUM until 1949, Ludvík Kodým, Vendelín Zdrůbecký and countless other less consequential sculptors and artists. Also School of Arts in Zlín was having good results.⁶⁰¹ Here was actively promoting young talents Vincenc Makovský within his own studio, educating Konrád Babraj, Karel Kuneš, Zdeněk Krybus, Vladimír Kýn or Zdeněk Kovář, Sylva Lacinová-Jílková.⁶⁰²

One of the most preferred branches of the secondary education among these sculptors was ceramics. The future sculptors would improve their skills in the small scale modelling usually at a specialised school of Ceramics in Bechyně, namely Ludvík Kodým or Miloš Zet.⁶⁰³ Jan Hána would prefer the Prague location, attending the local school of Ceramics. Karel Kolumek would study at another school of Ceramics, in Teplice.⁶⁰⁴

At Specialised Woodcarving School in Prague would prepare for their future careers Svata Hajerová and Vendelín Zdrůbecký.⁶⁰⁵ Minority of artists, usually women, would choose from different branches of applied arts related to interior design or jewellery making. A Secondary Industrial School of Housing in Prague was attended by Věra Merhautová, whereas Specialised School of Jewellery in Trutnov provided professional instruction to Věra Melicharová-Kartáková.⁶⁰⁶

This generation of K. Pokorný, J. Lauda and V. Makovský's pupils would be directly

⁵⁹⁹ The school would after 1938 frequently change name, the Státní průmyslová škola sochařská a kamenická in Hořice was used (1921-1938). The institution existed already at the times of Austrian.Hungarian Empire, from 1884, raising large number of greatly skilled artists, who would later study at AVU. For more see: Erik TICHÝ: 120 let hořické školy pro sochaře a kameníky: 1884-2004. Hořice: Střední průmyslová škola kamenická a sochařská 2004

⁶⁰⁰ Uměleckoprůmyslová škola v Praze

⁶⁰¹ (CZ) Škola umění in Zlín

⁶⁰² For account of the school attendance, exhibitions participation, lists of bibliography and affiliation to artistic groups of the Czech artists see especially the database: <http://abart-full.artarchiv.cz>

⁶⁰³ (CZ) Odborná škola keramická v Bechyni

⁶⁰⁴ (CZ) Keramická škola, Keramická škola v Teplicích-Šanově

⁶⁰⁵ (CZ) Odborná škola řezbářská in Prague

⁶⁰⁶ (CZ) Střední průmyslová škola bytové tvorby, Odborná škola šperkařská v Trutnově

responsible for the spreading of the Socrealist sculpture in Czechoslovakia after 1950 and its continuity well into 1980s. Their imminent need to establish themselves would result in a production of a number of conformist works, creating the mediocre mass produce, ever since the beginning of the 1950s. The high artistic level and professional skills of Myslbek's and Štursa's pupils, perceived often as a natural characteristic of the Czech figural sculpture, would in this generation gradually but fatally degenerate.

For some of the named artists would be the collective exhibitions, organised ever since the 1949 by the SČSVU and subordinated institutions the first opportunity to present themselves within a collective exhibition (not to mention a national scale of these “prestigious shows“ under the auspices of the state). Some of the artists would succeed to participate in the state shows already in the 1949.

For Zdeněk Kovář, pupil of Vincenc Makovský and his later successor at the School of Arts in Zlín, would be the first occasion to present his work at the exhibition *The Czechoslovakian People and its Land in Life, Work and Struggle*, when he was thirty two years old. His *Founders* (Slévači) would present a non- innovative continuity to the social sculpture of the 1920s.⁶⁰⁷ The same applies to Luděk Varvažovský, the pupil of Karel Pokorný, who was at the time only twenty six and who exhibited the model for a *Monument to the Red Army in Zlín* and who would on the other hand venture to employ less conventional composition.⁶⁰⁸

The exhibition *Art Harvest* (Výtvarná úroda) in 1950 already intended to comprehend as many young regime-obliging authors as possible and would therefore include a substantially larger number of perspective young artists, born in 1920s, the representatives of the Socrealism.⁶⁰⁹ This show would become the debut for Arnošt Košík, Zdeněk Kovář, Vladimír Kýn, Sylva Lacinová, Jan Simota, Taťána Schindlerová-Konstantin, Josef Vitvar, or Alexander Trizuljak, Vendelín Zdrůbecký, who would be in

⁶⁰⁷ (CZ) Československý lid a jeho kraj v životě, práci a zápasu: Výstava obrazů a soch z let 1918-49 (Ex. Cat. Jízdárna pražského hradu : Květen-červen 1949). Praha 1949

⁶⁰⁸ For more on the school of Pokorný see: 228

⁶⁰⁹ Výtvarná úroda 1950. Dům výtvarného umění v Praze II. 18. prosinec 1950 - 15. leden 1951. Praha : Svaz československých výtvarných umělců, 1950

average under thirty years of age. The topics and subjects would religiously cling to the official iconography and were dedicated to the Red Army subjects (employing the concept of the heroic sacrifice, comradeship in a meticulously calculated emotional effect), agriculture and manual labour professions.⁶¹⁰

Albeit in some cases would these young sculptors appear at the official exhibitions already in the early 1950s, their most prominent commissions and experienced successes would date comfortably into the verge of the 1950s and 1960s.

The younger generation of sculptors, who would toil to attain the official positions in the late 1950s and early 1960s, is represented especially by Josef Malejovský, pupil of Karel Dvořák at UMPRUM and Konrád Babraj. These artists, together with Jan Simota, Jan Hána and the oldest Karel Lidický and Vincenc Makovský, who were born in 1900, would share among them the most substantial commissions, when the generation of Jan Štursa's pupils would gradually decrease due to the old age.⁶¹¹ They would carry forward what was considered by the regime theoreticians as the most sound local tradition, the realist form, teamed with the socialist component. The perpetuation of the Socrealism, often enriched by the outward and purely superfluous signs of modernity, was secured also by the Armádní výtvarné studio (The Army Art Studio), where a number of inferior sculptors found their ideal occupation.

⁶¹⁰ For a detailed analysis of the exhibited themes see chapter: *Socialist Construction Heroes and Allegories*

⁶¹¹ Jan Hána (1927 - 1994) was a Czech sculptor and Ceramics maker, 1945-1946 studied at a specialised school of Ceramics (Odborná škola keramická v Praze) at prof. V. Vokálek. 1946-1951 AVU at Karel Pokorný. In 1974 received the title Distinguished Artist.

East German Sculptors

The orientation of the sculptural production in the newly established DDR did not deviate from the course, set in the previous two years. Another Anti-fascism monuments would emerge and the new thematics were heavily promoted. The art centres would be greatly improved in the great cities – Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, Halle, would soon consolidate the higher art education, museums and cultural life in general to the pre-war levels.⁶¹²

Fritz Cremer, arguably the most successful sculptor of the first decade of DDR existence, would have his position of a sought-after monumental sculptor already secured by his *Fighter for Freedom* (Freiheitskämpfer, 1947) for the Gedenkraum in the Lager in Auschwitz and *Monument to the Victims of Fascism* (Mahnmal für die Opfer des Faschismus 1934–1945) in the Wiener Friedhof (1948). The first year of the DDR existence, he would acquire another commission of the *Memorial in the Concentration Camp Ebensee* (Mahnmal in KZ Ebensee, 1949) dedicated to the French victims of Fascism, where he employed a simple heart shape on a tall pillar instead of a figure (Das Herz von Mauthausen).⁶¹³ A number of designs for monuments would not be realised, such as the Budapest monument with a figure of a fighter with a lowered automatic rifle, stemming from his Lammert-indebted style, employed already with great success in his *Freiheitskämpfer* (1947).⁶¹⁴ (Fig. 42)

In 1950 would Cremer move over to Potsdam and later to Berlin, following the invitation to the Deutschen Akademie der Kunste in Berlin and offer to lead his own Studio (Meisteratelier). Only year later in 1951 would Cremer participate in a collective exhibition and also an individual exhibition in Galerie Franz, promoting through these

⁶¹² Peter GUTH: Wände der Verheissung. Zur Geschichte der architekturbezogenen Kunst in der DDR, Leipzig 1995

Fritz JAKOBI: Plastik der DDR aus vier Jahrzehnten. Ausgewählte Neuerwerbungen der Nationalgalerie von 1980-1985, in: Forschungen und Berichte, Bd. 26 (1987), 291-304

Fritz JAKOBI: Figur und Gegenstand: Malerei und Plastik in der Kunst der DDR aus der Sammlung der Nationalgalerie; (Ausstellung der Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, 13. August - 29. Oktober 1995 im Ausstellungszentrum Gut Altenkamp). Berlin 1995

⁶¹³ Diether SCHMIDT: Fritz Cremer. Leben. Werke. Schriften. Meinungen. DDR 1972, Abb. 17-24

⁶¹⁴ SCHMIDT 1972, 64

career steps his reputation and distinctiveness as a leading sculptor.⁶¹⁵ The recognition would result in the influx of more commissions, the most consequential being the *Buchenwald-Denkmal*. Cremer would launch his work, lasting many years, in 1952.⁶¹⁶

In 1953 could Cremer add to his achievements the Nationalpreise der DDR of the Second Class in the field of Art and Literature, for his portrait *bust of Franz Franik*.⁶¹⁷ The portrait of an *udarnik*, a German miner, who not only exceeded the work-quotas, but also initiated a movement to fulfil the Jahresplan of 1952, was a clear-cut ideological work. According to the contemporary expert opinion, accompanying the decision to award the prize, the bust follows the best traditions of the German sculpture.⁶¹⁸ This work stands at the beginning of Cremer's explicitly ideological, political commissions.

Walter Arnold, sculptor and woodcarver would have his career unfold to its full potential only after 1949. His inter-war woodcarvings were mostly politically neutral and the majority of his works did not mirror the gruesome war experience such as F. Cremer's did. Arnold, as an aspiring sculptor, necessarily had to contribute to the Anti-fascist monument building. He achieved that aspiration with his *Denkmal für die Opfer des Faschismus in Südfriedhof*, Leipzig (1949).⁶¹⁹ (Fig. 43) In the tense figure of a kneeling youth he would step out of his ordinary, well rounded and smooth form of a human body to depict the starving, skinny body in an agitated, pathetic motion.

⁶¹⁵ Fritz Cremer, Deutsche Akademie der Künste (Ex. Cat.) Berlin 9.2. – 4.3. 1951

⁶¹⁶ For more see chapter: *Buchenwald-Denkmal*

⁶¹⁷ Heinz LÜDECKE: Fritz Cremer: der Weg eines deutschen Bildhauers. Dresden 1956

⁶¹⁸ Träger des Nationalpreises der DDR in der II. Klasse für Kunst und Literatur, in: Neues Deutschland, 7. Oktober 1952, 7

⁶¹⁹ Walter Arnold 1909-1979: Holzbildwerke, Zeichnungen, Graphik : Ausstellung : Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Künste Juli - August 1982, Berlin, Neue Berliner Galerie im Alten Museum Oktober - November 1982. Leipzig : Museum der bildenden Künste, 1982, 7

Walter Arnold (1909 - 1979), was a German sculptor and chairman of the Association of Visual Artists of the GDR. Born as a son of a stonemason from Leipzig. 1928 graduated as a wood and stone sculptor. 1928-1932, Arnold studied sculpture and ceramics at the Leipziger Kunstgewerbeschule under the supervision of Alfred Thiele. In 1946 becomes a teacher at the Academy of Graphic Arts and Leipzig and joined the SED. In 1949 he began to teach at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, where he worked until 1970 as a professor. A member of the German Academy of Arts since 1952. 1954 - 1962 was Arnold a candidate for the central committee of the SED. 1958 - 1961 he was a member of the Central Committee of the SED. 1958 - 1964 he succeeded Otto Nagel as chairman of the Association of Fine Artists. Arnold died in Dresden in 1979.

Selected bibliography: FEIST, Peter H.: Walter Arnold. – Leben und Werk, in: Walter Arnold 1909-1979: Holzbildwerke, Zeichnungen, Graphik : Ausstellung : Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Künste Juli - August 1982, Berlin, Neue Berliner Galerie im Alten Museum Oktober - November 1982. Leipzig : Museum der bildenden Künste, 1982. 6-9

In 1949 would Arnold also transition to Dresden as a Professor at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste, stepping into the new role of a regime-obliging sculptor. His first state distinction for his work, the Nationalpreise der DDR of the Second Class in the field of Art and Literature, he received for a female sculpture: *Die Jugend — Baumeister der Republik* in 1952.⁶²⁰ (Fig. 44) Together with his *Traktoristin* (1953) it would represent the capacity of Arnold to merge what was very close to his artistic nature – the convincingly accurate, yet picturesque female form, with the new subject of the women, working in a manly profession and contributing to the Socialist construction.⁶²¹ The prize he had won testifies to his lucky ability to find a form, corresponding to the taste of decision-makers: the best tradition of the German female figure, rendered in a robust, fresh youthfulness, yet alluding obviously enough to the Soviet Socialist Realism.

Ruthild Hahne, who stood at the establishment of a Hochschule für Angewandte Kunst in Berlin-Weißensee, would in 1952 move from the western part of Berlin to the East and engage actively in both artistic and political activities.⁶²² She would already have her position secured by her portraiture of political personalities and would ever since the establishment of DDR summon sinecures and commissions, the most high-profile of which was related to the design of the *Thälmann's monument*.⁶²³ (Fig. 45) Her intention was, according to her own statements, to capture the Socialist personality and embody in her portraits the agility, progressiveness and psychological profile and charisma of the political leaders and heroes of Socialism.

Gustav Seitz, whose human figure and especially nudes were characteristic with the yearning for timeless quality, represented in the German sculpture the employment of the Archaic Greece forms. His capacity to fuse the modern actualisation of the Classical, reaching from the Bourdellesque facial features to Maillolesque voluminous and stately shapes, with the legacy of the German Avantgarde, makes him one of the original

⁶²⁰ Träger des Nationalpreises der DDR in der II. Klasse für Kunst und Literatur, in: Neues Deutschland, 7. Oktober 1952, 7

⁶²¹ Peter H. FEIST: Walter Arnold. – Leben und Werk, in: Walter Arnold 1909-1979: Holzbildwerke, Zeichnungen, Graphik : Ausstellung : Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Künste Juli - August 1982, Berlin, Neue Berliner Galerie im Alten Museum Oktober - November 1982. Leipzig : Museum der bildenden Künste 1982, 7

⁶²² For more on the political career of R. Hahne in DDR see note: 476

⁶²³ Ruthild Hahne: Plastik; Ernst Jazdzewski: Pressezeichnung: Berlin 1979, Ausstellungspavillon am S-Bahnhof Friedrichstraße. Zentrum für Kunstaussstellungen der DDR. Berlin: Zentrum für Kunstaussstellungen der DDR 1979

personalities of the era. In 1949 he acquired the Nationalpreis der DDR of the Third Class for his *Monument to the Victims of Fascism* (Mahnmal für die Opfer des Faschismus) in Berlin-Weißensee. For receiving the prize and being a member of the Akademie der Künste zu Berlin (Ost), he was suspended from his teaching position at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Berlin-Charlottenburg. Between 1950 and 1958 he would live in the Eastern Part of Berlin, before moving to Hamburg in 1958.⁶²⁴

Waldemar Grzimek would in the early 1950s acquire his first monumental commission – the reliefs for the *Girls' School* (Mädchen Erziehungsheim, 1951-1952) in Dämmeritzsee, a task he would welcome from the perspective of his ambitions, a task that would allow him to present the skill he summoned during his instruction and experience to date.⁶²⁵ (Fig. 46) The below-average rendition of the figures - their stiffness and inflexibility and puppet-like posture – greatly compromise the quality of the relief. The horizontal frieze, situated above the entrance door, remind of Early Christian Sarofagi, as the allegorical figures, rendered in a shallow profile, are neatly organised around the central tree, demonstrating either weak or clumsy interaction. The side panels allowed greater liberty, yet the dynamism, endeavoured by the usage of vertical lines is insufficient, contributing to the unconvincing result of the attempted multi-figural composition.

The sculptors, who proved themselves reliable and loyal to the regime, as well as capable to fulfil the requirements, would both acquire positions in the higher education

⁶²⁴ Gustav Seitz (1906 - 1969), was a German sculptor and draftsman. Born in Mannheim-Neckarau as a son of a master plasterer, who was expected to follow his father's steps. In 1922 embark on an apprenticeship of stonemasonry and sculpture with August Dursy, as well as drawing classes. 1924 – 1925 Studied at the Landeskunstschule Karlsruhe with Georg Schreyögg. In 1925 admitted to the United State Schools for Free and Applied Art in Berlin-Charlottenburg, studied with Ludwig Gies and Fritz Diederich. In 1926 becomes a pupil of Wilhelm Gerstel, in 1933 under Hugo Lederer. In 1946 he was appointed professor for sculpture design at the Technical University in Berlin-Charlottenburg, year later at University of Fine Arts in Berlin-Charlottenburg. In 1946 he joins the Neuen Gruppe. In 1950 has his first individual exhibitions in Mannheim and Bremen. In 1951 leads his own atelier at the Academy of Arts. 1956 in the National Gallery of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (GDR) is opened a cabinet with sculptures by Seitz. 1958 began to teach at College of Fine Arts in Hamburg. 1969 dies in Hamburg. Selected bibliography: SEITZ, Gustav: *Skulpturen und Zeichnungen*. Dresden 1956; Gerhard GERKENS, Ursel GROHN, Anne RÖVER (Eds.): *Gustav Seitz: Skulpturen und Handzeichnungen*. (Ausstellung Kunsthalle Bremen 15.8.-10.10.1976) 1976; KRAUSE, Reinhard / SCHÄLICHE, Bernd (Eds.): *Gustav Seitz Museum : Bestand der plastischen Werke*. Münchenberg 2017. *Gustav Seitz: Skulpturen und Handzeichnungen*. [Katalog bearbeitung Gerhard Gerkens, Ursel Grohn, Anne Röver; Ausstellung Kunsthalle Bremen 15.8.-10.10.1976]. Bremen: Kunsthalle 1976; Verlag der Kunst: *Gustav Seitz: Skulpturen und Zeichnungen*. Dresden 1956

⁶²⁵ Raimund HOFFMANN: *Waldemar Grzimek 1918-1984 Plastik, Zeichnungen, Grafik*. (Ex. Cat. Juni/Juli 1989 Neue Berliner Galerie im Alten Museum) Berlin 1989, 8; *Ausstellung Waldemar Grzimek: Berlin 1952*, 23

and access to high-profile commissions. The central cultural apparatus encouraged the sculptors to adopt the “New thematics“ and awarded effort to deliver the new reality of the “Wiederaufbau“, as was seen in the Nationalpreise der DDR for Fritz Cremer and Walter Arnold, who succeeded in expressing what was clearly perceived the best fusion of the national German traditions and Socialist Realism.

Another method to encourage the adoption of new thematics and Socrealist form, were delegations to the Soviet Union, the alleged “shining example of all arts“.⁶²⁶ The Staatliche Kommission für Kunstangelegenheiten summoned in 1953 as a part of a broader group of artists a delegation of German sculptors, consisting of Fritz Cremer, Ruthild Hahne, Gustav Seitz, had Walter Arnold as a leading representative of German sculpture to attend three weeks study stay in the SSSR.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁶ Václav KOPECKÝ: Zářný příklad sovětského umění, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 5, 1950, 195-198

⁶²⁷ Deutsche bildende Künstler in der Sowjetunion, in: Barch, DR 1/5827

Compare: Jochen STAADT: "Die Eroberung der Kultur beginnt!": die Staatliche Kommission für Kunstangelegenheiten der DDR (1951-1953) und die Kulturpolitik der SED. Berlin 2011, 114

Sculptors in the Organisational Structures

The assignment of influential positions in the cultural sphere followed in Czechoslovakia and East Germany the same obvious pattern – the agreeability of a candidate was determined not so much by his artistic skill as by his political suitability, party mindedness and loyalty. A number of sculptors acquired influential positions within the cultural institution's hierarchy. The Czechoslovakian circumstances are demonstrated on Karel Pokorný and Václav Jícha, the East German parallel is endeavoured on the examples of Fritz Cremer and Walter Arnold.

From the newly established organisational structure of the SČSVU, which reflected the changes in the overall organisation in the culture of the post-February era, two sculptors raised to political prominence by engaging in the highest places of the SČSVU – Václav Jícha, as the union's secretary (1949-1952) and Karel Pokorný as the president of SČSVU (1949-1950) and (1952-1956), who also occupied position of the rector of the Academy of Fine Arts. In the later years of the organisation Josef Malejovský had risen to the position president of the SČSVU 1959-1964.

In DDR Fritz Cremer became the secretary of the Sektion Bildende Kunst of the Akademie der Künste (1954-1955 and 1961-1962) and a vice-president of the institution. (1974-1983). Walter Arnold would accumulate a number of sinecures and offices, among them the membership of the Akademie der Künste (1952). He also became a Candidate for the Central Committee of The Party (1952-1962) and its member he was for three years (1958-1961). As an influential public persona he also was chosen the president of the VBA (1957-1964).

Karel Pokorný

Karel Pokorný (1891 - 1962),⁶²⁸ was the rector of the Academy of Fine Arts, one of the most renowned representatives of the Realism in sculpture and highly valued artist.⁶²⁹ In 1949 was Pokorný named into the position of the president of SČSVU, following the resignation of the former, pre-February leadership.⁶³⁰ His qualities that determined him to acquire this position were mirrored both in his generally recognised merits as a dignified representative of the conservative tradition of Realism, and also in his agreeable “cadre profile”.⁶³¹

Pokorný remained in the position of the president of SČSVU until 1949 when he was replaced by architect Karel Stráník. After the cleanses connected to the Rudolf Slánský's case he was reinstated and remained in the position until 1956. As a president, he commented on current exhibitions in *Výtvarná práce* Magazine, presided over commissions and familiarised the public with the conclusions of the key administrative and organisational issues in SČSVU.⁶³² In 1955 he promoted the transition of the SČSVU into the selective organisation. On the pages of *Výtvarná práce* explained the advantages of these changes and emphasised the necessity to follow the artistic method of Socialist Realism.⁶³³

⁶²⁸ Jiří HLUŠIČKA: Karel Pokorný: Sochy, Kresby: Katalog výstavy, Brno Duben-Srpen. Brno 1985; KOTALÍK, Jiří: Karel Pokorný a jeho škola. Praha 1983; Vladimír NOVOTNÝ: Karel Pokorný. Praha 1956

⁶²⁹ This chapter is dedicated to the political engagement of Karel Pokorný, his artistic career is explored in *Part II. Sculpture of Socrealism in the Mirror of Cultural Politics and Art Theory*

⁶³⁰ NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, neinv. Zápis o schůzi výboru SČSVU, 8. července 1949 The circumstances of the resignation of the former leadership had been a lucky coincidence for the KSČ and its intention to capture as much power over it – the accountant of the SČSVU committed suicide and following audit revealed missappropriation of a significant sum of money. A detailed account of this is accessible in: NA, f. Ministerstvo informací, 1949, inv. č. 27, odd. B/2

⁶³¹ Jiří MAŠÍN: Karel Pokorný, souborná výstava sochařského díla k umělcovým sedmdesátinám : květen – červen 1961. Praha: Svaz československých výtvarných umělců, 1961

⁶³² For example: Karel POKORNÝ: Výběrový svaz je nová cesta československého výtvarného umění. In: *Výtvarná práce* 23 roč. 1955

⁶³³ For more on this see chapter *Post-War Cultural Politics*

Václav Jícha

Václav Jícha (1903 - ?), born in Malíkovice, attended the sculptural–stone mason school in Hořice and 1928–1934 studied at UPS as a pupil of prof. Josef Mařatka.⁶³⁴ Unlike Karel Pokorný, Václav Jícha did not acquire throughout his life a particularly prominent position as a sculptor. His career evolved more around the politics of the Central Committee of KSČ. During the years in function he very keenly promoted the goals of the Party.

Jícha was originally a leader of an Artistic sub-commission of the Department of Culture and Propagation of the ÚV KSČ until 1949, when he was installed in the position of the SČSVU secretary. His translation to the leadership of the union was in the best interest of the said Department, currently under the leadership of the influential Gustav Bareš.⁶³⁵ A tighter bond between the SČSVU and KSČ, forged by Jícha, contributed to the desired interconnectedness, required by the centralist model of the Communist cultural politics.⁶³⁶ Jícha's primary task was to promote vigilant observation of the Party's ideological requirements in the very heart of the organisation. By the members of the SČSVU he was therefore righteously perceived as the connecting link with the Party. He allegedly often claimed to consult with the Party the decisions taking place in the SČSVU and his decisions were therefore not often contradicted – the statement of the Party was after all of the highest consequence.⁶³⁷

As a Secretary of the SČSVU, Jícha organised steering committees of the Council and was involved in the internal processes such as the revision of the membership base of the

⁶³⁴ Prokop TOMAN: Nový slovník československých výtvarných umělců I., A – K. Praha 2000; Jiří KNAPÍK: Kdo byl kdo v naší kulturní politice 1948-1953 : biografický slovník stranických a svazových funkcionářů, státní administrativy, divadelních a filmových pracovníků, redaktorů. Praha 2002

⁶³⁵ Gustav Bareš (1910-1979), the leader of the Department of Culture and Propagation of the ÚV KSČ and one of the most influential Party ideologues of the early phase. He was removed from the position together with his loyal co-workers in 1952 political cleanses. His career is described in: Jiří KNAPÍK: Kdo spoutal naši kulturu : portrét stalinisty Gustava Bareše. Přerov 2002

⁶³⁶ Václav Jícha was a former leading figure of the Artistic Sub-Commission, subordinated to the Department of Culture and Propagation of the ÚV KSČ, NA f. Ministerstvo informací, kart. 14, inv. Č. 27; f. ÚSČSVU; SÚA, A ÚV KSČ, f. 19/7, a.j. 557, 559. For more on his engagement in the official structures see chapter *Václav Jícha*

⁶³⁷ Vojtěch PAVLÁSEK: The Speech of Under-Secretary to the Minister of Culture at the Nationwide Conference of the SČSVU in: KÁRA, Lubor (ed.): II. Celostátní konference Svazu československých výtvarných umělců. Praha 1952

Union or publishing of mandatory directives. His steering role in committees and frequent engagement with the practical questions of the union's agenda, is evident from numerous records of the administrative of the SČSVU leadership in the time-frame of his tenure. His clearly set ideological perspective and vigilantly observed directives, draw picture of Jícha as the most agile helper of the Party. Regardless of his personal motivation, his ability to absorb and interpret religiously the ideological reasoning, was undoubtedly appreciated by the Central Committee.

One of his roles, substantial in the early years of the existence of SČSVU was that of an editor in chief. Magazines, published regularly to the benefit of the Union members and the general public, were established mainly in order to familiarise them with the requirements and obligations of artists to the Socialist society with regard to fine arts.⁶³⁸ The Magazine *Výtvarné umění* published since 1950, took charge of the laudation of the “national classical artists”, extollation of the “realist tradition” and in unmistakable terms specified, what characteristics the „true art“ according to the Communist ideology ought to have. Contributions by Z. Nejedlý, V. Kopecký, L. Štoll, V. Jícha, J. Rybák and L. Kára, dealt with the most widespread problems of the current situation. They addressed the nature of artistic production, the role of artists in society, provisions for artists, engagement of the working-class public in the enjoyment and assessment of art, the problem of Formalism and Idealism, alleged desinterpretation of the true nature of new art by the bourgeois generation of artists and inability of the aforesaid to grasp fully and wholeheartedly the new thematics.⁶³⁹

Jícha plunged into the task to spread the Socialist Realism among the professional public with industrious agility. In the 1950 he provided the *Výtvarné umění* with several articles, addressing various art related subjects. As proven by his appearance of his name in daily papers, he felt entitled to assess all ideological aspects of the artists' work. He tirelessly pushed through the dogmatics of the Party as a member of commissions,

⁶³⁸ NA, f. SČSVU, kart. 1, nein.

⁶³⁹ Lubor KÁRA: K otázce úkolové práce v podmínkách lidov demokracie, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 2, 1950, 12-15; Vladimír ŠOLTA: K některým otázkám socialistického realismu ve výtvarném umění, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 2, 1950, 108-132; Václav KOPECKÝ: Zářný příklad sovětského umění, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 5, 1950, 195-198; Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: O nové výtvarnictví, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 6, 1950, 241-251; etc.

judging works of art from the partisan perspective.⁶⁴⁰

Aside from these generally hollow and inconsequential reiterations of the basic ideological constructions and obligatory formulations, Jícha addressed also a sphere to which he was - as a secretary of the SČSVU - closer than others of his co-editors. It was the question of the economic provisions for artists – a substantially important subject of a great consequence for all artists. The handling of the problem witnesses Jícha's obvious ability to deal with the practical questions of the transition to the new organisational structure of the artistic life. His capacity to perceive the situation from the perspective of an active artist as well as a Party proponent, is presumably caused by him experiencing both positions. He touched the troublesome question of the provisions for artists and their distribution, addressed pensions for elderly artists and did not forget to elaborate on insurance and recreation questions.⁶⁴¹

The position of V. Jícha in the organisation and the trajectory of his political career in the two last years in the position of the secretary, is uniquely documented in the materials printed on the occasion of the 2nd Nationwide Congress of SČSVU in 1952.⁶⁴² The published anthology, accompanying the event, witness both a development in the cultural sphere as such, as well as a modification in the approach of the One Party to the SČSVU and its proponents. The complicated political situation of 1951 resulted in an elevated effort to put the blame for the dreary economical and agricultural situation on the “inner enemy”. This effort translated into the orchestration of political processes, peaking with the imprisonment of Rudolf Slánský in 1951 and his execution only a year later. The concept of the inner enemy was skilfully used by many to get rid of the inconvenient competitors in the power structure. This was the case with V. Jícha and his co-workers in the forefront of the SČSVU.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴⁰ For example: Lidové noviny, roč. 1951, 1.11.1951; Lidové noviny, roč. 1951, 12.7.1951

⁶⁴¹ Václav JÍCHA: Hospodářské zabezpečení tvůrčí práce (Podle referátu na I. celostátní konferenci), in: Výtvarné umění, 1, 5, 1950/10, 214-220

⁶⁴² Lubor KÁRA (ed.): II. Celostátní konference Svazu československých výtvarných umělců. Praha 1952

⁶⁴³ For more on the process with Slánský see (CZ): Karel KAPLAN: Zpráva o zavraždění generálního tajemníka, Praha 1992; Zakázaný dokument, Zpráva komise ÚV KSČ o politických procesech a rehabilitacích v Československu 1949-68, Europa-Verlag Wien, 1970; (EN) Veronika HALAMOVÁ: Political Processes in Czechoslovakia 1949-1953: an instrument of legitimation of the communist regime. Lublin 2013

A valuable insight into the problematics is provided by the secretary of the Minister of Education, Science and Arts, Vojtěch Pavlásek in his speech at 2nd Nationwide Congress of SČSVU.⁶⁴⁴ Pavlásek does not hesitate to ascribe the most far-fetched crimes to the Slánský's Clique. He blames Slánský for all the failures of KSČ in their efforts to take control over the cultural sphere. He accuses the Slánský's Clique of undermining of the cultural sphere and makes use of the figure of Slánský as a scapegoat, which comes handy to get rid of the uncomfortable aspects of the cultural politics under the KSČ in the recent years:

*"...recognising the importance of the cultural sphere as a tool of Socialism, (the Clique) endeavoured to weaken it. Their wrecking methods were intended to disrupt our cultural front, annoy and discourage art workers, to make them develop an aversion towards the KSČ and drive them into the unwilling opposition to the Party and Governement."*⁶⁴⁵

Pavlásek in accordance with the "witch-hunt" atmosphere of the early 1950's, seeks and finds the saboteur also directly in the rows of the SČSVU leadership in the personality of V. Jícha.

In an eloquent and descriptive detail he accuses Jícha from the effort to undermine the honest efforts of artists and other members of SČSVU in their sincere efforts to grasp the new theme. He was supposed to be doing that by serving the "second centre" of Slánský's "sectarians, chatterers and talmudists". In Pavlásek's speech is Jícha subjected to scorching criticism with a detailed account of his alleged misdeeds. He is readily held responsible for all those frustrating phenomena, which were typical for the first years of the existence of SČSVU: insufficient flourishing of the Socialist Realism (supposedly suppressed by Jícha's misplaced agility and doctrinaire rigidity, grounded in his misunderstanding of the key principles), favouritism (according to Pavlásek, Jícha

⁶⁴⁴

PAVLÁSEK

1952,

9-10

Vojtěch Pavlásek (1895 – 1977), teacher by profession, was a communist politician and member of the Parliament after the war. In 1952 he became the secretary of the Minister of Education, Science and Arts. He received many state honours for his political reliability. For more see: Zasloužilý školský pracovník. Rudé právo. listopad 1977, roč. 58, čís. 258, 3.

A record in the website of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic <http://www.psp.cz/sqw/detail.sqw?org=287&id=3148>

⁶⁴⁵ PAVLÁSEK 1952, 9-10

provided generous space to his co-workers, such as Vladimír Šolta and Jiří Bursík, who were in the editorial board of the magazine *Výtvarné umění* and who were not up to the task.⁶⁴⁶ As is noted, together both Lubor Kára and V. Šolta were often named into various commissions and Jícha through them executed his power and influence),⁶⁴⁷ shallow understanding of the Marxism-Leninism doctrine, smothering of the rich Czechoslovakian art life, dogmatism and simplification of the doctrine of Socialist Realism.⁶⁴⁸

Fritz Cremer

Fritz Cremer (1906-1993), is considered a key figure of the DDR art and cultural politics.⁶⁴⁹ Aside from an active career as a sculptor, he occupied position of the secretary of the Sektion Bildende Kunst of the Akademie der Künste (1954-1955 and 1961-1962). Later on he served as a vice-president of the institution. (1974-1983). His public engagement span for almost thirty years.⁶⁵⁰ Due to his tireless involvement in the cultural life of DDR he developed a position of a renowned personality, whose legacy in the form of numerous documents is a priceless source to be examined in the effort to understand the sculptors' place in the cultural machinery of DDR.⁶⁵¹

Cremer's contribution, most relevant to this research, lays in his public speeches, through which he promoted his often controversial and progressive opinions. Since the

⁶⁴⁶ *Vladimír Šolta* (1924-1977) was a Czechoslovakian painter, pupil of Emil Filla, who was actively engaged in promotion of Socialist Realism through daily press and professional magazines. The same applies to *Jiří Bursík* (1927-1966), who was a painter and editor.

⁶⁴⁷ *Lubor Kára* (1927-1994), Art historian, author of monographical works on artists (esp. Magyar and Slovakian) and editor in chief of many official art related anthologies, articles, exhibition catalogues and art contests. 1949-1948 Editor of *Rudé právo*, since 1950 member of the Editorial Board of the magazine *Výtvarné umění*, 1952 member of the Central Commission of the ÚSČSVU, see: SÚA, f. Ministerstvo informací, kart. 86, č. 343

⁶⁴⁸ PAVLÁSEK 1952, 9-10

⁶⁴⁹ Matthias BRAUN: *Kulturinsel und Machtinstrument: die Akademie der Künste, die Partei und die Staatssicherheit*, Göttingen 2007, 138

This chapter is dedicated to the political career of F. Cremer, for an analysis of his artistic biography details see note: 471

⁶⁵⁰ BRAUN 1952, 137

⁶⁵¹ Fritz CREMER: *Nur Wortgefechte? Aus Schriften, Reden, Briefen, Interviews 1949–1989. Ausgewählt und kommentiert von Maria Rüger*, Berlin 2004

1949 he has sought to find a specific German way of Socialism reflection in the arts, communicating his observations on Socialist Realism as well as modern art, the role of the artist, Soviet Vorbild and many other subjects. His reflections stood at the base of changes in art politics, as he often foreshadowed the future development. As every professional union member, Cremer was forced by the nature of the culture organisation structure to take part in the evolvement of his professional union.

It is to be claimed that Fritz Cremer was no Stalinist and albeit he was a KPD and consequently SED member, his letters and concepts disclose that he genuinely sought a way for art to become a part of societal life and how to acquire broader understanding of the people. He wished to promote contentual art in opposition to avantgardist experiments, which to him were too far remoted from the reality of life and nature, did not connect well with people. However, this statement was not in opposition to his more controversial stance on the freedom of artist, with regards to the form. In the 1960s Cremer ventured to promote greater artistic freedom by noting famously Michelangelo's notion about the necessity to retain the freedom of the artist to choose his own style.

Being in influential position for more than two decades, Cremers' official statements, speeches and publicly presented opinions witness shifts in politics as well as the changes in the arts conception.⁶⁵² His artistic and personal expression was closely bound to the anti-fascist movement. The principle of the fight against fascistic tendencies and oppression was always present in his worldview. His monuments that made him famous internationally were dedicated to the victims of the Nazis and as a convinced nazism-fighter and pre-war member of the KPD, whose art was a political and idealist manifesto, he wished his works to evoke unease and induce thought and contemplation.⁶⁵³

What Cremer strove to achieve in his profession mirrored also in his proclamations and publicly presented opinions. Through his numerous speeches, letters and interviews he

⁶⁵² Fritz Cremer, in: Eugen BLUME / Roland MÄRZ: Kunst in der DDR, Eine Retrospektive der Nationalgalerie. Berlin 2003, 303

⁶⁵³ For more on Cremer as a sculptor see Part II. Sculpture of Socrealism in the Mirror of Cultural Politics and Art Theory

Compare to: Peter H. FEIST: Hauptstraßen und eigene Wege: RückSČchau eines Kunsthistorikers, 2016, 89-90

commented on current development with characteristic spontaneity.⁶⁵⁴ Cremers' statements and comments on the current events can be understood as a testimony to the ambiguity of artists' approach towards the pressure, originating from the Party Apparatus and his effort to recreate his artistic opinion, so as to satisfy his own conscience and justify his decisions as well as preserve the privilege, stemming from the conformist behaviour. Whereas his inner orientation was that of a Humanist and Socialist, he inwardly suffered from the schematism and life-devoid forms of the Socialist Realism, often risking his career with his critical comments. His attitude and courage, expressed in his writings and interviews are shifting with the concurrent political and cultural situation, it is therefore crucial to assess the statements against the background of these actual events.

Cremers' first comprehensive article, introducing his humanist and socialist opinions is to be found in *Österreichisches Tagebuch* in 1949, published in Vienna, where he reckons with the Avantgarde and "Modern Art Currents" and presents his stance on the nature of arts, which was to last for the large portion of the 1950s. His apprehension and mistrust of what he considers to be "Modern," devoid of reality, mystical, negativist and existentialist, he dismisses especially with the reference to the indifference of the Avantgardist to reality and lack of his effort to connect with people and make himself useful to them.⁶⁵⁵

In an attempt to draw parallel between Fritz Cremer and Václav Jícha, who were both very active in the presentation of their professional opinions in speeches and magazine articles, it is crucial to acknowledge several differences. Václav Jícha was a sculptor of obscure past and was not very successful in his profession, whereas Fritz Cremer is considered to be one of the most distinguished artists of DDR. Václav Jícha could not undergo any noteworthy ideological development, as his engagement as a secretary of SČSVU was ended in 1952, whereas Fitz Cremer was in a position of a secretary of the Sektion Bildende Kunst of the Akademie der Künste in 1954-1955 and 1961-1962,

⁶⁵⁴ Maria RÜGER: Fritz Cremer: Nur Wortgefechte? Aus Schriften, Reden, Briefen, Interviews 1949–1989, Berlin 2004

⁶⁵⁵ Fritz CREMER: Welche Kunst ist „modern“?, in: Österreichisches Tagebuch in 1949. Reprinted in: Maria Rüter: Fritz Cremer: Nur Wortgefechte? Aus Schriften, Reden, Briefen, Interviews 1949–1989, Berlin 2004

therefore could follow the general changes in both politics and ideology in his declarations and that could cause his formulations to sound more progressive. In comparison to the ideological activity of Václav Jícha, who also contributed significantly to the formation of the politics with regards to art and sculpture and moulded public opinion through articles and speeches.

1953 – 1956

New Course in Art Politics

In Czechoslovakia the post-February development resulted in 1951 in dreary economical and agricultural situation. The political leadership exerted elevated effort to put the blame for the dire situation on the inner enemy, a strategy well proven in the SSSR and exported into the satellite countries.⁶⁵⁶ That resulted in the orchestration of a theatrical political process with the General Secretary of the KSČ Rudolf Slánský and his subsequent execution in 1952.⁶⁵⁷ Very similarly, although without the death sentences, dealt the one Party with the inconvenient politicians in East Germany, when it filed accusations against several of the members of the government, including Minister of Justice, resulting in their arrest.⁶⁵⁸

The year 1952 was marked by the endeavour of the SČSVU leadership to make use of the Slánský's case to wash off the blame for the ill decisions and failures in the leadership of the union, in accordance with the general atmosphere and tendency in the society - with its tireless effort to search for the inner enemy.⁶⁵⁹ Some agile members of the SČSVU endeavoured this by blaming the alleged "Slánský's clique" who supposedly infiltrated the leadership of the union, for all the failures and mistakes of the previous years. The secretary of the union, Václav Jícha, was to become the scapegoat. The reform of both the organisational structure as well as the directives for artists were formulated and

⁶⁵⁶ Veronika HALAMOŤ: Political Processes in Czechoslovakia 1949-1953: an instrument of legitimization of the communist regime, Lublin 2014, 17nn

⁶⁵⁷ Rudolf Slánský (1901-1952), was a Czechoslovakian Communist politician and close peer of the Klement Gottwald, general secretary of the KSČ (1945-1951), executed in consequence of an orchestrated process in 1952.

For more on the process with Slánský see: Karel KAPLAN: Zpráva o zavraždění generálního tajemníka, Praha 1992; Zakázaný dokument, Zpráva komise ÚV KSČ o politických procesech a rehabilitacích v Československu 1949-68, Wien 1970

⁶⁵⁸ See: Matthias JAROCH / Mechthild LINDEMANN: Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1953. Institut für Zeitgeschichte, Berlin 2001, 726

⁶⁵⁹ Jiří PERNES: Krize komunistického režimu v Československu v 50. letech 20. století, Brno 2008, 37–40 The complex socio-political situation is analysed in following publications: Karel KAPLAN: Proměny české společnosti (1948–1960). Část první. ÚSD AV ČR, Praha 2007, 270

presented at the 2nd Nationwide Congress of SČSVU, which took place in 1952.⁶⁶⁰

The secretary of the Minister of Education, Science and Arts, Vojtěch Pavlásek in his speech at the Congress, ascribed the most serious crimes to the “Slánský's Clique”.⁶⁶¹ By his eloquent account of their alleged misdeeds, he provided a detailed list of the most sore problems the SČSVU faced at the time. In his speech he mobilised the SČSVU to “fight against cosmopolitanism and disintegrative influence of the inner enemies.” Pavlásek conceded that art production of recent years was not yielding the results, expected of the new Socialist society. The “Slánský's clique” and V. Jícha in the position of general secretary were readily blamed for this state and new ways were sought to make amends. Subsequently Václav Jícha was forced to give up his position as the secretary of the SČSVU.⁶⁶²

With regards to the changes in the rules for the artistic work, officials called for openness, wide debate and more liveliness in art, less schematism and more of the vivid colours of true life. In the part on the ideological tasks of the Central Union (ÚSČVU) Pavlásek summarised the most critical aspects of the transformed approach of the ÚSČSVU, which was to approximate it again to the conclusions of the IX. Convention of the KSČ in 1949, where Václav Kopecký for the first time defined the doctrine of Socialist Realism.⁶⁶³

Pavlásek expressed contentment regarding the decrease of the Formalist tendencies and declared war to the cosmopolitanism, naturalism and vulgarisation, dogmatism, schematism, doctrinairism and all forms of the so called “l'art pour l'artism”. As to the

⁶⁶⁰ NA, f. SČSVU

Lubor KÁRA (ed.): II. Celostátní konference Svazu československých výtvarných umělců. Praha 1952

⁶⁶¹ PAVLÁSEK 1952, 9-10

Vojtěch Pavlásek (1895 – 1977), teacher by profession, was a Czechoslovakian communist politician and member of the Parliament after the war. In 1952 he became the secretary of the Minister of Education, Science and Arts. He received many state honours for his political reliability. For more see: *Zasloužilý školský pracovník*. *Rudé právo*. listopad 1977, roč. 58, čís. 258, 3

A record on the website of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic <http://www.psp.cz/sqw/detail.sqw?org=287&id=3148>

⁶⁶² For more on this see chapter *Václav Jícha*

⁶⁶³ The IX. Convention of the KSČ took place on 35 – 29 May 1949.

For more on the Convention see: NA, f. Archiv ÚV KSČ, Předsednictvo ÚV KSČ 1945–1954

implications to method of Socialist Realism, he criticised efforts of the previous leadership of the union to restrict artists' in their creativity, which allegedly led to distortion, narrowing and curtailing of the artist's freedom. Pavlásek called for more "poetry" to the arts and opened doors to some previously shunned artists, such as Adolf Zábanský, Václav Rabas or to the work of the late Antonín Slavíček.⁶⁶⁴

It is essential to mention this turning point, where the leadership of the cultural sphere attempted to survive the witch-hunt for the inner enemy without suffering any diminution of their own power.⁶⁶⁵ By ostentatiously calling for the return to the origins of the Socialist Realism, they created a formula, used ever since to give an impression of an implacable fight against dogmatism. It is to be noted that the art production had been less influenced by these theatrical declamations than would be expected, considering the ferocity of the campaign.

The Soviet economic policy called The New Course, established in the SSSR after Stalin's death in 1953, aiming to improve living standard of the people and address the most pressing problems of the Communist economy, was obligatory also for Czechoslovakia, East Germany and other satellite countries, as these were also struck by many problems of the transition to collectivism and centralism.⁶⁶⁶ The adoption of the plan, mandatory for the governments of ČSR and DDR, had far reaching consequences for the political and

⁶⁶⁴ *Adolf Zábanský* (1909-1981) was a Czechoslovakian painter and illustrator. After the 1948 he became one of the most acclaimed authors of the monumental painting of Socialist Realism. For more on the author see: Marie ZÁBRANSKÁ / Marie VACHUDOVOVÁ: *Adolf Zábanský. Knižní ilustrace, plakáty, novinové kresby: Katalog výstavy, Cheb květen-červenec 1985: Galerie výtvarného umění, 1985;*

Václav Rabas (1885-1954) a Czechoslovakian painter, member of the SVU Mánes group, founding member of the Hollar Group of painters and graphics. One of the first bearers of the National Artist title. For more on the author see: Jiří KOTALÍK: *Národní umělec Václav Rabas, Ostrava 1968*

Antonín Slavíček (1870-1910), one of the most acclaimed painters of the realist tradition, who was also in his later works influenced also by Impressionism.

For an anthology of modern studies see: PRAHL, Roman (et al.) *Antonín Slavíček 1870-1910 Praha 2004*; For an account with ideological distortion, corresponding to the tendency to consider Slavíček as one of the Socrealism forbearers see: Jan TOMEŠ: *Malíř Jan Slavíček, in: Výtvarné umění, 1954, IV. roč, 161*

⁶⁶⁵ *Projev náměstka předsedy vlády Zdeňka Fierlingera, in: KÁRA, Lubor (ed.): II. Celostátní konference Svazu československých výtvarných umělců. Praha 1952, 7ff; Resoluce z druhé části II. Celostátní konference Svazu čs. výtvarných umělců, in: KÁRA, Lubor (ed.): II. Celostátní konference Svazu československých výtvarných umělců. Praha 1952, 88ff*

⁶⁶⁶ The New Course received attention of researchers both in BRD and CR.

For more on Soviet politics in the followed period see (CZ): VEBER, Václav: *Komunistický experiment v Rusku 1917-1991. Praha 2001*; (EN) John PAXTON: *Encyclopedia of Russian history: From the Christianization of Kiev to the break-up of the U.S.S.R. Santa Barbara, 1993.*

also the cultural sphere.

In an effort to appease the professional public, increasingly critical in the daily press and magazines,⁶⁶⁷ the central government endeavoured to calm the volatile situation – escalated even more by the strike of peasants at Stalinsalle in Berlin – by presenting new cultural politics at the 15th Tagung des Zentral Commission.⁶⁶⁸ The practical effect of the new rhetorics was presented through the Akademie der Künste and advice mediated by the Kulturbund.⁶⁶⁹ The leadership retained its goal to modify the administration of artistic creativity and also the thematical orientation, it would, however, abstain from interfering into the responsibility of every single artist to deliver work of art. Artists were, ultimately supposed to work in harmony with the needs of the People. The often controversial decisions of the Kommission für Kunstangelegenheiten were deprecated.⁶⁷⁰ Walter Ulbricht in a speech at the 15th Tagung des Zentral Commission blamed the revolt of the Intelligentsia on the subversive influence of western agents and praised those artists, who both remained loyal to the political course and also welcomed the upcoming changes in the form of the New Course.⁶⁷¹

The prime minister Otto Grotewohl promised broad discussion in the cultural and artistic sphere together with greater tolerance and equanimity of the central institutions in relation to artists, which were from thence to employ less forbidding and more of an argumentative style of persuasion.⁶⁷² Also the statement of Tom Beyer at the leadership gathering of the VBKD on 7 – 8 August 1953 presented the core tenets of the New Course. He highlighted the personal responsibility of the artist and emphasized the elevation of the creative freedom.⁶⁷³ Nevertheless, in the effect the position of the SED

⁶⁶⁷ NIEDHOFER 1996, 145-146

⁶⁶⁸ Otto GROTEWOHL: Die gegenwärtige Lage un der neue Kurs der Partei. Referat auf der 15. Tagung des ZK der SED vom 24. Bis 26. Juni 1953, in: Der neue Kurs und die Aufgaben der Partei. 15. Tagung des ZK der SED vom 24. bis 26. Juni 1953. EntschlieÙung. Referate der Genossen Otto Grotewohl und Walter Ulbricht, Berlin 1953

⁶⁶⁹ Alexander ABUSCH: Die Vorschläge des Kulturbundes und die Akademie – und einige Fragen unsere Kulturpolitik, in: Sonntag 23. 8. 1953

⁶⁷⁰ Martin DAMUS: Malerei der DDR: Funktionen der bildenden Kunst im Realen Sozialismus. Reinbek bei Hamburg : Rowohlt, 1991, 128ff

⁶⁷¹ Walter ULBRICHT: Rede auf der 15. Tagung des ZK der SED, Juli 1953, in: Berliner Zeitung , 3. 7. 1953,

⁶⁷² GROTEWOHL 1953, compare to: SCHUBBE 1984, 86, 289

⁶⁷³ Tom Beyer (1907-1981): Was an East German painter, member of the KPD and SED, regime-compliant artist with number of exhibitions in DDR. From 1950 regional chairman of the VBK. Professor at the Kunsthochschule

remained unaltered, as its position as the cultural-educational leader was not disputed.⁶⁷⁴

In Czechoslovakia the New Course met with a distinct unwillingness of the Party officials, who were disinclined to follow the compulsory changes (often related to unwelcome turbulences in the power structure and distribution). Unlike in the SSSR, the forced, yet self-imposed changes were following closely the process with the “inner enemy,” Slánský.⁶⁷⁵ It caused great discomfort to the Party leadership, who were supposed to revise well established Gottwaldian political line.⁶⁷⁶

As Jiří Knapík noted, the political representation made use of the Slánský's case to prepare some programme of changes in both economical and subsequently cultural politics.⁶⁷⁷ The five years since the 1948 proved that the public was not inclined to follow utopian ideas of the leadership regarding the artistic taste and preferences of entertainment in socialist society. The gradual cessation of popular interest in theatres, cinemas and social events (resulting from a rather unimpressive offer of plays and films with propagandist contents), was sorely felt by the leadership and had to be corrected. The New Course was a pretext to employ the necessary measures in the field of culture in a situation when the Moscow enforced the New Course strategy anyway. Aside from rehabilitation of some artists as well as the role of Intelligentsia in society, backup of the renewed interest in popular entertainment.⁶⁷⁸

The theses of the new political course, presented to the public for the first time in August, were with a several months delay translated also in the cultural sphere. In the internal meeting of the officials and heads of departments of the Central Committee of the KSČ,

Berlin-Weißensee.

VBKD (Ed.): Neuer Kurs und die Bildenden Künstler, Beiträge aus den Protokollen der außerordentlichen Vorstandssitzungen am 7. Und 8. August 1953 und 14. November 1953, Dresden 1953, 19

VBKD (Ed.): Arbeitsplan des VBKD für das Jahr 1953, in: Der Bildende Künstler, No. ½ February, 13-17

⁶⁷⁴ DAMUS 1991, 131

⁶⁷⁵ For more on the Soviet New Course politics see chapter *New Course in Art Politics*

⁶⁷⁶ For more on the development in Czechoslovakia with regards to the New Course see: Karel KAPLAN: *Kronika komunistického Československa. Doba tání 1953-1956*. Brno 2005

⁶⁷⁷ KNAPÍK 2006, 232

⁶⁷⁸ Ibidem, 232

there was a clear agreement (quite in harmony with the general reluctance of the leadership to promote substantial changes) that the New Course ought not to be understood as an attenuation of the ideological pressure.⁶⁷⁹ On the contrary – it was to be perceived as an opportunity to improve its workings, the chance to achieve profounder persuasiveness and less rigidity.⁶⁸⁰

The new Secretary of the ÚV KSČ Antonín Novotný in his speech at the occasion of the V. Meeting of the ÚV KSČ in December 1953 emphasised the general lines of the approaching changes.⁶⁸¹ In his summary he presented the need to fight schematism and stodginess, superfluousness and dullness in the artistic production. He also noted that SČSVU ought to serve more as an elite point for ideologically and professionally apt artists, rather than as an umbrella organisation for all active artists in Czechoslovakia.⁶⁸² This notion was in accordance with supposed waste of money on unworthy art and artists. Karel Pokorný as a President of SČSVU on the pages of *Výtvarná práce* Magazine brought together positive arguments for the upcoming reorganisation.⁶⁸³

The New Course had implications for Socialist Realism as well as for the cultural politics.⁶⁸⁴ Antonín Novotný in his speech at the occasion of the V. Meeting of the ÚV KSČ in December 1953 presented the need to fight schematism and stodginess, superfluousness and dullness in the artistic production. Václav Kopecký on the occasion of the V. Meeting held a speech where he elaborated on the Novotný's ideas.⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁷⁹ KNAPÍK 2006, 225

⁶⁸⁰ NA, A ÚV KSČ, f 19/7, a. j. 15

⁶⁸¹ NA, A ÚV KSČ, f. 01, sv. 22, a.j. 35

Antonín Novotný (1904-1975) A Czechoslovakian Communist politician, 1953-1968 the first Secretary of the Central Committee of the KSČ, 1957-1968 the third Communist President of the Czechoslovakia.

For more on the situation after Stalin's and Gottwald's deaths see: Jindřich MADRY: *Entscheidungsfindung in der Tschechoslowakei nach Stalins Tod*, in: Jan FOITZIK (ed.): *Entstalinisierungskrise in Ostmitteleuropa 1953–1956. Vom 17. Juni bis zum ungarischen Volksaufstand. Politische, militärische und nationale Dimensionen*. Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn 2001

⁶⁸² NA, A ÚV KSČ, f. 01, sv. 22, a.j. 35

⁶⁸³ Karel POKORNÝ: *Výběrový svaz je nová cesta československého výtvarného umění*, in: *Výtvarná práce* 23 roč. 1955

⁶⁸⁴ Compare to: Otto GROTEWOHL: *Fragen der Kultur und Kunst im Neuen Kurs*, in: VBKD (Ed.): *Neuer Kurs und die Bildenden Künstler*, Dresden 1953, 10

⁶⁸⁵ Václav Kopecký also made use of the Slánský's process by emphasizing his alledged crimes. This constituted part of the speech and is symptomatic for the contemporary atmosphere. NA, A ÚV KSČ, f. 02/5, sv. 61, a.j. 166

In relation to SČSVU Kopecký developed Novotný's statement and recommended to the artistic unions to eschew the schematism, which he defined as

*“art devoid of life, constructed scheme, to which words and phrases are only adjusted. Such an artist, succumbing to vulgarism, without profound understanding, simplifies problems and makes concessions to demagoguery, platitudinous expression and prevarication.”*⁶⁸⁶

In a close relation to this effort to suppress “dogmatism” and dullness, Kopecký also prophesied changes in artistic work itself. By naming categories such as family, interpersonal relations, matrimony, love or morality, he contributed to the establishment of new themes and subjects for artists to implement into their artworks.⁶⁸⁷

Also the dogmatic perception of Socialist Realism was subjected to Kopecký's scrutiny and commented in address to writers. He noted that Socialist Realism is supposed to be an artistic method and therefore should allow some measure of licence. Despite the rigidity of both the central and especially the peripheral structures of the KSCĚ prevented the declared liberating steps from acquiring an overly distinctive influence over the cultural development, the most strict doctrines, towering above the sphere of fine arts were between 1953 - 1956 at least gradually modified.⁶⁸⁸

Kopecký familiarised the public with a revised concept of the culture under Socialism – a culture where public entertainment, cabarets, circuses, popular theatre pieces, dancing and fashion were not to be frowned upon as a capitalist convenience, but as acceptable leisure time activities for the Socialist society.⁶⁸⁹ This shift in the course was an inevitable consequence of the Party's realisation, that the general public under the Socialist society had relatively simple taste, which required these amusements to their overall contentment and that in this respect it did not change since the pre-February times. The rhetoric therefore shifted in the direction towards endorsement of popular

⁶⁸⁶ Václav KOPECKÝ: K některým otázkám naší kultury. In: Rudné právo, 13. 12. 1953, 3

⁶⁸⁷ These shifts in the employment of iconographic motives are examined in greater detail in the chapter *Socialist Construction Heroes and Allegories*

⁶⁸⁸ KNAPÍK 2006, 225 - 238

⁶⁸⁹ Ibidem

entertainment – of course in accordance with the basic Socialist perspective.⁶⁹⁰

The Pokorný's article and reformulation of the union's statutes are a relevant testimony to the shift in the general line of cultural politics.⁶⁹¹ The leadership of the SČSVU began to comprehend advantages of the original structure of the pre-February professional unions. It became clear that the state is unable to provide for all artists, regardless of their skill or proficiency. The union therefore had to be transformed into an exclusive selection of reliable and sufficiently proficient artists. Aside from the organisational challenges, the questions of the greatest importance had to be addressed again: the accessibility of art to the masses, intensification of the debate over the characteristics and specifications of Socialist Realism, the interconnection of fine arts with architecture.⁶⁹² In coming years the pensions and subsidies were to be distributed in a more economical and efficient way.⁶⁹³

In the time-frame 1953-1955 the imperviousness of the borders to the cultural exchange was progressively loosened and the contacts of artists with the rest of the world (not excluding the west) became more common.⁶⁹⁴ The position of Czechoslovakian artists within the state again allowed some measure of activity, projected into the surge of Modernist tendencies among the independently thinking artists.⁶⁹⁵ New Course was

⁶⁹⁰ KOPECKÝ 1953, 3

NA f. Státní výbor pro věci umění, Likvidace následků škůdcovství.

The problem of the serious decline of the popular entertainment as to the general interest of the people was scrutinised by a professional commission, Státní výbor pro věci umění. It was examined with regards to the goals of the first Five-years Plan and put to perspective with the Slánský's proclaimed subversive influence.

⁶⁹¹ POKORNÝ 1955, 2

⁶⁹² POKORNÝ 1955, 2

⁶⁹³ NA, A ÚV KSČ, f. 01, sv. 22, a.j. 35

NA f. Státní výbor pro věci umění, f. Ministerstvo školství a kultury, kart. 15

The cuts in subsidies and pensions was innately related to the economical difficulties and subsequent financial reform in 1953.

⁶⁹⁴ Karel KAPLAN: Kronika komunistického Československa. Kořeny reformy 1956-1968: společnost a moc, Brno 2008

⁶⁹⁵ The phenomenon of the gradual inclination towards modernism in the early fifties was inspected by many scholars, for account of relevant studies, exhibitions and anthologies see texts and bibliographies of: Miroslav LAMAČ: Nové tendence, nové osobnosti, nové diváci, in: Česká kultura na přelomu 50. a 60. let. (Kolokvium Galerie hl. města Prahy u příležitosti retrospektivy Jiřího Balcara, 22. – 23. června 1988). Dům U kamenného zvonu, Praha 1988; Vojtěch LAHODA: Plíživý modernismus a socialistické umění 1948-1958, in: Dagmar PETRASOVÁ / Helena LORENZOVÁ: Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V., 1939-1958, Praha 2005; Marie KLIMEŠOVÁ: Roky ve dnech: české umění 1945-1957(Kat. výst. v GHMP, Městské knihovně, ve dnech 28.5. až 19.9. 2010) Řevnice 2010

promoted with a vigour especially in the Party meetings and the fight against dogmatism and schematism became a motto universally employed in speech but much less in practice. In the management of cultural institutions generally persevered the original rigid methods.⁶⁹⁶

Despite the efforts of the Party, a new generation of artists, who began to study at art schools after 1945, has already summoned strength to fight for greater freedom of artistic expression. The first herald of the upcoming changes was an article published in *Výtvarná práce*, which gathered signatures of 69 artists and became sort of “manifesto” of the young generation. Regarding the organisation they voiced their suggestion that artists ought to have the right to gather in interest-based art groups, on grounds of their stylistic or idealistic preferences.⁶⁹⁷

Adherence to the Conservative Line within Sculpture

The codification of the Socialist art historical narrative, aligned with the ideology of the cultural politics, was sealed in 15th October 1954, when a department of sculpture of the Zbraslav castle, at the time serving as a dignified National Gallery permanent exhibition site, was festively opened to the public. The exhibits' selection as well as the general line obviously elevates and celebrates the Realist tradition from J. V. Myslbek – in the continuity of his work are followed by the generation of his pupils and their pupils, and always is the narrative focused on the branch of the Realist, figural tradition.

Jan Tomeš continues the story of the Czech sculpture around the generally accepted line, which is valid until today, however, highlighting rather the most ideological representatives of the required style. He marked the monumental Jan Štursa's sculptural group *Work and Humanity* (1913) as the literal climax of the artistic efforts of many

⁶⁹⁶ KNAPÍK 2006, 232

⁶⁹⁷ Hlas mladých, in: *Výtvarná práce III.*, č. 24., 20. prosince, Praha 1955, 2

decades, and noted that in his mature years Štursa “understood *Výtvarná práce* as the truest service to the society and nation.”⁶⁹⁸ (Fig. 5) Works of Štursa, such as *the Dancer* (Tanečnice, 1909) were also copied and provided to the general public in a form of low-cost copies.⁶⁹⁹

Whereas the younger generation of artists would brace themselves to pursue greater freedom of expression, the official sculpture after 1953 continued entirely without being curtailed by the New Course modifications. On the contrary, the representative commissions, anchored in the most conservative perception of Socialist Realism, would expand and gather momentum, due to inevitable long-term planning, preparations and lengthy execution. The final form of the monuments would in the interval of 1953-1956 exhibit the most conservative Socialist character, as was authorised in previous years. The exhibitions would also not allow any opportunity to loosen the required focus on the Socialist principles and values.

One of the most representative exhibitions within the time-frame of 1953-1956 would be the *Ten Years of the Czechoslovak People's Democratical Republic in Fine Arts 1945-1955*, simultaneously presented in Jízdárna Pražského hradu and Slovanský ostrov. Whereas the first would show monumental art and poster, the other would be concerned with sculpture and drawing, providing additional space for the continuation of the monumental art show.⁷⁰⁰ The jury of the exhibition would host several sculptors: Tibor Bartfay, Josef Malejovský and Václav Žalud. In the introduction to the exhibition catalogue by Václav Formánek is the success of the current sculpture seen, especially in the evolution of the design of monuments and memorials, albeit the greatest step forward is seen in the flourishing of other monumental arts – the fresco, sgraffito and mosaic.⁷⁰¹

The predominant accentuation of the Red Army monuments and liberation memorials,

⁶⁹⁸ TOMEŠ 1954, 34

⁶⁹⁹ Reprodukce plastik našich klasiků, in: *Výtvarná práce* č. 3, 1955, 7

⁷⁰⁰ Deset let Československé lidové demokratické republiky ve výtvarném umění 1945-1955. (Ex. Cat. December 1955 – February 1956) Praha: Slovanský ostrov / Jízdárna Pražského hradu. 1956

⁷⁰¹

described in greater detail in a separate chapter, was enriched in the late 1940s Czechoslovakia by ever growing number of the monuments to the personalities of national history. The endeavour to cultivate the public allegiance to the central ideology called for the promotion of desired values through the means of charismatic personalities and the accent of these would grow steadily throughout the 1950s, providing a welcome opportunity to the artists, who would find a relief from the overtly political commissions in the focus on the merits of historical figures, providing them with an opportunity to look for a less uniform and more interesting perspective and form.

The monuments to national classics, such as *Alois Jirásek* (1952) and *Božena Němcová* (1954) became together with the *Charles IV* statue the true badges of honour to Karel Pokorný, who dedicated to the search of the optimal form of the monuments larger part of the 1940s, creating on the account a great number of sketches and models.⁷⁰² (Fig. 47) As a result of his conscientious work he would receive two times State Prize of the First Class. In 1952 for the *Alois Jirásek Monument* and in 1955 for *the Monument to Božena Němcová*. (Fig. 48) Subsequently, in 1956 would be Pokorný honoured with the honorary title of the National Artist and during the festive ceremony was congratulated by the minister of Culture, Ladislav Štoll. Pokorný's art was for the purposes of the prize bestowing described as the bearer of the Myslbekian tradition, whose work became part of the Classical legacy of Czechoslovakian sculpture.⁷⁰³

Vincenc Makovský's post-war abandonment of the mythological-romantic motivation and baroque morphology, that would demonstrate in his works in the pre-war and inter-war era, would approximate him to J. V. Myslbek and bring more professional opportunities.⁷⁰⁴ Rising steadily to the top of the official artists, Makovský experienced in the time-frame of 1953-1956 numerous successes and would finalise generously funded large scale commissions, such as the *Monument to J. A. Komenský*, started in 1948 and *the Monument to the Red Army Victory*, launched in 1949 and unveiled in 1955 on

⁷⁰² The sketches of the *Božena Němcová* would exhibit varying degree of pathos and romanticism, as described in the chapter *The 19th Century "Communism Revivalists"*

⁷⁰³ Akademický sochař Karel Pokorný národním umělcem, in: *Lidová demokracie*, 18. 1. 1956, 3

⁷⁰⁴ HLUŠIČKA 2002, 65

the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the liberation of Brno on 26th April 1955.⁷⁰⁵ (Fig. 22, 49, 50)

Beside these tasks Makovský exercised his remarkable portraiting skill, both in the depiction of contemporaries, such as *Linka Procházková* (1953) and historical figures, namely *Jan Jesenius* (1955), both unrealised in the final material.⁷⁰⁶ As a recognised artist, Makovský would join in 1953 the committee of the national exhibition *The Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts*, under the auspices of the president Gottwald.⁷⁰⁷ In 1954 he had also seen his works exported to the exhibition in China as a part of a representative exhibition of Czechoslovakian art.

The following year would bring 365th anniversary of the J. A. Komenský birth and fitting occasion to unveil the monument to the teacher and scholar in Uherský Brod. By that time Makovský, after eight years of concentrated effort, concluded his works on the task, that would be left undone by both Jan Štursa and Jan Lauda. Only year later would Makovský participate in a government delegation to unveil another exemplar of the monument in Naarden, the place, where J. A. Komenský lived and taught.⁷⁰⁸ (Fig. 21)

Karel Lidický would the followed period begin with an individual exhibition in the hall of the *Československý spisovatel*. The exhibition would promote another of Lidický exceptional talents – his portraiture skills.⁷⁰⁹ Yet the commission of *Jan Hus Monument* would become Karel Lidický's most prestigious commission, spanning to the 1955, when would the sketches of the head and figure be employed in the bronze cast in 1955. (Fig. 28) Karel Lidický succeeded in the strive for an important official commission and conveyed the result satisfactory as to secure himself a place among the privileged. The

⁷⁰⁵ ŠEBEK 1963, 103-107

For a detailed account of these commissions see: Jiří ŠEBEK: *Soupis sochařského díla Vincence Makovského*, in: Jiří HLUŠIČKA / Jaroslav MALINA / Jiří ŠEBEK: *Vincenc Makovský*. Brno 2002; Dušan ŠINDELÁŘ: *Národní umělec, Vincenc Makovský*. Praha 1963; Jiří HLUŠIČKA: *Monumentální tvorba*, in: HLUŠIČKA / MALINA / ŠEBEK: *Vincenc Makovský*. Brno 2002, 61

⁷⁰⁶ ŠEBEK 2002, 302

⁷⁰⁷ For more on the exhibition see chapter *Exhibitions*

⁷⁰⁸ HLUŠIČKA 2002, 75

⁷⁰⁹ Miroslav MÍČKO: *Karel Lidický: výstava sochařské práce, 1953*. An Exhibition in Výstavní síň Československého spisovatele (Praha)

same year he received for his Jan Hus a State Prize of the Second Class and his time could be used again on new commissions. He would succeed in a contest for a memorial plaque in memory of Hus' close peer *Jan Želivský*, situated at Staroměstská radnice.⁷¹⁰

Josef Malejovský would be for several years occupied by the commission for the bronze *doors of the Vítkov Memorial* (1952), installed no sooner than 1958.⁷¹¹ (Fig. 51) This would not prevent him, however, from attempting several other commissions, including realisation of two *monuments to J. V. Stalin in Plzeň* (1953) and *Liberec* (1955). One of the interesting monuments was erected in Pardubice and commemorated the liberation of the city.⁷¹² (Fig. 55)

In East Germany the year when the New Course began was also the year of the *Third German Exhibition*.⁷¹³ Beside that, and most importantly, it witnessed peaking dissatisfaction of the professional public with the paternalism of the central institutions, which not only intruded into the organisational matters of the artistic unions, but also interfered into the minutest aspects of the artistic creativity.⁷¹⁴ This was perceived more and more intolerable, as many respected artists, such as sculptor Waldemar Grzimek, were subjected to harassment, some even chose to emigrate, rather than face denigration and despotism from the authoritative Kommission für Kunstangelegenheiten.⁷¹⁵

The second half of the 1950s in Germany also brought intense efforts of the foremost sculptors to deliver important tasks and commissions. Fritz Cremer had in 1954 won one of his most valued commissions – the design of the *National Monument and Memorial in Buchenwald* (Nationalen Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Buchenwald) situated

⁷¹⁰ Karel Lidický, práce 1940-1947: Seznam výstavy : Alšova síň Umělecké besedy, od 2. do 28. dubna 1947. Praha 1947, nonpag.

⁷¹¹ For more on the Vítkov Memorial see page: 277

⁷¹² For detailed info on the monument see *The Personality Cult Sculpture*

⁷¹³ For more on Third German Exhibition see: Helmut HOLTZHAUER: Dritte Deutsche Kunstausstellung, Dresden 1953, an English account by: Heather E. MATHEWS: Making Histories: The Exhibition of Postwar Art and the Interpretation of the Past in Divided Germany, 1950—1959 (A Dissertation, University of Texas), 2007

⁷¹⁴ Elimar SCHUBBE: Dokumente zur Kulturpolitik DDR, 1984. Document 86, 289

⁷¹⁵ Jochen STAADT: "Die Eroberung der Kultur beginnt!": die Staatliche Kommission für Kunstangelegenheiten der DDR (1951-1953) und die Kulturpolitik der SED, Berlin 2011, 11

near Weimar.⁷¹⁶ The prestige of the commission was elevated by the fact, it was the first complex Antifascist multi-figural sculpture of Socialist Realism in Germany.⁷¹⁷ The process of Cremer's designing of the monument became the subject of a professional discussion, regarding the substantial questions of form and content in the Socialist sculpture.⁷¹⁸ (Fig. 52)

Also the designing of the Thälmanns monument on the Thälmann Platz in Berlin belonged to high-profile commissions. The importance ascribed to the task stemmed from the fact, the statue ought to embody all the values, endorsed by the DDR – Antifascism, fight for world peace and building of Socialism.⁷¹⁹ The design and model preparations employed Ruthild Hahne most of the second half of the 1950s and early 1960s, resulting in numerous sketches, models and discussions with other professionals, especially co-worker René Graetz, whose opinion was mirrored in the designs very markedly. (Fig. 53)

The prestigious, political commissions, demonstrated on the example of the *Buchenwald-Denkmal* and *Ernst Thälmann-Denkmal*, were notoriously difficult to grasp and fulfilled satisfactorily. The author had to excel in his capacity to fulfil the volatile wishes of the Party and keen to religiously observe the ideological aspects. He would unconditionally need to be capable to suppress any sense of professional pride that would interfere with his effort to accommodate the political order.

Fritz Cremer, who in 1956 celebrated his 50th birthday, would be honoured with an individual exhibition in Nationalgalerie-Berlin, providing a comprehensible summary of his work to date and promoting his person as the most consequential East German sculptor.⁷²⁰ Also, through this exhibition, as a substantial number of exhibited works

⁷¹⁶ Ulrich SCHLIE: Die Nation erinnert sich. Die Denkmäler der Deutschen. München 2002, 139-142

⁷¹⁷ Volkhard KNIGGE: Fritz Cremer, Buchenwald-Denkmal, Auftraggeber: Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes, in: Monika FLACKE (Hrsg.), Auftrag: Kunst. 1949-1990. Bildende Künstler in der DDR zwischen Ästhetik und Politik, Berlin) 1995, 106-118

⁷¹⁸ For more on the Buchenwald-Denkmal and the workings of the relations of the commissioning bodies and the author see: 280-283

⁷¹⁹ Peter MONTEATH: Ernst Thälmann: Mensch und Mythos. Amsterdam / Atlanta 2000, 185

⁷²⁰ Fritz Cremer, Ausstellung der Nationalgalerie und der Deutschen Akademie der Künste in der Nationalgalerie. Berlin (September – November 1956), in: Ludwig JUSTI / Helga WEISSGÄRBER (Eds.) und der Sektion Bildende Kunst der DAK. Berlin 1956; See also: Bodo UHSE: Um die Überwindung des Schweren. Zum 50. Geburtstag von Fritz Cremer, in: Sonntag, 14. 10. 1956

were derived from his monumental works, would Cremer be established as the author of anti-fascist works, the author, who by his empathy and capacity to embody the past, would help to pave the way to future - the Socialism.

Usually less attention acquired, because of the lesser political consequence, monuments to the historical personalities. The national figures such as Heinrich Heine could therefore allow their authors more space to employ their artistic ideas (yet, the ideological supervision was never ceased entirely). In case of Waldemar Grzimek's *Heine Monument in Berlin*, this was precisely the case. However, the interest among the professionals was more profound, because the sculpture struck with its formal nonconformism the cord of the prolonged debate on Realism. The commemoration of the 100 year from the death of H. Heine induced a number of related cultural activities, including the plan to install a monument in the capital city. (Fig. 54)

W. Grzimek would in the middle of 1950s work on two models, following his premeditated works, for an unrealised *monument of Heine in Halle*.⁷²¹ The final model, eventually realised, represents Heine in an unconventional, excited and dynamical seated posture. Heine is depicted as a youth, at the very moment of composing his first love poem.⁷²² Grzimek endeavoured according to his own words to express in his model the different facets of the poet's personality: lyrical and tragical.⁷²³

The posture and stylisation of the figure departed distinctly from the traditional understanding of the seated figural monument and initiated a discussion with his fellow-sculptors, especially Fritz Cremer and Gustav Seitz, or Walther Victor, who as well as other critical voices objected to Grzimek's decision to represent one of the greatest figures of German poetry, friend of Marx and Engels, as a sensitive youth.⁷²⁴

⁷²¹ Monika FLACKE: Auftrag: Kunst der DDR 1949 – 1990. Bildende Künstler in der DDR zwischen Ästhetik und Politik. München 1995

⁷²² Raimund HOFFMANN: Waldemar Grzimek 1918-1984 Plastik, Zeichnungen, Grafik. (Ex. Cat. Juni/Juli 1989 Neue Berliner Galerie im Alten Museum) Berlin 1989

⁷²³ Ulrich MÜLLER-HOFSTEDT: Heine-Denkmäler, in: Skulptur und Macht, Figurative Plastik in Deutschland der 30er und 40er. (Ex. Cat Akademie der Künste Berlin (West), 1983, 145

⁷²⁴ Walther VICTOR: Um das Heine-Denkmal in Berlin, in: Berliner Zeitung, nr. 33, 8. 2. 1956, 3; Gustav SEITZ: Wird das Heine-Denkmal torpediert?, in: Berliner Zeitung, nr. 34, 9.2. 1956, 3

Echoes of the Soviet Socialist Realism

Had there been an avid cultural exchange among the brotherly nations of the Eastern bloc, resulting in numerous exhibitions, delegations and cultural contacts, the level of the exposure the public and art professionals would experience, was incomparable to the intense, continuous and persistent pressure of the Soviet culture and art. Shortly after the liberation by the Red Army and political decision to cede the East Germany and Czechoslovakia to the Soviet influence sphere, would the endeavours of the Hegemon to promote Soviet art and culture become the daily bread of the affected nations. One of the tools were unions and societies, most importantly the The Union of the Czechoslovakian-Soviet Friendship and its German parallel Gesellschaft für Deutsch-Sowjetische Freundschaft.⁷²⁵

Every year was the Czechoslovakian public endowed with at least one exhibition of one or another aspect of the Soviet art, culture, industry, agriculture, history or politics. In 1945 the highly contemporary theme of a Soviet satire on A. Hitler was exhibited at Topičův Salon, apparently organised by the Society for cultural and political relations with the SSSR to leverage the hate of the common enemy. Both the Soviet and Czechoslovakian nations after all rejoiced in the unison in the joyous moments of the Hitler's ultimate fall.⁷²⁶ This notion was yet to be prefabricated during the exhibition *SSSR during the Patriotic War* (1945), taking place immediately after the first exhibition, at the same location.⁷²⁷ It would introduce SSSR in the perspective of its justified struggle against the Fascist aggressor, promoted ever since 1941 under the title of the

⁷²⁵ (CZ) Svaz československo-sovětského přátelství

Compare: Anneli HARTMANN / Wolfram EGGELING: Die Gesellschaft für Deutsch-Sowjetische Freundschaft. Zum Aufbau einer Institution in der SBZ/DDR zwischen deutschen Politzwängen und sowjetischer Steuerung. Berlin 1993, a very apt analysis also by Matthias KLINGENBERG: Kultur als Vehikel: Zur Geschichte der Gesellschaft für Deutsch-Sowjetische Freundschaft (1947-1953) (A Master's thesis at Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg Philosophisch-Historische Fakultät). Heidelberg 2001

⁷²⁶ Hitler v sovětské karikatuře. Společnost pro kulturní a hospodářské styky s SSSR (28. červenec 1945 – 12. srpen) Praha: Topičův salon.

⁷²⁷ (CZ) SSSR za vlastenecké války

The Soviet Sculpture – Exhibition of Photographs in Topičův salon, 27th May – 16th June 1946, promoted by the Ministry of Informations was one of the first occasions for the Czechoslovakian sculptors to familiarize themselves with the artistic concept of Socialist Realism.⁷²⁹ The goal was to introduce the best sculptors of the recent three generations of the Realist current, whose works were shown together with their portrait. The scope of the exhibited photographs included depiction of the official monumental commissions, decorative reliefs, industrial design, portraiture and small-scale realisations.

In a review of the exhibition, Anna Masaryková seeks analogies between the works of Soviet artists and Czech sculptors, such as in the case of Dmitry F. Caplin, who is readily compared to Jan Lauda for their equally masterly skill to elaborate sculptures of animals. The psychological portraiture of Ilya L. Slonim, Vera Mukhina, Dmitry P. Schwarz is likened to Štursa's school.⁷³⁰ Agile search for similitudes in the production of both countries, together with the non-critical, reverent stance towards the Soviet artistic tendencies, testifies to the distinct modification of cultural politics towards the obligatory idolization of the SSSR, intensively promoted from 1946 onwards.⁷³¹

The year of 1947, the year of the thirty years of the SSSR brought a great number of exhibitions, related to the SSSR, both in the Czechoslovakia and East Germany. Union of the Friends of the SSSR and Society of Cultural Relations with SSSR would organise a great number of exhibitions, endeavouring to present the Soviet Union in the most favourable light and present its achievements in the building of Communism in

⁷²⁸ Sovětský svaz za vlastenecké války (28. srpna – 13. září 1945) Svaz přátel SSSR. Praha: Topičův salon

For more on the Great Patriotic war see: Valerij PONOMAREV: Jak jsme zvítězili: Sov. lid za Velké vlastenecké války 1941-1945. Moskva 1990

The Soviet exhibitions in Topičův salon were presented by Anna Ostapczuk during the student conference ÚDKU at KTF UK, called TOPIČŮV SALON 1937–1949, in an unpublished material.

⁷²⁹ Sovětská plastika – výstava fotografií (27th May – 16th June 1946) Praha: Topičův salon

⁷³⁰ Anna MASARYKOVÁ: Introduction, in: Sovětská plastika – výstava fotografií (Ex. Cat. Soviet Sculpture – Exhibition of Photographs), Topičův salon, 27th May – 16th June 1946

⁷³¹ Jan PAVELKA: Výstavy., in: Dílo XXXIV. 1946, 228

The Post-war exhibitions are summarised in: Jan HOSTĚÁK, Zahraniční výstavy v Praze mezi lety 1945-1953. (Bachelor's thesis at KTF UK) 2012

agriculture, education, public transportation, health services or peace politics.⁷³² The sphere of culture would not be omitted and individual exhibitions would be dedicated to theatre, film, literature, and painting.⁷³³ In DDR the commencement of the Soviet culture import is also relatable to the 1947. In February would be opened a Haus der Kultur der Sowjetunion with an exhibition of the Soviet art in Berlin.⁷³⁴

The 1947 would not only bring a show of Soviet art, but also a heated discussion regarding the authority of the Soviet art over the Czechoslovakian art. The debate was initiated by the *Exhibition of the Paintings by National Artists of the SSSR* at Slovanský Ostrava in Prague.⁷³⁵ The selection presented Soviet artists such as Aleksandr Gerasimov, Sergei Gerasimov, Aleksandr Dejneka or Arkady Plastov, an unequivocal group of devote Socialist Realists. The director of the Tretyakov Gallery Aleksandr Zamoshkin, Ambassador of the Soviet Union and representatives of the Czech political scene including Jan Masaryk were at the vernissage.⁷³⁶ Also in Germany in the spring of 1949 a show of the present-day Soviet painting was presented in Dresden. On the III. Weltfestspiele der Jugend und Studenten in Berlin in August 1951, an exhibition on the visual art of the Soviet Union took place.⁷³⁷ The other exhibition would continue in the political direction, set by the exhibition *SSSR during the Patriotic War* two years sooner – it served as a promotional show, celebrating thirty years of the SSSR existence.⁷³⁸

One of the most efficient tools for the promotion of the Soviet style Socialist Realism

⁷³² (CZ) SSSR Svaz přátel SSSR and Společnost pro kulturní styky s SSSR

⁷³³ For a list of related exhibitions use the catalogue of the National Czech Library with the keywords „30 let SSSR“

⁷³⁴ Dagmar BUCHBINDER: Die Dritte Deutsche Kunstausstellung 1953 in Dresden – Malerei als Teil der Kunstpolitik in der DDR, in: Jochen STAADT: Die Eroberung der Kultur beginnt!: die Staatliche Kommission für Kunstangelegenheiten der DDR (1951-1953) und die Kulturpolitik der SED. Berlin 2011, 114
Ausstellung sowjetischer Malerei im Haus der Kultur der Sowjetunion. Berlin: Haus der Kultur der Sowjetunion in Berlin. 1949

⁷³⁵ (CZ) Obrazy národních umělců SSSR

⁷³⁶ Compare: Peter KOVÁČ: Skandály v umění: Polemika o stalinském malířství v Praze na jaře 1947. Retrieved from: <http://www.stavitele-katedral.cz/skandaly-v-umeni-polemika-o-stalinskem-malirstvi-v-praze-na-jare-1947/> (9. 10. 2016)

⁷³⁷ BUCHBINDER 2001, 114

Anne HARTMANN / Wolfram EGDELING: Sowjetische Präsenz im kulturellen Leben der SBZ und frühen DDR 1945–1953. Berlin 1998

⁷³⁸ Sovětský svaz za vlastenecké války (Soviet Union at the Times of the Patriotic War), Topičův salon, 28th August – 23rd September 1945

were professional magazines. Only in the 1950s volume of the *Výtvarné umění* one can find more than 12 articles on some aspect of Soviet art – be it Soviet critique, architecture, Russian realist tradition in painting, graphic art, Stalin's notes or various translations of articles by Soviet authors. The article on the character of the Soviet art, translated by Vladimír Šolta, would bear three reproductions of the portraiture of V. Mukhina and N. Tomsky.⁷³⁹ The Soviets were installed in the position of authority, the ultimate judges of the achievements of Socialist Realism in the satellite countries. In 1952 a brochure, appendix to the *Výtvarné umění* was published, called *Draw the Experience from the Art of Soviet Masters, Masters of Socialist Realism!*⁷⁴⁰

A representative exhibition in Jízdárna Pražského hradu, *An Exhibition of a Contemporary Art of the SSSR* in 1954, introduced to the sculptors some of the finest examples of the Soviet Socialist Realism.⁷⁴¹ Some of the works by Soviet sculptors were exhibited in reduced size, such as M. G. Manizer's *Struggle for Peace, Women want peace* and V. Mukhina's *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman*.⁷⁴² (Fig. 56) A large reprinted pictures of these works would in 1954 adorn the pages of the art magazine *Výtvarná práce*, accompanied on further pages with a Manizer's and Mukhina's curriculums, so as to broaden the impact on the professional public.⁷⁴³ Manizer's and Mukhina's works, exhibited at the show and reprinted in the professional magazines, could inspire Czechoslovakian sculptors both in the ideological perspective and also with regards to

⁷³⁹ P. SYSOJEV: Boj o socialistický realismus v sovětském výtvarném umění. In: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1 1950, 27-41

⁷⁴⁰ Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu! in: *Výtvarné umění*, časopis Ústředního svazu československých výtvarných umělců, Praha 1952

⁷⁴¹ Výstava současného výtvarného umění SSSR (Praha, Jízdárna Pražského hradu, leden - únor 1954) Praha: Ministerstvo kultury ČSR 1954

⁷⁴² *Vera Mukhina* (1889 – 1953), was a prominent Soviet sculptor. From 1912 attended the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris under Emile-Antoine Bourdelle and visited also Italy to leverage inspiration from the Renaissance legacy. In the 1920s Mukhina became the leading figure of Soviet Socrealism. 1926 she taught at the art school – Vkhutemas. Until her death in 1959 she worked in her own studio on a number of monumental commissions. She received Stalin's Prize five times and was named a People's Artist of the USSR (1943). For more see: A. ZOTOV: *Mukhina Vera Ignat'yevna: Narodnyy khudozhnik SSSR*. Moskva 1944

Matvey Manizer (1891– 1966), a prominent Soviet sculptor, author of monumental statues of Socrealism, among them twelve portraits of Lenin. He accumulated a number of distinctions and sinecures, such as the title of the People's Artist of the USSR (1958), post of a chairman of the Saint Petersburg Union of Artists (1937-1941), Member of USSR Academy of Arts (1947), he held the title of a vice president of USSR Academy of Arts for almost twenty years. (1947-1966). He also received three times the Stalin's Prize. For more see: *Manizer Matvey Genrikhovich*, in: A. M. PROKHOROV (Ed.): *Bol'shaya sovětskaya entsiklopediya*. Moskva 1969

⁷⁴³ Fig. Boj o mír (A Struggle for Peace) from M. G. Manizer and col. in: *Výtvarná práce* roč. 2., č. 14. 1954, 1

the optimal solution of the multi-figural compositions.

The articles on Soviet sculpture, accompanied by numerous photographs ought to serve as a guideline to the professionals and offered some of the most celebrated examples of the Socialist Realism. M. G. Manizer as the most celebrated Soviet artist also participate in the delegation to Czechoslovakia, organised on the occasion of the Month of Czechoslovakian-Soviet friendship in 1955.⁷⁴⁴

The young generation of figuralists born in 1920's belonged to the most susceptible group. They would often participate in the action tasks and contest with an apparent wish to fulfil the requirements, set by the commissioning bodies. Therefore a large number of rather inferior works, exhibiting clear ties to the Soviet Socrealism, stemmed from these inexperienced young artists, who desired to attain a position among the artistic professionals.

The school of Karel Pokorný would raise a great number of these young, ambitious sculptors. Among them especially Tibor Bartfay, Svata Hajerová, Jan Hána, Ludvík Kodym, Sylva Lacinová-Jílková, Věra Merhautová, Alexander Trizuljak, Luděk Varvažovský, Vendelín Zdrůbecký would join around the 1955 the Socrealist current. The school of Vincenc Makovský would also contribute to the formation of this young Socrealist generation, by educating within the secondary School of Arts in Zlín, Konrád Babraj, Karel Kuneš, Zdeněk Krybus, Vladimír Kýn, Zdeněk Kovář or Sylva Lacinová-Jílková.⁷⁴⁵

Setting aside the general influence of the SSSR over the Czechoslovakian art through the total domination over the cultural life, making the "Sovietisation" of the culture in the 1950s a matter entirely evident and widespread, the specific Soviet inspiration or influence can be derived from the sculptural works themselves. Through the formalist analysis of the most conspicuously Soviet-oriented examples of the Socrealist sculpture can be drawn a line between the intended, outspoken inspiration by the Soviet example

⁷⁴⁴ , M.G. Manizer na návštěvě v Československu, in: *Výtvarná práce* roč. 3., č. 20-21, 1955, 4-5

⁷⁴⁵ For more on the New Generation of the Socrealists see chapter: *Official Sculpture 1948/1949 – 1953*

and the endeavour to employ the local tradition.

The iconic work of V. Mukhina, *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman*, with its triangular composition, belong to the most famous Socrealist art works. (Fig. 56) The colossal couple would from the frontal view create a triangular shape, the top represented by their raised hands clasping the attributes of their respective professions. The side view accentuates the dynamical posture of the both figures, whose momentum is underlined with the dramatic flow of the drapery and hair, just as if the figures would speed to brighter tomorrows on top of a rushing train.

The Mukhina's composition would fit into the branch of Soviet multifigural compositions, often employing either raised hands or a large flag as the highest component of the structure, to achieve the striking triangular frontal perspective. This composition was fit for the heroic, victorious and revolutionary topics, therefore, employed often in monuments dedicated to the Red Army, great battles and allegorical groups representing victory. In countless sculptures all across the Eastern Bloc, not excluding Czechoslovakia, was this composition employed to deliver the desired ideological effect.⁷⁴⁶

The Prague Monument to Stalin would elaborate upon the frontal triangular composition, where the central figure is flanked by the two rows of figures. For instance, of smaller scale realisations can be named *The Monument to the Slav Brotherhood* (Pomník Slovanskému bratrství) in Mních by Jan Přerovský (1947), a pupil of Bohumil Kafka is one such an example. (Fig. 57) Přerovský would in his group of three attempted to create a dynamic posture of the two figures, flanking the central figure of a declining soldier, supporting the flag he no longer can bear. The two soldiers, stepping out to raise the flag, provide the heroism and momentum to the group. Sylva Jílková, in her model for the Monument of the Battle at Stalingrad (1951) would make her dominant central figure wave the flag with both arms raised above his head. A similarly assembled groups would be placed in many varieties in the regions.

⁷⁴⁶ A notable example is the Monument to the Red Army in Bulgarian Sofia.

To the problem of monumentality and victory is dedicated unpublished work Luboš BARTA: *Monumentalita a triumf v české plastice 50. let 20. století* (Rigorosum Thesis Ústav teorie a dějin umění ČSAV) Praha 1979

A marked similarity is also discernible in the rendition of individual figures, including soldier, worker, partisan. A meticulous study of the Soviet examples is observable in the works of the new generation. They employed the composition, posture of the figures, attire rendition, and psychologism supporting the key ideological tenets. The early attempts to establish themselves as professionals by monkeying the Soviet examples would be soon abandoned by a number of artists in favour of the resurrected modernism after 1957 (some artists such as Karel Hladík, Vladimír Kýn, Sylva Lacinová or Daniela Vinopalová would partake in the establishment of the modern Czechoslovakian sculpture), some, such as Vendelín Zdrůbecký, would not risk to lose the prominent position in exchange for the privilege of artistic freedom and was content with half-hearted pseudo-modernist figures, retaining the semi-Socrealist perspective.

From the perspective of the Soviet inspiration are the acutest examples derived from the Action task results and models, presented during exhibitions. Jan Hána's February 1948 (Únor 1948, 1955) and in cooperation with Jaroslav Bartoš also the Monument of the Soviet Army in Svídník (Pomník Sovětské armády ve Svídníku), (Fig. 58) Female Partisan (1955) by Svata Hajerová, the Red Army soldier by Konrád Babraj or Josef Vitvar with his Vítězná úderka (The Victorious Udarniki group) from the same year are all witnessing the acute determination to live up to the expectation and show the capacity to create according to the new requirements.

The sculptors from the Red Army Studio, Vendelín Zdrůbecký, Jaroslav Bartoš would perpetuate the hollow „academical“ Socrealism well until 1980s, employing the form and compositions of the long overdue Soviet-inspired style, such as in the *Monument in Remembrance of the Warriors at Sokolov* (Na paměť československých bojovníků v bitvě u Sokolova). (Fig. 59)

Mutual Contact – DDR and ČSR

The SSSR developed with regards to the satellite countries protectionist strategy, reaching into all spheres of the countries' home and foreign policies. The mutual interconnectedness of the individual states was a matter of necessity, had the Soviet Union wished to retain its regional influence and the position of a large territorial Hegemon. From the late 1940s onwards the states, belonging to the sphere of the SSSR influence, began to forge mutual relations, following the guidelines of Moscow and wishing not to be left out of the process of maturation of the new political structure.

In ČSR would the pages of newspapers be filled with the reports of the delegations from the brethren socialist states: Poland, Hungary, Romania, even Communist China. The warm-hearted political meetings, exchanges of leading workers of agriculture, industry and culture, would attempt to promote the feelings of togetherness and security among the general population. The vigilant guarding of peace, conjoined with the tireless building of the economic prosperity, stood at the core of the official ideology and was not to be achieved, unless the socialist states would stand shoulder to shoulder.

The political and cultural relations of ČSR and DDR, evolving within this pattern, belong to the most intriguing subjects, as it demonstrates the meticulous effort, invested into the restoration of the Czechoslovakian-German relations. After the war the relations of the Czechoslovaks to the German nation were for obvious reasons in ruins. The SSSR, having in the DDR its most distant eastern stronghold and wishing to see the Germany united again under its direct influence, could not allow any mistrust or downright animosity stemming from its neighbours. The strategy was therefore to convince the Czechoslovakian public, the harm done is to be ascribed to the Fascist regime and lift the guilt of the German nation in general.⁷⁴⁷

The line of reasoning for the newly born relations to the western neighbour were given high priority, as proven by the K. Gottwald's claim in 1951: *"It is therefore in our own*

⁷⁴⁷ ANONYM: Německo chce mír!, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 1953, č. 26, 1

interest to follow with understanding and support the great battle of the DDR for a united democratic and peaceful Germany... “Not all Germans are the same,” the motto valid in the past is even more true today...“ The practical demonstration of the support to the peaceful solution of the “German question“ was endeavored in 11th October 1953 through Czechoslovakian Peace Defenders Committee in Prague, where the resolution to support in every possible way the peaceful efforts of Germans with regards to their own self-determination, was granted.⁷⁴⁸

The mutual political relations would fill the pages of newspapers throughout 1950s – for example, in January 1956 on the occasion of the 80th birthday of the president of DDR, Wilhelm Pieck, a festive celebrations were arranged in Prague and one of the main Prague streets – Korunní třída, was renamed to Třída Wilhelma Piecka.⁷⁴⁹ The same month a delegation from DDR, with Walter Ulbricht as a First Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED, visited Czechoslovakia. The delegation was welcomed by a numerous crowd, lead by the foremost representatives of the state, at the festively adorned main platform of the Prague main railway station.⁷⁵⁰

The exhibitions would under the new regime acquire an additional role, as it would often be used without the pretext of the cultural enrichment as one of the ideological tools. This was the case with the exhibition in 1953 (?) presenting the life in DDR in the economical and societal circumstances related to the five year plan.⁷⁵¹ The effort to present DDR as the bearer of the positive social changes and emerging economical revival would serve both to build the capacity to relate to the western neighbour and perhaps also induce a brotherly competitiveness among the nations for the industrial and economical prowess.

The desired impact of the ideological schemes on the public - the reinforcement of the

⁷⁴⁸ Německo chce mír!, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 1953, č. 26, 1

⁷⁴⁹ Slavnostní večer na počest presidenta W. Piecka. Projev presidenta republiky Antonína Zápotockého, in: Lidová demokracie, roč. XII. Praha 3. ledna 1956, 3

Praha má třídu W. Piecka, in: Lidová demokracie, roč. XII. Praha 3. ledna 1956, 3

⁷⁵⁰ Vládní delegace NDR v Praze, in: Lidová demokracie, roč. XII. Praha 27. ledna 1956

⁷⁵¹ Pětiletý plán: výstava o životě v Německé demokratické republice. Praha: Ministerstvo informací a osvěty, 1953

brotherhood of socialist nations, would be also endeavoured through cultural exchange and instruction. Films, exhibitions and literature were to promote the mutual understanding of ČSR and DDR. Contemporary and past artists were presented within exhibitions and articles were published in the professional magazines. In the autumn of 1952 would be the Czechoslovakian sculpture exported as a part of a collective exhibition. This extensively elaborated presentation of the artistic qualities of the artists of ČSR provided a welcome opportunity for the young artists and with the participation of the most valued, seasoned artists, could claim to provide a comprehensive overview of the current sculpture.⁷⁵²

German art would be also presented in Czechoslovakia on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the foundation of DDR in 1959. The national gallery would summon the most representative works in an exhibition called *German Art of the XX. Century from the Collections of the National Gallery in Prague*.⁷⁵³ In 1963 would be organised by the joint efforts of the Czechoslovakian Army's Art Studio (AVS) and the German Nationale Volksarmee (NVA) an exhibition *the Soldiers of Peace: An Exhibition of Works of Fine Artists of the DDR and Volk Artists from the German Volk Army of DDR*, in Oblastní Galerie Vysočiny v Jihlavě. ⁷⁵⁴ The NVA would in many a respect mimic in its endeavours the AVS and the joint effort could easily be translated into a cohesive exhibition, representing painting, sculpture, political satire and films.

Also delegations of artists and heritage workers, who were either supposed to familiarize with the cultural life of the western neighbour, or to draw inspiration from its artistic tradition, visited Czechoslovakia in 1954. The pair of artists, graphic artist Hans Baltzer and sculptor Hans Kies visited during their stay not only Prague, but also Ostrava and Bratislava, bringing to the local pioneers a bust of a pioneer boy. Hans Kies would during his stay discuss the current works on the Thälmann Monument, the most

⁷⁵² Ausstellung die tschechoslowakische Skulptur. Oktober 1952 – November 1952. Berlin: Akademie der Künste 1952

⁷⁵³ Německé umění XX. století ze sbírek Národní galerie v Praze: (výstava k 10. výročí NDR). Praha: Národní galerie, 1959

⁷⁵⁴ Vojáci míru: výstava prací výtvarných umělců NDR a lidových umělců z řad Národní lidové armády NDR: obrazy, sochy, politické kresby, grafika, filmy. Praha: Názorná agitace, 1963

ambitious project, many German sculptors participated on at the time.⁷⁵⁵ Another group consisted of the main officer of the Department of Arts at the Ministry of Culture, the painter Belz, accompanied by DMs. Dr. Rudloff-Hille, a director of the art collections in Dresden and doc. Mrusek, teacher at the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg. They met with the Czechoslovakian artists and professionals from museums and historic preservation institutions, familiarizing with the cultural heritage and contemporary art.⁷⁵⁶

To the cultural exchange belonged also the promotion of living and dead German artists. One of the most widely promoted “German national” artists was Käthe Kollwitz, whose individual exhibition took place in Prague in March 1951.⁷⁵⁷ A translated monography of Kollwitz from Gerhart Strauss was published in ČSR in 1954. The justification of her high merit and rhetoric supporting her accomplishments is aligned with the German understanding of Kollwitz as the valiant fighter against peace and social injustice.⁷⁵⁸ Among the living sculptors would the most attention acquire sculptor Fritz Cremer, whose exhibition took place in Prague in 1957 at the Slovanský ostrov.⁷⁵⁹ An article in *Výtvarná práce* would summarise the highlights of Cremer's career in a conscientious selection by Jiří Mašín, acknowledging Cremer's position among German sculptors.

A discussion with Cremer, on the grounds of his authority as a professor at the German Academy of Arts and the bearer of the National Prize, would take place on 17th October 1957, following the opening of the exhibition. The discussion was preceded by a lecture on Cremer's importance by the said specialist in the field of sculpture, Jiří Mašín. Cremer himself would manifest as a loyal representative of the official art, emphasizing the need to retain ideological maturity and firm statement stemming from the scientific, i. e. Marxist point of view. He would also mention an interesting perspective of his own understanding of the Socialist Realism; conceded he consider the term inaccurate and

⁷⁵⁵ Studijní pobyt předních výtvarníků z NDR, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. 1953, č. 12

⁷⁵⁶ Československo navštívili hosté z NDR, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. 2, 1954, č. 19, 1

⁷⁵⁷ březen 1951 – Käthe Kollwitz – soubor původní grafiky (Purkyně) katalog: KC 6245

⁷⁵⁸ Josef KRÁSA: Recenze: Gerhart Strauss: Käthe Kollwitzová, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. II, 1954, č. 5; Vladimír DIVIŠ: Grafika Käthe Kollwitzové, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. II, č. 22, 12.11.1954, 6

⁷⁵⁹ Jiří MAŠÍN: Pražská výstava Fritze Cremera, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. VIII., č. 21, 5. 7. 1957, 8; Beseda s profesorem Fritzem Cremerem, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. V, č. 21, 8. 11. 1957, 10

rather uses a term “socialist art,” as to him this formulation more precisely captures the tendencies of the current art epoch.

This notion unintentionally struck the core principle of the German Socialist Realism. Whereas the Czechoslovak sculptors would with great success turn to the Myslbekian tradition, German sculptors adhered to the basic forms of Modernism and traditional inclination towards closed form. Germans strived to find the expression of the inner contents in a visual appearance of the work, that in artists mind aligned with the inner idea – in Germany in a highly specific way, originating from the legacy of Expressionism and the *Neue Sachlichkeit*.⁷⁶⁰

The apparent discrepancy in the results achieved when comparing the Czechoslovakian and German sculpture, was analysed by Josef Kovák. He noted that when the collective exhibitions *The Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts* (1953) is measured with *The Third German Art Exhibition in Dresden* (1953), the Czechoslovakian sculptural production stands a level higher, because a substantial number of exhibits is related to the design of monuments, whereas German sculpture is predominantly represented by small scale production a portraiture busts.⁷⁶¹

What is more and unveils partly the conundrum of the Socrealiasm itself, from the perspective of the Soviet Socialist Realism – the original and most authentic form of the style, the Czechoslovakian sculpture is, with the attention to realist detail, voluminous monumentality and pathos, inherited from the baroque sculpture, formally more accurate Socrealism than the German branch.

⁷⁶⁰ Compare: Miroslav LAMAČ: Dva medailony z NDR, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. V., č. 13, 5. 7. 1954, 12

⁷⁶¹ Josef KOVÁK: Poznámky k situaci výtvarného umění v NDR, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. 1953, č. 21, 5; For more see: Vladimír Diviš: Výtvarné umění NDR, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. IV. č.18-19 15. 11. 1956; ANONYM: III. německá umělecká výstava v Drážďanech, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. 1953, č. 16, xxx; Luboš HLAVÁČEK: Umění NDR: in: *Výtvarná práce*, 1958, roč. 12, č. 8, 8. 5. 1958, 12

Army's Art Studio

On the verge of the 1953 an Army's Art Studio (Armádní výtvarné studio), one of the most effective producers of the ideologically oriented art was established. It was directly subordinated to the Czechoslovak People's Army, currently under the leadership of the Minister of Defence, and son-in-law of Klement Gottwald, Alexej Čepička.⁷⁶² The studio was a functional component of the newly reorganised army and was devised to supply the Army with the works of Socialist Realism, to promote the values of the Socialism, glorify the peacemaking engagement of the army in the conflicts of the past and raise culturally aware soldiers.⁷⁶³ The studio was by its organisation mimicking the Grekov's Army Studio, which was serving the same purpose in the SSSR.⁷⁶⁴ In the words of a catalogue introduction of an exhibition called Victorious February, the foremost task of the Studio was: *“to cultivate Socialist art creativity, bound closely to the interests and needs of our People and Army, to secure its influence over the positive characteristics, especially in the young generation and using the specific attributes of fine arts to deepen Socialist Patriotism, Proletarian Internationalism and a positive relation to the building and defending of the Socialist Motherland.”*⁷⁶⁵

Vladimír Šolta, held a festive speech on the occasion of the opening of the studio and the core thoughts were summoned in the *Výtvarné umění*.⁷⁶⁶ There he foreshadowed the desirable outcomes of the establishment of this institution, which have had no predecessors on the Czechoslovakian soil.⁷⁶⁷ He noted that Czech artists were not very familiar with the military thematics and expressed his wish to promote this newly

⁷⁶² Alexej Čepička (1910-1990), a Communist politician, a Minister of Interior Trade (1947), a Minister of Justice (1948), a Minister of Defence (1950-1956), a son-in-law of the Prime minister and President Klement Gottwald.

⁷⁶³ Výtvarní umělci do společného šiku s naší lidovou armádou v boji za trvalý mír, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1., č. 5, 1950, 193 – 194. For more see: Jiří PERNES / Jaroslav POSPÍŠIL / Antonín LUKÁŠ: Alexej Čepička: šedá eminence rudého režimu. Praha 2008

⁷⁶⁴ Ch. UŠENIN: Grěkovovo studio vojenských umělců, in: *Výtvarné umění 1950*, č. 6., 362-364 The statutes of the Studio are to be found here: Archiv Historického ústavu Armády ČR, Fond Ministerstva národní obrany 1985/kr., Teze statutu Armádního výtvarného studia, viz Dokument č. II.

⁷⁶⁵ Vítězný únor, Katalog výstavy obrazů, soch a grafiky Armádního výtvarného studia. Armádní výtvarné studio. Praha 1973

⁷⁶⁶ He was named into the position of the leader of the studio in 1961

⁷⁶⁷ Vladimír ŠOLTA: Z projevu na aktivu výtvarných umělců a armády, in: *Výtvarné umění 1950*, č.9-10, 474-477

forged cooperation in the effectual way of mutual meeting and familiarising, both on the side of artists and the army. The goal was twofold – on one side to boost the connection of the soldiers to the values of patriotism, socialism and loyalty to the regime, on the other the familiarisation of the public with the heroism, vigilance and sense of togetherness and unity in the army. The Studio provided engaged artists – painters, sculptors and others with a secure livelihood and steady income, furnished them with their own atelier, tools and materials for free – a luxury many other artists could only dream of.⁷⁶⁸ The regime in turn acquired a group of artists, readily available and at its disposal, capable and willing to provide ideological art for the decoration of army-related buildings and public spaces, educating the public and strengthening the army's morale.⁷⁶⁹

The Studio was from 1952 under the leadership of a sculptor, Jaroslav Heyduk (1953-1977), in 1961 he was replaced by Vladimír Šolta. The collective of the Army's Art Studio consisted of groups, organised according to the art field. The Studio usually comprised of five to eleven artists and aside from the regular members often hosted pupils of art schools, or artistically active soldiers.⁷⁷⁰ The members were hand-picked according to their political reliability, artistic skill and readiness to conform to the requirements of the Socialist Realist method.⁷⁷¹ The collective of Jan Čumpelík, Jaromír Schoř and Alena Čermáková, painters who entered the newly established studio, were responsible for some of the most typical examples of the Socialist Realism in painting, bearing the closest visual and contentual affinity to the Stalinist current of Soviet art, ever accomplished in Czechoslovakia.⁷⁷²

In 1956 the Studio achieved the highest distinction by exhibiting together with Grekov's Studio in the Riding Hall of the Prague Castle.⁷⁷³ Aside from their creative tasks, they also engaged in lectures and meetings on the subject of fine arts, dedicated to the

⁷⁶⁸ Václav ŠMIDRKAL: *Dlátém a štětcem. Proměny Armádního výtvarného studia v letech 1953–1995*, in: *Dějiny a současnost 2008*, č. 4, 21-22

⁷⁶⁹ Tereza PETIŠKOVÁ: *Armádní výtvarné studio*, in: *Československý socialistický realismus 1948-1958*. Praha, 2002

⁷⁷⁰ PETIŠKOVÁ 2002,

⁷⁷¹ ŠMIDRKAL 2008, 22

⁷⁷² Markéta PERINGEROVÁ: *Alena Čermáková, Malba 50. let.* (A Master's Thesis, FF MU) Brno 2013

⁷⁷³ A Leaflet of the Army's Art Studio, UMPRUM

soldiers or general public. In 1961 it stood on the verge of dissolution, for the unconcealed conformance with the Stalinist methods of the fifties brought criticism upon the Studio and cost some of the most prominent members their jobs. *Vladimír Šolta* became the leader of the studio and it was transformed into a less rigid structure with gradually reemerging Modernist features from the end of the sixties. The studio then reportedly created fifteen travelling exhibitions a year – two of them major and the rest for the purposes of aesthetic education.

The members of the collective, engaged in the sculptural production, were most notably Vendelín Zdrůbecký, Bohuslav Burian, and Jan Bartoš.⁷⁷⁴ They were responsible for a large number of official sculptures with the military thematics and contributed substantially also to the decoration of public spaces. The sculpture for its character was most readily employed in various monuments: to Red Army Soldiers and political leaders, or allegories of the soldier's profession/vocation.

Vendelín Zdrůbecký is one of the best examples of conformist artists, who would otherwise be overshadowed by their more talented colleagues, but due to his ability to create in accordance with the doctrine, he enjoyed all the advantages of a distinguished artist – he participated in a great number of exhibitions, received state honours and lived in material security, occupying his position within the Studio for three decades.⁷⁷⁵ Bohuslav Burian, Zdrůbecký's generational peer also created a large number of smaller-scale sculptures for the Army and public institutions. He participated in all exhibitions of the Studio.⁷⁷⁶

⁷⁷⁴ *Vendelín Zdrůbecký* (1923 -) was a Czech sculptor. 1939-1942 at a specialised school of Woodcarving (Odborná škola řezbářská v Praze), 1942-1945 UMRUM at prof. Jan Lauda, 1945-1949 AVU at Jan Lauda and Karel Pokorný. 1982 received title Distinguished Artist

Bohuslav S. Burian (1913-1981), was a Czech sculptor. In 1936 concluded his studies at UMRUM as a pupil of K. Dvořák. 1940-1945 a soldier of the Czechoslovakian Army and subsequent member of the Army's Art Studio. Often employed his interest in the connection of the human and technology. For more see: *Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců*, sv. 1, 1950-1997. Ostrava 1997

⁷⁷⁵ As he was a part of the official current, he will be discussed more thoroughly in the following text

⁷⁷⁶ Jaroslav HAMRNÍK: Bohuslav Burian, in: AVS, sborník členů Armádního výtvarného studia. Praha : Armádní výtvarné studio Praha. 1978, nepag.

1956 – 1968

From the Destalinisation to the Prague Spring

The year of 1956 brought restructuralisation of the cultural megamachine both in Czechoslovakia and East Germany. In Moscow the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) turned the Eastern Block upside down.⁷⁷⁷ The groundbreaking speech of the Nikita Sergeyeovich Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1953-1964)⁷⁷⁸, was taking place in February 1956 in Moscow behind closed doors.⁷⁷⁹ Khrushchev made a bold political step by openly criticising the most controversial aspects of the Stalin's rule.⁷⁸⁰ He unraveled the cult of personality Stalin built around himself, brought to light the persecutions he orchestrated and purges of the army and the Party he performed. This shocking disclosure had immense effect not only over the political situation in the SSSR, but especially in Poland and Hungary.⁷⁸¹

Czechoslovakian representatives were facing the unpleasant necessity to draw consequences from this abrupt change of the Soviet political strategy - to the intense annoyance of the Party leadership, with A. Novotný in the forefront. The Czechoslovakia experienced at the time relative stabilisation of the political situation, achieved by economical and agricultural measures (even though these measures did not address the core of problems, the Party leadership had a firm belief in the viability of their

⁷⁷⁷ For more on XX. Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) see (EN): Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Great Soviet Encyclopedia, 3rd Edition. (1970-1979)

⁷⁷⁸ Nikita Sergeyeovich Khrushchev (1953-1964), a Communist politician, 1953 - 1964 First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 1958 - 1964 Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

For more see (EN) and (CZ): William TAUBMAN: Khrushchev: The Man and His Era. New York 2003; (EN) Melanie ILIC / Jeremy SMITH: Khrushchev in the Kremlin: policy and government in the Soviet Union, 1953-1964. London 2011

⁷⁷⁹ This is why it is often referred to as the "Secret Speech".

⁷⁸⁰ Nikita S. KHRUSHCHEV: Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the 20th Party Congress. Moscow 1956 For more on Khrushchev's foreign policy see: Michal REIMAN: Chruščov a jeho zahraniční politika, in: Studená válka 1954-1964. Brno 2000, 15

⁷⁸¹ KAPLAN 2005, 369

decisions).⁷⁸² The same can be said of the DDR, which was in a comparable situation – its leadership was under intense pressure, but unlike Poland or Hungary, there were not substantial personal changes in the highest levels of the Party and no major consequent alterations in the cultural politics.⁷⁸³

The critique of Stalin worked as a catalysator of the pressure, accumulated under the surface of the political and cultural organisations in the Czechoslovakia.⁷⁸⁴ It caused an avalanche of doubts and questions of the legitimacy of the former political leadership of KSČ and its subordinated institutions.⁷⁸⁵ Jan Drda was among those, who hastened to take part in the criticism and who denounced Stalin's cult of personality. He named especially *the Stalin's Monument* and the painting *Thanksgiving to Generalissimus Stalin by Czechoslovakian people* as particular examples of this cult on the Czechoslovakian soil.⁷⁸⁶

Whereas in 1948-1952 the power structure achieved a degree of control over the writers and artists and succeeded in the endeavour to turn some of them into the providers of ideologically conformist art, after 1956 this fragile construction began to crumble. The alleviation of the tough political line in the politics of the SSSR resulted in increase of resistance among artists, who questioned the very roots of the official politics.⁷⁸⁷ The most substantial criticism was proclaimed at the II. Congress of Writers 21st – 28th.⁷⁸⁸ The foremost personalities such as František Hrubín⁷⁸⁹ and Jaroslav

⁷⁸² Ibidem

For a German translation of the Czechoslovakian situation analysis see especially: Jiří PERNES: Von der verschleppten Reform zum beschleunigten Wandel, in: Thomas GROßBÖLTING (et al.): Kommunismus in der Krise. Göttingen 2007, 137–148

⁷⁸³ Michael LAUSBERG: DDR 1949–1961, Marburg 2009

For more see: Stephan MERL: Entstalinisierung, Reformen und Wettlauf der Systeme 1953–1964, in: Stefan PLAGGENBORG / Manfred HELLMANN / Klaus ZERNACK / Gottfried SCHRAMM (Ed.): Handbuch der Geschichte Russlands. Volume 5: 1945–1991. Vom Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges bis zum Zusammenbruch der Sowjetunion. Tb 2., Stuttgart 2002, 175–203; Thomas GROßBÖLTING / Roger ENGELMANN / Hermann WENTKER (Ed. et al): Kommunismus in der Krise: Die Entstalinisierung 1956 und die Folgen. Analysen und Dokumente der BSTU. Göttingen 2007

⁷⁸⁴ Čestmír JEŘÁBEK: V zajetí Stalinismu. Z deníků 1948-1958. Brno 2008, 320-321

⁷⁸⁵ PÁVOVÁ 2009, 128 – 129 Václav Kopecký was one of those politicians,

⁷⁸⁶ KNAPÍK 2006, 255

⁷⁸⁷ JEŘÁBEK 2008, 327

⁷⁸⁸ (CZ) Sjezd československých spisovatelů

Památník národního písemnictví, fond Svazu spisovatelů – neinventarizovaný fond, II. sjezd SČSS – 1956, stenografické záznamy, sign. 21/C/27, karton 367

For more on the significance of the Congress to the development of cultural politics in the year 1956 see: Jana

Seifert⁷⁹⁰ called for “destalinisation,” so that the writers would yet again become the conscience of the nation, and objected to the interference of the State and Party to the writers' agenda.⁷⁹¹ Jeřábek in his memoirs marked Hrubín's speech as “*burning indictment against the tyrannical regime*“.⁷⁹²

In combination with a notoriously ambiguous doctrine of Socialist Realism, it launched a diversion of many fields of culture from the strict political line. From thence the low-grade tension between the power and artists grew into a full blown discrepancy.⁷⁹³ Together with the emergence of a young generation of artists, who began the return to Modernism and raised the debate on the character of art and creativity under Socialism, the tough control of the pre-1956 was impossible.⁷⁹⁴

In 1956 also the members of unions, publishing houses and intelligentsia, began to call for changes in the organisational structure and greater independence of their respective institutions. This eventually contributed to decentralisation – carefully contrived by the Party leadership itself. The cultural megamachine administrative was already grown through with loyal communists and the tough centralization and the Party assumed, the grip could be somewhat loosened without harm to the essentials of their power. In agreement with these tendencies was also the establishment of the Union of Architects (Svaz Architektů), which broke away from the SČSVU.

The 1956 would therefore bring tumultuous changes, influencing all fields of arts and allowing the Modernism to resurface in the creative endeavours of the younger generation. The Socialist Realism would not lose its exclusive position and universal

NEUMANNOVÁ: Strana a spisovatelé v roce 1956. II. sjezd SČSS, Praha 1969; Martin SVOBODA: II. sjezd SČSS v kontextu kulturní politiky let 1948 – 1956 (Magisterská diplomová práce, Masarykova Univerzita) Brno 2011;

⁷⁸⁹ František Hrubín (1910-1971) was a Czechoslovakian writer, poet and playwright, who was a life-long member of the KSČ. In 1960 he became the chairman of the Poetry Friends Club.

⁷⁹⁰ Jaroslav Seifert (1901-1986) was a Czechoslovakian writer, poet and journalist, Nobel Prize winner. In 1920's a co-founder of Devětsil group and foremost Avantgarde artist. A life—long member of the Communist Party, on several occasions contributed to critical reflections of the cultural politics of the Party.

⁷⁹¹ František HRUBÍN: Z diskuse na II. sjezdu čs. Spisovatelů, in: Nový život 1956, č. 5, 526–532;

František HRUBÍN, „Čo chce ľud od poézie – a čo mu dávala“, in: Kultúrny život 11, 1956, č. 16b, 11

⁷⁹² JEŘÁBEK 2008, 327

⁷⁹³ KAPLAN 2008, 310

⁷⁹⁴ Ibidem, 327

promotion by the political leadership, yet ever since the 1956 would the careful and circumspect art “probes” appear within exhibitions and influence the atmosphere in culture. Considering the daring experiments of the first two decades of the 20th century art, were the attempts of the post-war generation “tame” and therefore coined by Josef Brunker as “tame Modernism”.⁷⁹⁵

The atmosphere of changes in the cultural apparatus within the Party, teamed with the urgent need of the young artists to seek new ways of expression, would inevitably result in the efforts of both to find mutually agreeable compromise. The leadership was aware of the necessity to provide some space to the artists, had they wished to prevent an open confrontation, allowing therefore already in 1955 the existence of a gallery for the young artists, so-called Gallery of Youth - Galerie Mladých u Řečických - in Vodičkova street.⁷⁹⁶

As a direct consequence of the debate over the current situation in SČSVU, a new draft of the statutes of the union was devised by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The general professional public was familiarised with it on the pages of *Výtvarná práce* on 18th October 1956.⁷⁹⁷ The suggestions of the young artists, regarding the grouping of artists, were embodied in the text by permission of the existence of artistic groups.⁷⁹⁸

As a result, several groups, with a pioneering group Máj in the forefront, emerged and experienced a level of freedom unheard of before, as the selection of art works for exhibitions was done by the members of the group rather than by the external supervising commissions.⁷⁹⁹

The East German political situation in 1956 was very imminently bound to the development in other satellite countries.⁸⁰⁰ Both politicians and intellectuals were well

⁷⁹⁵ Josef BRUKNER: Krotká generace, Poznámky na okraj mladého výtvarnictví, in: *Květen* VI., č. 9, květen Praha 1958, 496

⁷⁹⁶ Adriana PRIMUSOVÁ: MÁJ 57. Skupina Máj 57: úsilí o uměleckou svobodu na přelomu 50. a 60 let. (Ex. Cat. Císařská konírna Pražského hradu 17.8.-15.12.2007) Praha 2007, 16

⁷⁹⁷ Its final approval was achieved 22th December 1956

⁷⁹⁸ Návrh stanov Svazu Československých výtvarných umělců (pozn. 21), s. 1, 5 – 9., Stanovy Svazu Československých výtvarných umělců. In: *Výtvarná práce* IV., č. 14, 11. 7.1956, Praha. s. 5.

⁷⁹⁹ MÁJ 57. Skupina Máj 57: úsilí o uměleckou svobodu na přelomu 50. a 60 let. (Ex. Cat. Císařská konírna Pražského hradu 17.8.-15.12.2007) Praha 2007

⁸⁰⁰ For a study of the situation in DDR, as related to other satellite countries, see: András B. HEGEDÜS / Manfred

aware of the seriousness of the situation, which threatened to destabilise whole Eastern bloc by the ever increasing social turmoil. The 1956 was the time when the callings for reform in the political and cultural area were getting louder.⁸⁰¹ The leadership of SED adopted uncompromising attitude towards critical voices, which is most often demonstrated on the case of Wolfgang Harich.⁸⁰² A philosopher and journalist, lifelong Communist and member of SED, presented to a Soviet Ambassador Georgy Pushkin and also to Walter Ulbricht himself a manifesto of reforms, summarising ideas, which most intellectuals would wish to come to fruition. He not only demanded restructuralisation of political and economical aspects of DDR, but also independent elections, the termination of the Stasi, allowing of legal opposition groups existence and steps to initiate reunification of both Eastern and Western Germany. Harich was accused of Revisionism and plotting against the state, stripped of his membership in SED and imprisoned.⁸⁰³

The process with Harich served as a welcomed pretext for accentuation of the fight against the so-called "Revisionism", peaking in the following year of 1957.⁸⁰⁴ As well as in the Czechoslovakia, the Stalinists in the leadership of SED did not embrace with enthusiasm the New Course and took advantage of the first opportunity to reinstate the tough course. The cleanses were accompanied by massive numbers of imprisoned intellectuals and also procedural changes in the administration.⁸⁰⁵ At the 33. Conference of Zentral Kommission was established Kommission für Fragen der Kultur beim Politbüro der SED with Alfred Kurella as its director.⁸⁰⁶ This commission with its director significantly contributed to the prosecution of artists who were deemed "Revisionists" and constant monitoring of artistic creativity for all traces of decadence.

WILKE (Ed.): Satelliten nach Stalins Tod - Der 'neue Kurs': 17. Juni 1953 in der DDR / Ungarische Revolution 1956. Berlin 2000

⁸⁰¹ Jan FOITZIK (ed.): Entstalinisierungskrise in Ostmitteleuropa 1953–1956. Vom 17. Juni bis zum ungarischen Volksaufstand. Politische, militärische und nationale Dimensionen, Paderborn 2001, 21

⁸⁰² Wolfgang Harich (1923-1955) A philosopher and journalist, life-long Communist and member of SED. From 1949 professor at the Humboldt University in Berlin. 1950 arrested, 1964 released and 1990 rehabilitated.

⁸⁰³ Andreas HEYER (Ed.): Wolfgang Harich in den Kämpfen seiner Zeit. Berlin 2010

⁸⁰⁴ Manfred HERTWIG: Deformationen – die Rebellion den Intellektuellen in der DDR, in: Reinhard CRUSIUS (Ed.): Entstalinisierung: XX. Parteitag Der KPdSU und Seine Folgen, Frankfurt am Main 1977, 477ff

⁸⁰⁵ FOITZIK 2001, 21ff

⁸⁰⁶ Alfred Kurella (1895-1975) A German writer and Communist functionary of the SED, life-long proponent of Communism, active in all stages of the development of the East German post-war cultural politics. 1955 - 1957 the First Director of the Institute für Literatur in Leipzig, active also in the Akademie der Künste.

GILLEN 2005, 81

The Kulturkonferenz der SED in October 1957 was another step to the promotion of this counter-Revisionist campaign.⁸⁰⁷ The conclusion of the Conference elaborated on the necessity to fight with all expressions of westernized Modernism, and what was newly condemned under the term “Dekadenz“, formerly so often spelled formalism.⁸⁰⁸ It provided the artists with the common arsenal of ideological clichés, emphasizing the obligation to create according to their own sense of responsibility in a manner, that would make their art accessible to the People.⁸⁰⁹ In case particular art work did not appeal to the Kommission für Fragen der Kultur beim Politbüro der SED, it could be easily denounced by the claim that the respective art did not see eye to eye with the People.⁸¹⁰ Eventually, the Kulturkonferenz der SED in October 1957 resulted most importantly in the consolidation of the power SED exercised over the professional lives of artists, as well as over the artistic produce.

The Bitterfelder Weg, established in 1959 at the Bitterfelder Konferenz 24 April 1959, belonged to a wider strategy of Siebenjahrplan, announced at V. Parteitag der SED 10 – 16 July 1958.⁸¹¹ The conference brought together professional writers with non-professionals, amateurs with working background. The essential goal in the sphere of arts was to overcome the gap between art and life and between the artist and the People.⁸¹² In that respect the most essential requirement the leadership of SED imposed upon the artists, was to make “Volkskunst“ by approaching from closer distance the life and work of the working People.⁸¹³ The artists were encouraged to visit factories and agricultural sites in order to familiarise themselves with the thematics on deeper,

⁸⁰⁷ BArch, DY 34/18863, 36/70/5962, Vorbereitung der Kulturkonferenz der SED am 23./24. Oktober 1957 in Berlin

⁸⁰⁸ DAMUS 1991, 158

⁸⁰⁹ Unsere Kultur muß sozialistisch sein. Kulturkonferenz des ZK der SED gestern in Berlin eröffnet, in: Neues Deutschland, 24.10.1957 / Berlin

⁸¹⁰ Ibidem

⁸¹¹ Zweite Bitterfelder Konferenz 1964. Protokoll der von der Ideologischen Kommission beim Politbüro des ZK der SED und dem Ministerium für Kultur am 24. und 25. April im Kulturpalast des Elektrochemischen Kombinats Bitterfeld abgehaltenen Konferenz, Berlin 1964

Compare: Bitterfelder Weg, in: Eugen BLUME / Roland MÄRZ: Kunst in der DDR, Eine Retrospektive der Nationalgalerie. Berlin 2003, 317

Bitterfelder Konferenzen, in: Kulturpolitisches Wörterbuch. Berlin 1978

⁸¹² Walter ULBRICHT: Zur Kulturpolitik. Rede, gehalten in Bitterfeld vor Schriftstellern, Brigaden der Sozialistische Arbeit und Kulturschaffenden. Berlin 1959

⁸¹³ Greif zur Feder, Kumpel! Protokoll der Autorenkonferenz des Mitteldeutschen Verlages Halle an 24. April 1959 in Kulturpalast de Elektrochemischen Kombinat Bitterfeld. Halle 1959

personal basis⁸¹⁴. The workers, in this instance miners, were on the other hand encouraged to grasp the pen and produce art with the work environment thematics.⁸¹⁵ On 24 – 25 April 1964 took place the second Bitterfelder Konferenz, where the conclusions of the first conference were repeated and its goals further encouraged.⁸¹⁶

In Czechoslovakia the futility of the continuous effort to achieve ultimate subordination of the artists to the will of the state lead to the only possible development – the decision of the Party to allow some degree of a dialogue of the Party and cultural workers on the questions of art. The 1963 brought a revelation of the circumstances of the political processes in the early fifties.⁸¹⁷ The strain on the art unions to follow the method of Socialist Realism relaxed and various previously undesirable tendencies were perceived more leniently when the XII. Congress of the KSČ called for the fight against the consequences of the cult of personality and elimination of the dogmatism.⁸¹⁸

9 – 11 December of 1964 took place a Congress of SČSVU, which among other tasks was expected to address conclusions of XII. Congress of the KSČ.⁸¹⁹ The leadership emphasized in the introductory statement the necessity to promote “the variety of art”, contribute to “active role and dialogue with current art in the world”. Albeit the formulations linger still around the “responsible approach of the artists to the society,” the shift in the rhetorics towards greater flexibility and openness to the influences from abroad is clearly comprehensible. The Party was fully aware that control, exercised over the art unions in the fifties was long gone and the tension, resulting from different ideas of the Party and union leaderships became a new standard. In the middle of the decade the pressure, issuing from the art unions grew substantially and exerted strain on the Communist power itself.⁸²⁰

⁸¹⁴ Compare to the same tendency in Czechoslovakia

⁸¹⁵ Walter ULBRICHT: Prinzipienfestigkeit ist nicht Dogmatismus. Aus der Rede Walter Ulbrichts auf der II. Bitterfelder Konferenz, in: *Bildende Kunst* 7/1964, 339ff

⁸¹⁶ *Zweiter Bitterfelder Konferenz 1964*. Berlin 1964

⁸¹⁷ KAPLAN 2008, 280

⁸¹⁸ (CZ) XII. sjezd Komunistické strany Československa. Praha 4.-8. prosince 1962.

For a resolution of the Congress see: Antonín NOVOTNÝ: Sjednotit všechny síly za splnění usnesení XII. sjezdu KSČ: rezoluce. Praha 1964; General informations are provided by: Karel KOZELEK / Ladislav ŘEZNÍČEK: XII. sjezd KSČ. Praha 1963

⁸¹⁹ Usnesení sjezdu SČSVU, in: Dagmar DUŠKOVÁ / Pavlína MORGANOVÁ / Jiří ŠEVČÍK: *České umění 1938 – 1989, programy, kritické texty, dokumenty*. Praha 2001, 71-81

⁸²⁰ KAPLAN 2008, 280

Some of the most often discussed subjects were the engagement of art in society, partisanship of art and the role of the Party in the dictate of the art works contents. In the mid sixties, even the most staunch communist artists began to question the leading role of the Party in the rules of the creative process.⁸²¹ The progress towards further liberation of artists mirrored in the final Resolution on Culture, published on the occasion of the XIII. Congress of the KSČ in 1966.⁸²² This resolution attempted to reformulate the relationship of the Party and culture by allowing larger space for the creativity of the artists, but insisted upon the leading role of the Communist Party in the power structure itself, as well as in the provision of the general line of political and ideological direction.⁸²³ The art as a tool of the official politics ceased to fulfil its role and artists gradually adopted more oppositional tendencies, weakening the official line.

The early sixties in East Germany were on the way to industrial modernisation and in the sign of ever increasing efforts to promote economic and agricultural growth.⁸²⁴ The SED sought to fulfil the Bitterfelder Weg in order to promote the goals of the growth in all spheres of public life. 14. Plenum des SED in 1961 serves as a proof of the unchangeable character of the official dogma, as it again ventures against the so called *Dekadenz*, which is most often the Expressionism and which was marked as an instrument of the political fight of the imperialists.⁸²⁵ Therefore the official space for a development of modernist tendencies was polarised into the praiseworthy art of Socialist Realism and art promoting the interest of the enemies of the state.⁸²⁶ In order to prevent massive migration of East Germans, the Berlin wall was built, which resulted in more profound alienation of the East German artists from the modern art exhibition in the western part of Berlin. Also the Bitterfelder Weg was yet again promoted at VII. Parteitag der SED in 1965, in effect, however, it was entirely pointless.

⁸²¹ Ibidem, 281

⁸²² XIII. sjezd Komunistické strany Československa: Praha 31. května - 4. června 1966. For a comprehensive overview of the conclusions of the Congress see: Komunistická strana Československa. Sjezd. XIII. sjezd Komunistické strany Československa: Praha 31. V. - 4. VI. 1966

⁸²³ KAPLAN 2008, 281

⁸²⁴ DAMUS 1991, 183,

⁸²⁵ 14. Plenum des ZK der SED 23.11. – 26.11. 1961, in: Schubbe documents 229, 742

⁸²⁶ NIEDHOFER, 177-178

Transformation and Socrealist Sculpture 1958-1962 in ČSR

The sorely felt rigidity of the Stalinist years made any artistic experiment impossible and the young generation made use of the weakened system after 1956 to push through their essential objective – the possibility to experiment according to their best ability and use the results in the public space – in exhibitions and commissions. The artistic groups, gathered in the Bloc of artistic groups, contained the progressive members of the young generation of sculptors born in 1920s. They would mostly come from the school of Josef Wagner, among them Miloslav Chlupáč, Zdeněk Palcr, Eva Kmentová or Vladimír Preclík.⁸²⁷ They concluded their education in the 1950s and were eager to come into the open and present themselves as the representatives of a new, less dogmatic and more individual art.⁸²⁸

A partial lessening of the categorically negative approach towards individualism in art from the side of the SČSVU, resulted in greater variety and freedom in exhibitions, where works of the Socialist Realism were gradually ceasing in prevalence.⁸²⁹ Figural sculpture and realistic rendition of the Socrealist style would lose its exclusive right to every single conformist work of art also in the public space. A number of abstract and modernist works would appear, especially in the architecture bound sculpture, where the applied arts would seamlessly mingle with high arts to deliver refreshing decoration and background to the daily lives of the people.⁸³⁰

Yet, the official line of SČSVU was quite pronouncedly lagging behind the artistic

⁸²⁷ (CZ) Blok tvůrčích skupin

⁸²⁸ The situation within Czechoslovakian culture addressed in various perspectives in: Marie JUDLOVÁ: Česká kultura na přelomu 50. a 60. let: kolokvium konané Galerií hl. města Prahy u příležitosti retrospektivy Jiřího Balcara: Dům U kamenného zvonu 22.-23. června 1988. Praha: Galerie hlavního města Prahy 1992

⁸²⁹ Also the number of ideological exhibitions dropped significantly throughout 1958-1962.

⁸³⁰ To the post-war generation see: Jiří ŠETLÍK: Umělecká a občanská odpovědnost poválečné generace, in: Výtvarné umění: The magazine for contemporary art: Čtvrtletník pro současné umění / Quarterly for contemporary art, č. 3-4, 1995. 8-19; Jiří ŠETLÍK: Bilance československého sochařství. Problémy vývoje československého výtvarného umění v dvaceti letech osvobozené vlasti, in? Výtvarné umění, č. 15, roč. 4-5, 1965. 145-167

novelties. In the 1960 at the Congress of the SČSVU the general secretary of the ÚV KSČ held a speech where he marked abstraction as an art form, incompatible with the Socialism.⁸³¹ Also the inertia of the monumental sculpture production caused distinct belatement, not able to keep the accelerated pace of the cultural changes. *A Steel Worker* (Hutník) by Alois Sopr, designed for the administrative building of ČKD in Prague – Karlín, was contested in 1949, created in 1957 was installed no sooner than 1960.⁸³² (Fig. 60) *The bronze doors of the Vítkov Memorial*, prepared by Josef Malejovský from 1952 were installed six years later, in 1958.⁸³³ (Fig. 51) The lengthy realisation of monumental sculpture would result in almost seamless continuity between the Socrealism of the 1950s and the era of Normalisation from 1968, when would the Socrealism experience its second Renaissance.

The transformation was also facilitated through the generational change - the demise of some significant personalities, born in the 1890s, whose talent granted the exceptional level of the Socrealism of the early phase. The first among them was Otakar Švec, who committed suicide in 1955, following the difficulties and denigration after the installation of the Monument to Stalin.⁸³⁴ An outstanding medal and relief maker Otakar Španiel, deceased the same year.⁸³⁵ Prematurely would demise in 1957 the teacher of the generation of sculptors, which would shape the Czechoslovakian sculpture in the years to come – Josef Wagner.⁸³⁶ Jan Lauda, another of the powerful generation of Štursa's pupils, would follow him in 1959.⁸³⁷

Only few years afterwards, in 1962, would die Karel Pokorný, who beside his fruitful pre-war career, was one of the most respected Socrealists.⁸³⁸ Pokorný was honoured by a number of exhibitions both during his life and after his death. Not only throughout the fifties, also in 1971 his legacy of Socrealist art was still understood by the official theoreticians as a substantial contribution to the development of the Czechoslovakian

⁸³¹ Jiří HENDRYCH: Projev na Sjezdu SČSVU. In: DUŠKOVÁ / MORGANOVÁ / ŠEVČÍK 2001, 234-238

⁸³² Václav PROCHÁZKA: Alois Sopr. Plzeň 1982, 24

⁸³³ Jana HOFMEISTEROVÁ: Josef Malejovský – bronzová vrata, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 1959, č. 7, 304-305

⁸³⁴ Rudla CEINAR: Žulový Stalin: Osudy pomníku a jeho autora, Praha 2008

⁸³⁵ Rozloučení s Otakarem Španielem. Projev předsedy ÚSČSVU Karla Pokorného, in: Výtvarná práce, 25. 2. 1955

⁸³⁶ Jan LAUDA: Vzpomínka na Josefa Wagnera, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 7, č. 3, 1957. 97-101

⁸³⁷ Antonín PELC: Vzpomínka na Jana Laudu, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 9, č. 4, 1959. 146-149

⁸³⁸ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Odkaz díla Karla Pokorného, in: Výtvarná kultura, roč. 7, č. 1, 1983. 30-35

socialist art and remembered by a summarising exhibition in the Mánes under the title *National Artist – Karel Pokorný*.⁸³⁹

The first comprehensive exhibition in a decade, where the exhibits were selected without the supervising body, was *The Young Art* (Mladé umění), orchestrated by the artistic group Máj 57.⁸⁴⁰ The exhibition would present works, chosen by the artists themselves, who would put these on show on their own responsibility.⁸⁴¹ The most valuable contribution to the exhibition was brought by Robert Piesen, Richard Fremund, Libor Fára, who were accompanied by twenty other artists, among them also sculptors Zdeněk Palcr, Miloslav Chlupáč, Miroslav Vystrčil, Dagmar Hendrychová.⁸⁴² The sculptures within the exhibition reportedly leveraged the Gutfreundian legacy, while retaining lyrical and intimate note.⁸⁴³

The effort to address the Modernist legacy resurfaced also in the eastern metropolis of Brno, where the exhibition of the pioneers of the Czech modernism, titled *Founders of the Modern Czech Art* in 1957, took place. There the youngest among artists could familiarise themselves with the roots of Modernism.⁸⁴⁴ The prolonged restriction of artistic freedom in the previous decade and following release of the gathered momentum resulted in elevated artistic activity and subsequent exhibitions.⁸⁴⁵ The first comprehensive nationwide exhibition of the new tendencies took place in Brno and was called *The Exhibition of the Young Artists of Czechoslovakia 1958*.⁸⁴⁶

⁸³⁹ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Karel Pokorný: výbor z díla. Výstavní síň Mánes, Praha, 1971

⁸⁴⁰ Mladé umění (Obecní dům, červen 1957). Praha: Svaz čs. výtvarných umělců, 1957

⁸⁴¹ Adriana PRIMUSOVÁ: MÁJ 57. Skupina Máj 57: úsilí o uměleckou svobodu na přelomu 50. a 60 let. (Ex. Cat. Císařská konírna Pražského hradu 17.8.-15.12.2007) Praha 2007, 33

For more on the subject of the exhibitions of Máj 57 see: Marie KLIMEŠOVÁ: Průkopníci, jejich úspěchy a omyly: Skupina Máj, in: Adriana PRIMUSOVÁ: MÁJ 57. Skupina Máj 57: úsilí o uměleckou svobodu na přelomu 50. a 60 let. (Ex. Cat. Císařská konírna Pražského hradu 17.8.-15.12.2007) Praha 2007, 55

⁸⁴² Vojtěch LAHODA: Krotký modernismus, in: Marie JUDLOVÁ: (ed.): Ohniska znovuzrození: České umění 1956 - 1963: (Ex. Cat. Kat. 28. 7. - 23. 10. 1994) Praha: Galerie hlavního města Prahy, 1994,

⁸⁴³ Petr WITTLICH / Josef KRÁSA: K výstavě mladých. Výstava Skupiny Máj 57 v Obecním domě v Praze, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. V., 21. 6. 1957, 9

⁸⁴⁴ (CZ) Zakladatelé moderního českého umění (Ex. Cat. Dům umění města Brna, 6.10. – 3.11. 1957.,) Brno 1957

⁸⁴⁵ The resurrection of the Czechoslovakian modern art was addressed in a number of texts and anthologies, notably:

Marie JUDLOVÁ: (ed.): Ohniska znovuzrození: České umění 1956 - 1963: (Ex. Cat. Kat. 28. 7. - 23. 10. 1994) Praha: Galerie hlavního města Prahy, 1994

⁸⁴⁶ (CZ) Umění mladých výtvarníků Československa 1958

Václav ZYKMUND: Výstava Mladých v Brně, in: Výtvarná práce roč. VI., č. 11, 21. 6. 1958, 2-3

The changes, mirrored in the exhibitions, contributed to the rehabilitation of the Avantgarde and Modernism, until then perceived as bourgeois and decadent treat for the elites and a tool of disintegration employed by the „reactionaires“.⁸⁴⁷ A number of art groups, such as Trasa or UB12 would help to introduce new perspectives, approximating Czechoslovakian artists yet again to their western counterparts. Nevertheless, the attempts of the young artists in these years were still “probes,” more than mature quest for individual expression. Utilizing the formal language of the classical Moderne, they were heavily indebted to the decades old tradition of the modern art and therefore coined by Josef Bruncker as “tame Modernism“.⁸⁴⁸

The talented young sculptors, mostly from the school of Josef Wagner – Miloslav Chlupáč, Zdeněk Palcr, Eva Kmentová (among others), all of them born during 1920s and concluding their education in the 1950s would become the front representatives of the independent Czechoslovakian sculpture, as it is understood today.⁸⁴⁹ Joined by older sculptors, such as Karel Hladík, they ventured to find their individual artistic expression

⁸⁴⁷ Josef CÍSAŘOVSKÝ: Výstava Umění mladých výtvarníků Československa 1958, in: Dagmar DUŠKOVÁ/ Pavlína MORGANOVÁ / Jiří ŠEVČÍK: České umění 1938 – 1989, programy, kritické texty, dokumenty. Praha 2001, 71-81

⁸⁴⁸ Josef BRUKNER: Krotká generace, Poznámky na okraj mladého výtvarnictví, in: Květen VI., č. 9, květen Praha 1958, 496

⁸⁴⁹ For more on the legacy of Josef Wagner see: Jiří ŠETLÍK: Sochařská škola Josefa Waagnera, in: Jindřich CHALUPECKÝ (Ed.): Sborník památce Václava Navrátila. Praha 1987, 47-53; Jiří HLUŠIČKA: Sochařský odkaz Josefa Waagnera, in: Výtvarná kultura, roč. 7, č. 3, 1983, 23-26

All of the authors, having a short biographical have in common their participation in the unprecedented surge of activity in the artistic sphere of the late 1950s and 1960s.

Miloslav Chlupáč (1920-2008), a Czech sculptor, apprenticed during the Second World War as a stone mason, also in the Prague studio of Otakar Velinský, later pupil of Josef Wagner at UMPRUM. From 1946 to a member of the group Máj 57. In 1968 he became the chairman of the Blok tvůrčích skupin (Bloc of Creative Groups). In the 1970s and 1980s he was banned from the public exhibiting and could not work as a professional sculptor. He was not allowed to exhibit from the 1970s to the 1980s. Chlupáč would work in Prague until his death in 2008. For more on Chlupáč from the perspective of his contemporaries see: Jiří ŠETLÍK: Miloš Chlupáč a Zbyněk Sekal, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 13, č. 24-25, 18.12. 1965, 14

Zdeněk Palcr (1927-1996), a Czech sculptor, restorer and poster designer, 1945-1950 studied UMPRUM at professor Josef Wagner with a study stay in 1948-49 in Bulgarian Sofia with prof. Lazarov. 1957 membership in the artistic group Máj. 1969-72 he was also active in the a committee of painters, sculptors and graphic designers of the SČSVU. Appreciated for his artistic cohesion and exceptional quality of his works. For a recent work on Palcr, including bibliography see: Iva MLADIČOVÁ: Zdeněk Palcr. (Rigorosum thesis at FF UK). Praha 2015

Eva Kmentová (1928-1980), a Czech sculptor, wife to sculptor Olbram Zoubek. 1946 at UMPRUM in the Josef Wagner studio, where she graduated in 1951, working since then in her Žižkov studio. Her work, spanning from figuration to minimalism was honoured by a number of exhibitions and her legacy is valued highly by the professional public. See: Jindřich CHALUPECKÝ, Eva Kmentová, Praha 1977, more recently: Ludmila VACHTOVÁ / Polana BREGANTOVÁ (Eds.): Teď: práce Evy Kmentové. Praha 2006

through the inspiration by the art of the West, especially France, Italy or Great Britain, together with still influential modernist inter-war art, by exploring abstract and unorthodox forms of sculpture.

At the beginning of far-reaching changes in the sphere of art stood the participation of Czechoslovakia at *The World Exhibition Expo* in Bruxelles the same year.⁸⁵⁰ The Party representatives allowed greater freedom of expression of artists, participating in the design of the pavilion and decorations. The Czechoslovak Pavilion by František Cubr, Josef Hrubý and Zdeněk Pokorný with its simple and elegant form, received the distinction of the best pavillion at the Expo. The Grand Prix of Expo International Film Festival won the science fiction film by Karel Zeman, *Facing the Flag* (*Vynález zkázy*).⁸⁵¹

The exhibition would with regards to sculpture demonstrate the phenomenon, typical for the following decade – the coexistence (rather a ceasefire) of the Socrealism and the “modern art” tendencies, enriched with occasional attempts to create a combination of both. Vjačeslav Irmanov's high-relief *Steel Work* (*Hutnictví* 1960) presented at the Expo 1958 would maintain the familiar Socrealist rendition of professions.⁸⁵² (Fig. 61) Vladimír Jiroudek – *Allegory of Music* (*Alegorie Hudby*) would combine a Cubist abstract background with a figural motive, showing the ambition to render familiar topics in a nonconformist way.

The attempts to arrive to a modern form while retaining the traditional topic would sometimes result in rather peculiar works of art, especially in the period of the 1958-1962 when the transformation was taking place. The industrial Ostrava, where the subjects of mining and steel works were traditionally well rooted, provides an intriguing

⁸⁵⁰ Vít HAVRÁNEK / Konstantina HLAVÁČKOVÁ/ Jiří HULÁK, (eds.): *Bruselský sen, Československá účast na světové výstavě Expo 58 v Bruselu a životní styl 1. poloviny 60. let* (Ex. cat. Galerie hlavního města Prahy, Moravská galerie) Praha 2008, 200 – 233

For more on the Czechoslovakian participation at Expo 1958 see: Emilie BENEŠOVÁ / Karolina ŠIMŮNKOVÁ: *EXPO '58: příběh československé účasti na Světové výstavě v Bruselu*. Praha 2008

⁸⁵¹ Havránek / Hlaváčková/ Hulák 2008, 200-233

⁸⁵² For more on Vjačeslav Irmanov's high relief “*Steel Work, Mine Work and Agriculture*” (1955-1960) see: Martin STRAKOŠ: *Kulturní domy na Ostravsku v kontextu architektury a umění 20. století*. Ostrava 2012; For more on Jan Simota and his Ostravian works: Vlastimil VINTER: *Jan Simota: [monografie s ukázkami z výtvarného díla]*. Praha 1988

examples of this tendency – mirroring in the figural allegories of a profession, an indispensable genre of the local artists and subject of many commissions.

The figural, “cubist shaped” *Steel Worker* (Hutník, 1961) from an unknown author, was placed in front of the entrance into the Vítkovice Steelworks on the occasion of the exhibition *Ostrava za socialistické životní prostředí* (Ostrava for the Socialist Environment) and is now lost. (Fig. 62).⁸⁵³ The figure is reduced into simplified angular shapes of the limbs and drapery, delivering awkward feeling of half-hearted modernism. This approach was repeated in a sculpture of the same name and topic by Emil Sedlák (1965), who does not fall short of its predecessor with regards to the stiff clumsiness of the figure.⁸⁵⁴

Jana Laštovková Bartošová and Karel Kronych would create a decorative lattice for the entrance vestibule of a new administration building of the power plant Třebovice. The *Production of Electricity* (Výroba elektřiny, 1961-1962) is a composition, consisting of wrought sheet metal and shaped rods, harbouring groups of small-scale figures – an example of the endeavour to merge the customary figuralism with an abstract metal structure.⁸⁵⁵ (Fig. 63) One is reminded of the Gutfreundian Social civilist sculptural teracottas, yet the tendency, ascribed to the two above named works is distinguishable too – the figures have sharp edges and hefty limbs.

Whereas some of the Ostravian sculptors obviously strived for a novel solutions to their artistic endeavours (often with questionable results) others would adhere to the conservative Socrealism and both these tendencies would overlap. The New Society (Nová společnost), adorning the façade of Dům kultury in Ostrava-Poruba by Jan Kavan (1958-1961) depicting in the larger than life proportions the traditional professions of the Ostrava region, is entirely conservative. (Fig. 64) The same applies to the individual figure of a Steel Worker by Antonín Ivanský (1959-1962), *Milicionář* (Militiaman 1961-1962) by Vladislav Gajda.

⁸⁵³ Hutník / Slévač. Dílo zaniklé, in: <http://ostravskesochoy.cz/dilo/821-Hutnik-Slevac> (Retrieved 12.3. 2017)

⁸⁵⁴ Hutník, in: <http://www.ostravskesochoy.cz/dilo/209-Hutnik> (Retrieved 12.3. 2017)

⁸⁵⁵ Výroba elektřiny, in: <http://ostravskesochoy.cz/dilo/1330-Vyroba-elektriny> (Retrieved 12.3. 2017)

The foremost representative of the official current, Vincenc Makovský, belonged to the unique artists, who beside the capacity to deliver Socrealist works of art were capable to create modernist works of considerable quality. In 1956 was Vincenc Makovský commissioned by the Czechoslovakian Trade Chamber, with the consent of SČSVU, to create a sculptural composition in larger than life proportions, a *central decoration of the entrance into the Czechoslovakian Pavilion*.⁸⁵⁶ (Fig. 65) Two allegorical figures of Agriculture and Science flank abstractly elaborated formation, representing the sun. The innovative combination of realist figures with a post-avantgardist motive of sun would correspond to the title of the composition, *the New Era*. Beside fulfilling the representational role within the exhibition, the work achieved substantial recognition and earned Makovský a Grand Prix.⁸⁵⁷ It is undoubtedly rather unique demonstration of how the officially approved Socialist Realism could be merged with Modernist features and yet, in a case of a recognised artist, perceived as an innovative and approvable, rather than reactionary or bourgeois. The successful presentation at Expo brought a renewal of the use of abstraction.

In 1958 Vincenc Makovský beside national appreciation achieved international recognition, a point of his career, that would make him unique among other Socrealist artists, who would generally not experience a success of the sort. Makovský received third Klement Gottwald's State Prize, this time for his first-rate monument to J. A. Komenský. (Fig. 21) The same statue, that adorns both Uherský Brod and Naarden in the Netherlands, would be in 1960 also set in the area of Moravian College in Pennsylvania (USA), thus distinguishing as to the international significance any of his pro-regime peers.⁸⁵⁸ The cumulative effect of the presented distinctions was sealed in 1958, when was Makovský decorated with the National Artist title and Order of the republic in 1960.⁸⁵⁹ Towards the end of Makovský's life a monographical exhibition was organised in the Belvedere, summer house, situated in the gardens of the Prague Castle, in 1965, reprised in Moravian Gallery in Brno in the autumn of the same year.⁸⁶⁰

⁸⁵⁶ Výsledky soutěží. Na sousoší pro Brusel, in: Výtvarná práce 31. 12. 1956, roč. IV., č. 24-26, 15

⁸⁵⁷ In following decades would the sculpture adorn the Premises of the Brno Trade Show and in Prague is situated next to the building of Federal Assembly.

⁸⁵⁸ For more see: HLUŠIČKA 1979, 46

⁸⁵⁹ ŠEBEK 1963, 103-107

⁸⁶⁰ HLUŠIČKA 2002, 69

Stronghold of Socrealism – Monuments, Portraits and Memorials

The members of the Czechoslovakian artistic groups would explore within the refuge of their ateliers the possibilities of independent creativity, exhibiting with increasing freedom ever since the 1958 the results of their endeavour. The public space was increasingly often adorned with abstract or semi-abstract compositions and boundaries between different art branches blurred. Many of the former Socrealists sought ways to reestablish their connection to modernity. The realm of the Socrealism dominance narrowed substantially – it would retain the exclusive position only within the field of monuments, memorials and historical or political portraiture.

The official monumental commissions would be marked by the turbulent changes in the cultural sphere only marginally, as in the vast majority of important tasks they were indebted to the declining Socrealism, still considered as the conservative standard. The prolonged processes of the monumental sculpture production and installation (often a part of yet lengthier process of architecture, urban or landscape design) would cause the genesis of the official sculpture in the followed period to exhibit markedly less dynamism than other art branches. The projects for monumental works, launched in the years preceding 1962, would not be halted and would in many cases span well into the second half of the 1960s.

Karel Pokorný and Karel Lidický, the two of the meritorious sculptors, would be entrusted with the two symmetrical works on the subject of *the Victory of Socialism*, the very subject Socrealism was designed to successfully and convincingly express. The two sculptural couples were to flank the circular structure of the Eastern apse of the *Vítězov Hill Monument*. Karel Pokorný had chosen a dynamic composition, employing time-proven emotional scheme of a fighter, raising the banner of his fallen comrade. Unfortunately Pokorný could not finish his work as he died in 1962. The finalisation of the model was given to sculptor Jiří Dušek.⁸⁶¹

Karel Lidický was obliged to cope in his *Socialist Family* with Pokorný's concept both in

⁸⁶¹ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Odkaz díla Karla Pokorného, in: *Výtvarná kultura*, roč. 7, č. 1, 1983. 30-35

height, composition and style, working on the model from 1965, until its unveiling in 1972.⁸⁶² (Fig. 71) Lidický was forced by the concept to employ Socrealism in an unaltered form - a good example of a process of the transmission of the peaking Socrealism, embodied in the work of Pokorný, into the changed circumstances. The concept of the sculpture, showing the socialist family, would fit neatly into the restrictive atmosphere of the Normalisation, where the principles of the Socrealism were yet again resuscitated.

The clear-cut ideological commissions, not reflecting in any way the current development in sculpture, were often the monuments, dedicated to memorable strikes and uprisings. This downright political subject would not attract the sculptors of the modern artistic orientation and would therefore remain in the hands of regional realist sculptors who would not oppose well-established motives and schemes, customary for the topic. *The Monument of the Frývaldov Strike Victims* in 1931 (Památník obětem Frývaldovské stávký in 1931, 1960), placed in Dolní Lipová, *Monument to the General Strike in 1920* (Pomník Generální stávký r. 1920, 1965) situated in Hodonín, *Monument to the Svárov strike in 1890* (Památník Svárovské stávký, 1963) located in Velké Hamry (Jizerské hory), all of them are sound examples of this tendency. *The monument Monument of the Frývaldov strike* - the multifigural bronze by Rudolf Doležal, as well as the *Monument to the General Strike in 1920*, reiterate the customary triangular composition with the central banner, seen in numerous occasions as exhibitions and in the public space. Retaining a calm, steady posture, the figures are heroic, yet not revolutionary. (Fig. 66)

The Slovakian branch of the Socrealists, including Alexander Trizuljak, Ladislav Snopek, Tibor Bártfay, Ján Kulich, Jozef Kostka and Ján Svetlík would participate in a prestigious commission for a generously rendered memorial to the Red Army in Bratislava.⁸⁶³ (It presented one of the very last opportunities to join the efforts in a truly representative, large-scale task of purely Socrealist nature). Situated on a hill Slavín, the memorial, harbouring the graves of 6 845 Soviet soldiers, offered a number of opportunities for the

⁸⁶² Jaroslav RATAJ: Karel Lidický. Praha 1977, 32

⁸⁶³ For the account of the Slovakian sculpture of the 20th Century see especially: Katarína BAJCUROVÁ: Slovenské sochárstvo 1945-2015: socha a objekt. Bratislava 2017; Jitka MADARÁSOVÁ: Slovenské sochárstvo a medaila 20. storočia. Bratislava: Slov. nár. galéria, 1982

pro-regime sculptors. The memorial was built between 1957 and 1960 and was festively unveiled on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the liberation of the city by the Soviet Army on 4 April 1960. The design of the memorial, challenged by the complicated layout of the graves, was prepared by the Slovak sculptor and architect Ján Svetlík and his collective, consisting of the above named sculptors.

The architecture and urbanistic concept was to evoke the Soviet model and it accomplished that aim. From the perspective of the ruling Socrealism of the 1950s a Gesamtkunstwerk of great significance and impact. Regarding the formal approach, all the artists would yet again stay true to the Socrealist style, without minutest sign of innovation. Perpetuating well-established motives and patterns they would adorn the memorial with larger than life bronze groups and reliefs. The dominant central column would be crowned by a figure of a Red Army soldier by Alexander Trizuljak, a large dynamical figure, reminding in many ways of Vincenc Makovský's monument in Zlín. (Fig. 49, 50, 67) Trizuljak, in official commissions achieving remarkably conservative character, in his victorious soldier he would achieve the highest point of his career as an official sculptor.⁸⁶⁴

The Slovakia would within the narrow time-frame of 1958-1962 open another monument and a military burial ground in Liptovský Mikuláš.⁸⁶⁵ The site, finished in 1961 present the last truly monumental work of the decade lasting Socrealist dominion on the Slovakian soil. The stone stairs lead up to a white marble column, peaking with a bronze Communist star. At the base of the stairs a two groups of soldiers, spread in atypical horizontal composition, define the space and divide the two figures by the diagonally situated banner.⁸⁶⁶

Another sphere, where the Socrealism would keep its position, was the portrait of either

⁸⁶⁴ *Alexander Trizuljak* (1921 - 1990) was a Slovak sculptor, pedagogue and prominent personality of art sphere in Slovakia. He studied at the Slovenská technická univerzita v Bratislave (Slovak Technical College in Bratislava, STU) by Jozef Kostka and sculpture at AVU, K Pokorný. 1949 - 1972 teacher at VŠVU in Bratislava, since 1972 active as an independent artist. In 1964 becomes an Associate Professor.

Selected bibliography: Lubor KÁRA: *Alexander Trizuljak: Plastika 1946-1961: (Ex. Cat. SSVU Dostojevského rada, 11. júna - 2. júla 1961)* SFVU, Bratislava 1961; Nora HRAŠKOVÁ: *Alexander Trizuljak. Bratislava: Zväz slovenských výtvarných umelcov, 1972*; Jiří MAŠÍN: *Alexander Trizuljak. Bratislava 1970*

⁸⁶⁵ *Liptovský Mikuláš a okolie: putovanie mestom, históriou, krajinou. Banská Bystrica 2008*

⁸⁶⁶ *Pamätník a vojenský cintorín Háj Nicovô, in: visitliptov.sk*

dead or living representatives of the Communist Party. These commissions would help the Socrealism and its proponents to overcome the critical era of the 1960s, until the Normalisation resurrected its basic tenets and revived the already weathered and retrograde style to drop yet lower in the overall artistic quality of its production.

Klement Gottwald would occupy the foremost places of the honoured politicians. For instance, his monument in Gottwaldov by Miloš Zet and Zdeněk Krybus was unveiled in 1961 on the occasion of a large peace manifestation, related to the anniversary and the 40th years' existence of KSČ.⁸⁶⁷ A statue of journalist Jožka Jabůrková, executed by German occupiers, was created by Věra Merhautová and L. Hilgert in 1965. (Fig. 68)

A considerable number of sculptures was dedicated to Julius Fučík. A Monument in Plzeň by Irena Sedlecká was unveiled on 5th September 1965.⁸⁶⁸ On the contrary, monuments by Miloš Axman in Brno (1965) and Prague (1976), or even later, Karel Kuneš in Karlovy Vary (1982) are just uninventive repetitions of the same subject, only Axman employs entirely obsolete and inappropriate form of drapery.⁸⁶⁹

A large percentage of the 1962-1968 public sculpture was dedicated to rather neutral portraits of the foremost representatives of culture. The monuments to the liberation, victims of the war and foremost politicians were at the time already finished and the supporting lower members of the official pantheon had to be honoured as well – composers, writers, poets, actors and other universally known personalities began to appear all over the this ČSR and DDR. Rendered in the realist style, they are not necessarily indebted to Socrealism and therefore omitted from this section. For this reason they were most often spared the destruction after the 1990.

⁸⁶⁷ Mladá fronta Dnes 17. listopadu 2014

Zdeněk Krybus (1923 - 2007), a Czech sculptor. 1942-1944 School of Arts in Zlín (Škola umění ve Zlíně - Gottwaldov) under Vincenc Makovský, 1945-1949 AVU under Karel Pokorný. 1974 received title Distinguished Artist, in 1984 Order of Merit for the (Socialism) Building.

⁸⁶⁸ Václav JÍLEK: Vděk i závazek, in: Pravda, 5. září 1965, roč. 46, č. 213, 1

Hold Plzně Juliu Fučíkovi, in: Pravda, 6. září 1958, roč. 39, č. 106, 1; Only year later would a local school be renamed to bear Fučík's name.

⁸⁶⁹ Karel Kuneš (1920 - 1997), was a Czech sculptor and book illustrator. Firstly he apprenticed as a book illustrator. 1942-1944 School of Arts in Zlín (Škola umění ve Zlíně - Gottwaldov) under Vincenc Makovský, 1945-1949 AVU under Karel Pokorný. 1979 received title Distinguished Artist. For more see: Václav FORMÁNEK: Karel Kuneš. Plzeň 1979

The DDR continuation of a successful row of monuments in the sites of concentration camps was crowned with a large commission for the Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Ravensbrück. It employs the proven type of haunted figures, coined by Will Lammert and elaborated upon in the centrepiece memorial space with a platform reaching into the lake bears a stellar base with the sculpture Bearing (*Tragende*). (Fig. 69) At the entrance to the memorial and memorial site is the sculpture *Mütter group* by Fritz Cremer, complementing the Lammert's statue.

A different approach was chosen by Arnd Witting whose *Resistance Figher* (*Widerstandskämpfer*, 1958-1962) elaborate upon the Rodin's composition *Citizens of Calais* (1895) – both through the versatility of the individual figures' postures and situation on the low pedestal and distribution of the figures in space. (Fig. 70) In this monument is the customary sallow look of haunted prisoners of concentration camps replaced with a group of figures of slightly indistinct, blurred figures with indistinct features. The composition arrives to the serious and dignified impression through the posture of the female figure in the forefront, rather than facial expression.

The second half of the 1950s in the DDR demonstrated clearly, that Fritz Cremer's opinion on the character of the Socialist art was sound. The Socialist art from the perspective of the Marxist-Leninist aesthetics did not find a nurturing soil in the DDR. The artists, had they exhibited publicly their resolution to contribute to the building of Socialism, resolved to do so in accordance with their artistic capacity and ideas.⁸⁷⁰

The DDR sculpture was therefore in the artistic orientation closest to the legacy of the Modernism and the Socrealist principles influenced only a portion of the most ideological commissions of the 1950s. The majority of the production would, however, formally adhere to the tradition of Expressionism in case of the war memorials and *Formvereinfachung* in case of portrait, nude or genre. In the high-profile commissions the Socrealist form was employed by the Soviet sculptors, not the locals.

⁸⁷⁰ Walter HOWARD: Probleme der monumentalen Plastik, in: Überarbeitetes Protokoll der Arbeitstagung des Verbandes Bildender Künstler Deutschlands zu Problemen der Synthese von Architektur und bildender Kunst am 18. und 19. November 1965, Berlin 1965, 95-100

Notes on the Decline of the Socrealism after 1962

From the 1962 would the relationship between the Party and cultural sphere experience distinct changes. The former one-way dictate would make way to the mutual endeavours to launch a dialogue. This would have an immediate effect over the cultural life, not excluding the sculpture. The approach to the national history of art was modified to finally recognise the legacy of the Avantgarde, which would no longer cause controversies and resistance of the cultural apparatus of the Party. The professional magazines would in the years rehabilitate Emil Filla or Pablo Picasso, to name only the artists employing sculpture as their medium.⁸⁷¹ Just as the western books would more often translated, foreign artists would visit Czechoslovakia and also a number of exhibitions would witness the alleviation of the ideological pressure.

The 1962 was a watershed year also in the history of Czechoslovakian sculpture. The embodiment of the Stalin's cult of personality – the Monument, towering over Prague, was removed and Socrealism received a deadly blow.⁸⁷² Paradoxically, some of the most strikingly Socrealist works, inspired by the Soviet sculpture, would emerge already after the cessation of the Stalinist regime – consider A. Trizuljak's Red Army Soldier at Bratislava's Slavín or late 1950s and 1960s works in the stronghold of Socrealism - Ostrava. (Fig. 67)

This is firstly to be attributed to the inertia of the monumental sculpture building, slow in commissioning and rendition, secondly to the fact, the generation of Myslbek's and Štursa's pupils, who helped to shape the early stages of Socialist realism in the second half of the 1940s and the first half of 1950s, would be replaced by the younger generation, where a number of clear opportunists was exceptionally high.

Notwithstanding the resurrection of the Modernism after 1956, the official, high-profile commissions rested securely in the hands of the SČSVU and under the circumspect

⁸⁷¹ Výtvarná práce, Výtvarné umění, Tvorba etc.

⁸⁷² For a detailed account of the monument removal see note 925

observance of the Central Committee and were ascribed to the meritorious sculptors. Outside the exhibition halls, in the public squares and places the Socrealism would retain its dominant position in the sphere of: a) the official portraiture, b) monuments and memorials to the victims of the Second World War and to commemorate the merits of the Red Army, c) allegories of the Socialist construction. The less consequential commissions – allegories of family, youth, work would allow more licence, had they not been predestined to a place of higher consequence. The overview of the realisations, documenting the protraction of the Socrealist style is proving the point.⁸⁷³

The decline of the Socrealism, accelerated even more after 1957, has to do one one hand with the resurrection of the Modernism and on the other with unsustainability of the tough centralism of cultural sphere activities. The artists, for whom their artistic integrity and freedom stood higher than position in the hierarchy and comfortable living, would shortly after the changes in the SČSVU abandon the Socrealism in favour of more independent art, facing often hindrances and obstructions from the assessing commissions, such as Jindřich Wielgus, who created a figural composition *Milenci* (*Lovers* 1961-1963) for Ostrava.⁸⁷⁴ (Fig. 72) After the unfavourable assessment from the Ostravian commission he requested another opinion from Prague commission and his modernist work was approved for realisation.

A number of artists, previously active in the Socrealist style would experiment with organic and abstract shapes, such as Josef Malejovský, Sylva Jílková-Lacinová or Karel Hladík. One of the popular 1960s sculptural subjects became Henry Moore inspired individual figures or family groups, which would with their tranquil, soothing shapes fit neatly into the grounds of health centres and schools.⁸⁷⁵ This would become one of the

⁸⁷³ See chapter: Socialist Construction Heroes and Allegories

⁸⁷⁴ *Jindřich Wielgus* (1910-1998) was a Czech sculptor and graphic designer. He studied at the UMRUM at Karel Dvořák, at AVU under Otakar Španiel and he also received instruction at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome. In his work he focused mainly on the motifs from the mining life of his native Ostrava. The author of the *Victory Winner*, *Return home*, *Crying of Three Maria*, *Maryčka Magdonova*, or *Portrait of the Havíř J. K.* In 1989 he was awarded the title of National Artist. For more see: *Jindřich Wielgus*, in: TOMAN 1993

⁸⁷⁵ For early 1960s see: Vojtěch LAHODA: *Krotký modernismus*, in: Marie JUDLOVÁ: (ed.): *Ohniska znovuzrození: České umění 1956 - 1963*: (Ex. Cat.Kat. 28. 7. - 23. 10. 1994) Praha: Galerie hlavního města Prahy, 1994, For the late 1960s see: Pavel KAROUS (ed.): *Vetřelci a volavky: atlas výtvarného umění ve veřejném prostoru v Československu v období normalizace (1968-1989) = Aliens and herons: a guide to fine art in the public space in the era of normalisation in Czechoslovakia (1968-1989)*, Praha 2015

less controversial possibilities for those sculptors, who wish to stay closer to the conservative line. Had the sculptor chosen wisely the topic and formal rendition, he could even achieve balance between the official approval and individualism.

Others, who valued more their sinecures and secure income, would religiously adhere to the official Socrealist academism. Only the most opportunist would cling to the stale remnants of the Socrealism in the 1970s and 1980s, when their generational peers were exploring unbeaten ways forward. In that respect the mediocrity of the Socrealist production of these two decades would help to Socialist Realism what it was and how is it perceived today. Their art works, often lacking the professional quality, would penetrate into every corner of the Czechoslovakia, where the Red Army soldiers and workers, together with often menacing, often ridiculous portraits of Communist leaders towered over the daily lives of the people.

The Socrealist figuration in an unaltered and strikingly retrograde form was again employed in numerous works in the 1980s.⁸⁷⁶ Exceeding the capacity of this work, just a few of the examples of this tendency are to approximate the persistency of the Socrealism: Miloš Zet in *Památník Ostravské operace, Hrabyně* (The Memorial to the Ostravian Operation in Hrabyně, 1981) in a couple of soldiers under the title *Brotherhood in Fight* (*Bratrství v boji*) in his ambitious yet failed composition intertwined both soldiers in a mass of arms and legs. Similarly, yet with greater license and confidence would deal Vendelín Zdrůbecký with his commission on the Monument called *In Remembrance of the Czechoslovak warriors in the battle of Sokolov* (*Na paměť československých bojovníků v bitvě u Sokolova*, date unknown). (Fig. 59)

The reminiscence of the toughest 1950s would appear in a number of works, such as the *The Builder of the Subway* (*Budovatel metra*) from 1980s by František Radvan, guarding the entrance into the Prague metro station Chodov, or *Monument to the Red Army in Terezín* by Václav Kyselka. Jan Simota created a couple, *Workers in Industry and Agriculture* (*Pracovníci Průmyslu a Zemědělství*, 1982 -1984), extolled as an example of

⁸⁷⁶ For an account of the monumental sculpture of the 1980 see: Jiří VENERA: Zdroje a hodnoty monumentální plastiky, in: *Výtvarná kultura*, č.4, roč. VIII. 1985, 9-13

the Myslbekian tradition.⁸⁷⁷ (Fig. 73) Nevertheless, the diminutive approach towards the detail an utter failure to achieve the monumental effect contribute to the extremely low quality of the work. A conservative realism of Jan Hána's *Monument to the Victims of the Second World War* in Prague Opatov could pass for a conventionally realistic work, had he not employed a number of the Red Army attributes in a figure of the soldier.

The Renaissance of the Socrealism in the 1970s and 1980s would also result in the most ridiculed works of portraiture, most frequently of Klement Gottwald.⁸⁷⁸ One of the often employed sculptors of the Era was Miloš Zet, who authored a larger than *life monument in Košice* (1975), one of the rare works surviving to present day.⁸⁷⁹ (Fig. 74) Also Josef Malejovský would realize two monuments, one for *Teplice* (1971) and the four meters tall monument in *Jihlava* (1978).⁸⁸⁰ It is often noted, that during the time the artistic quality of public monuments in Socrealist style sunk so low, it would become general laughing stock.⁸⁸¹ This was also the case with the monuments in Plzeň by Alois Sopr (1971),⁸⁸² and České Budějovice (1972). Praha would in 1970s acquire two monuments by Vladimír Dobrovolný and Jan Simota, both with exceptionally poor rendition.⁸⁸³ Probably the most bizarre representation of Gottwald's monument would be installed in Bratislava (1980). The authors Tibor Bártfay a Karol Lacko created a monstrous, six meters tall stone group sculpture, flanked by massive fan-like pylons.⁸⁸⁴ (Fig. 75)

⁸⁷⁷ VENERA 1985, 11

⁸⁷⁸ For more see part IV. Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture

⁸⁷⁹ For more on Miloš Zet see note: 1119

For an account of the present day state and placement of the statue see: <http://kosicednes.sk/dennik/clanky/gottwald-a-kosice/> (Retrieved 21. 3. 2017)

⁸⁸⁰ Jan SPURNÝ: Josef Malejovský. Praha 1963, 34-35

⁸⁸¹ Articles in press, dealing with the subject of Normalisation monuments especially by architecture historian Zdeněk Lukeš: Zdeněk LUKEŠ: Sáňkující Smetana i Hopkirk. Normalizace a nepovedené pomníky. 14. listopadu 2013 7:00, in: Lidovky.cz, http://www.lidovky.cz/sankujici-smetana-i-hopkirk-normalizace-a-nepovedene-ceske-pomniky-1fr-/design.aspx?c=A131111_110053_In-bydleni_ter (Retrieved 21. 3. 2017); Zdeněk LUKEŠ: Pomníky normalizační Prahy, in: <http://neviditelnypes.lidovky.cz/> (Retrieved 21. 3. 2017)

⁸⁸² For more on Alois Sopr see note: 426

Ivan MARTINOVSKÝ (et al.): Dějiny Plzně v datech: od prvních stop osídlení až po současnost. Praha 2004, 442; Věrní Gottwaldovu odkazu. Pravda, 23. listopadu 1971, roč. 52, č. 277, s. 1-2.

⁸⁸³ Jan Simota (1913-1993), Czech sculptor and medal maker, studied at UMPRUM under J. Horejc, 1935 - 1939 at AVU in Prague under B. Kafka and O. Španiel, whose assistant he was 1946 – 1949, shortly also in Gottwaldov.

⁸⁸⁴ Tibor Bártfay (1922-2015), was a Slovak sculptor. From 1939 studied at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, as a pupil of F. Sidló, from 1949 concluded his studies at AVU as a pupil of K. Pokorný. He mostly created portrait and monumental sculpture. For more see: Karol KAHOUN: Tibor Bártfay. Bratislava 1988

Part III. Promotional Methods and Tools of the Regime

Political Monument

Among those, most relevant to the narrative of the post-war sculpture are memorials and monuments, where the sculptural component would be employed in the form of the figuration and/or relief. The extent of the decoration would be determined in the first place by the character of the event commemorated. The most generous decoration was dedicated to the memory of war victims, great battle or military group, often connected with the burial grounds of soldiers and memorials of the mass murders, executed by the Nazi army in retaliation for the resistance of the locals. These memorials were often approached with the conjoined efforts of landscape designers, urbanists and architects, who would provide a complex solution to the aesthetic and psychological character of the place.

High-profile Monumental Commissions

Aside from building of monuments to political personalities and fallen soldiers and victims of war, a non-negligible number of monuments were dedicated to the historical personalities of the Czech lands. Their employment was interconnected with the general line of cultural politics, defined in 1949 and creating a connecting line with the pre-war sculptural production. It called for an employment of pathos and monumentalism on one side and faithful, yet flattering and heroic depiction of the political personalities on the other. Many large-scale commissions would be re-launched shortly after the war, such as Makovský's J. A. Komenský and A. Jirásek, Pokorný's A. Jirásek and B. Němcová, J. Wagner's J. Vrchlický.⁸⁸⁵ Some of them would be launched newly, such as the contest for the decoration of the Karolinum, the historical site of the Charles University in Prague.⁸⁸⁶

⁸⁸⁵ For detailed informations on the works dedicated to the historial personalities see *National and Working Class History Monuments*

⁸⁸⁶ The contest for the decoration of the Karolinum, the historical site of the Charles University in Prague is covered in a separate chapter, see: *Charles University Karolinum and Sculpture*

After the 1948 in ČSR and 1949 in DDR would emerge the necessity to build noteworthy monuments, reinforcing the new regime, comprising of political portrait, historical monument and liberation memorials/monuments. The monumental commissions would gain momentum and would expand throughout the 1950s. These commissions, vigilantly watched over by political personalities, who ensured observance of the ideological content and form and watched over immaculate rendition, are good examples of the official art. The majority of commissions were concerned with architecture-bound sculpture and free statues in the form of monuments.

One of the most pressing problems, faced by the Communist representatives, was related to the approaching Stalin's 70th birthday. A National Committee for Celebrations on the occasion, which was established on 27th September 1949, was to take care of the dignified and sumptuous manifestation of the gratefulness to the great leader of the Soviet Union. One of the most magnificent accolades was to be the Prague Monument. The foundation stone was to be installed at the peak of the celebrations in December and the Committee had to prepare the requirements for the approaching contest.⁸⁸⁷ In Czechoslovakia, even though the construction of the Prague monument was not achieved on time, in Bratislava was in 1949 installed a larger than life statue of Stalin by Pavol Bán.⁸⁸⁸ (Fig. 76) A monument in Plzeň would be unraveled no sooner than 1953.⁸⁸⁹

One of the most representative East German statues to Stalin was not commissioned in Germany, as it was brought by a Komsomol delegation from Moscow at the opportunity of III. Weltfestspiele der Jugend und Studenten. The larger than life bronze statue from an unknown author was erected already in 1951 in the Berlin district of Friedrichshain, at the street, renamed in his honour in 1949 on the occasion of Stalin's birthday

⁸⁸⁷ For more on the Stalin's monument see chapter: *Stalin's Monument in Prague*

⁸⁸⁸ *Pavol Bán* (1892-1959), a Slovakian sculptor, studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, by Alojz Stróbl. Here, in his work he strengthened lyrical expression, which was a distinct feature of his portraiture. He is the author portraits of Polkoráb, G. Mally, J. Cikker, R. Koch, numerous medals and plaques. In his monumental works it includes three-figured relief on the portal of the building of the former Workers' Social Insurance for Bezručova Street, conducted memorials of Slovak National Uprising in Šumiac and Turčianske Teplice.

⁸⁸⁹ For more on the political monument see Part IV. Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture

celebrations.⁸⁹⁰

Due to the authorship of the professionals from the SSSR, three sculptural groups present the best examples of the Soviet style Socialist Realism in the area of the East Germany in the early days of the SBZ and DDR. The success of the teams of Soviet origin precedes the tendency to award some of the most monumental commissions to the Soviet artists – such as *monuments to Karl Marx in Chemnitz, to Ernst Thälmann* by Lev Kerbel, or *Lenin's monument* by Nikolai Tomski.⁸⁹¹ All of the endeavoured sculptures and statues, placed within the memorials, deliver the necessary heroism, dignity and idealised realism in a way convening to the decision-makers. It is therefore only natural, the Soviet authors would be entrusted with the most monumental works in the DDR.

Stalin's Monument in Prague

This formidable sculpture, which took three years to build, became the greatest opportunity of its sculptor, Otakar Švec, but it also resulted in his ruin. This five meters tall sculpture made of concrete and granite was designed to last for eternity. (Fig. 77) It was also the largest monument to J.V. Stalin outside the SSSR. The immensely expensive and universally disliked monument stood on the verge of Letná in Prague only two years and after the denouncement of the Stalin's cult of Personality in 1956 was removed. Švec did not live to see his last work demolished, as he committed suicide. The Stalin's Monument was to become the highlight of the decade, the most symptomatic symbol of the era and pathetic testimony to the cowardice and servility of the contemporary political representation with the first Communist president Klement Gottwald in the forefront. Stalin's monument became a cultural symbol which found its expression in literature, poetry and popular culture. It was mocked as the Lineup for Meat, ridiculed for its obvious artistic inferiority and horrendous, intimidating proportions. (Fig. 78)

⁸⁹⁰ Günter FEIST / Eckhart GILLEN/ Beatrice VIERNEISEL: Kunstdokumentation SBZ/DDR 1945–1990: Aufsätze, Berichte, Materialien. Köln 1996, 414

⁸⁹¹ For more on Karl Marx monument in Chemnitz see Part IV. Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture

Although the construction of the monument and the overall situation in the society related to it offers great many research opportunities, it was until recently relatively under valued. The vacant space at Letná was analysed in many ways and the potential alternatives of its usage were discussed. The monstrous mass of granite and concrete with a face of a dictator was never missed by the general public and the ideological sculpture as a research subject remained unnoticed.⁸⁹²

The idea to build a monument to Stalin was already outlined when Communist Václav Vacek, predecessor of Petr Zenkl was at the post of Prague Mayor.⁸⁹³ Vacek himself was a die-hard Communist and at the time of the aforementioned National Committee in 1945 was the first secretary to Zenkl.⁸⁹⁴ He reminded the Committee of the pledge he himself had given to the Soviet diplomatic and army representatives at the time of his tenure (5th May – 7th August 1945). The Stalin's monument was at the time supposed to be built at the Vítězné náměstí.

Zenkl who was a National Socialist did not oppose his predecessors binding statement and decided to act on his comment. At the moment there would be no serious opposition against such an idea, Stalin was perceived to be of paramount importance to the achievement of the present state's independence. If Prague could have had American president Woodrow Wilson, who was celebrated for the existence of the Czechoslovakia (destroyed during the Nazi occupation), there was no reason to oppose such a tribute. After all, Stalin was to be just one of three planned monuments, together with those dedicated to Tomáš G. Masaryk and F.D. Roosevelt (the latter was to replace Bedřich Smetana).

For more pressing matters of political nature the building of Stalin's monument was for some time forgotten. After the Communist coup d'etat however, the growing subordination to the SSSR required the ruling Party to demonstrate its loyalty to Stalin

⁸⁹² For an overview of literature see bibliography

⁸⁹³ PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 22

⁸⁹⁴ HOJDA/POKORNÝ 1996, 205 For more on Petr Zenkl see: NEKOLA, Martin. Petr Zenkl : Politik a člověk. Praha : Nakladatelství Mladá fronta, 2014

in the most expressive way. The Communist leaders, afraid to be scolded for their lack of enthusiasm by their powerful advisors from Moscow, revived yet again the plans to build a monument to the great Stalin.⁸⁹⁵ The year 1949 when generalissimus Stalin was to celebrate his seventieth birthday was in many ways a great horror for all those satellite countries, which lay in the shadow of the SSSR. National Committee for Celebrations of the Stalin's 70th birthday (21. 12. 1879 – 5. 3. 1953) was established and all aspects of this essential task were thoroughly discussed at the highest levels of the Party.⁸⁹⁶

The setting of the monument was not clearly stated in the assignment and the vague specification, stating that monument ought to be set somewhere between Chotek's street and Čech's bridge at the Letná plain, met with comments and criticism of the expert public.⁸⁹⁷ The threat of discord was averted by the intervention of the National Committee for Celebrations of the Stalin's 70th birthday, which was established on 27th September 1949. The highest representatives of the state became the members of the preparatory Committee. Sixteen members of this group were charged with the responsible task to prepare the celebrations so as to please Moscow and at the same time leverage the potential of the public festivities to instill the ideological contents into the minds of the broad public.⁸⁹⁸ Not the only one, but certainly one of the most important goals of this committee was to shed light on the contest for the monument and provide the artists and architects with amended instructions, so that the foundation stone would be fit to be installed at the peak of the celebrations in December.⁸⁹⁹

The location of the monument was discussed thoroughly all over again and many options were put on the table, including the idea to demolish the Petřín lookout tower

⁸⁹⁵ HOJDA/POKORNÝ 1996, 205

⁸⁹⁶ Svému osvoboditeli československý lid. Praha 1955, 7. For details on birthday celebrations coordination see: Zpráva sekretariátu vládní komise pro koordinaci oslav 70. narozenin generalissima J. V. Stalina, fond ÚPV, karton 484.

⁸⁹⁷ KÁRA 1950, 141; Václav Kopecký v článku „Dílo největší cti“ In: Praha. Týdeník ÚNV pro lidovou správu. Číslo 43/ročník 52 (1949)

⁸⁹⁸ Zpráva sekretariátu vládní komise pro koordinaci oslav 70. narozenin generalissima J. V. Stalina, fond ÚPV, karton 484.

⁸⁹⁹ HOJDA/POKORNÝ 1996, 208

and place giant statue of Stalin on a roof of a scientific institute.⁹⁰⁰ The most passionate promoter of the final decision to place the monument at the edge of the Letná in a place that would provide it with the most exclusive visibility was Václav Kopecký. His article “The work of the highest honour“ published in a Prague magazine on 24th October 1949 is both a testimony to his extraordinary servility and a vehement call to action of those artists, who dared not to present their project to date.⁹⁰¹ Considering the pressing time, the option to place the Stalin's monument on the edge of Letná, between the Hanavský Pavillion and Čechův Bridge, was approved, regardless of the unstable rockbed of the chosen place.⁹⁰²

The victorious project was created by sculptor Otakar Švec and architects Jiří Štursa a Vlasta Štursová. Švec' artistic tendencies conformed to the Party officials. He was both sufficiently skilled as an artist and was also perceived as a non-controversial personality. His model for the contest consisted of a figure of Stalin and eight figures of working people, the intelligentsia, women and soldiers in two rows, attached to a rectangular block of stone. These representatives of Czech and Russian nations stood in a formation as if following Stalin's lead. The initial composition was attributed to painter Adolf Záborský, who was, however, not among the rewarded authors of the project. The Švec ' decision to situate the figure of Stalin to the front and other figures in two rows standing grouped around a rectangular block of stone, was favourable in several ways – it allowed the sculpture to be looked at from all sides and even from the back, where the monument faced the Letná Plain.⁹⁰³ It made a monumental picture when observed from the Čech's bridge and presented Stalin in the most favourable light, dignified and respectable, as a confident leader to all Socialist nations, who is innately bound to them

⁹⁰⁰ Státní ústřední archiv v Praze, odd. ÚV KSČ, fond ÚPV – T (K. 485), Zápis o první vládní schůzi komise pro koordinaci oslav 70. narozenin generalissima Stalina, 30. září 1949 For more information on the planned placement of the statue see: HOJDA/POKORNÝ 1996 a PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 29

⁹⁰¹ KOPECKÝ, Václav: Dílo největší cti, in: Praha. Týdeník ÚNV pro lidovou správu. Číslo 43/ročník 52 (1949).

⁹⁰² Praha bude mít pomník generalissima J.V. Stalina. In: Praha. Týdeník ÚNV pro lidovou správu. Číslo 1/ročník 53 (1950).

⁹⁰³ The official argumentation to support the chosen project is summarised in the verdict of the jury, now preserved in fond ÚPV, karta 1572: „Considering the monument from the artistic point of view, it is expressed as a massive, coherent sculptural and architectural work of art. It impresses with its simplicity, compact form, when perceived both from a far distance and from proximity. It serves well also if looked at from sides and from behind, where the sign of the SSSR is standing out as an indivisible and not merely decorative part of the Monument. The sculpture of Generalissimus J. V. Stalin is monumental, solemn and dignified.“

as they are to him. It was also the appropriateness of the monument for both close and distant observation that eventually led to the victory of the Švec' model.

The Švec' contest design for the Monument is still a subject to numerous speculations. Lubor Kára marked book illustrator and painter Adolf Záborský as the author of the concept, who expanded the idea of situating the figure of Stalin into the leading position of two rows of soldiers, workers and other representatives of Czech and Russian nations, achieving to demonstrate the close bond between the generalissimos and his people.⁹⁰⁴ This authorship is confirmed by Marie Záborská, the painter's wife.⁹⁰⁵ A testimony of a sculptor Josef Klimeš, one of the co-workers of Švec during the construction of the monument claims that Švec was also inspired by a Monument to National Liberation in Plzeň.⁹⁰⁶ This inspiration by a statue of the first Czechoslovakian president and four accompanying statues representing the people would be, if true, politically rather ironical.⁹⁰⁷

The predecessors and influences of the Stalin's monument are traceable to Švec' personal artistic development, as well as to the impact of his teacher Jan Štursa. Aside from the common formative influence master has over his pupil, there is another connection taken into account when researching the Stalin's Monument. Jan Štursa together with Jan Kotěra participated with their project in the competition for the intended statue of Jan Žižka of Trocnov. Even though the innovative design was not successful – the first place was not awarded and the statue was eventually assigned to Bohumil Kafka and his conservative Realist vision – it was praised by critics as being the project of the highest quality, representing the most modern and apt expression of the contemporary art. The model showed Cubism-inspired forms, with the equestrian figure in the middle of the composition. From the front-view the Žižka figure is flanked by two arched structured „wings“ consisting of raised shields, carried by his followers, hooded figures, foremost of whom are holding their shields high with hand above their heads.

⁹⁰⁴ KÁRA 1950, 142

⁹⁰⁵ PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 37

⁹⁰⁶ Ibidem. For more on the Monument see: HAVLIC, Vladimír: Památník národního osvobození v Plzni. Plzeň: Karel Veselý 1999.

⁹⁰⁷ PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 37

With the side view entirely new perspective opens before the observer – Žižka's row of followers in a futurist formation creates the illusion of movement, just as if he witnessed Žižka's victorious ride at the very moment.

Although this project for Žižka's Monument was not brought to life, the sketch and model itself could have served O. Švec to devise his peculiar composition for the Stalin's monument.⁹⁰⁸ There too the central figure is effectively employed in the front-view and acquires entirely different perspective in the side-view. Also the overall shape of both monuments corresponds to a great degree – there is an obvious similarity in the inclined tomb-like mass of the central block, rising to the front figure, as well as employment of the side figures. Even though Jan Štursa used innovative form and Švec returned to the more conservative tradition, favoured for ideological reasons, the main composition is very alike. It is therefore to be assumed, that Švec leveraged all possible inspiration from his master, from whom he could acquire self-assurance by comparing his ideas to his master's own work. Subsequently, he could use the sketch by Adolf Záborský to specify the possible situation of the side figures.

Even though victorious, Švec' design of the Monument was at the time of the exhibition in the Municipal House subjected to a number of suggestions, as to the conception and elaboration of the final statue. The jury of the contest noted that *“Figure of Stalin ought to be in the overall composition emphasized. The side figures, the jury recommends, to be adjusted so as to emphasise the peaceful efforts of Stalin.”*⁹⁰⁹ The jury also proposed reconsideration of the size of the Monument. It was apparent to all back then, that such an enlargement of the model would be problematic.⁹¹⁰ Lubor Kára in his article was also well aware of the challenge, that would have to be dealt with in the course of the

⁹⁰⁸ HOJDA/POKORNÝ 1996, 209

⁹⁰⁹ Fond ÚPV, karton 1572.

⁹¹⁰ Even though the original intention of the Party was to honour the Stalin's birthday by the Exhibition of the designs for the Monument in the Municipal House, the agile Václav Kopecký pushed through the idea to also lay the foundation stone yet in the year of 1949. The complications that followed – the necessity to move the stone later on – was undoubtedly caused by this not entirely well founded over-enthusiasm.⁹¹⁰ The celebratory occasion of the laying of the foundation stone was accompanied by indispensable tap with a golden mallet by President Klement Gottwald and a number of festive speeches. The base of the Monument consisted of 23 stones, brought from all 23 districts of the Czechoslovakia.⁹¹⁰

See: Praha bude mít pomník generalissima J.V. Stalina, in: Praha – Týdeník ÚNV pro lidovou správu, 24.10. 1949

building. He pointed out that the central rectangular block reminds more of a tomb and does not fully represent the joyous and vivacious celebration of life it ought to do. Aside from that, the figure of Stalin seemed to him too closely attached to the mass of the rectangle and he therefore suggests it to be detached and set more distantly from the two rows of other figures.⁹¹¹

27th June 1950 another Committee was established, which was this time entrusted with the task to bring Stalin's Monument to life and which had the prime minister Antonín Zápotocký as a presiding member.⁹¹² This allows us to comprehend the importance, the Party assigned to the task. Other members were not very different from the assembly of previous commission.⁹¹³ Only gradually became apparent, how difficult a task it will be to construct a statue, measuring (with the pedestal) 30 metres and being 22 metres long until the planned deadline in 1952.⁹¹⁴

Otakar Švec was given an atelier near Letná, the same space where Bohumil Kafka prepared his huge equestrian statue of Jan Žižka. There he was supposed to prepare his three meters high model and also take account of numerous suggestions of the Committee. Aside from the question of material, the Švec' model was questioned time and again. He was forced to revise his models several times – some of the observations were of artistic point of view, others were blankly ideological – for example, the figure of Stalin had to be detached and enlarged, so that his leadership would appear more pronounced.⁹¹⁵ Yet again, the argument of the tomb-like appearance of the whole Monument was brought to attention by Antonín Zápotocký. After all, to create a tomb-

⁹¹¹ KÁRA 1950, 142

⁹¹² Antonín Zápotocký, one of Klement Gottwald's close workers, in office as a prime minister 15 June 1948 – 14 March 1953, subsequently Gottwald's successor in the presidential office. He was 6th President of Czechoslovakia 21 March 1953 – 13 November 1957.

⁹¹³ Svému osvoboditeli československý lid. Praha 1955, 11

⁹¹⁴ Zápis ze druhé schůze 11. 7. 1950 (fond ÚPV, karton 1572).

The prolonged meetings of the Committee had to address the question of the material for the Monument. The consultant of the building, renowned sculptor Otakar Velinský (1879–1959) suggested travertine to be the best material for such a sculpture – the material all authors of the victorious project hoped for. The only accessible quarry to provide this material was in Spišské Vlachy, Slovakia, which however, required adaptation to the purpose. The unsuitability of the quarry in question, joined an unfavourable opinion of the expert public. The Slovakian geologists unyieldingly insisted that travertine is entirely out of the question, as it tends to go stale. The examination of quarries and disputes took several months

⁹¹⁵ PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 64

like Monument could be perceived as an intention to provoke the SSSR.⁹¹⁶

The second meeting of the Committee discussed usage of granite, one of the hardest stones. The opposition of the authors who questioned the capacity of granite to be shaped into this undisputedly difficult sculpture was to be overcome by ideological arguments.⁹¹⁷ Once the disputes were concluded, geological conditions assessed and organisational questions solved, the building could have started.⁹¹⁸ It took six hundred workers and 23 stone masons.⁹¹⁹ The circumstances were to blame for the continuous delays in the planned handover of the Monument.

Even though the construction successfully continued, the main recipient of the honour – J. V. Stalin died on 5th March 1953, followed by the first Communist Czechoslovakian president Klement Gottwald only nine days later on 14th March. This unfortunate coincidence could not, however, be taken as an encouragement to cease work on the Monument. Until the end of 1953 works on the reinforced concrete kernel of the Monument were finished and supporting walls and the transportation of the parts of the figures could be initiated. The stonemasons were Jaroslav Svojanovský, Karel Wagenknecht, Bohumil Macák, Miloš Šperling, Hugo Demartini and many others.⁹²⁰ The works on the Monument itself were officially concluded in 1954 and demanding adaptation of the surroundings was started. The whole venue, including the Monument and park adaptations are estimated at 150 million Czech crowns.⁹²¹

The festive unveiling ceremony of the Monument took place on the Labour day 1st May 1955, more than two years after Stalin's death and in the atmosphere, when politicians already suspected that Stalin's cult of personality is on the decline. This suspicion was only fueled by the fact, that no representative of Moscow was present for the ceremony

⁹¹⁶ Zápis ze třetí schůze 4.1. 1951 (fond ÚPV, karton 1572).

⁹¹⁷ Zápis ze druhé schůze 2. 11. 1950 (fond ÚPV, karton 1572).

⁹¹⁸ The works were launched in February of 1952 and stone began to be summoned from all corners of the republic – the granite from Liberecko and the paving stones for the stairs from Slovakia. The immensely strenuous task of moving 31 733 granite blocks, some of them weighing 40 tons, was difficult both for transportation and manipulation.

⁹¹⁹ Svému osvoboditeli československý lid. Praha 1955, 11

⁹²⁰ Ibidem

⁹²¹ ŠINDELÁŘ 2009, 42

– the only Russian participant was the Soviet ambassador N. P. Firjubin. The discomfiture was apparent also in the speech given by Prague mayor Antonín Svoboda. In his five minutes long addresses he replaced the name of Stalin with the general reference to the SSSR and the friendship of both nations. The name of Švec was omitted entirely, as the author of the monument committed suicide shortly before the unveiling ceremony. This was another embarrassing circumstance of the whole Monument construction, which only added to the impression of unease. The failure to deliver the effect the representatives wished for at the time of Stalin's life was sorely felt by all.

The press brought unified reactions, being content with the description of the ceremony and bringing details about the statue. Generally, as was noted by Hojda and Pokorný, the Prague Monument in the press did not reach by far the devoted and absurdly servile proclamations of the Hungarian press, when the statue of Stalin was revealed in Budapest.⁹²² In Czechoslovakia the unveiling was followed by a publication, documenting the building, which is still one of the best sources for the history of the construction. Another homage to the Monument was paid in a short film called “The Monument of Love and Friendship”.⁹²³ The public, although restricted in their immediate reactions by the censorship and fear from the omnipresent oppression, perceived the whole business with a great deal of irony. The Monument was, for example nicknamed “Lineup for Meat”, as a reference to the scarcity of essential commodities such as meat in the contemporary Czechoslovakia.

The political course, which rendered the building of extravagantly massive monument to Stalin necessary, had to give way shortly after the conclusion of the construction to entirely different course. Even though at the moment of the unveiling ceremony the Stalin's cult in Moscow was already being revised, the political representation of Czechoslovakia could not step back – the monument, built at great expense of money, had to become what he was to be since the first decision to build it – indestructible witness to the cowardice and servility of the small nation to mightier and larger neighbour, moreover with the face of a mass murderer. Only seven years after the

⁹²² HOJDA/POKORNÝ 1996, 212

⁹²³ Svému osvoboditeli československý lid. Praha 1955

unveiling it was clear, that the embarrassing monster could not stay in its place any longer. It was, after all, one of the last standing monuments to Stalin in the eastern block and SSSR.⁹²⁴ The hesitation of the political representation as to the removal of the monument proved again the ever present falling behind the politics of Moscow. In 1961 the destalinisation was marked as a new and obligatory course. The President Antonín Novotný then had to follow the directions, cost what it may.⁹²⁵

National Monument at Prague Vítkov Hill

One of the Socrealist Gesamtkunstwerks, where a number of artists joined their efforts to deliver a homogeneous group of works, compatible with the ideological perspective of Communism, was the National Monument at the Vítkov Hill.⁹²⁶ The hill was related to the Hussite wars, and the retrospective into the history of the Hussite Movement was employed at the times of the First Republic to emphasize the bravery and confidence of the nation in the struggle against the enemy. The hill platform was therefore chosen for the construction of the Vítkov Monument. The Functionalist structure was built 1928–1938, designed according to the victorious architectural project by Jan Zázvorka and was to honour the Czechoslovak Legionnaires and provide tangible representation to

⁹²⁴ PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 42

⁹²⁵ A Committee had to solve the question, what to do with the 17 thousand tons of reinforced concrete and granite. Considering the paramount expenses of the construction everyone was to a degree inclined to preserve at least the side figures, which were thought to be of very good artistic quality. They would either stay in place to become a part of a renewed monument, dedicated to the Czech-Soviet Friendship. It was impossible, though, to keep the conceptual form of the monument without the Stalin in front. Therefore the possibility to break of the figures and transport them elsewhere was dismissed as technologically and financially inefficient. The only solution, when all the options were assessed, was to destroy the sculpture altogether. To the representatives of the Party was the erasing of the most visible and opulent symbol of the Stalin's cult immensely embarrassing matter. There was a consensus among the officials to provide the least publicity and perform the demolition in secrecy – as much as possible, considering the eminent location of the Monument. This idea turned out to be almost impossible, as the material was too tough to give way so easily. All documentation was forbidden and also the archival resources for the demolition are missing. The researchers reconstructed its process from the testimonies of the eye-witnesses. The detonations, used to destroy the sculpture, were so strong, no inhabitant of the city centre could have missed it. In spite of the prohibition to document the demolition, witnesses captured great many pictures of the whole process, allowing the general public to assess the whole scope of the unique demolition, unprecedented by the extent.

⁹²⁶ A comprehensive monography on the National Monument in Vítkov, published recently, contains both historical an art historical details of the monument, as well as a comprehensive account of the bibliography: Jan GALANDAUER: Chrám bez boha nad Prahou: Památník na Vítkově. Praha 2014

the Czechoslovakian statehood. After the 1948 would the Monument be transformed into the burial place of the foremost representatives of the regime and in 1954 the Mausoleum of the first Communist president Klement Gottwald.

The middle of the 1930s brought together with the conclusion of the construction of the Monument also the necessity to install a dignified decoration. In 1936 would Karel Pokorný acquire one of the most monumental commissions for the interior decoration of the Vítkov Monument – four large dark marble reliefs (330 x 200 cm), related to the legacy of the Legions. The decoration should honour the four affiliations of the Legionnaires, participating in the First World War, according to the nations they joined in the fight against the common enemy: Russia, Italy, France and Serbia.⁹²⁷

Pokorný's attention was focused on a subject he was familiar with - the fate of a common soldier, a subject he successfully utilized in his post-First World War monuments.⁹²⁸ In the impressive mass of stone, decorating the walls of the Main Hall, conveys the essence of war by choosing the typical phenomena, under the categories of „Defence“, „Assault“, „Dying“ and „Death“ understood as a sacrifice.⁹²⁹ (Fig. 14) The dynamical effect is achieved aside from the masterful composition also by the antithesis of the physical strength, accentuated by the noble material, confronted with the inevitable termination of the soldiers' life.⁹³⁰ These diagonal compositions depict an individual figure of a soldier, arranged in complicated, artificial position to fit the rectangular shape of the relief.⁹³¹

The reliefs attracted attention and acknowledgement, counting to Pokorný's most valued works, for which he also received the Katz Prize. An influential art historian

⁹²⁷ Jiří KOTALÍK: Karel Pokorný a jeho škola. Praha 1983, 10

For the account of the political circumstances of the subject selection, especially related to the inclusion of the Serbian Legionnaire instead of the originally intended member of the local resistance, see GALANDAUER 2014, 56

⁹²⁸ For more see Commemoration of the Fallen in ČSR

⁹²⁹ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Karel Pokorný : výbor z díla. Praha 1971, nepag.

⁹³⁰ Petr WITTLICH: České sochařství ve XX. století. Nové Město na Moravě 1978, 224

⁹³¹ Compare: Vladimír NOVOTNÝ: Karel Pokorný. Praha 1956; Jiří MAŠÍN: Karel Pokorný, souborná výstava sochařského díla k umělcovým sedmdesátinám: květen – červen 1961. Praha: Svaz československých výtvarných umělců, 1961; Jiří HLUŠIČKA: Karel Pokorný: Sochy, Kresby. (Kat. výst., April-August) Brno 1985, 5

Antonín Matějček would not hold back on the praise of the superlatives of the delivered work: „Everything here is a truth itself, everything is concurrently skillfully developed and combined from the perspective of the higher logic of art.“⁹³² Also from the perspective of the Czechoslovakian sculpture present Pokorný's work truly unique fusion of Realism and allusions to the legacy of the Avantgarde, reaching back to Otto Gutfreund and his Cubist experiments. The form is comparable to the Gutfreund's *Koncert* from 1912, where the surface of the rectangular slab is defined by a combination of diagonal lines).

After 1948 would the monument transition into the hands of the Communist leadership with all the consequences for the purpose of the building and its appearance. The Soviet perspective on the role of the Czechoslovakian legions in the First World War was not favourable and the primary endeavour of the former politicians to make the monument a hall of fame to the fallen heroes of the Legions had to be abandoned. The purpose of the place, considering the prominence of its position on a hill right above Prague, was to change, so as to reinforce the current ideology.⁹³³

However, some of the historical perspectives of the First republic could be recycled and modified for the purposes of the new ideology. The Hussite Movement would become part of the Communist curriculums. The Hussites would embody the first historical example of practically realised Communism and relevant example of the attempt to impose a classless society.⁹³⁴ The charismatic leaders of the Hussite Movement such as Jan Želivský or Jan Žižka, Jan Roháč z Dubé but also Jan Milíč z Kroměříže, were endowed with heroic attributes and used as symbols.⁹³⁵ For this reason would come to fruition an expensive and a large-scale sculptural project, launched before the war - the equestrian portrait of Jan Žižka created by Bohumil Kafka. The first contest for the monument dated

⁹³² Antonín MATĚJČEK: Reliéfy Karla Pokorného v mausoleu Památníku národního osvobození, in: Umění, roč. XII, 1939-1940

⁹³³ See chapter: Proletářský pantheon, in: GALANDAUER 2014, 126

⁹³⁴ Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Úvod, in: Kamil KROFTA: Duchovní odkaz husitství. Praha 1946; In the 1950s was praised Nejedlý's six volume publication on the history of Hussite singing. Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Dějiny husitského zpěvu, vol. 1-6. Praha 1954-1955

⁹³⁵ Josef MACEK: Husitské revoluční hnutí. Praha 1953; Jan FAJKUS: Husitské revoluční hnutí. Praha 1956
Jan Želivský (1380-1422), a radical Hussite priest and preacher, favourite with the lower Prague classes, related to the events of the First Prague Defenestration (1419), in a command of military operation, lost the battle of Brůx (1421). He was arrested during the Hussite civil wars by the Prague Council and executed.

back as far as 1913, yet the designs were at the time too extravagant or expensive and therefore out of the question.⁹³⁶

Bohumil Kafka, as the most proficient monumentalist of his generation, achieved recognition in the field of monumental sculpture through his numerous realisations, including monuments to Karel Havlíček and Milan Rastislav Štefánik.⁹³⁷ His capacity to deliver awe-inspiring statues in larger-than-life proportions, destined him to become the most suitable candidate for the ambitious equestrian portrait of Jan Žižka. (Fig. 15) The process of the monument building, from the initial idea to the realisation took several decades and the author would not live to see his ultimate work realised.⁹³⁸

Albeit recognized as a figure of historical importance,⁹³⁹ new meaning to Žižka's historical role was attributed at the time of the First World War, where it became a part of the ideology of Czechoslovakian legions. Hussite Movement and its charismatic leader acquired more of a universal appeal and the way to realization of the monument was again open. The second contest in 1928 have not yielded satisfactory result and Bohumil Kafka was approached directly with the demand of a new model, atypical decision of the organisers, that did not meet with the approval of some of the artistic community.⁹⁴⁰

Kafka, who himself exhibited patriotic feelings, was determined to perform the task at his best and went great lengths to secure the best possible outcome.⁹⁴¹ He paid extraordinary attention to the selection of the horse model - an example of the conscientious approach to the demanding task.⁹⁴² The minutest detail of the horse's physique the monument Kafka subjected to meticulous study. The entirely new studio

⁹³⁶ Petr WITTLICH: Bohumil Kafka. Praha 2014, 195

The detailed analysis of the lengthy

⁹³⁷ For more on the Kafka's First Republic commissions see pages: 95-96

⁹³⁸ WITTLICH 2014, 195

⁹³⁹ In 1882 was established the Society for Building of the Jan Žižka z Trocnova Monument. See: J. BALVÍN: Spolek pro zbudování pomníku Jana Žižky z Trocnova na vrchu Vítkově, in: Památník národního osvobození. Praha 1928, 10-14

⁹⁴⁰ For more on the controversy see: Spor o pomník Jana Žižky na vrchu Vítkově, in: Umění 1938, 103-106

⁹⁴¹ Bohumil KAFKA: B. Kafka členům Spolku Žižkova pomníku a rozhodčímu soudu odborných znalců O soše Jana Žižky určené před Pantheon národního osvobození na vrchu Žižkově. Praha 1937

⁹⁴² Kůň Jana Žižky z Trocnova. Prof. Dr. Fr. Bílek, přednosta zootechnického ústavu na České vysoké škole zemědělské při pražské technice, in: Lidové noviny, 14. listopadu 1937

had to be customised to the needs of the vast sculpture construction. The result of Kafka's tireless effort is the third largest bronze equestrian monument in the world and largest in Europe, together with the pedestal 22 meters high. The imposing effect of the statue is the closest to the understanding of monumentality, as it was discussed by the theoreticians in the 1940s.⁹⁴³

The decision to employ a retrospective form, inspired by the Renaissance masters of the equestrian portraits, was aligned with the conservative tastes of the public. The inspiration by the legacy of Mikoláš Aleš' portraits of Jan Žižka helped to establish a widely accepted appearance of the Hussite Movement leader, whose countenance ingrained into the minds of the public very profoundly also through the monument. The idealised, charismatic facial features of Žižka, decisive posture, combined with realistic detail of the horse's slender body, armour and horse's saddle and harness, all helped to anchor Žižka in his historical reality, materialising him for the present. His pseudo-historical portrait was, aside from celebrating his person, supposed to serve as an embodiment of the collective national consciousness and reinforce the ideas of the valiant and unyielding character of the Czechoslovaks.

In July 1946 was the plaster model for the monument delivered to the První pražská umělecká slévárna in Prague-Karlín and the process of the casting and assemblation of the parts would last another four years.⁹⁴⁴ The festive unveiling of the monument in 1950 would take place in the atmosphere of the toughest Stalinism, when the Hussite tradition was most actively promoted and the unveiling was to become the political manifestation of the regime.⁹⁴⁵ The festive speech was held by Alexej Čepička, the Minister of Defence and Klement Gottwald's son-in-law. He would endeavour to draw connecting line between the personality of the great warlord Žižka and his declared successors – charismatic leaders of the liberated nations, J. V. Stalin and K. Gottwald, the

⁹⁴³ For more on the discussion of Monumentality see chapter: *New Monumentality*

⁹⁴⁴ The First Prague Foundry

⁹⁴⁵ Galandauer notes an interesting difference between the speech, preserved in a typescript, supposed to be presented by the Chairman of the Society for the Building of the Žižka's Monument, Oldřich Žák and the actually realised speech by the Minister of Defence, Alxej Čepička.

true embodiments of the modern day tradition of the Hussites.⁹⁴⁶

The transformation into the „Proletarian pantheon“ required interventions with regard to the ideologically unsuitable decoration.⁹⁴⁷ Jan Galandauer published an interesting account of the former caretaker of the Grave of an Unknown soldier, placed within the Monument, prof. Jiří Šebek, who witnessed the work of the Governmental commission in 1951, concerned with the said artistic decoration. One of the controversial works, subjected to examination and doubt, were also the marble reliefs by K. Pokorný in the Main Hall. These large-scale works were unequivocally related to the Legionnaire thematics and therefore their future existence was endangered.

J. Šebek describes, how Prime minister Antonín Zápotocký (himself a former stonemason) would defend the superior quality of the reliefs and their right to existence from the assaults by another member of the commission – Jindřich Veselý. He would emphasise the exceptional quality of the rendition by the leader of the stonemason department of the Prague Academy of Arts, Otakar Velinský. As Šebek claims, Zápotocký's opinion and determination to save this superior work, could have had a decisive role in the preservation of the reliefs.⁹⁴⁸

The final transformation into the Monument to the Communist ideology required a great number of architectural changes, including a construction of the Hall of the Soviet Army, in turn necessitating extension of the exterior and interior decoration.⁹⁴⁹ In 1952 was announced a contest for the bronze entrance door of the Monument as well as eight mosaics for the interior of the Hall. A sarcophagus with ornamental adornments by Karel

⁹⁴⁶ GALANDAUER 2014, 136

For more detail on the iconographic and artistic employment of the Hussite Movement see chapter: *Part IV. Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture*

⁹⁴⁷ NA, 01/5. Zpráva pro s. Novotného o ideologických závadách v Národním památníku na Vítkově

⁹⁴⁸ Jan GALANDAUER: Česká vojenská tradice v proměnách času. Vrch Vítkov v české historické paměti, (vzpomínka bývalého správce hrobu Neznámého vojína J. Šebka), in: *Historie a vojenství*. č. 5, roč. 1994

Similar argumentation, this time by Jindřich Veselý, the director of the Institute of the History of KSČ (who opposed the works by Pokorný), lead to the protection of the mosaics by Max Švabinský, whose authority and renown was established by his portrait to Julius Fučík and made his works untouchable.

⁹⁴⁹ GALANDAUER 2014, 251

The architectural extension was in accordance with the original design by Jan Zázvorka, who assumed future necessity to enlarge the dimensions of the Monument.

Pokorný was installed right in the centre of the hall, as well as the bust of Marshal P. S. Rybalko by sculptor Karel Kolumek.⁹⁵⁰

The prestigious commission for the bronze door was acquired in 1953 by Josef Malejovský, for whom this victory was a distinct career advance as well as his major occupation for the next six years.⁹⁵¹ The task assigned to Malejovský demanded the creation of twelve reliefs, each measuring 117x98 cm, placed upon the large door, sized 365x530 cm. The six of them depict famous moments of the Hussite history, another six are dedicated to the narrative of the Czechoslovak working class movement and socio-political development after 1945.

In order to fulfil the expectations, Malejovský travelled in 1955 to Italy, where he could find inspiration in the work of Renaissance masters Lorenzo Ghiberti or Andrea Pisano. His final work witnesses his willingness to approach and emulate the example of the Renaissance tradition, an approach, undoubtedly convenient to the conservative decision-makers.⁹⁵²

The reliefs exhibit good quality in the rendition of the bronzes, honouring the Renaissance examples with the plasticity of the figures and momentum of the depicted narratives. The composition aim with regards to the observer in the separate scenes at different emotions. The scenes of Hussite history are to remind the spectator of the wrongs, inflicted upon the people by the Church and Feudal lord. Jan Hus and Jan Želivský preach vehemently in front of the crowds of laymen and Hussite warriors, their fist raised in the justified rage against the oppression. Jan Žižka is depicted in a ferocious

⁹⁵⁰ Karel Kolumek (1924 - 1997), was a Czech sculptor and Ceramics maker. 1946-1947 at a specialised school of Ceramics in Teplice (keramická škola v Teplicích-Šanově), 1947-1948 UMRUM at prof. B. Štefan, 1948-1953 AVU under Otakar Španiel and Karel Pokorný. From 1958 member of the artistic group Říjen. 1970-1973 was a director of a Publishing House Odeon. In 1973 acquired a post of a Dozent at AVU and a position of a prorektor. In 1976 received an Order for an Outstanding Work.

⁹⁵¹ Jana HOFMEISTEROVÁ: Josef Malejovský – bronzová vrata, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1959, č. 7, 304-305, see also: Josef Malejovský. (Ex. cat. březen-květen 1986) Praha: Národní galerie, 1986; Hana MANDYSOVÁ: Národní umělec Josef Malejovský: výběr z díla (kat. výst.). Pardubice 1988

The mosaics were to be executed by Antonín Sychra, for more see: Jana HOFMEISTEROVÁ: Mosaiky pro Síň Rudé armády v Národním památníku na Vítkově, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1959, č.4, 185-188

⁹⁵² Jiří KOTALÍK: K výstavě Josefa Malejovského, in: Josef Malejovský: katalog výstavy, Národní galerie březen-květen 1986. Praha 1986, 7-13

Battle at Vítkov, in his hand holding a mace, raised in a menacing gesture.

The feelings of pride on the heroism of the ancestors was to be achieved in the scenes of the Slovakian and Prague Uprising. The scenes of the liberation and modern history focus on rather different emotional effect. The strong narrative of the welcoming of the Red Army is set into the idealised May day, where soldiers are welcomed by cheering women and blossoming lilacs – a common iconographic motive, employed in countless paintings and sculptures, the true staple of the Socrealist art.

Karel Pokorný and Karel Lidický, the two of the meritorious sculptors, would be entrusted with the two symmetrical works on the subject of *the Victory of Socialism*, the very subject Socrealism was designed to successfully and convincingly express. The two sculptural couples were to flank the circular structure of the Eastern apse of the *Vítkov Hill Monument*. Karel Pokorný had chosen a dynamic composition, employing time-proven emotional scheme of a fighter, raising the banner of his fallen comrade. Unfortunately Pokorný could not finish his work as he died in 1962. The finalisation of the model was given to sculptor Jiří Dušek.⁹⁵³

Karel Lidický was obliged to cope in his *Socialist Family* with Pokorný's concept both in height, composition and style, working on the model from 1965, until its unveiling in 1972.⁹⁵⁴ (Fig. 71) Lidický was forced by the concept to employ Socrealism in an unaltered form - a good example of a process of the transmission of the peaking Socrealism, embodied in the work of Pokorný, into the changed circumstances. The concept of the sculpture, showing the socialist family, would fit neatly into the restrictive atmosphere of the Normalisation, where the principles of the Socrealism have been yet again resuscitated.

⁹⁵³ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Odkaz díla Karla Pokorného, in: *Výtvarná kultura*, roč. 7, č. 1, 1983. 30-35

⁹⁵⁴ Jaroslav RATAJ: Karel Lidický. Praha 1977, 32

Buchenwald-Denkmal

In 1954 had been Fritz Cremer commissioned to create a *sculptural monument for the Nationalen Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Buchenwald* near Weimar, the first complex Antifascist multi-figural sculpture of Socialist Realism in Germany. The monument, unveiled on 14th September 1958 by the Ministerpräsident of DDR, Otto Grotewohl, became one of the most famous sculptures of the DDR.⁹⁵⁵ All officials, former prisoners, as well as the general public have been pilgrimaging to the monument for many decades to honour the victims of Nazism, encouraged by the universal DDR ideology of Antifascism.⁹⁵⁶ The process of Cremer's designing of the monument was not without hurdles and provides unique insight into the workings of the relations of the commissioning bodies and the author under the Socialist regime. From this perspective is also written this chapter.

The Buchenwald sculpture is integrated into an extensive memorial structure. It stands at the end of a long staircase that leads from the mass graves up to the bell tower. The figures of prisoners look across the stairs and the mass graves far to the south in the Weimar country. The sculpture consists of eleven bronze figures - the concentration camp prisoners - whose famished bodies, shaven heads and tortured faces witness the hardships and suffering of their captivity. The figures are installed to look beyond the horizon, over the spectators' heads.

The sculpture belonged to highly political commissions and had an ideological background, carefully guarded by the commissioning bodies – the SED leadership. In order to satisfy the requirements, Cremer had to rework the design twice, as none of the first two fulfilled the stipulated criteria. The author himself provided a valuable insight into the process of his work, as it was modified on the grounds of the received criticism.⁹⁵⁷ The first model from 1952 was apparently inspired by the Rodins' group

⁹⁵⁵ Volkhard KNIGGE: Fritz Cremer, Buchenwald-Denkmal, Auftraggeber: Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes, in: Flacke, Monika (Hrsg.), Auftrag: Kunst. 1949-1990. Bildende Künstler in der DDR zwischen Ästhetik und Politik, (Berlin) 1995, 106-118

⁹⁵⁶ Ulrich SCHLIE: Die nation erinnert sich. Die Denkmäler der Deutschen. München 2002, 139-142

⁹⁵⁷ Fritz CREMER: Über die Arbeit an den plastischen Entwürfen meiner Buchenwald-Gruppe, in: Das Blatt, Berlin,

Citizens of Calais (1895).⁹⁵⁸ This renowned work, belonging to the best known multi-figural compositions of all times, were installed against the wishes of the author on a pedestal, deforming the original artistic intention, presenting figures individually, in a row. The group of the Buchenwald prisoners intentionally draws inspiration from Rodin's group setting. Another similarity is observable in the psychologically individualised postures. The individualisation is less distinct and the figures are more uniform both in expression, dress and the fact, all of them are gazing in one direction. Cremer wished to *“come to terms with the immense scope of the topic and the possibilities of form by excluding secondary, anecdotal things, by leaving purely human values.”*⁹⁵⁹

The model was criticised for not living up to the expectations – not reflecting the positive values of the new socialist society and retaining the harmful residues of the formalist individualism.⁹⁶⁰ From the perspective of Socialism did the first model not achieve any of the features required in the successful Socrealist works – pathos, heroism, revolutionarism or progressive optimism. How did the intelligent and adaptive Cremer put up with the criticism is a testimony of his resolution to satisfy the commissioner, even if resulting in a distinct modification of his ideas and curtailment of his artistic freedoms.

The second model is therefore the most convincing witness to the desire to arrive to a successful solution, satisfying the commissioning bodies, even if it would be in direct contrast to his original draft. Compared to any of the former art commissions, taking place during the First Republic or Weimar Germany, renowned artists were definitely more resilient in the defence of their artistic ideas, facing the decision-makers. Their self-confidence and knowledge of their proficiency would not allow to abandon their

5. 1954, Heft 7, 2-3, alternatively translated into Czech: Z článku „O práci na plastických návrzích mé Buchenwaldské skupiny, 1954, in: Fritz Cremer: projekty, studie, výsledky. (ed. Christine Hoffmeister; Fritz Jacobi, Horst-Jörg Ludwig; Ausstellung director Petr Hartmann; Exhibition Národní galerie v Praze-Valdštejnská jízdárna IV.-V.1978). Praha : Národní galerie v Praze 1978, 31

⁹⁵⁸ A. Rodin is also mentioned here: 256

⁹⁵⁹ CREMER 1954, 2-3

⁹⁶⁰ CREMER 1954, 2-3

For the discussion regarding the model see: Wolfram PETRI: Das Mahnmahl von Buchenwald, in: Kunsterziehung in der Schule, 4. 196, Heft 4, 5-11; Edith KRULL: Probleme der Denkmalgestaltung, in: Urania, 19. 1956, Heft 11, 420-425; L. DIETERS: Die Gestaltung des Ehrnhains Buchenwald, in: Deutsche Architektur, 1957, 487-489; Peter H. FEIST: Fritz Cremer: Die Kämpfer von Buchenwald, in: Junge Kunst, 1958, Heft 12, 27ff

visions so thoroughly and willingly, as Cremer did in this case.

The second model has entirely different composition and introduces “stage props” – explicitly asked for by the critics of the first model - weapons and dominantly set flag, contributing to a triangular shape of the group. Beside these favourite attributes of Socrealism, heroism and revolutionary spirit springs from the dynamic, active posture of the figures, who also acquired more of an athletic physique and were clad in collared shirts. In the overall effect it did deliver the sense of victory, missing in the first model. Nevertheless, this second model did not either satisfy the commission.

Cremer would not only come up with a third model amending all the concerns of the critics, but also lay forward a clever analysis of his work on the monument, oscillating between self-criticism and self-justification, analysing his work in individual stages and clarifying the mental and artistic process, leading to each of the models.⁹⁶¹ He would present objections and counter arguments, not hesitating to ascribe the Party the highest authority both in the questions of contents and form, describing however his motivations so as to remind the acute reader of his honest wish to deliver truly valuable work of art ever since the first model.

The third model group is spacially defined on the left side by the figure of a child, on the left by the flag carrier. The central group depicts a prisoner armed with a rifle, stepping forward in an unintimidated pose. Another inmate raises right hand in a gesture of oath. In the foremost plan a figure of collapsing soldier adds to the dynamism of the composition, joined by the behind standing man with both arms held high and fists clenched. Another six figures of prisoners without specific roles or postures add volume and monumentality to the group.

The first model was indebted to the tradition of Rodin and endeavoured to strip the group of any redundant attributes, so as to achieve the universally humanist result. The second had shown keen effort to grasp the Socrealist perspective through the employment of heroic and revolutionary postures and attributes. The third model would

⁹⁶¹ CREMER 1954, 2-3

choose a different path – returning to the tolerated aspects of the Neue Sachlichkeit, Formvereinfachung and employing customary Lammertesque physique of the prisoners, he would finally arrive to the model, artistically valuable and yet relatable to the commissioner, because employing both revolutionary spirit and heroism. The sculpture invokes the against Fascism and uniting the people in the new journey towards better tomorrows.

When the third draft was approved in 1956, the project was already belated. For this reason, temporary bronze plaster figures were placed on the finished plinth for the inauguration of the bell tower in September 1958 and the final bronze figures were installed to their final place only in the summer of 1959.⁹⁶²

Exhibitions

The subjugation of artists to the unions influenced every aspect of their professional life and the opportunity to exhibit their works was not excluded. The union, dividing artists most typically into groups according to the place of their residence, took over also the responsibility for the organisation of exhibitions. The exhibitions would include the representative *Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts* or *Deutsche Kunstausstellung* as the showcase of the best talents, but numerous small-scale exhibitions would be organised periodically on a district level to provide the opportunity to present their work also to the local artists, who did not reach the level necessary for the attendance at the national exhibition. These would present a cross-section of the art fields in a careful selection of works, convening to the Socrealist perspective and would include painting, sculpture and design.

A separate category of exhibitions had political purpose and was organised to promote some of the industrial or agricultural fields, often as a show of the results of a

⁹⁶² Ulrich SCHLIE: Die nation erinnert sich. Die denkmäler der Deutschen. München 2002, 139-142

successfully completed action task. In Czechoslovakia the heavy accentuation of the mining industry in the early 1950s would for example result in a number of exhibitions, designed to promote the profession among the youth and raise the prestige of this profession among the general population.⁹⁶³ Also the agriculture, its collectivisation, new methods employed and the promising future, secured by the elevated productivity, was addressed in promotional exhibitions. The presentation of the ideal workers in a heroic and revolutionary light, had at its core the desire to raise productivity and inspire the emergence of the new *udarníci*.⁹⁶⁴ Another, even more conspicuously political exhibitions, were dedicated to the relations with other states of the Eastern Bloc, particularly the SSSR. Annually was the Czechoslovakian public introduced to some field of the Soviet art, culture, industry, agriculture, history or politics.⁹⁶⁵

Aside from these exhibitions were most often presented monothematic exhibitions of the „classics“, to whom belonged especially Mikoláš Aleš, or Josef Mánes.⁹⁶⁶ Several serial events and exhibitions were launched to provide artists the opportunity to represent their works, created in accordance with the doctrine. The Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts at the Prague Castle, the Riding School, was organised four times in the time-frame 1951 – 1959. The Art Harvest, an event organised as a most representative exhibition by SČSVU took place at Republic Square in the Art House.⁹⁶⁷ The central exhibition series in the DDR was the Deutsche Kunstausstellung, organised annually 1949-1988.

High-profile artists such as Vincenc Makovský, Karel Pokorný, Jan Lauda, Josef

⁹⁶³ For more on the mining industry accentuation in sculpture see Part IV. Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture

⁹⁶⁴ The first exhibitions: the Slavonic Agricultural Exhibition (1948), Slavonic Agricultural Exhibition (1948)

⁹⁶⁵ A more detailed account of the SSSR related exhibitions see chapter: *Post-War Exhibitions*

⁹⁶⁶ Mikoláš Aleš was raised to the pedestal of the national pantheon. His unique position was sealed by Zdeněk Nejedlý, who initiated foundation of his museum in the Summer house Hvězda in Prague. His exhibitions were at the core of the official propaganda, with exhibition of his drawings in National Gallery in 1950, a major exhibition in 1952 under the auspices of the President of ČSR.

To the perception of Josef Mánes by the theoreticians of Socrealism see especially: Vladimír ŠOLTA: K některým otázkám socialistického realismu ve výtvarném umění. In: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1, 1950, 108-132 Jaromír NEUMAN: Josef Mánes, In: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 3 1950, 88-105

⁹⁶⁷ *Výtvarná úroda*

Malejovský, but also a number of less prominent sculptors, who created some exceptional Socrealist sculpture, would also exhibit abroad in a representative exhibitions, tailored to promote Czechoslovakia and its talents outside the borders of the republic, often also outside of the Eastern Bloc. However scarce, these exhibitions provided artists with the welcome opportunity to enrich their curriculums – this applied especially to the younger generation, who did not exhibit abroad at the times of the First Republic, when sculptors, such as Karel Pokorný, could exhibit twice in Paris (1937). The post-1948 sculptors had less interesting venues to send their art works to. The Czechoslovakian sculpture was presented in Bucurest (1949), in Wien (1951) and in Berlin (1952).⁹⁶⁸

The Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts

The first comprehensive collective exhibition, fit to be used as an example of general concepts in the Socrealist iconography *was the Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts*. The row of these exhibitions was hosted by the Prague Castle, the Riding School, where it was organised four times in the time-frame 1951 – 1959. This convenient location was selected by the President of the Czechoslovakia, Klement Gottwald and his advisors to serve as the showcase for the art, consistent with the new Weltanschauung.⁹⁶⁹ It was considered to be of the most representative quality of all exhibitions that were taking place in the followed period.⁹⁷⁰ In order to give a picture of the structure of such an event, detailed account of the organisational arrangements follows.

⁹⁶⁸ Sculptura cehoslovaca: Catalogul expozitiei sculpturi cehoslovace - Bucuresti 1949. Bucuresti: Institut roman pentru relatiuni culturale cu strainatate, 1949

Ausstellung der tschechoslowakischen Skulptur: Wien - Wiener Kunsthalle 25. Februar bis 19. März 1951. Wien: Österreichischtschechoslowakische Gesellschaft, Berufsvereinigung bildender Künstler Österreichs, 1951

Ausstellung die tschechoslowakische Skulptur. Oktober 1952 – November 1952. Berlin: Akademie der Künste 1952

Tjeckoslovakisk konst (Ex. Cat.) Liljevalchs konsthall (17. September - 17. Oktober 1949). Stockholm 1949, 59

⁹⁶⁹ Already in 1949 was publicly presented exhibition Československý lid a jeho kraj v životě, práci a zápasu: Výstava obrazů a soch z let 1918-49 : Jízdárna pražského hradu : Květen-červen 1949.

⁹⁷⁰ PAVLÁSEK, Vojtěch: The Speech of Under-Secretary to the Minister of Culture at the Nationwide Conference of the SČSVU in: KÁRA, Lubor (ed.): II. Celostátní konference Svazu československých výtvarných umělců. Praha 1952, 12

The exhibition took place under the auspices of the President in May – September 1951. It was organised by joint efforts of the Office of the President and SČSVU.⁹⁷¹ In comparison with the following years it has a well prepared catalogue accompanied by depictions of the most representative works of art. The Honorary Board consisted of Z. Nejedlý, V. Kopecký, the Mayor of Prague V. Vacek and two more representatives of both ministries of Education and Informations. The jury of the exhibition consisted of vast array of 35 artists and public figures. The value of the presented sculptural works of art was judged by the most active sculptors of the generation – Jan Lauda, Karel Pokorný with a selection of Slovak academical artists, Jozef Kostka or Rudolf Pribiš.⁹⁷²

In the pre-1948 period, the artefacts and works of art at collective exhibitions were usually divided according to style, time-frame or schools their authors belonged to. Since 1948 the exhibitions, organised by SČSVU, comprised all artistic fields and were bound by the abstract and vague affiliation to the Socialist Realism. As is obvious from the analysis of the exhibition catalogue, painters were facing the possibility either to choose a less ideologically conspicuous subjects, such as a depiction of a landscape: Vincenc Beneš for example exhibited four paintings, two of them with floral motifs and other two with a neutral subject of autumn scenery. Similarly neutral motives were used by Oldřich Blažíček, Miroslav Brotánek, Emil Filla, Karel Holan (with four paintings of Prague sceneries), Miloslav Holý (five paintings of still-lives), Josef Kadřábek, Ludvík Kuba, Josef Lada all used sceneries and still lives.⁹⁷³ This strategy was successfully employed at future exhibitions as well.

⁹⁷¹ KÁRA, Lubor: 1. Přehlídka československého výtvarného umění 1949-1951. Praha 1951

⁹⁷² *Rudolf Hornák* (1911-1965), a Slovak sculptor. 1936 concluded his studies at UMPRUM, as a pupil of J. Mařatka and K. Dvořák. 1945-1950 founder and director of the School of Applied Arts and Industrial Design in Bratislava (Škola uměleckého průmyslu v Bratislavě), 1950-1954 asistant at Pedagogical Faculty of the Comenius University in Bratislava (Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave), 1959-1965 dozent and professor at Pedagogical Institute in Trnava (Pedagogický institut v Trnave). His field of occupation was especially portraiture. For more see: *Slovník českých a slovenských umělců*, sv. 3, 1950-1999. Praha 1999

Jozef Kostka (1912-1996), a Slovak sculptor. 1937 concluded his studies at UMPRUM, as a pupil of J. Mařatka and K. Dvořák. 1948 professor at Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (Slovenská technická univerzita v Bratislave) 1948 professor at Pedagogical Faculty of the Comenius University in Bratislava (Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Komenského v Bratislave), 1949 professor of the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava. A member of the group Generace 1909. His field of occupation was especially monumental and lyrical sculpture. 1967 acquired title of the National Artist. For more see: Jiří KOTALÍK: *Jozef Kostka: Katalog*, Praha 1981

⁹⁷³ KÁRA 1951, 2

A viable alternative some artists employed, were on the divide between neutral and ideological - dignified subjects of the famous history of Hussite revolution – landscapes of the famous historical sites, painted for example by Josef Glückselig, Vlastimil Rada, Jan Slavíček, Anna Suchardová-Podzemná or Marie Vokáčová-Šindlerová. These non-controversial, regime-friendly subjects were obviously popular, as they allowed artists to participate and at the same time would not engage too conspicuously in the political sense. Another option was to use a portrait of unknown, non-political person, such as in case of Charlotta Burešová, who painted Children at play, Anna Dvořáková who created a portrait of a musician and Otto Holaš, who staged his draft for a portrait of a girl.

Other artists chose to comply unreservedly with the directives and depicted either:

- 1) *A portrait of a leader*: the President of the ČSR Klement Gottwald (Jan Čumpelík, Maxmilian Schurrman)
- 2) *Painting of the heroic history of the Working-class* (Ctibor Belan, Alena Čermáková, Jan Čumpelík, Václav Junek, Josef Konečný, etc.)
- 3) *Painting of daily labour* (Josef Drha, Karel Gabriel, Čeněk Chodera, Olga Mandelová, Maria Medvecká, etc.)
- 4) *Typus of a profession*: A Mine worker, Worker in agriculture, Steelworker, Founder, Tanner and other professions, often representing the most meritorious worker, so-called striker, often depicted in a heroic pose with an attribute of his profession. (Julius Bukovinský, Ladislav Čemický, Jaroslav Kantor, Jan Rusňák etc.)
- 5) *Portrait of a distinguished personality of cultural life*: Conventional elaboration of a portrait of a personality. Portrait of National Artist Ludvík Kuba (Jaroslav Janeček)

The first Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts presented 77 sculptures, drafts either in plaster or bronze and medals. The highest number of exhibited works of a single artist belonged to Josef Malejovský (born 14th April 1914), Professor at Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design, who studied under Prof. Karel Dvořák and who was about to become one of the most fruitful sculptors of the Socrealism. Between 1959 –

1987 he received from the state many distinctions for his achievements.⁹⁷⁴ His contribution at the exhibition consisted of portraits of J. V. Stalin and Alois Jirásek and three agitational works: Above a friend, Temporary worker and Socialist Commitment.

One of the leading ideologues, Lubor Kára, summarised in the catalogue of the first exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts aptly the thematics and motives, desirable to the organisers and preferred by the jury in their final selection. In 1951 the cultural production was already heavily influenced by the Zhdanov doctrine, which is reflected accurately in his text on literature, where he also named the basic motives of Socrealist style:

*In our country the main heroes of works of literature are the active builders of a new life-working men and women, men and women collective farmers, Party members, managers, engineers, members of the Young Communist League, Pioneers. Such are the chief types and the chief heroes...*⁹⁷⁵

The demand, placed upon the artists was in the depiction of animate life of the udarníci and improvers, toiling for higher productivity of industry labour, expansion and growth of the agriculture in the countryside, emergence of the new generation of youth in their education and in the industrial production, creative relationship of the people to labour and nature.⁹⁷⁶

The second of the exhibitions of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts took place two years after the first exhibition, already without the participation of the deceased Klement Gottwald, who was replaced by the new president of ČSR, Antonín Zápotocký. He overtook the auspices of this exhibition, sealing thus the importance of the event in the cultural sphere. The exhibition contained 623 artworks, chosen from almost two thousand works, provided by the local centres and picked by the jury. By structure and overall progress of the exhibition it is in accordance with the successful model of the first exhibition.

Karel Pokorný, whose introduction to the subject of the exhibition was reprinted in the

⁹⁷⁴ For more on Josef Malejovský: SPURNÝ, Jan: Josef Malejovský. Praha 1963; MANDYSOVÁ, Hana: Národní umělec Josef Malejovský: výběr z díla (kat. výst.). Pardubice 1988

⁹⁷⁵ ŽDANOV, Andrej Aleksandrovič: On Art. Praha, 1950

⁹⁷⁶ KÁRA 1951, 2

Výtvarná práce, commented on the occasion. Aside from conventional ideological clichés on the ambitions of the Socialist art - Socialist by content and Realist in form - he noted, that there are still sore deficiencies in the monumental painting and figurative sculpture, partly due to insufficient effort to seek for opportunities in the public space and in architecture to promote this monumental art.⁹⁷⁷ In the same magazine Antonín Pelc, painter and caricaturist, who received in 1951 the State prize of Klement Gottwald, published a series of critics of the exhibition, where he praised sculpture beyond all other art fields.⁹⁷⁸ The endurance of what he calls „reliable basis,“ he assigns firstly to the good overall level of Czech sculpture to date, secondly to lesser influence of „Formalism“ over the figurative sculpture, which managed to retain in the older generation of sculptors the „Myslbekian“ level and mastery.

Pelc extolled especially Jan Lauda's portrait of Zdeněk Nejedlý, Josef Malejovský for his model of the sculptures for the Doors of National Memorial on Vítkov, Karel Pokorný's Charles IV for the Charles University, whom he praises precisely for those qualities which allow to compare the work with the „Myslbekian style“. Here was also presented the model for the Monument to Miners, installed in the city of Kladno later on, by Ladislav Novák, who received the State prize for this sculpture the same year and who used a novel composition while retaining a desirable realist impression.⁹⁷⁹

Regarding the iconographic content of the exhibited sculptures, it is obvious that Karel Pokorný's note on seeing too few examples of monumentality in the mass of the presented works, is relevant to present inclination to make choices of themes and subjects, that would be in accordance with more ambitious projects. The Party acknowledged the need to represent their aims by building of memorials and monuments in massive scale and in durable materials that would last ages.⁹⁸⁰ Therefore more models of public monuments were included in the mass of art works, representing the Socrealist sculpture. There is also an apparent widening of the official „pantheon“ of

⁹⁷⁷ Karel POKORNÝ: II. Přehlídka československého výtvarného umění. In: *Výtvarná práce* 1, 1953, 16

⁹⁷⁸ Antonín PELC: Naše sochařství, věrno slavné tradici. In: *Výtvarná práce* 1, 1953, 21

⁹⁷⁹ PELC 1953, 21

⁹⁸⁰ PETIŠKOVÁ, Tereza: Oficiální umění padesátých let, In: BREGANTOVÁ, Polana, BYDŽOVSKÁ, Lenka, HLAVÁČEK, Josef, et.al., *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění V. 1939/ 1958*. 2005, 341 – 357

promoted historical personalities, clearly according to Zdeněk Nejedlý's conception of national history in the Marxist-Leninist perspective of a class-struggle.

The third of the exhibitions of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts in 1955, less monumental in scope and also without the auspices of the president, is presented with a catalogue, which contains no accompanying text, only a mere list of exhibited works, divided according to medium. The part dedicated to sculpture (157 in number) contains a distinctly higher proportion of bust portraits of distinguished artists. Painters Jan Slavíček a Karel Holan were portrayed by Břetislav Benda, Karel Pokorný by Sylva Jílková-Lacinová and as much as 50 portraits of the various personalities of history (Antonín Dvořák, Petr Bezruč, Julius Fučík, Leoš Janáček, Alois Jirásek, Jiří Wolker, Jan Želivský, etc.), mandatory politicians (A. Zápotocký, K. Gottwald, V. Kopecký A. Šverma, Z. Nejedlý) and Russian army commanders (V. Molotov, P. Rybalko).

Among the models to monumental commissions is the most complex the collective project for the erection of the Monument to the Soviet Army in Svídník. Jaroslav Kumprecht, Karel Lodr, Vladimír Šedivý, Jaroslav Bartoš, Jan Hána a Oskar Kozák offered to the exhibition the overall view of the monument, the frontal relief called Victory, sculpture „Honour to the Deceased“ and sculptural group „Welcoming“.⁹⁸¹ The same theme was used by Antonín Širůček for his model of the monument, placed at the outskirts of Brno. A group sculpture, following still the cult of Stalin and Gottwald was created by Miloš Zet under the title „Teacher and Pupil“, depicting these politicians in a sculptural group, which was intended for the Gottwald Museum.⁹⁸² The highest praise was dedicated to Karel Lidický, whose models for the Jan Hus monument (Karolinum, Charles University in Prague) was celebrated also in Lidický's own exhibition.⁹⁸³

The central exhibition of the ÚŠČSVU, *the Art Harvest*, took place in the winter of 1950 in the House of Fine Arts at Republic Square in Prague under the auspices of Minister of

⁹⁸¹ Catalogue III. Přehlídka československého výtvarného umění, 1955, 35

⁹⁸² Miloš Zet was a pupil of Karel Pokorný. For more on Miloš Zet see: KAROUS, Pavel: Miloš Zet. In: Vetřelci a volavky. In: <http://www.vetrelciavolavky.cz/sochari/milos-zet>
Jaroslav Bartoš (1926-2010), was a Czech sculptor. In 1949 concluded his studies at AVU as a pupil of K. Pokorný. He mostly created monumental paintings and sculpture. A member of the Radar group and Tolerance 95. For more see: Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců, sv. 1, 1950-1997. Ostrava 1997

⁹⁸³ MÍČKO, Miroslav: Karel Lidický: výstava sochařské práce, 1953. An Exhibition in Výstavní síň Československého spisovatele (Praha)

Education, Zdeněk Nejedlý and again year later in Exhibition Halls of Mánes. The art presented consisted of works selected from the local unions of SČSVU. The exhibits were chosen by a jury with the Academical Painter Josef Brož, commissar of the exhibition, in the lead. The sculptors in the jury of both exhibitions were in majority the same as in The exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts in 1951, only Václav Žalud is missing from the list. In 1951 was the list enriched by sculptor Miloš Zet.⁹⁸⁴ In 1950 the SČSVU presented 80 sculptures and 1951 the number heightened to 97.

Theoretician Vladimír Šolta in the Magazine of the Fine Arts in 1950 dedicated one extensive critique to the exhibition and his article is a testimony to the political perspective over art in the followed time-frame. Šolta as well as already mentioned Antonín Pelc (two years later) expressed his conviction that sculpture of Socialist Realism has held since 1945 high level among the art spheres:

“ The success of our sculpture already after 1945 happened distinctly sooner than in painting. The level of work at the Art Harvest is considerably high, taking into account operational and expenses problems sculptural work has to deal with.”

Albeit Šolta expresses disappointment with the low number of marble and stone sculptures and prevalence of plaster in the exhibited sculptures, he claims sculpture to be predestined to fulfil monumental tasks and believes in the capacity of artists to accomplish them.⁹⁸⁵ The sculptures at Art Harvest are assessed by him in agreement with the above mentioned perspective. The most monumental art work, complying the best with the requirement of heroic monumentalism is in his perspective Václav Žalud's group sculpture „For Peace, for Homeland, for Socialism“, which is rendered in plaster but nevertheless elaborated in a large-scale model with 210 cm in height.

„It expresses morally-political unity of our People and it shows in the individual representatives of our nation the powers, which by their work and by their vigilance contribute to the observation of the world's peace. With monumentally arranged dimensions and substances, the figures are

⁹⁸⁴ Miloš Zet was a pupil of Karel Pokorný. For more on Miloš Zet see: KAROUS, Pavel: Miloš Zet. In: Vetřelci a volavky. In: <http://www.vetrelciavolavky.cz/sochari/milos-zet>

⁹⁸⁵ ŠOLTA, Vladimír: Připomínky k výstavě „Výtvarná úroda“, in: Výtvarné umění 9-10, 1950, 386 - 398

rendered in sufficiently convincing manner...⁹⁸⁶

Aside the Žalud's work earned Šolta's praise three more sculptures – the co-op female worker by Tatiana Konstantinova (an agricultural worker holding in her arms a piglet), and Red Army Soldier by the same author, appreciated by Šolta for fresh youthfulness, unpretentious charm and truthful expression. (Fig. 81) Mechanical Engineer by Zdeněk Kovář, the second being the product of the first task action. Šolta accompanied the description of the sculpture with a comment that: „*The productive relation of our worker to the product of its labour is still not customary object of interest of our artists.*“ Šolta's critical thoughts on the sculpture of this exhibition are all concerning the sketchiness of the models, often executed in a hurry either due to the short time available for the production, or due to certain reluctance of the artist facing the task.

Deutsche Kunstaussstellung

The central art exhibitions of the DDR were organized in the Dresden Albertinum, 1946 – 1949 in the Stadthalle Nordplatz, 1953-1972 in the "Gemäldegalerie Neue Meister" and 1977-1987 in the Ausstellungszentrum at the Fučikplatz with 3-5 years frequency. The tradition of the Nationalkunstaussstellungen in Dresden reached to the times of the Weimar Republik, not excluding the times of National Socialism. In the course of more than forty years, between 1946 and 1988 the exhibitions carried the title *Deutsche Kunstaussstellung* and belonged to the most visited cultural events of the DDR.

The exhibition was always prepared in close cooperation of VBK and SED, resulting in an equilibrium of artistic and political perspective as well as universal promotion of the exhibition attendance throughout the DDR society.⁹⁸⁷ The exhibitions were supplemented by meticulously prepared catalogues and the works of art promoted by slide shows and postcards, enhancing the public impact. Even Czechoslovakian

⁹⁸⁶ ŠOLTA 1950, 398

⁹⁸⁷ Joachim ACKERMANN: Die Kunstaussstellungen der DDR, in: Offner, Hannelore/ Schroeder, Klaus (Hrsg.), *Eingegrenzt – ausgegrenzt. Bildende Kunst und Parteiherrschaft in der DDR. 1961-1989*. Berlin 2000, 89-148

theoreticians noted, the German catalogues by far and wide surpass the catalogues, published on similar occasion in Czechoslovakia.⁹⁸⁸

The first exhibition, renewing the tradition of the national exhibitions was organised in Dresden already in 1946, under the title *Allgemeine Deutsche Kunstausstellung*. Organised by *Landesverwaltung Sachsen* with the consent and support of SMAD, a great variety of art works was gathered from all corners of the divided Germany.⁹⁸⁹ Sculptors such as Wilhelm Lehmbruck, Ernst Barlach, Käthe Kollwitz, Waldemar Grzimek were again exhibited besides other works – both Expressionist or Realist.⁹⁹⁰ This exhibition was the first and also the last opportunity for the Avantgarde artists to exhibit in a post-war East Germany in a comprehensive and unrestrictive exhibition.⁹⁹¹

Whereas the exhibitions of the early 1950s would present strictly the fine arts, the more recent exhibitions expanded to include also fashion, utility graphics, photography and the arts and crafts. This would widen the public interest, making the exhibition a universal cultural event, rather than fine arts oriented show for the few specialists.⁹⁹² The SED would further promote the attendance by encouraging factory and agriculture workers, and brigades to visit the exhibition, often by organising bus transports to the venue. For this reason the number of visitors steadily grew from the 250 000 visitors of the third exhibition in (1953) to the astonishing one million when the last exhibition took place (1987).⁹⁹³

⁹⁸⁸ Vojáci míru: výstava prací výtvarných umělců NDR a lidových umělců z řad Národní lidové armády NDR: obrazy, sochy, politické kresby, grafika, filmy. Praha: Názorná agitace, 1963

⁹⁸⁹ Ausstellungskatalog zur Allgemeinen Kunstausstellung Dresden 1946. Dresden 1946, 6

⁹⁹⁰ GILLEN 2005, 32

⁹⁹¹ Kurt WINKLER: Allgemeine Deutsche Kunstausstellung, Dresden 1946, in: Stationen der Moderne - Die bedeutenden Kunstausstellungen des 20. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland (Exhibition Catalogue, Berlinische Galerie) Berlin 1988, 355

One of relevant studies to the cultural-political background subject of the Exhibition in 1946 is: Kathleen SCHRÖTER: Allgemeinen Deutschen Kunstausstellung 1946 in Dresden im Kontext der Kunst- und Kulturpolitik in der SBZ. (Magisterarbeit, Universität Bonn) 2004

An interesting project, reconstructing in virtual environment the exhibition, was endeavoured by students of Fach Medieninformatik at the Technischen Universität Dresden, accesible at: <http://willgrohmann.de/reconstructionexhibition.php?lang=de>

⁹⁹² Paul KAISER: Leistungsschau und Ideenverkörperung: Die Zentralen Kunstausstellungen der DDR, in: Enge und Vielfalt - Auftragskunst und Kunstförderung in der DDR : Analysen und Meinungen. Hamburg 1999, 93-105

⁹⁹³

The abandonment of the liberal principles was mirrored already in the II. Deutsche Kunstausstellung in Dresden, organised by the Landesregierung Sachsen in 1949, following the first Kulturtag, where the pro-Soviet course and quest for new Socialist culture was defined. The inclination towards the orientation and rhetorics of the Socialist state was already clearly comprehensible, making the exhibition one of the first venues, where the orientation on the Soviet Union as the Vorbild was established.⁹⁹⁴ Albeit taking place in the tumultuous moment of the final division of Germany, both East and West artists were to be equally present, at least according to the organisers. The effort to merge the authoritative Soviet model of the exhibition with the liberal art works could lead inevitably only to dissatisfaction of the SED leadership with the final result.

To secure more favourable outcomes of the art production, the SED leadership would in the March 1951 issue a resolution, to organize another exhibition within a year, that would finally present the works, reflecting the new thematics of the Wiederaufbau and the Socialist state life and work.⁹⁹⁵ This exhibition, organized by the VBK, was opened in the Berlin, Pergamonmuseum, on December the same year, under the title "*Künstler schaffen für den Frieden*".⁹⁹⁶ The conception was from the aesthetic perspective finally obviously Soviet. This time the organisers made sure, no undesirable expressions of decadence and formalism would appear on the show, by stating clearly the criteria of the art works selection.⁹⁹⁷

The diversion from the chosen course was secured by the publishing of the topics and themes, artists were to exhibit. They included the following areas: 1. Udarniki, workers

⁹⁹⁴ Gabriele SAURE: Die II. Deutsche Kunstausstellung Dresden 1949. Der Ausgang für den kompromißlosen Kampf um eine realistische deutsche Kunst, in: Martin PAPENBROCK: Kunst und Sozialgeschichte. 1995, 347

⁹⁹⁵ Dagmar BUCHBINDER: Die Dritte Deutsche Kunstausstellung 1953 in Dresden – Malerei als Teil der Kunstpolitik in der DDR, in: Jochen STAADT: Die Eroberung der Kultur beginnt!: die Staatliche Kommission für Kunstangelegenheiten der DDR (1951-1953) und die Kulturpolitik der SED. Berlin 2011, 135-173

⁹⁹⁶ Künstler schaffen für den Frieden (Ex. Cat.) (1. Dezember 1951 - 31. Januar 1952 in den Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin), Museumbau am Kupfergraben (Pergamon-museum), Berlin (Ost) 1951

Kurt MAGRITZ: Deutsche Künstler schaffen für den Frieden, in: Täglichen Rundschau, 2. Dezember 1951, 6

⁹⁹⁷ Der richtige Weg ist beschritten. Nachwort zur gesamtdeutschen Kunstausstellung Künstler schaffen für den Frieden, in: Einheit /1952 484-496

and technical intelligentsia, studying workers and farmers, 2. Fighters and Events of the National Front, 3. Comradeship with the Soviet Union, 4. The progressive forces of the world in the struggle for peace, 5. Criticism and self-criticism of the democratic Aufbau, 6. Endeavours to fulfil the five-year plan.⁹⁹⁸

In 1953 was already obvious, that the continuity of Modernism in DDR is not to be accepted as the leading artistic tendency of the socialist state. The *Dritte Deutsche Kunstausstellung*, organised by the joint efforts of the Staatliche Kommission für Kunstangelegenheiten of DDR and VBK, was transformed into the full-blown tool of political propaganda both in structure and content.⁹⁹⁹ The Kunstkommission exerted a substantial effort to secure the ideo-political agreeability of the prepared exhibition. One of the outcomes of the II. Parteikonferenz was therefore the statement to the process of preparations. The organisers were encouraged to actively visit artists' studios and select the most suitable works themselves, instead of passively receive the enrolled works. These recommendations did not affect the action tasks for the exhibition works, providing the potential authors with specific recommendations with regards to theme and topics.

A relevant source for the preferred topic structure for the upcoming exhibition is a report, sent by Helmut Holtzhauer, representative of the Kunstkommission, on October 22, 1952 to the Commissioner of the Sowjetische Kontrollkommission, Yuri Beburow, where he specified the topics, selected for the exhibition:¹⁰⁰⁰

1. Leading Soviets of the Soviet Union and the DDR ie Monuments and paintings of Stalin, Lenin, Pieck, Ulbricht, Grotewohl

⁹⁹⁸ See the Exhibition catalogue, see bibliography

⁹⁹⁹ Helmut HOLTZHAUER: Dritte Deutsche Kunstausstellung. Dresden 1953 Paul KAISER: Leistungsschau und Ideenverkörperung: Die Zentralen Kunstausstellungen der DDR, in: Enge und Vielfalt - Auftragskunst und Kunstförderung in der DDR : Analysen und Meinungen. Hamburg 1999, 93-105; For more on the subject see: STEINKAMP, Maike: Die Konstruktion einer „Sozialistischen Kunstgeschichte“, in: Das Unerwünschte Erbe, die Rezeption "entarteter" Kunst in Kunstkritik, Ausstellungen und Museen der SBZ und frühen DDR. Berlin 2008, 338-339; Fritz JAKOBI, Figur und Gegenstand: Malerei und Plastik in der Kunst der DDR aus der Sammlung der Nationalgalerie. Berlin 1995, 96-113; DAMUS, Martin: Malerei der DDR: Funktionen der bildenden Kunst im Realen Sozialismus. Reinbek bei Hamburg 1991, 64;

¹⁰⁰⁰ Helmut Holtzhauer's report quoted and analysed in: BUCHBINDER 2011, 28

2. Udarniki, Activists, Inventors, National Prizewinners
3. Defence of the home
4. Struggle for unity, peace and democracy - e.g. Pictures and sculptures on the subject of "Bodenreform", the "Hausfriedenskomitee" or "Weltfestspiele 1951"
5. Construction of Socialism
6. Production Cooperatives
7. Friendship with the Soviet Union
8. From the Cultural Life
9. Our youth - e.g. The representation of Young Pioneers.
10. Historical themes from the struggle of the German workers' movement and the struggle of the German people for unity, peace, democracy and socialism
11. The national heritage: Great national and social liberation struggles of the German people", especially: Freedom Struggles of the Germans Against the Roman oppressors, The time of the Reformation and the peasant war, The struggle against the Napoleonic oppression, The bourgeois revolution 1848, Struggles of the workers' movement.

Among the selected works were also sculptures – a bust of J. V. Stalin was regardless of the loud Antifascist rhetoric, ordered from Johann F. Rogge, an artist, who at the times of National Socialism created numerous "Führerbüsten" and exhibited at the Great German Art Exhibition in München *busts of Gerhart Hauptmann* (1943) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1944).¹⁰⁰¹ Moreover, the catalogue presents other illustrations of Rogge's works – sculptures of Wilhelm Pieck, Ernst Thälmann and Thomas Münzer.¹⁰⁰²

Walter Arnold, distinguished in the previous year with the Nationalpreis for his Wiederaufbau sculpture *Jugend – Baumeister der DDR* (1952), exhibited another in the row of his conformist sculptures - the life-sized plaster figure of a *Traktoristin* (1953), cast later in bronze. It was the result of Arnold's stay in the countryside, where he resided to leverage the inspiration for his Socrealist works from the agricultural work. The theme of "Our youth" was employed by Hans Kies in his "Thälmann-Pionier Jörg Kies", a bust figure of a young boy, whose innocent face gazes beyond the observer to the

¹⁰⁰¹ For more on Johann F. Rogge see note 1080

¹⁰⁰² BUCHBINDER 2011, 28

bright future.¹⁰⁰³

No H. Blumenthal, E. Barlach or K. Kollwitz were exhibited - instead of them the most prominent sculptors of the exhibition became Gustav Seitz (1906-1969) and Waldemar Grzimek (1918-1984).¹⁰⁰⁴ While the first exhibitions were still dominated by the pathos of reconstruction, in the 1960s, images that were created within the framework of the Bitterfelder Way dominated. With the increase in exhibiting artists in the following years, the diversity of the artistic genres also increased. This in turn raised the popularity of art exhibitions.

Action Tasks and Contests

Beside the monumental commissions, the centralisation and nationalisation of the culture required new ways of the provisions for the average artist, who was dependent on the state subsidies. To this end and also to achieve transformation of the thematics and a form of art works, the Party adopted the Soviet model of the financing of artists through a series of task actions (scholarship tasks), which required artists to participate in order to get funding. These action tasks were secured materially and economically by the ministries and clearly appointed also in the content and form. This new system was presented as a modern way of cooperative work, where the artist not only received an opportunity to familiarise with the new art requirements, but also was endowed by the chance to discuss his model or a draft with a wide scope of professional colleagues of his field.¹⁰⁰⁵

It was leveraged for minor tasks, such as regional monuments for towns and villages, as well as for the statewide commissions. Beside the monument and architecture-sculpture

¹⁰⁰³ Foto: <https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/VCOFK4SMUOKDNZ57WT55WIVI6ULGUV3I>

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ulrike NIEDHOFER: Die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Expressionismus in der bildenden Kunst im Wandel der politischen Realität der SBZ und der DDR 1945 – 1989. Frankfurt am Main 1996, 7

¹⁰⁰⁵ Vladimír ŠOLTA: První zkušenosti z úkolové akce. In: Výtvarné umění, roč. 3 1950, 172-180

designs, another niche for sculptors' employment were medal and coin designs. These were the tasks and commissions the average artists had the chance to participate in and win the funding.¹⁰⁰⁶ The contests were anonymous with clearly stated demands and the process of the contest, including the assessment was administered by the relevant exponent of the state structure, such as the ministry, local committee, or union. The informations of the approaching contests together with rules, ideological assignment and details of the funding available was published through the professional press.

The earliest example of the employment of a contest to encourage production of "Socialist" sculpture, was endeavoured as a part of the Lenin's plan for monumental propaganda in 1918.¹⁰⁰⁷ A decree was issued under the commonly known abbreviation "Concerning the Monuments of the Republic,"¹⁰⁰⁸ which lead to the choosing of almost seventy national or foreign public personalities, including the classical sculptor Mikhail Vrubel, who were to be endowed with a monument, acknowledging their revolutionary or social activity.¹⁰⁰⁹ Let aside the results of the contest, which was with the number of finished monuments far behind the expectations, this early example of a contest, having clearly set rules and required outcomes, was also groundbreaking in the ideological sense. The acknowledgement of the educational character of the monuments and elevation of the spirit of the revolution through the festivities, ceremonial unveiling and corresponding publishing of brochures informing on the merits of the person concerned, all was transplanted both to the Stalinist era and to the satellite states.

Action tasks often merged and overlapped with contests, which were of similar

¹⁰⁰⁶ ANONYM: Soutěž na úpravu památníku na Slavíně v Bratislavě, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 1953, č. 26
Karel HLADÍK: O sochařské části bratislavské soutěže, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 1953, č. 29, ANONYM: Významný krok našeho výtvarného umění, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 2, 1954, č. 15, 1 ANONYM: K soutěži na pomník Klementa Gottwalda, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 2, 1954, č. 22, xxx

¹⁰⁰⁷ Christina LODDER: Lenin's Plan for Monumental Propaganda, in: Matthew Cullerne Bown / Brandon Taylor: Art of the Soviets: Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture in a One-party State, 1917-1992. Manchester 1993, 16-32; A. MIKHAILOV: Leninskii plan monumentalnoi propagandy i tvorcheskie problemy monumentalnogo isskustva, in: Isskustvo 9, 1969, 11-20

¹⁰⁰⁸ The full title: „The Removal of Monuments Erected in Honour of the Tsars and Their Replacement with monuments to outstanding persons in the field of revolutionary and social activity, philosophy, literature, science and art.“

¹⁰⁰⁹ For more on the monument building in the followed period in Moscow see: N. SOBOLEVSKIY: Skul'pturnyye pam'yatniki i monumenty v Moskve. Moscow 1947

organisational structure and were used as a complementary method of artists' funding. The contests for often large-scale state commissions were the most suitable opportunity for distinguished sculptors to participate in. As the commissions very often required collaboration of different art branches, the participating artists had to create teams of cooperating specialists, such as common combination of architect and sculptor, or sculptor with the landscape designer. The most large scale and important contest for a sculptural composition during the whole 1948-1992 era was the contest for the Stalin's Monument.¹⁰¹⁰

According to its universal effort to reconstruct all spheres of human activity, Party endeavoured to set the artistic activity – both lay and professional, on entirely new foundations. The first years after the Communist takeover were marked by an intensive strive to subordinate all artists by installment of art unions and expelling of non-conformist artists. This resulted in sorely felt lack of artists, who would live-up to the expectations of the regime representatives. This was the reason behind the contests, especially those, dedicated to the youth artistic activity. One of the broadest and accessible to the public was the Contest of the Youth Creativity, which was taking place annually in autumn since 1945.¹⁰¹¹ Vladimír Šolta defined with great precision the hopes of the party, regarding the new generation:¹⁰¹² *“Finally is the creative contest the widest, truly massive foundation, from which will – in cooperation with our schools – a cadres of professional artists emerge... Mass foundation of artistic creativity is a guarantee that new art will be born, whose obvious result will be development of the traditions of national culture and direction of art towards rebuilding of our society”*¹⁰¹³ In some cases, perhaps the works of pupils lived up to the expectations – the central round of the contest brought Jiří Černoch, student of the The Academy of Applied Arts, praise for his sculpture of a Factory Worker.

SČSVU as a platform for professional artists officially declared thematic tasks through

¹⁰¹⁰ Albeit the major commissions for the large monuments were often handled through the anonymous contest and belong therefore also into this chapter, more details are provided in a separate chapter. There were innumerable other commissions for a large-scale monuments for towns and cities

¹⁰¹¹ (CZ) Soutěž tvořivosti mládeže

¹⁰¹² Vladimír ŠOLTA: Rozmach výtvarné práce v STM. In: Výtvarné umění roč. 1, č. 2. 1950, 18-26

¹⁰¹³ Ibidem, 21

the local unions, VŠUP or Academy of Arts. Artists were often as a part of the task sent to the countryside, factories or mines to familiarize themselves with the daily routine of the labourers, achieving knowledge and gaining inspiration.¹⁰¹⁴ Reflecting the ideological needs of the Party and on the present need regarding the economy and agriculture, the thematics were based on broad categories such as “Building of Socialism”, “Fight against Fascism”, “Unified Agriculture”, “Our Army”, “Our Agriculture”, “Our Industry” “Our Mining Industry”, “Our Army”. The Artists were expected to “choose freely” according to their ability from the widely set thematic scope and create preliminary sketches. These were submitted to evaluation of a commission, consisting of authoritative professionals of their respective fields in the so-called “collective discussions”, providing artists with a critical assessment both of content and form of the presented work.

The Ministry of Informations, as L. Kára refers, provided on the occasion of the “*Mine Theme Action Task*” fifty scholarship holders were awarded with six months worth of expenses. The practice evolved according to the experiences with the results of these action tasks. The tendency to award artists in advance was soon to be reassessed. After 1951 it shifted towards the more cautious strategy - in case the draft or model was approved, the artist received 6 months of refundable deposit. The first task action employed 169 painters (66 successfully concluded the task) and 65 sculptors (35 assessed as successful). The refundable deposits paid to artists were 3 955 000 Csk, out of which 1 123 000 Csk were paid back when the art works were sold. The value of 2 650 000 Csk in art works was bought by the central buying and selling department.¹⁰¹⁵

The larger-scale contests were organised in rounds, at district and later on a regional level, resulting in central rounds. The contest jury, made up of the artists of renown, often also by ideologues and theoreticians of questionable qualifications. The contest resulted in collective exhibitions.¹⁰¹⁶ These action tasks were also devised to provide the newly organised exhibitions with the desired content. L. Kára's article, albeit admiringly

¹⁰¹⁴ Komandýrovka, in: KNAPÍK, Jiří: Průvodce kulturním děním a životním stylem v českých zemích 1948-1967. Praha 2011

¹⁰¹⁵ ŠOLTA 1950, 172

¹⁰¹⁶ The exhibitions are covered in a separate chapter *Exhibitions*

celebrating the new model of the funding of artists, allows to comprehend with sufficient complexity challenges and failures of this radical transformation. Firstly, the lack of planning, construction and assignment of the tasks resulted in uneven distribution of funding and consequent discontent among artists. Secondly, once the tasks were finally assigned, the deadlines were impossible to meet. As an example can be named the case with the Exhibition of the History of Revolutionary Struggle (1949),¹⁰¹⁷ where the artists had only three weeks to accomplish their assigned tasks. These impossible time-frames resulted in an insufficient finish of works, or downright scanty results.

The most effective tool in the ideological retrospective of the Czechoslovakian Communism was the large work of Alois Jirásek, whom Zdeněk Nejedlý appointed the ultimate interpreter of national historical narrative.¹⁰¹⁸ Nejedlý's enthusiasm and endeavour would result in the by declaration of the so-called *Jiráskovská akce*, officially launched by president Gottwald on 10th November 1948. This project was supposed to bring Jirásek's work to the masses through the publishing of his 32 works and opening of a museum, dedicated to the author, in the Hvězda Summer House.¹⁰¹⁹ The task of Jirásek's promotion was to culminate in 1951, in a 100 years from Jirásek's birth by the festive opening of the museum and conclusion of the publishing of his works. The cult of Jirásek would influence profoundly film production, stage plays.¹⁰²⁰

The *Jiráskovská akce* also affected fine artists, who from the incentive of Minister of Culture, Václav Kopecký, could seek funding from a related contest, announced in 1954. The artists were encouraged to create works, derived from landscape and characters

¹⁰¹⁷ J. LORIŠ / J. MÜLLER, Jiří (Eds.) Výstava dějin revolučních bojů: Praha-Památník osvobození. Květen - srpen 1949: Stručný průvodce. Praha: ÚV KSČ - kulturní a propagační odd., 1949

¹⁰¹⁸ Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Alois Jirásek. Praha 1949; Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Alois Jirásek a společenský význam jeho díla. Praha 1951; Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Doslovy k souboru spisů Aloise Jiráska „Odkaz národu“, Praha 1960

Alois Jirásek (1851-1930), a Czech novelist, poet, author of vast number of historical novels, wrote stage plays. He belonged to the promoters of the Czech independence from Austro-hungarian Empire and his novels are written with Czech-German struggle in mind. The novels are considered not to be historically accurate, as they allegedly tend to simplify the historical problems in a favour of nationalist interpretation.

¹⁰¹⁹ NA, A ÚV KSČ, F. 19/7, a.j. 764

¹⁰²⁰ For more on *Jiráskovská akce* see especially: Michal BAUER: *Jiráskovská akce*, in: *Ideologie a paměť. Literatura a instituce na přelomu 40. a 50. let 20. století*, Jinočany. HaH 2003, 153-185; Jiří KNAPÍK / Martin FRANČ: *Jiráskovská akce*, in: *Průvodce kulturním děním a životním stylem v českých zemích 1948-1967*. Praha 2011, 400-401; Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: *Film a dílo Aloise Jiráska*, in: *Var*, roč. 2 (1949), č. 11-12

described in Jirásek's novels.¹⁰²¹ The characters, as the professional newspaper *Výtvarná práce* states, were to be captured in their dramatic entirety, in all their thoughts, actions and manifestations. The goal of the contest was to find suitable artists for the decoration of Jirásek's exhibitions, museums and related cities and places.¹⁰²²

One of the substantial and generously funded contests, which allowed sculptors to participate, was the action task for the *decoration of the Museum of Klement Gottwald* in 1954.¹⁰²³ The Museum was the tangible product of the historical narrative modification – it ought to materialise and sanctify the history of the working class and ultimate victory of the Communist party over the “bourgeois class”. This ambitious project called “Gottwaldian task” attracted 336 artists, who submitted 748 art works. The jury of the contest consisted of the foremost politicians – aside from obligatory ministers Václav Kopecký and Zdeněk Nejedlý also minister of defence Alexej Čepička and the president of ČSR Antonín Zápotocký, who was the chairman of the jury. As to the professional sculptors, Karel Pokorný, Josef Malejovský, Oskar Kozák and František Štefunko joined them. The Museum was opened on the day of late Gottwald's birthday anniversary, under the auspices of the Central Committee of KSČ.¹⁰²⁴

The exhibition of the contest works coincided with the X. Congress of the KSČ and was considered by the pro-regime theoreticians to be of watershed significance, as it demonstrated the principles of cultural politics in the field of fine arts, the pros and cons of the contemporary figurative art. The intriguing aspect, noted also by the press, was the notably low participation of the giants of the Czechoslovakian sculpture, who arguably were employed elsewhere, on the commissions bound to the museum of V. I. Lenin.¹⁰²⁵ The themes were stated rather broadly, encouraging artists to choose from the formative moments of the Klement Gottwald life according to their ability.¹⁰²⁶

¹⁰²² Jiráskovská akce, in: *Výtvarná práce*, roč. II, 26th February 1954, 6

¹⁰²³ Rytířská street 29, Prague

¹⁰²⁴ Hodnocení výsledků soutěže na výzdobu Musea Klementa Gottwalda, in: *Výtvarná práce* roč. 2., č. 14, 1954, 1

¹⁰²⁵ For more see note 1031

¹⁰²⁶ František PEŤAS: Výtvarná výzdoba Musea Klementa Gottwalda, in: *Výtvarná práce* roč. 3., č. 14, 1955, 4-5

The vast majority of the works were the sketched models, which were supposed to be elaborated on in future. The awarded works of art are the testimony to the enforcement of the national history narrative, devised in order to legitimise the Communist Regime. The sculptures from the history of the class struggle were to become part of the Gesamtkunstwerk of the narrative. They represented either the pictures from the life of Klement Gottwald, or from the national history, perceived from the Communist perspective – with the largest part dedicated to the elaboration of the Hussite Movement narrative.¹⁰²⁷

The first prize in the sphere of sculpture was awarded to Irena Sedlecká-Kodymová and Ludvík Kodym, the second prize to Jiří Babička, František David, Karel Hladík, Karel Nepraš and Ladislav Pícha.¹⁰²⁸ František Peřas mentioned especially Jiří Babička with his depiction from the youth of Klement Gottwald, called the Joiner Apprentice,¹⁰²⁹ showing the future President in an animated discussion with his peers in a workshop. (Fig. 82) The photograph of this sculptural composition adorned also the title page of the *Výtvarná práce* Magazine. Another of praised sculptures was K. Hladík's Jan Hus, depicted as a young, beardless man of slender figure in a long tunic with an expressive gesture and visionary stare, gazing into the future.¹⁰³⁰

The Hussite thematics was endeavoured also by Jaroslava Lukešová-Kýnová, who presented her model for the statue of Jan Želivský, with expressively determined posture, Bohuslav Burian's Prokop, again in a position of a pugnitive and resolute leader of Hussite army, Vendelín Zdrubecký's Jan Roháč z Dubé. A group of portraits by various artists were dedicated to the 19th century heroes of the 1848 revolution, K. Marx and F. Engels, together with distinguished members of the Communist Party and the Working Class Movement in the Czech Lands. The famous Fraternisation by K. Pokorný could not be missing. (Fig. 18)

¹⁰²⁷ Václav FORMÁNEK: Úkoly Gottwaldovské akce a jejich vztah k výtvarným tradicím. (Na okraj Gottwaldovské akce II.), in: *Výtvarné umění 1954*, roč. IV., 305-313

¹⁰²⁸ Významný krok našeho výtvarného umění, in: *Výtvarná práce* roč. 2., č. 14, 1954, 1

¹⁰²⁹ Truhlářský učeň

¹⁰³⁰ For more on Karel Hladík see note: 1276

Whereas the Museum of Klement Gottwald was supposed to promote the national note in the ideological construction, the Museum of V. I. Lenin ought to enhance the sense of belonging to the sphere of Soviet influence and constant renewal of the brotherhood among the Czechoslovakian and Russian nations.¹⁰³¹

Pet'as in his article expressed his conviction, that sculpture in the exhibition continued to overshadow the paintings by their generally higher artistic level. This notion was not a novelty, as it was repeatedly mentioned in the press. Also Antonín Pelc conceded, that the rich figurative tradition of sculpture provided the sculptors with much steadier ground, than their counterparts among painters.¹⁰³² In an article, offering a retrospective on art professions of painting, sculpture and graphics in the year of 1954 this conviction is repeated.¹⁰³³

The most large scale and important contest for a sculptural composition during the whole 1948-1992 era was the *contest for the Stalin's Monument*. (Fig. 78) The idea to build a monument to Stalin was already outlined when Communist Václav Vacek, predecessor of Petr Zenkl was at the post of Prague Mayor.¹⁰³⁴ The Board of the Central National Committee of the capital city of Prague announced a public contest for the architectonic and sculptural project of the monument on 7th April 1949.¹⁰³⁵ Perhaps the fear of underestimating the important occasion of Stalin's birthday is the reason for the procrastination of the officials, which led eventually to almost impossible submission deadlines for the authors of projects. The deadline was stated on 14th November of the same year, later postponed to 10th December. The Union of the Czechoslovakian Artists was urged to participate as it was expected that only the best artists of the state would

¹⁰³¹ Refer to: Museum V. I. Lenina v Praze, in: Lidová demokracie, roč. IX., č. 17, 21. 1. 1953; Projev presidenta republiky Klementa Gottwalda k slavnostnímu otevření Musea V. I. Lenina, in: Lidová demokracie, roč. IX., č. 17, 23. 1. 1953; Václav FORMÁNEK: K výsledkům soutěže na výtvarná díla pro Museum V. I. Lenina, in: Výtvarné umění 1954, roč. IV., 30-31

¹⁰³² PELC, Antonín: Naše sochařství, věrno slavné tradici. In: Výtvarná práce, č. 21, 1952, 1

¹⁰³³ O práci malířů, sochařů a grafiků v roce 1954. In: Výtvarná práce roč. 3., č. 14, 1955, 4-5

¹⁰³⁴ PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 22

¹⁰³⁵ „Soutěž na pomník generalissima J. V. Stalina“ In: Praha. Týdeník ÚNV pro lidovou správu. Číslo 44, ročník 52 (1949);

Státní ústřední archiv v Praze, odd. ÚV KSČ, fond 230/100, 1950-1952, Stavba pomníku J.V. Stalinovi na Letné, 6.4. 1951

be capable of fulfilling such a task.¹⁰³⁶ Considering the fact that Stalin's statues were unveiled on the occasion of Stalin's birthday in Bratislava and Plzeň, Prague would not, could not stay behind.¹⁰³⁷

At the postponed deadline of 10th December 54 projects were received. Jury, consisting of the members of the Union of Czechoslovak artists, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and a member of the Presidential Office, were summoned. The task to evaluate all of the projects was to be handled in the course of a week, otherwise it would be impossible to lay the foundation stone on the day of Stalin's birthday (21st December).¹⁰³⁸ Moreover, the final decision ought not to had been based on the artistic and conceptual value only, into account had to be taken also the question of the urbanist adaptation of the place and also the political suitability of the author.¹⁰³⁹

Only one of the 54 projects could be considered to fully live up to the expectations of the Committee – to the instruction to create *„a sculptural, figurative portrait of J. V. Stalin, to express aptly the whole beauty and strength of his personality, in which the most noble characteristics of people, to whom he is a native son and a wise mentor, to create an impressive monument to the best friend of our nations and fittingly express our gratitude, honour and love to the exemplary person.“*¹⁰⁴⁰

It was to be expected that Pokorný will be chosen as the most suitable candidate for the monument construction.¹⁰⁴¹ He proved himself to be a great artist, who already created one acclaimed portrait of Stalin. However, whether intentionally or unintentionally,¹⁰⁴² the model of Karel Pokorný (accompanied by architectonic project by J. Kroha a Z. Pešánek) proved in many ways unsuitable – as Lubor Kára specified in his article, the model presents Stalin with his arms wide open in a welcoming gesture. (Fig. 83) His posture is distinctly too light, making the impression as if Stalin was a dance master,

¹⁰³⁶ Zadání soutěže se dochovalo ve fondu UPV, karton 1572.

¹⁰³⁷ Lubor KÁRA: A Competition for the Execution of a Memorial Statue of J.V. Stalin in Prague, in: *Výtvarné umění I*, 1950. 141-143

¹⁰³⁸ HOJDA/POKORNÝ 1996, 209

¹⁰³⁹ PÍCHOVÁ 2015, 32

¹⁰⁴⁰ KÁRA 1950, 141

¹⁰⁴¹ For more on Karel Pokorný as a Chair of the SČSVU see chapter *Sculptors in the Organisational Structures*

¹⁰⁴² *Ibidem*

demonstrating a dancing figure. Aside from the posture, the elaboration of the likeness was perceived by Kára to be of very good quality.

Pokorný was to share a third place in the contest with Josef Malejovský (in team with architect J. Saal), who was one of the most acclaimed artists creating in accordance with the doctrine of Socialist Realism. He had created a model very similar to Pokorný's.¹⁰⁴³ His Stalin was more steadily attached to the ground, his welcoming gesture is fitting, the form monumental and dignified, the face, however, not depicted according to the contemporary demand for "truthfulness".¹⁰⁴⁴ (Fig. 84) As the contemporary press noted and Václav Kopecký did not endeavour to conceal, some artists seemed to fulfil the task only half-heartedly or in a slapdash manner. It is easily observable also in the encounter with the models of the Stalin's figure. In the majority of cases the exhibition of the models in the Municipal House showed a single figure either in long cloak or in a short coat, with hands raised in a visionary gesture or hanging loose on the sides of the body. Neither could be judged to deliver the monumental effect or dignity of the depicted. Apparent lack of eagerness with regard to the forced participation in the competition is comprehensible and it is to be assumed that a significant number of artists obeyed the command with unwillingness and without any desire to truly excel. L. Kára reproaches some models for being "unfinished" and not enough elaborated, in case of group sculptures he takes note of insufficient compositional preparations.¹⁰⁴⁵

The decision of the jury was presented to the public not only in the press, but also by an exhibition of both architectonic plans and models of all contestants in the municipal House in Prague. The importance of this occasion is emphasised by the participation of president Gottwald and other high officials of the state.¹⁰⁴⁶ The festive speeches were held by the mayor of Prague Dr. Václav Vacek and a representative of the National Committee for the coordination of celebrations, Minister for Technology Emanuel Šlechta. The results of the contests were announced by the chairman of the Contest jury,

¹⁰⁴³ For more on Josef Malejovský see: Jan SPURNÝ: Josef Malejovský. Praha 1963

¹⁰⁴⁴ KÁRA 1950, 142

¹⁰⁴⁵ Ibidem

¹⁰⁴⁶ President republiky navštívil výstavu návrhů na pomník J.V. Stalina., in: Rudé právo XXIX - XXX, č. 300, 21.12.1949, 2

ing. Dr. Vladimír Maděra. The participating teams were in 38 cases rewarded with compensation of their expenses.¹⁰⁴⁷ Aside from an ideological display, this exhibition was also one of the first occasions for opportunist artists in all fields of artistic effort to comprehend the requirements of the new regime.

One-time task actions were typical for the first stages of the Communist regime and did not last longer than until the adoption of the New Course.¹⁰⁴⁸ In 1955 it was apparent to all, that this method of enforcement of art through the means of administrative measures and commands was inefficient.¹⁰⁴⁹

Official Prizes and Honorary Titles in ČSR

One of the innovations in the sphere of culture, mirroring successfully the model of the SSSR, was the introduction of a system of distinctions, prizes and orders. The structure of these merit-based acknowledgements was established not only to appreciate and motivate the regime obliging authors, but also to lay a clear, comprehensible example for those artists, who struggled to grasp the new thematics. The artists, who were most often awarded, succeeded in the eyes of the Party officials in delivering the required work of art, covering the currently demanded subject and containing a favourable combination of artistic quality and ideological content. Contemplating the award winning works of art was therefore worth more than reading thousands of pages of ideological directives.

As the operation of the cultural sphere was dependent upon the central organisation at the Ministry of Informations and Ministry of Education and corresponding department of the Central Committee, the necessity to secure a group of reliable artists and through

¹⁰⁴⁷ Praha bude mít pomník generalissima J.V. Stalina, in: Praha – Týdeník ÚNV pro lidovou správu, 24.10. 1949, 1

¹⁰⁴⁸ For more on the New Course in cultural politics see *New Course in Art Politics*

¹⁰⁴⁹ KNAPÍK 2011, 434-435

them acquire eligible works of art, became a number one concern. Among the methods, employed to achieve this, were

Type of incentive	The target group	Examples
Large Commissions	Distinguished Artists	Slavonic Agricultural Exhibition (1948) Exhibition of the history of Revolutionary Struggle (1949) Decoration of the Meeting Places of the KSČ Congresses (1948-1990)
Action Tasks and Contests	Every registered member of the SČSVU	The Stalin's Monument (1949) The Klement Gottwald's Museum Decoration
State Prizes	Distinguished Artists	The National Prize of Klement Gottwald (1950-1990) The Institute of National Artist The Institute of Distinguished Artist

The highest distinction achievable by any artist was the State Prize, in 1955 renamed to commemorate the first Communist President Klement Gottwald as *the Klement Gottwald's State Prize*. It was inspired by the Stalin Prize (later renamed as Lenin Prize), awarded in SSSR.¹⁰⁵⁰ The prize was awarded by the president of the Czechoslovakian Republic for a distinguished achievement in the previous year and was handed regularly on 9th May in a period between 1949 and 1990. The Committee for the Prize was constituted from outstanding representatives of science, technology, arts and other

¹⁰⁵⁰ Introduced in 1939 to achieve both instruction of the Soviet professional public and also to create a elite of official artists, who would set the tone of the official art production.

fields of creativity. The Committee presented its suggestions to the President. The prize was awarded to three categories of nominees. The first was dedicated to discoveries and works in the field of social, natural, mathematical, medical and technical sciences, the second for outstanding inventions in technical sphere or innovations in medicine in the above named fields. The third was then intended either for an individual artist or an art collective of any art branch. The honorary title was "The Laureate of the Prize of Klement Gottwald" and the accompanying reward was set at 50 000 Kcs for an individual and 70 000 Kcs for a collective work. The laureate had the privilege to wear a badge with a laurel branchlet.¹⁰⁵¹

In the sphere of arts the prizes were distributed among the personalities, who fulfilled the above stated requirements. The selection of sculptors, who earned the state prize is not only an interesting testimony to the official politics of the prize awarding, but also the most effective indication of the merit of certain sculptors to the regime. The laureates such as Karel Pokorný, Vincenc Makovský, Josef Malejovský, Ladislav Novák, Jozef Kostka, Konrád Babraj, Karel Lidický, Jan Lauda, Václav Žalud, Jan Hána or Rudolf Pribiš, succeeded most efficiently in the assigned tasks and were awarded by the official appreciation.¹⁰⁵²

An analysis of the selected works is a testimony to the general line and development of the Socrealist sculpture. The 1948-1952 award winners epitomise in their works the most prevailing subjects used in the sculpture at the time.¹⁰⁵³ The award winning works are often dedicated to the depiction of the brotherhood with the mighty SSSR in Karel Pokorný's *Fraternisation* (1949), apotheosis of the labouring professions in Jozef Kostka's *Collective Farm Girl* (1952), the army/fighting thematics in Vincenc Makovský's *The Partisan Monument in Zlín* (1948) or allegories of the virtues of the new regime - peace, motherland and Socialism in Václav Žalud's *For Peace – for Homeland – for Socialism* (Za mír – za vlast – za socialismus, 1951). (Fig. 85) Since the 1952 this group of basic categories has been enriched by monuments to national classics, mirroring the

¹⁰⁵¹ Předpis č. 21/1975 Sb. Zákon o udělování státních cen Klementa Gottwalda

¹⁰⁵² Those who received the state prize repeatedly are also those, to whom are dedicated individual chapters of this dissertation.

¹⁰⁵³ As to the detailed examination of the iconography of the Socrealist sculpture see : *Part IV. Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture*

intense effort of the Zdeněk Nejedlý to devise a regime favourable history narrative. The monuments to national classics, such as Karel Pokorný's *Monument to Alois Jirásek* (1952) and *Božena Němcová* (1954), Karel Lidický's *Jan Hus for Charles University* in Prague (1955) or Vincenc Makovský's *Monument of J. A. Komenský* for Uherský Brod and Naarden (1958) are a good example of the shift in the work selection pattern for the State Prize.

Another prestigious distinction was a title of the Distinguished Artist and a higher level of this honour, the title of the National Artist. It was established in 6th May 1948 as an honorary title for artists, who through their exceptional artistic quality and significance enriched the national culture. The government would decide on the basis of Minister of Culture and Minister of Informations recommendations. The awarded artist together with the right to use the title of National Artist, also acquired monthly benefits, equaling the pay of a university professor.¹⁰⁵⁴

The distinction of National Artist is another of the great ways to determine the value of the respective artist to the regime. The list of sculptors, presented in the previous article as laureates of the State Prize, was in vast majority also declared National Artists in the course of their lives.

These official distinctions provide a researcher with the most reliable measure of eligibility and appreciation of the individual artists, who formed the core of the official group of regime-obliging artists. By a number and type of prizes acquired by the respective artist it is possible to devise a chart of artists. The record holder is Josef Malejovský, who was awarded with a State Prize four times, Vincenc Makovský and Karel Pokorný both achieved this award three times during their careers. Together with other titles, comprising also the Order of the Republic and various other honours, this trio is to be considered as the core of the official sculpture of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, as they were most often hand picked to receive these honours.

¹⁰⁵⁴ zákon č. 130/1948 Sb. ze dne 6. května 1948

Name	Year	Prize/Order/Distinction	Art work
Vincenc Makovský	1947	Professorship at VUT	
	1948	State Prize	The Partisan Monument in Zlín (Fig. 20)
	1952	Professorship at AVU	
	1955	State Prize of of the First Class	The Victory of the Red Army over Fascism - Monument in Brno (Fig. 49, 50)
	1958	State Prize	The Monument of J. A. Komenský in Uherský Brod and Naarden (Fig. 21)
	1958	A Member of a government delegation to the World Expo in Bruxelles, Acquires a Grand Prix	The Sculpture „New Age“ (Part of Czech Pavilion Decoration) (Fig. 65)
	1958	National Artist Title	
	1960	Order of the Republic	
	1961	A member of a committee for the reconstruction of Prague Castle	
Karel Pokorný	1948-1950	Rector of The Academy of Arts	
	1949	State Prize	Fraternisation (Fig. 18)
	1952	First Class State Prize	Alois Jirásek Monument (Fig. 41)
	1955	State Prize of the First Class	Božena Němcová (Fig. 144)
	1956	National Artist Title	
	1958	Honorary Member of the Academy of Arts, SSSR	
	1961	Order of the Republic	Accompanied by an exhibition in Riding House of the Prague Castle

Josef Malejovský	1959	State Prize	The Bronze Door of the Vítkov Monument
	1964	The Order of Work	
	1974	National Artist Title	
	1976	State Prize	Partisan statue for the Memorial of the Partisan Brigade of an Žižka in Velké Karlovice
	1977	Order of the Republic	
	1979	Order of Merit for the Socialist Culture	
	1979	The Order of the Victorious February	
	1980	State Prize	The statue of Grief (Žal) and the Monument to the Prague Barricade Fighters
	1984	Order of the Republic	
	1987	The Prize of Antonín Zápotocký	
Jozef Kostka (1912-1996)	1953	State Prize	Collective Farm Girl (Družstevnička)
	1962	Distinguished Artist	
	1965	Cyprián Majerník Award	
	1966	National Artist Title	
	1969	The National Prize of Slovakia	
Ladislav Novák (1908-1994)	1953	State Prize Second Class	The Monument to Mining for Kladno (Fig. 86)
	1968	The Distinguished Artist	
Konrad Babraj (1921-1991)	1954	State Prize Second Class	Red Army Soldier in Znojmo (Fig. 87)
	1975	The State Prize	

Karel Lidický (1900-1976)	1955	State Prize Second Class	Jan Hus Monument for Charles University (Fig. 28)
	1965	The Order of the Republic	
	1968	The National Artist Title	
Jan Lauda (1898-1959)	1951	State Prize	Bust of V. I. Lenin (Fig. 80)
	1955	The Order of Work	
	1958	National Artist Title	
	1958	A Member of a government delegation to World Expo in Bruxelles, Acquires a Grand Prix	
Václav Žalud	1951	State Prize	Za mír - za vlast - za socialismus (Fig. 85)
	1954	Vyznamenání Za zásluhy o výstavbu	
Jan Hána (1927-1994)	1977	Meritorious Artist	
	1979	State Prize	
	1984	National Artist Title	
	1987	The Order of Work	
		1970 reliéfní bronzové dveře na Slavíně, Bratislava	
Ludvík Kodym	1953	State Prize	
	1983	The Distinguished Artist	

Part IV. Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture

The Socialist Realism Sculpture, albeit in many cases removed from the public space, destroyed or placed in depots, provides such a wide range of accessible material, it is highly relevant to devise a logical, research-based typological structure as well as to perform a thorough analysis of iconography on the grounds of the summoned evidence. An attempt to investigate how the interactions between the cultural politics, ideological assignments, obligatory doctrines, tradition and free will of the artist reflected in the sculpture of the official production, belongs to the core objectives of this dissertation. Beside the works of art themselves, the contemporary press, speeches, texts published on the planned or unveiled monuments, exhibition catalogues and memories of sculptors would help in the accomplishment of the objective.

The typological categories, devised on the grounds of the performed research consists of four groups: Personality Cult Sculpture, The Red Army Monument, Heroes of the Resistance Movement, Heroes of Labour and Role Models and National History Figures. This structure allows arrangement of subcategories, concerned with particular iconographic/ideological subset. Personality Cult Sculpture is dedicated to the high-profile political assignments, portraits and monuments to the foremost representatives of the regime, such as K. Gottwald, W. Pieck or J. Stalin.

Heroes of the Resistance Movement covers the pre-war generation of activists, politicians and journalists - Heroes of the Resistance Movement, the early members of KSČ and KPD, especially Julius Fučík and Ernst Thälmann. The chapter on Heroes of Labour and Role Models is following the widespread utilization of various labour professions for ideological purposes in the 1950s. The chapter on National History Figures provides an insight into the accentuation of certain historical periods as the means of justification of the Communist doctrine. The Hussite Movement, including the personality of Jan Hus, peasant revolts and National Revival Movement of the 19th century became the object of typological parallelism and systematical endeavour to place the Communist doctrine on the steady roots of national history.

Personality Cult Sculpture

The attempt to leverage the benefits of the monumental sculptural portraits for the promotion of Socialism was employed for the first time in the emerging Soviet state in 1918, when V. I. Lenin inaugurated the Plan for Monumental Propaganda.¹⁰⁵⁵ This complex plan, devised to remove Tsarist monuments and to replace them with Socialist substitutes, stood at the beginning of the systematically organised usage of the agitational sculpture in the course of following decades.¹⁰⁵⁶ The primary task of sculpture was, according to Lenin, to become part of the everyday life of the common people, who would on the daily basis in the squares, plants and factories exposed to the embodiments of the ideals of the Bolshevik revolution, fulfilling an essentially propagandist and agitational role.

The modern cult of political personality, as employed with greatest success in the SSSR and subsequently transplanted to its East European vassals, was born of the historical need to unify highly varied Soviet nations under the leadership of a central figure – very similarly to the traditional sovereign position of the tsars in the pre-October Russia. The tools of this cult, incorporating propagandist use of mass media, broadcasting and repetitive exposition of the people to slogans and campaigns, were in the full scope manifested for the first time in 1929 on the occasion of J. Stalin's 50th birthday celebrations.¹⁰⁵⁷ The flourishing of the cult, attainable under absolutist or totalitarian regime only, would have the most profound effect in the SSSR.

¹⁰⁵⁵ A. MIKHAILOV: Leninskii plan monumentalnoi propagandy i tvorcheskie problemy monumentalnogo isskustva, in: *Isskustvo* 9, 1969, 11-20

¹⁰⁵⁶ Christina LODDER: Lenin's Plan for Monumental Propaganda, in: Matthew Cullerne BOWN / Brandon TAYLOR: *Art of the Soviets: Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture in a One-party State, 1917-1992*. Manchester 1993, 16-32

¹⁰⁵⁷ Robert C TUCKER: The Rise of Stalin's Personality Cult, in: *The American Historical Review*, vol. 84, no. 2, 1979, pp. 347–366, www.jstor.org/stable/1855137, (Retrieved 25.3.2017)

The research of personality cults in the Communist countries is covered by a number of studies and anthologies. See especially: Balazs APOR / Polly JONES / Jan C. BEHREND: *The Leader Cult in Communist Dictatorships. Stalin and the Eastern Bloc*. London 2004; Graeme GILL: *The Soviet Leader Cult: Reflections on the Structure of Leadership in the Soviet Union*, in: *British Journal of Political Science*, vol. 10, no. 2, 1980, 167–186., www.jstor.org/stable/193478, (Retrieved 25.3.2017)

The results of the campaign to build a cult around a political personality would depend not only on the employment of all access channels to reach the public, but also in the skilful fabrication of the mythos surrounding the person. The attributes of this mythos would often be ambiguous. The leader would be described as “one of the people,” a common man, on the other hand endowed with a superiority of mind and wisdom, exceptional skills and faculties. In the case of Stalin the adoration would result in unprecedented divinisation, as he would unite in his person attributes of the Tsar and the high priest.¹⁰⁵⁸ Both in the SSSR and in the Eastern Bloc the adoration would in press, literature and poetry acquire hyperbolised character full of inflated praise and extraordinary epithets.

The monument construction would belong to the most ostentatious tools in the personality cult arsenal. The large statues, made of lasting materials were omnipresent symbols of the virulence of the ruling ideology and would form the background to the everyday lives of the people. The lasting presence was not always assured, especially in the case of Stalin's monuments, that would often disappear within several years, the closer to the damnation to the Stalin's cult, the shorter their duration.

The monument setting would also have large consequences for the urbanism, as the monumental bronze or stone figures of the revered statesmen and heroes of revolution simply could not be set in a neglected environment. The contests would be often accompanied by a urbanist and architectural solutions not only of the closest surroundings, but also of the broader environment, accompanied by renaming of squares and streets.

Another significant effect of the sculpture was related to the social events. The ceremonial at the site of the monuments, due to the attendance of the working people on Sundays, were to replace religious events and become part of the centrally coordinated political commemorations, mass celebrations, manifestations or gatherings, related often to anniversaries of the October Revolution, Victorious February, Labour Day, birthdays of leaders and so on.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Marcela PÁNKOVÁ: Pro zítřek světlejší, in: Výtvarná kultura, 1992, roč. 2, č. 3, s. 71; Jiří ŠEVČÍK: Socialistický realismus. Neodreagované trauma, in: Ateliér, 2003, roč. 15, č. 1, s. 4.

J. V. Stalin and V. I. Lenin

In the SSSR the one most important subject of Socialist Realism was the depiction of the great revolutionary Lenin and his follower, the father of nations, Stalin. From the mid-thirties the propaganda would endeavour to convert the artists into the builders of Stalin's and Lenin's cult. By the words of Aleksandr Gerasimov, contribution to the construction of their image was "*one of the most responsible tasks of creativity and ideology that realm of art has ever faced.*"¹⁰⁵⁹ These proclamations were related to the second wave of monumental propaganda, starting in 1933, when not only the deceased heroes, but also the living men were to become monumentalised in sculpture. The pursuit would elaborate upon the original cultural politics of the Soviet state, celebrating deceased heroic figures ever since 1919, peaking with the attempt to build a huge Palace of Soviets with a hundred metres tall statue of Lenin as a posthumous tribute.¹⁰⁶⁰ Unlike Lenin, Stalin did not object to the aggrandizement of his person in monument and a number of monumental works, just as the sculpture at Volga-Don Canal by Yevgeny Vuchetich was built during his office tenure.¹⁰⁶¹

In the Eastern Europe, albeit endeavoured and widely promoted, the personality cult, especially related to the prominent statesmen, would never succeed among the general population so thoroughly, meeting often with distinct apprehension and scepticism.¹⁰⁶² The Soviet foreign policy towards the Eastern Europe would be based on the concept of "comradeship" among the pro-Soviet nations, promoting mutual political ties and unconditioned allegiance to Stalin, the one and only defender of peace and prosperity. The year 1949, when generalissimus Stalin was to celebrate his seventieth birthday, was

¹⁰⁵⁹ Voprosy teorii sovetskogo izobrazitel'nogo isskustva, in: Moscow, 1950, 62

¹⁰⁶⁰ Igor GOLOMSTOCK: Totalitarian Art: in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy, and the People's Republic of China, London 1990, 227-229; For more see: Boris GROYS: The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-garde, aesthetic dictatorship and beyond. Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin. Princeton 1992; Vladimir PAPERNY: Architecture in the Age of Stalin: Culture Two, New York 2011

¹⁰⁶¹ Yevgeny Vuchetich (1908-1974), a Russian sculptor of Serbian, Russian and French descent. He was a distinguished representative of the Socialist Realism style and would acquire a number of prizes, namely the Lenin Prize (1970), the Stalin Prize (1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950), Order of Lenin, Order of the Patriotic War, Hero of Socialist Labor (1967) and People's Artist of the SSSR (1959). He would author the largest monuments, such as the The Motherland Calls (1967) or the Berlin Monument to the Red Army in the Treptower Park (1949)

¹⁰⁶² For more on the successfulness of the cult transmission see: BEHREND 2004, 161nn

a probation of the zeal and devotion for all satellite countries, including ČSR and DDR.

In Czechoslovakia National Committee for Celebrations of the Stalin's 70th birthday (21. 12. 1879 – 5. 3. 1953) was established and all aspects of this essential task were thoroughly discussed at the highest levels of the Party.¹⁰⁶³ The highest representatives of the state, such as Minister of Informations and Education Václav Kopecký, Minister of Culture Zdeněk Nejedlý, Minister of National Defence Alexej Čepička, or the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Jiří Hendrych became the members of the preparatory Committee. Sixteen members of this group were charged with the responsible task to prepare the celebrations so as to please Moscow and at the same time leverage the potential of the public festivities to instill the ideological contents into the minds of the broad public.¹⁰⁶⁴

Not the only one, but certainly one of the most important goals of this committee was to shed light on the contest for the Prague Stalin's monument and provide the artists and architects with amended instructions, so that the foundation stone would be fit to be installed at the peak of the celebrations in December.¹⁰⁶⁵ Poland had summoned its committee for the celebrations with a distinct head start and Czechoslovak politicians were well aware of the risks of staying behind.¹⁰⁶⁶ In SBZ would the effort to establish a Stalin's cult meet with resistance, stemming from the perception of Soviets as the invaders and occupants. Whereas in Czechoslovakia the cult building could easily operate with the liberating role of the Red Army, in SBZ the rhetoric necessarily had to be shaped along different lines. The emphasis was put on Stalin's statements, condemning Hitler, but expressing the wish to reinstate the freedom and unity of the German nation.¹⁰⁶⁷

¹⁰⁶³ NA, fond 357/2 (Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty 1948 – 1955), inv. č. 7. (70. Narozneniny J. V. Stalina) Svému osvoboditeli československý lid. Praha 1955,

For details on birthday celebrations coordination see: Zpráva sekretariátu vládní komise pro koordinaci oslav 70. narozenin generalissima J. V. Stalina, fond ÚPV, karta 484.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Zpráva sekretariátu vládní komise pro koordinaci oslav 70. narozenin generalissima J. V. Stalina, fond ÚPV, karta 484

About the celebrations also: Václav ČERNÝ: Paměti 1945-1972. 1992, 238-239

¹⁰⁶⁵ For more on The Stalin's Monument see chapter: *High-profile Monumental Commissions*

¹⁰⁶⁶ ŠINDELÁŘ 2009, 21

¹⁰⁶⁷ BEHREND 2004, 162 For more see: Wolfgang WEBER: DDR – 40 Jahre Stalinismus: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte DDR. Essen 1992, 62

The portraits of Stalin and Lenin would acquire a clearly defined canonical form with a limited number of variations, replicated subsequently with very little invention in thousand copies in both SSSR and related countries.¹⁰⁶⁸ The Eastern bloc artists, who wished to avoid any dissonance with the Communist leadership in their respective countries, would quickly learn to adhere religiously to the canonised typus of both personalities according to the obligatory example of SSSR sculpture. This was promoted by numerous articles and directives, celebrating the Soviet art.¹⁰⁶⁹ Stalin would be most often presented as a leader, rendered in an awe-inspiring monumentalised form, with idealised facial features and imposing bodily form, accentuating his superhuman characteristics. Alternatively, he would be seen as a scholar and teacher, with the gesture of an orator, shown speaking at a congress, emphasizing thus his wisdom, cleverness and farsightedness, sometimes together with Lenin.¹⁰⁷⁰

In the time frame 1949-1953, with relation to the Stalin's birthday celebrations, in all of the involved countries would be erected large monuments, showing his individual figure in larger than life proportions, usually in bronze. The highly sensitive task to honour the most powerful and redoubtable man would result in cautious and guarded approach of decision makers and artists. The process of selection of the right artist, form, setting and material would in many cases contribute to substantial delays. One of the notable examples being in Hungarian Budapest (1951) by Mikus Sándor, with an eight meter tall bronze, situated on a horizontal relief adorned walls, stretching twenty five meters wide and showing scenes of Hungarians welcoming the great leader.¹⁰⁷¹ (Fig. 88) The need for

¹⁰⁶⁸ Vasilij JAKOVLEV: Lenin a Stalin a sovětské výtvaré umění, in: Výtvarná práce č. 10, 14. 3. 1953, 1-2

¹⁰⁶⁹ For other Czech articles on the subject see: November 1951 – Výstava se Sovětským svazem na věčné časy, catalogue: XXII D 6751 č. 17; Vladimír ŠOLTA: Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu! in: Výtvarné umění, Praha 1952; Jan ČUMPELÍK: Příklad sovětského umění. In: Vladimír ŠOLTA: Čerpejte zkušenosti z děl sovětských mistrů – Mistrů socialistického realismu! in: Výtvarné umění, časopis Ústředního svazu československých výtvarných umělců, Praha 1952

¹⁰⁷⁰ A detailed typology in: GOLOMSTOCK 1992, 230

¹⁰⁷¹ Katalin SINKO: Political Rituals: the Raising and Demolition of Monuments, in: Peter GYORGY / Hedvig TURAI: Art and Society in the Age of Stalin. Budapest 1992

Mikus Sándor (1903-1982), a Hungarian sculptor and teacher, an autodidact, during his studies travelled to Italy and participated in Venice Biennale. Also won two gold medals at the Paris World Exhibition in 1937. Member of the Hungarian Artists' Association. Vice-President of New Artists (1938), Founding member of the Association of Fine and Applied Arts (1949), the president of the Association of Fine and Applied Arts (1957-1962). Author of many bronze monuments to Hungarian personalities.

the material was solved by the melting of some of the “obsolete“ bourgeois statues.¹⁰⁷²

In Czechoslovakia a timely monument erection was achieved in *Bratislava* (1949), where the task was assigned to Pavol Bán.¹⁰⁷³ (Fig. 76) In DDR would be the monument to Stalin gifted by a Komsomol delegation to the East German government, and placed in *Stalinallee in the district of Friedrichshain* (1951). (Fig. 89) Protractions would belate the construction of monument in Czechoslovak Plzeň (1953), initiated by the Union of the Czechoslovakian-Soviet friendship and financed with money, collected by a fund-raising campaign in schools, factories and institutions. The results of the open contest were exhibited publicly and Josef Malejovský, was selected by the commission, including Jan Lauda, Karel Lidický and Václav Jícha to create the monument. Approval of his work was mirrored in the assignment of another similar commission, for *Liberec* (1955) The rendition arguably suffered from the employment of the most skilled stonemasons on the Prague monument assignment.¹⁰⁷⁴ Another monument by Karel Kuneš in Karlovy Vary (1954), showing Stalin as a teacher of the nations and father of the youth with a figure of a pioneer child would last just two years, until removed in 1956. (Fig. 90) Similar fate would meet also DDR monument to Stalin in Weimar.¹⁰⁷⁵

At the first of the exhibitions of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts this category is represented by portraits of V. I. Lenin by Jan Lauda and Rudolf Hornák, several portraits of J. V. Stalin by Otakar Španiel, Josef Malejovský and Karel Pokorný. (Fig. 91) J. V. Stalin by Otakar Španiel witnesses the above-average artistic quality of the old generation, active already at the time of the First Czechoslovakian republic, with the remarkable likeness of the portrayed leader, accompanied with convincingly apt elaboration of the surfaces. The same applies to Jan Lauda's Lenin, whose sharp and alert expression and

¹⁰⁷² Sergiusz MICHALSKI: *Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage, 1870-1997*, London 1998, 140-141

¹⁰⁷³ Pavol Bán (1892-1959), a Slovakian sculptor, studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, by Alojz Stróbl. Here, in his work he strengthened lyrical expression, which was a distinct feature of his portraiture. He is the author portraits of Polkoráb, G. Mally, J. Cikkerá, R. Koch, numerous medals and plaques. In his monumental works it includes trojfigurálny relief on the portal of the building of the former Workers' Social Insurance for Bezrucova Street, conducted memorials of Slovak National Uprising in Šumiac and Turčianske Teplice.

¹⁰⁷⁴ SOA v Plzni, fond KV SČSP, číslo kartonu 19. A detailed account in: *Stalinův pomník v Plzni*, in: *Ročenka Státního oblastního archivu v Plzni 2006*, Plzeň: Státní oblastní archiv v Plzni 2007, 88 – 90; see also: Marcel FIŠER: *Pomník Josifa Vissarionoviče Stalina v Plzni*, in: www.socharstvi.info (retrieved 7.3. 2017); An online accessible resource: Lenka MAROUŠOVÁ: *Zaniklé socialistické pomníky v Plzni*. (Bachelor's thesis at ZČU). Plzeň 2013

¹⁰⁷⁵ For more on Karel Kuneš see note: 869

head raised as if looking out over the horizon conjoins the well established idealised typus of Lenin as was introduced in SSSR by A. Gerasimov, with a convincing pseudo-realist impression. (Fig. 80) This essential group of depicted was in 1955 widened to contain President A. Zápotocký and politics most interconnected with the field of culture, Z. Nejedlý and V. Kopecký.

Lenin, on the other hand would often be rendered in a way different from the dignified and majestic Stalin. Lenin as a cultic figure of the famous past of the Communist Movement was seen in more romantic, revolutionary manner. A fiery gesture of hand, conveying exaltation, energy and forwardness. His statues would manifest greater passion, often stepping forward, or leaning towards the audience in the zealous agitation over the tribune or a pulpit. These attributes were canonised in the sculpture by Vladimir Schuko and Sergei Evseev in Leningrad (1926).¹⁰⁷⁶ (Fig. 92)

Lenin would become the most often utilized foreign representative of the Communist ideology in the Eastern Europe, overshadowing greatly the “local saints,” the first generation of the original Communists, Ernst Thälmann or Julius Fučík. In Czechoslovakia and DDR the monuments to Lenin would greatly outnumber those, dedicated to Stalin, who would undoubtedly relish the self-aggrandizing schemes, yet would prefer the most monumental and representative.

In Czechoslovakia Lenin's bust by Jan Lauda (1945) would belong to the earliest and most respected works, acquiring broad reception and often praised for the capacity to “*express Lenin's importance, reaching beyond borders*” by “*articulating great pathos and revolutionary zeal*”.¹⁰⁷⁷ (Fig. 80) The bust would be festively unveiled in 1949 as a part of a memorial plaque at the Prague Lidový dům, which hosted in 1912 the VI. Conference of the The Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, where Bolsheviks, under the guidance of Lenin seized power over the Mensheviks.¹⁰⁷⁸ The success and lasting impact

¹⁰⁷⁶ GOLOMSTOCK 1992, 230

¹⁰⁷⁷ Jan TOMEŠ: Jan Lauda. Praha 1952, 29

¹⁰⁷⁸ Klement GOTTWALD: Leninovou cestou za Stalinem. Praha 1953, 3

For a contemporary reportage in Czech television see: Archiv ČT24, Leninův večer a odhalení pamětní desky (1949) <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ivysilani/10116288585-archiv-ct24/216411058210019>

of this sculpture was perpetuated in a number of busts, one of them for the Charles University, Karolinum (1650).¹⁰⁷⁹ In DDR the first Lenin's full-sized monument, a large bronze by Matwei Maniser (1948), would be imported from the SSSR and installed in Eisleben, establishing the pattern to have Lenin's statues designed by the most accomplished masters of Socialist Realism, the Russian sculptors. (Fig. 93) The first exclusively German-made monument was assigned to Johann F. Rogge in Königsee (1951).¹⁰⁸⁰ (Fig. 94)

The skill of Czechoslovakian sculptors to depict the great revolutionary was probably judged as reasonable by the Soviet decision makers, as all major monuments in the region would be assigned to local artists. A sculptor Vladimír Relich would overtake the task to design a large three meters tall bronze monument for a city with a substantial Russian minority - Karlovy Vary, inherited from his teacher Jan Lauda, who died in 1959. (Fig. 95) The monument, successfully elaborated upon the acclaimed bust by Lauda with regard to distinct facial features, stripped of the Asian characteristics in favour of a relatable, European visage.¹⁰⁸¹ The dynamically rendered figure of a confident man, stepping forward with a typical gesture of the hands, thumbs of which are put on his vest delivers the feeling of acute determination.

An interesting contribution to the iconography of Lenin is bound to the Lenin's Museum.¹⁰⁸² The Museum was opened in January 1953 and was presented in the daily

¹⁰⁷⁹ Dušan KONEČNÝ: Lenin v českém výtvarném umění. Příspěvek k ikonografii a typologii, in: Výtvarná kultura I. 1980, č. 4. 2-7

¹⁰⁸⁰ *Johann F. Rogge* (1898-1983) a German sculptor and a son of the academic painter Adalbert Rogge. In 1922, he turned to fine arts and worked as a sculptor in the studio of the sculptor Paul TÜRPE. In the second half of the 1920s was in Berlin. From 1946 he lived near Dresden. He became a member of the Kulturbund. In 1949 created Weimar bust to Pushkin, followed by numerous orders for busts and monuments. He was a member of the Central Committee of the Society for German-Soviet Friendship allowing him to take part in several study trips to the Soviet Union.

See: Hans MAUR: Stätten der Ehrung und Würdigung für Wladimir Iljitsch Lenin in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Berlin 1966; Hans MAUR: Denkmale für W. I. Lenin auf dem Territorium der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Berlin 1970

¹⁰⁸¹ *Vladimír Relich* (*1924) a Czech sculptor, studied at AVU under O. Španiel and J. Lauda. Active mostly in the regions of Karlovy Vary and Cheb, also as a teacher. He would most often succeed in regional contests, author of many monuments in the generous time frame of 1950s-1970s.

¹⁰⁸² Museum V. I. Lenina v Praze, in: Lidová demokracie IX., č. 17, 21. ledna 1953; Projev presidenta republiky k otevření Musea V. I. Lenina v Praze, in: Lidová demokracie IX., č. 18, 22. ledna 1953; K výsledkům soutěže na výtvarná díla pro museum V. I. Lenina v Praze, in: Výtvarné umění, roč. 4, 30-31

press as the first institution of the kind, beside the SSSR. The Museum would be accommodated in a place of special importance - the Prague Lidový dům, which hosted in 1912 the VI. Conference of the The Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, with Lenin's active attendance. The bust of Lenin by Jan Lauda was adorning the facade ever since 1949.¹⁰⁸³ The occasion necessitated a thorough reconstruction of the building and the facade, which was to be decorated with five arch-shaped sculptural reliefs, depicting scenes from Lenin's political career. (Fig. 96)

The facade showed five scenes: 1) Lenin editing the Iskra magazine (1900) 2) The first Russian revolution (1905), 3) Lenin leading the Prague Conference of RSDLP (1912) (fig. 97) 4) Lenin and Stalin in the October Revolution (1917), 5) Stalin's oath above the Lenin's coffin (1924). The contentual character builds upon the interrelation between Lenin as a teacher and Stalin as his successor, strongly accentuating the legitimacy and righteousness of purpose of the other. The task was assigned to a group of young, academically trained sculptors: Svata Hajerová, Ludvík Kodým, Irena Sedlecká, Vendelín Zdrůbecký. These authors would be awarded the State Prize second class in 1953.¹⁰⁸⁴ The reliefs would belong to the most conservative forms of Socialist Realism with their essentially shallow utilization of typological stereotypes and clichés.

The Era of Normalisation coincided with the 100th anniversary of Lenin's birth. In 1970 would therefore spring up a large number of statues, memorial coins, reliefs – naming the sculptural art only. Only cursory glance over the produce is stipulated by the space limits. The cultural apparatus made use of the fact, the ideological orientation dominated yet again over the supposedly anti-Soviet and anti-Socialist powers of Modernism and promoted the openly pro-Soviet course. Ludvík and Božena Kodýmovi created a *bronze for Praha – Dejvice* (1972-1973) an iconographicly novel solution,

¹⁰⁸³ Klement GOTTWALD: Leninovou cestou za Stalinem. Praha 1953, 3

For a contemporary reportage in Czech television see: Archiv ČT24, Leninův večer a odhalení pamětní desky (1949) <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ivysilani/10116288585-archiv-ct24/216411058210019>

¹⁰⁸⁴ Laureáti Státní ceny 1953, in: Výtvarná práce 29. května 1953, č. 16, 3

Svatava Hajerová (1917 - 1979) was a Czech sculptor and wood carver, 1942-1944 studied at a Odborná škola řezbářská v Praze (Specialised Woodcarving School in Prague), 1945-1950 at AVU under Karel Pokorný.

Selected bibliography: Svata Hajerová, Jiří Mandel ml., Jiří Novák: Výstava obrazů a plastik: Alšova síň umělec. Besedy: (Ex. Cat. 20.února - 11.března 1951) Praha: Umělec. beseda - 2. skupina SČSVU, 1951

depicting Lenin as Prague visitor, more modest and less conspicuous in his informal dress and attitude. (Fig. 98) The informal attire and posture was employed also by the experienced author of Lenin's monuments, Vladimír Relich in Cheb. Vendelín Zdrůbecký rendered a *relief for the Lenin's Subway station* (1978), Miloš Axman *Monuments for Vyškov* (1972) and *Brno* (1974).¹⁰⁸⁵

V. Relich, as he succeeded in delivering the combination of realist form and revolutionary zest, would be employed again for *monuments in Cheb* (1979) and *Sokolov* (late 1980's), thus becoming the most outstanding author of Lenin's high profile monuments in ČSR. (Fig. 99) In the last two named he would experiment with different posture and attire, in Cheb with a hand raised and in Sokolov in a heavy coat with his proverbial cap on. The vast majority of regime obliging artists would endeavour to depict Lenin at some point of their career.

In DDR were the high-profile monuments often repeatedly assigned to Russian sculptors. The most famous *monument to Lenin by Nikolai Tomski* was erected in Berlin on the occasion of the approaching 100th anniversary of Lenin's birthday (1970), another was made by Russian sculptor in Dresden on the occasion of the DDR foundation (1974).¹⁰⁸⁶ (Fig. 100) Both of these are already manifesting a fading interest in the Socrealist form and bolder formal approach. The verge of the 1960s and 1970s would witness the enormous number of Lenin's monument building, among others in *Wünsdorf* (1970), in *Riesa* (1971) or in *Merseburg* (1971).

On several occasions would be attempted a group composition, that would depict either 1) Stalin and Lenin together 2) Stalin or Lenin with an accompanying figure or figures of working class 3) The regional leader with Stalin or Lenin. In these cases would often stay in the way to realisation the dissatisfaction of the decision makers with the final design

¹⁰⁸⁵ KONEČNÝ 1980, 7

¹⁰⁸⁶ *Nikolai Vasilyevich Tomski* (1900-1984) was a Russian-Soviet sculptor. Descended from a family of a blacksmith, in the province of Novgorod. 1923-1927 at the Leningrad Academy of Fine Arts as a pupil of Wsewolod Lischew. The first Stalin Prize (1941) - was awarded for the creation of the memorial to Sergei Kirov in Leningrad. He also designed busts of heroes of the Soviet Union and at least five great Lenin statues in the Soviet Union, as well as several monuments and monumental reliefs in Moscow and other cities. Tomski was a member of the Academy of Arts of the SSSR (1949) and its president (1968-1983). 1970 to 1984 a corresponding member of the Academy of the Arts of the DDR. In 1948 taught at the Moscow Surikow College of Art, and became a rector there at 1964. He directed the sculptor's department at the Academy of Arts in Leningrad. (1960-1968)

often caused by unrealistic expectations or insufficient capacity of the sculptor. One interesting example of finalised monument was to be found in Olomouc. The seven metres tall limestone monument was dedicated to Lenin and Stalin, accompanied by a flag bearer was executed by local sculptors Rudolf Doležal and Vojtěch Hořínek (1955).¹⁰⁸⁷ (Fig. 101) The sculpture luckily survived the Stalin's cult of personality decomposition, as the leitmotif is Lenin, standing in the front.¹⁰⁸⁸

K. Gottwald and W. Ulbricht

The personality cult in Czechoslovakia would evolve most notably around the president K. Gottwald, less pronouncedly around his successor A. Zápotocký. In DDR would separate cults be devised around Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl, presidents Wilhelm Pieck and Walter Ulbricht.¹⁰⁸⁹ The cult would be manifested beside the intellectual realm of art, literature and poetry, in various honouring deeds. Streets, squares, schools, factories, coal-mines and steelworks, even towns were renamed to honour the leaders. Series of stamps, bearing their portraits would be produced in great numbers and portraits would spread not only to public buildings, institutions, factories, but also to the homes of the public, not mentioning parades and public open-air festivities adorned with large-scale portraits. That way would the celebrated leader fulfil one of the often employed epithets in the 1950s, as being “omnipresent and all-seeing”.

The most successful political personality cult in Czechoslovakia was fabricated around Klement Gottwald, “the first working class president.” The golden era of the cult would cover the years from the coup d'etat in 1948 until the groundbreaking speech of the Nikita S. Khrushchev in 1956, when the personality cult of Stalin was denounced, yet the greatest surge of the Gottwald's monument building would reach into the years of

¹⁰⁸⁷ Marek OTAVA: Okolnosti výstavby sousoší Lenina a Stalina v Olomouci v letech 1949-1955, in: Střední Morava - vlastivědná revue 24 (2007), 27-43

¹⁰⁸⁸ For the present day fate of this monument see: Part V. Official Socialist Sculpture Second Life

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Otto Grotewohl* (1894-1964), was a German politician and the prime minister of the DDR 1949-1964 during the era of both Wilhelm Pieck and Walter Ulbricht.

Normalization in 1970s and 1980's.¹⁰⁹⁰ The flourishing of the Gottwaldian cult would by its time-frame copy the era of the toughest political course and by this circumstance alone, he would by far and wide surpass all his successors' cults both in scale and impact. Albeit the propagandist representation of Gottwald in the 1950s would heavily depend on his relation to J. Stalin and frequent affirmations of their mutual relationship, Gottwald was not removed from the pantheon even after the 1956 and his cult would only be rearranged around slightly different lines, peaking by festivities and monument unveiling on every suitable anniversary, related to his life.¹⁰⁹¹

Walter Ulbricht, who shared in a number of ways fate very similar. He was raised in an underprivileged family, apprenticed as a cabinetmaker and in his youth fought in the World War One. After the war, in 1923 he would acquire an influential position in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany. During the Nazi Era and the second war he would be exiled in Paris and Prague, later in Moscow. This is where all the future post-war Communist leaders of the Eastern bloc would gather to forge ties to the Soviet leadership, that would, in case of Gottwald and Ulbricht last lifetime.¹⁰⁹² After the 1945 Ulbricht persistently pushed for the implementation of the Stalinist course and played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, consisting of the merged Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and the Communist Party of Germany (KPD). Under his rule the Party acquired characteristics of the Soviet Communist Party and Ulbricht would unwaveringly promote the course for most of his life, until his death in 1970.¹⁰⁹³ Ulbricht outlived Gottwald by decades, yet the period of his cult flourishing would follow the same time-frame.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *Klement Gottwald* (1896-1953), was a Czechoslovak communist politician and leader of the Communist Party of ČSR (KSČ), 1929-1945 was the General Secretary of the KSČ, 1945-1953 the Chairman of the KSČ. 1946-1948 Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia 1948-1953 President of Czechoslovakia. He was born in the Haná region of Moravia, in a village Dědice close to Vyškov, apprenticed as a cabinetmaker in Vienna, where he joined Social Democratic youth movement. Worked as an editor to newspapers and in 1930's would build his position in the Communist Party. After 1938 emigrated to the SSSR. After 1948 the most prominent politician in Czechoslovakia, whose political course was aligned with the interests of Moscow leadership.

¹⁰⁹¹ Jan NĚMEC: *Klement Gottwald, tvůrce nerozborného československo-sovětského přátelství*. Praha 1953; Štefan RAIS: *Klement Gottwald, velký žák Leninův a Stalinův*. Praha 1949

¹⁰⁹² *Walter Ulbricht* (1893-1973) A Communist politician, who was directly engaged in the Weimar Era emergence of the Kommunist Partei Deutschland. He was the first secretary of the Socialist Unity Party (1950-1971) and also the head of state until his death (1960-1973). He was born in Leipzig (Saxony) into a family of tailor. He would apprentice as a cabinet maker.

¹⁰⁹³ See: Mario FRANK: *Walter Ulbricht. Eine deutsche Biografie*. Berlin 2001

The Gottwald's and Ulbricht's legend, weaved around their true personality would be in many aspects parallel to the narrative of Stalin's life and consisted of several layers.¹⁰⁹⁴ The ground stone of his cult would be set upon their humble ancestry. With the working class background and regional origin, Gottwald, in his youth a cabinetmaker apprentice, would be extolled as “a son of his class,” Ulbricht “ein deutscher Arbeitersohn.”¹⁰⁹⁵ He was positioned as the first president, stemming from the people, whose healthy appearance of a sturdy Moravian villager would serve as an evidence of his affiliation to the populace of his country and further contribute to his trustworthiness.¹⁰⁹⁶ This basic determinant, allowing the people to gain trust to “one of them” on the grounds of mutual ties of brotherhood, would be repeatedly emphasized.

After the death of Wilhelm Pieck in September 1960 would be vacated space readily filled by Ulbricht, who would with the aid of the propaganda-apparatus seek to attain the epithet of the wise and benevolent father of the nation. On the occasion of his 70th (1963) and 75th birthday (1968) he would acquire distinctions from the DDR and SSSR, including the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union pinned on his chest by the Chruscshev himself.¹⁰⁹⁷ “*Walter Ulbricht - das ist die Arbeitklasse, das ist die DDR,*” would be broadcasted in radios. He would be titled by the press as “neuen Menschen“, “Fundament des Neuen Lebens“, “Genie der Arbeiterklasse“, or “neuen Weltschöpfer“. Ulbricht would, in accordance with the personality cult, emerge as an indispensable figure, whose importance to the existence and welfare of the state is such, he would be marked as the „der bedeutendste deutscher Politikerdes Jahrhunderts.“¹⁰⁹⁸

The cult would need, in order to achieve the required effect, to employ the

¹⁰⁹⁴ For a valuable insight of the Gottwald's cult and its comparison to Stalin's see Czech study: Vladimír MACURA: *Obraz vůdce*, in: *Šťastný věk (a jiné studie o socialistické kultuře)*. Praha 2008, 101-120

¹⁰⁹⁵ Compare: Jindřich MALEC: *Klement Gottwald - syn své třídy a svého lidu: 1896-1953: Pásmo o životě a díle*. Kladno 1971; Johannes BECHER: *Walter Ulbricht : Ein deutscher Arbeitersohn*. Berlin 1958

¹⁰⁹⁶ Marie PUJMANOVÁ: *U Buzuluku*, in: *Gottwald je s námi : Náš první dělnický president v zrcadle č. a slov. poesie a prózy*. Praha 1953, 55

¹⁰⁹⁷ Alexander ABUSCH: *Walter Ulbricht : Schriftsteller, Künstler, Wissenschaftler und Pädagogen zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*. Berlin 1963

Die Welt grüsst Walter Ulbricht und unsere Republik: Reden und Grusschreiben zum 70. Geburtstag der Ersten Sekretärs des Zentralkomitees der SED und Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates der DDR. Berlin 1963

¹⁰⁹⁸ Frank, MARIO: *Walter Ulbricht. Eine Deutsche Biographie*. Berlin 2001, 73

hyperbolisation and mythologisation of his personality traits, character, knowledge and skills. Gottwald's laudations in the press, literature and poetry would depict him as the most hard-working, disciplined, knowledgeable, prescient, valiant, talented, kind, honest, and most talented of all men.¹⁰⁹⁹ In the effort to draw the most flattering portrait to the figure of the leader, writers, poets would equate him to an engineer, builder, a navigator, shining beacon or a great general. His person, aggrandized to the most potent and knowledgeable protector of both the Czechoslovakian people and the values of Marxism-leninism, was to stand guard over the peace and future prosperity.

The endeavour to translate emerging Gottwald's cult into the sculpture or "everlasting" form of a monument, would appear shortly after the coup d'etat in 1948, together with the widespread implementation of the personality as a symbol and authority in the construction of the Socialist state. Already a year later in 1st January 1949 the city of Zlín would be renamed to Gottwaldov and the ground stone of Gottwald's monument was laid in the city centre, the square of the Red Army. As it would often be the case with important large scale commissions, the whole process of the realisation of the Gottwaldov monument would get protracted for many years.

Although would Gottwald occupy the highest place among the members of the Communist pantheon, the task to create his official portrait in painting or sculpture was difficult for a number of reasons. Firstly the official bodies, artists in SČSVU and all other concerned groups, subordinated either directly or indirectly to the Central Committee, would in the 1950s experience rather well-founded fear to offend the leader, secondly the lofty and ambiguous instructions, provided to artists with regards to Gottwald's portrait would only obscure things. "The Ideal synthesis of the Gottwald's personality" considering he was perceived as a „Bolshevik Revolutionary and President at the same time," was an uneasy task, a fact acknowledged by the pro-regime theoreticians of art.¹¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁹⁹ An anthology of the laudatory texts and poems summarised in: Alexej KUSÁK: Gottwald je s námi: Náš první dělnický president v zrcadle č. a slov. poesie a prózy. Praha 1953

¹¹⁰⁰ Václav FORMÁNEK: Úkoly Gottwaldovské akce a jejich vztah k výtvarným tradicím. (Na okraj Gottwaldovské akce II.), in: Výtvarné umění 1954, roč. IV., 312

Regardless of these difficulties, the necessity to adorn institutions and public buildings with official portraits of the president, would result in a number of portrait busts, created during his life.

One of the best known was Viktor Dobrovolný's bust (195?), that would later occupy a place of honour at the top of the main staircase in the Museum of Klement Gottwald.¹¹⁰¹ Beside countless regional exemplars of wavering quality, spread all over the republic, also some of the distinguished sculptors would in the early 1950s contribute to the sculptural component of Gottwald's cult. Vincenc Makovský would throughout his professional career dedicate to the portraiture of Gottwald three attempts, all of them between 1950-1952. (Fig. 102) His study of Gottwald would result in three bronzes of various sizes, the largest measuring 75 cm, exhibiting them on numerous occasions among other venues in Prague and Brno.¹¹⁰² Otakar Španiel would in 1952 create a design for a hundred Czechoslovakian crown coin, depicting Gottwald's profile.¹¹⁰³

The second, more fruitful stage of sculptural production, related directly to the person of Gottwald would be launched no later than five months after his death in 1953 by two substantial and generously funded contests, announced concurrently to the artists in the Institute for the History of KSČ in July.¹¹⁰⁴ The priority was ascribed to the contest for the Gottwaldov monument. Interestingly, the contest would not yield satisfactory results and none of the designs would acquire enough approval of the decision makers so as to be recommended for final realisation.¹¹⁰⁵

The other project – the action task for a series of works of all fields of fine art, elaborating upon the life of Gottwald, would on the other hand succeed both in the

¹¹⁰¹ Viktor Dobrovolný (1909-1987), was a Czech sculptor, painter and book illustrator. 1927-34 studied at UMPRUM under professor Josef Drahoňovský. He employed Socialist Realism, creating portraits, medals and monumental commissions. For more see: MALÁ Alena (Ed.): *Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců 1950 – 2002*. (II. D-G)

¹¹⁰² Jiří ŠEBEK: *Soupis sochařského díla Vincence Makovského*, in: Jiří HLUŠIČKA / Jaroslav MALINA / Jiří ŠEBEK: *Vincenc Makovský*. Brno 2002, 303

¹¹⁰³ Vojtěch V. ŠTECH / Lev J. NERAD: *Otakar Španiel*. Praha 1954, fig. 284

¹¹⁰⁴ *Veliký úkol našeho výtvarného umění*, in: *Výtvarná práce 1953*, 7. srpna 1953, č. 21, 2-3

¹¹⁰⁵ The realisation of the monument would take place seven years later, for more see *note The Personality Cult Sculpture*

achieved results attract a number of artists.¹¹⁰⁶ It would undoubtedly belong to the high profile contests within the 1950s Socialist Realism establishment and was designed specifically for the purpose of decoration of the Museum of Klement Gottwald. The Central Committee, deputized at the meeting with artists by the ÚV KSČ secretary František Nečásek, whose speech would be published in *Výtvarná práce*. Nečásek in his address, besides the encouraging words to the artists disclosed the high hopes of the Communist leadership with regards to the fabrication of the Gottwald's cult. The contest, epitomized as a “mobilisation” of the artists, ought to show the ideological and professional capacity of the artists and would provide the necessary instrument to spread the awareness of the continuity of Communist history, indispensably intertwined with the life and career of Gottwald.¹¹⁰⁷

The contest would encourage artists to attempt the depiction of the first working class president and choose from the formative moments of his life.¹¹⁰⁸ The list of 23 subjects would be devised according to the officially approved biography and offered wide selection, ranging from his childhood years through his youth, over his relations to SSSR and highlights of his political career.¹¹⁰⁹ The artists could choose to depict Gottwald as a “creator of the unbreakable unity of our nations”, “the best friend of our youth”, or promote the new leadership by depicting him “together with A. Zápotocký”. The artists would be encouraged to follow the example of the Soviet artists, who, according to Nečásek, already mastered the discipline of Lenin and Stalin portraits and therefore could provide the soundest example.¹¹¹⁰

The results of the contest would be presented to the public in July 1954. The importance, ascribed to this “artists' mobilisation” is to be derived from the composition of the Jury, comprising of Gottwald's son-in-law, minister of Defense, general Alexej Čepička, Gottwald's successor as a president, Antonín Zápotocký, Minister Zdeněk Nejedlý, minister of Culture Václav Kopecký. The assessment of the realm of sculpture was

¹¹⁰⁶ Rytířská street 29, Prague

¹¹⁰⁷ Projev tajemníka ÚV KSČ Františka Nečásky, in: *Výtvarná práce* 1953, 7. srpna 1953, č. 21, 2-3

¹¹⁰⁸ František PEŘAS: Výtvarná výzdoba Musea Klementa Gottwalda, in: *Výtvarná práce* roč. 3., č. 14, 1955, 4-5

¹¹⁰⁹ Václav FORMÁNEK: Úkoly Gottwaldovské akce a jejich vztah k výtvarným tradicím. (Na okraj Gottwaldovské akce II.), in: *Výtvarné umění* 1954, roč. IV., 305-313

¹¹¹⁰ Projev tajemníka ÚV KSČ Františka Nečásky, in: *Výtvarná práce* 1953, 7. srpna 1953, č. 21, 2-3

assigned to academical sculptor František Štefunko.¹¹¹¹ The first prize for sculpture was awarded to Irena Sedlecká-Kodymová and Ludvík Kodym for their *reliefs The Burial of Klement Gottwald. (Pohřeb Klementa Gottwalda)*¹¹¹² (Fig. 103)

The broad motivival spectrum and large number of participating artists resulted in thorough coverage of the Gottwaldian narrative, ranging from childhood themes to the adulthood. The sculptors would, restricted by the character of their craft, prefer individual figure or smaller multi-figural compositions. The third prize would be bestowed upon Vladimír Večeřa and his *Cabinet Maker's Apprentice* showing child barely eight years old, leaning over a book in the flickering light of an oil lamp. (Fig. 104) The subject is not meant to just deliver a portrait of an adorable child. It is allowing the observer to contemplate the roots of the future greatness of the leader by witnessing the moment the seed of righteousness and justice would spring up in the unspoiled mind of the working class boy. Among the awarded was also K. Hladík's *Gottwald with his Mother* builds on universally endorsed values of deep family bounds by showing the young, grateful teenage son holding affectionately his mother's hands, confiding in her the great determination to save the humanity from the clutches of the capitalism.¹¹¹³ (Fig. 105)

Jiří Babiček with his sculptural genre, inspired by the youth of Klement Gottwald,¹¹¹⁴ showing the future President in an animated agitational discussion with his peers in a cabinet maker's workshop, called "The Cabinet Maker's Apprentice" would receive the Second Prize. The usage of the scenes from Gottwald's youth, rendered with pathos and reverence, would strongly remind of the scenes from the life of Stalin and Lenin, inspired in turn by the power of religious art.¹¹¹⁵ Gottwald is presented as an avid revolutionary, whose future valiant deeds would be firmly rooted in the honest and pure hopes of idealist youth. The photograph of this sculptural composition adorned also the

¹¹¹¹ František Štefunko (1903-1974), Slovakian academical sculptor, Professor of the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava, one of the founders of Slovakian modern sculpture. He spent most of his career in Martin, oriented mostly on the portraiture of personalities of national history.

¹¹¹² Významný krok našeho výtvarného umění, in: Výtvarná práce, roč. 2, 1954, č. 15, 1; Fig. "The Burial of Klement Gottwald," in: FORMÁNEK 1954, 306

¹¹¹³ Fig. "Gottwald with his Mother" in: Výtvarné umění 1954, roč. IV., 305

¹¹¹⁴ Truhlářský učeň

¹¹¹⁵ For more on the „relious“ side of the official art under Communism see: Hans MAIER: Politická náboženství. Totalitární režimy a křesťanství. Brno 1999

title page of the *Výtvarná práce* Magazine.¹¹¹⁶ Also Skopový's *Klement Gottwald in a working class family* elaborates upon the indispensable understanding of the idolized hero, as the son of his class, interconnected with his people. The ties to SSSR would be highlighted by the sculpture by Miloš Zet "Stalin and Gottwald in a friendly discussion," accentuating "the warm regard" both leaders hold for each other.

The Museum was opened on the day of the late Gottwald's birthday anniversary under the auspices of the Central Committee of KSČ on 23rd November 1954 and would present a number of sculptural works, summoned through the action task, most of them still in models.¹¹¹⁷ František Peřas would provide a detailed analysis of artistic decoration, comprising of all art disciplines and including the contest works. The personality cult related works would be mentioned on many occasions, the sculptural works would present but a fraction of the overall volume of Gottwald dedicated works.

Also the monument building would gain momentum after the Gottwald's death in 1953. The village, claimed to harbour his native house – Dědice u Vyškova – would in the place of pilgrimage, acquire Gottwald's statue from Vincenc Havel from Opava in 1956.¹¹¹⁸ The contest for the Gottwald's monument in Gottwaldov, albeit launched in 1949 and meeting with a representative number of 41 participating sculptors and 50 architects, did not yield the desired result. The committee, whose foremost member was A. Zápotocký, would decline the models presented by stating, they did not fulfil the ideological requirements. Only in 1956 would be the statue assigned to the team of Miloš Zet and Zdeněk Krybus.¹¹¹⁹ Almost four metres tall bronze Gottwald's monuments would be festively unveiled in 1961 on the occasion of a large peace manifestation,

¹¹¹⁶ One of the exemplars would be used in 1968 for a bust in Nová Huť, Ostrava – Kunčice.

¹¹¹⁷ Hodnocení výsledků soutěže na výzdobu Musea Klementa Gottwalda, in: *Výtvarná práce* roč. 2., č. 14, 1954, 1; ČTK: Před otevřením Musea Kl. Gottwalda v Praze, *Mladá fronta*, roč. 10 č. 274, 1954/ 11/16, 3-3; V. JENŠOVSKÝ: V Museu Klementa Gottwalda, in: *Mladá fronta*, roč. 10, č. 280, 1954, 23,5-5

¹¹¹⁸ Vincenc Havel (1906-1992), a Czech realist figurative sculpture, studied at UMPRUM under J. Mařatka and K. Štipl. Mainly active in Hradec nad Moravicí. Created portraits of Gottwald also for Opava, pro Opava, Nový Bohumín a Třinec.

¹¹¹⁹ *Miloš Zet* (1920 – 1995), a Czech sculptor. 1934-1937 studied at a specialised school of Ceramics in Bechyně (Odborná škola keramická v Bechyni), in 1939-1940 at the Art School in Zlín, 1941 - 1942 Akademie der bildenden Künste (Academy of Fine Arts), Vienna (Wien), 1945 - 1950 AVU Prague, Lauda Jan 1945 - 1950 Španiel Otakar. 1964 - 1972 member of the Army's Art Studio. 1980 received the title Distinguished Artist.

related to the noteworthy anniversary and the 40th years' existence of KSČ.¹¹²⁰ (Fig. 106) Also Česká Lípa in the 1961 installed a Gottwald's statue by L. Kühn.¹¹²¹

In the course of two decades, most cities, towns and localities bound to Gottwald's life would either have a full-size bronze or stone statue, or a bust of the late president, rendered in carefully conservative Socrealist style.¹¹²² The construction would be often accompanied by adaptations in the urbanistic and architectural frame of the monument, so as to provide a decent surrounding environment to the statue. The quality of the monuments themselves would be substantially varied, ranging from a decent work such as Břetislav Benda's monument for Písek (later in a second cast for Příbram) to mediocre and downright inferior. (Fig. 107) Albeit adored by the official narrative also as the “Bolshevik Revolutionary,” in the public space none of the statues would deviate from the presentation of Gottwald as a statesman, dignified and elegantly dressed. There has been close analogy to the Stalin's monuments, always showing a stately and calmly imposing figure, lacking any traces of revolutionary romanticism, often associated with Lenin.

The greatest surge of the monument building was associated with the Normalisation Era, when the Gottwald's cult would experience thorough revitalisation.¹¹²³ One of the often employed sculptors of the Era was Miloš Zet, who authored a larger than life monument in Košice (1975), one of the works surviving to present day.¹¹²⁴ (Fig. 74) In Písek was placed work by Břetislav Benda (1975), belonging to the more valuable realisations, due Benda's preserved professional skills, acquired in the era of the First Republic.¹¹²⁵ Also

¹¹²⁰ Mladá fronta Dnes 17. listopadu 2014

¹¹²¹ Remarkable interchangeability of the statues in 1961.

¹¹²² http://www.bohmischleipa.cz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=159&Itemid=157

¹¹²³ This paragraph is only a brief summary, providing an orientational account of the Normalization Era statues of Gottwald. The task to provide a comprehensive catalogue of the art of the era of normalisation in Czechoslovakia was already with great results attempted by: Pavel KAROUS (ed.) *Vetřelci a volavky: atlas výtvarného umění ve veřejném prostoru v Československu v období normalizace (1968-1989) = Aliens and herons: a guide to fine art in the public space in the era of normalisation in Czechoslovakia (1968-1989)*, Praha 2015, the research is covered also in an online version at: <http://www.vetrelciavolavky.cz/>

¹¹²⁴ For an account of the present day state and placement of the statue see: <http://kosicednes.sk/dennik/clanky/gottwald-a-kosice/> (Retrieved 21. 3. 2017)

¹¹²⁵ Jiří KOTALÍK: *Břetislav Benda: přehled sochařovy tvorby*. Praha 1982, 68

For an account of the modern fate of the statue see: <http://www.pribramsko.eu/musi-se-pribram-zbavovat-sochy-ktera-patri-k-jeji-moderni-historii-7261> (Retrieved 21. 3. 2017)

Josef Malejovský would be endowed with the realization of two monuments, one for Teplice (1971) and the four meters tall monument in Jihlava (1978), unveiled on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Victorious February.¹¹²⁶ It is often noted, that during the time the artistic quality of public monuments in Socrealist style sunk so low, it would become general laughing stock.¹¹²⁷ This was also the case with the monuments in Plzeň by Alois Sopr (1971),¹¹²⁸ and České Budějovice (1972). Praha would in 1970s acquire two monuments by Vladimír Dobrovolný and Jan Simota, both ridiculed for their poor rendition.¹¹²⁹ Probably the most bizarre representation of Gottwald's monument would be installed in Bratislava (1980). The authors Tibor Bártfay a Karol Lacko created a monstrous, six meters tall stone group sculpture, flanked by organically shaped pylons.¹¹³⁰ (Fig. 75) The figures of Gottwald and two representatives of the working class would have hyperbolised and angular shapes, of pseudocubist style, massive limbs and would without doubt belong to the utmost stage of the official sculpture decline.

In the attempt to compare the spheres of DDR and ČSR, a noticeable disparity between the almost feverish monument building to K. Gottwald (especially in 1970s) and substantially less pronounced endeavour to build statues to W. Pieck and W. Ulbricht, would emerge. This does not mean that a highly variable number of various distinctions would not be bestowed upon them. W. Pieck's native city would be renamed to Wilhelm-Pieck-Stadt Guben and acquire his monument in Guben, adorned with bronze reliefs (1976).¹¹³¹ (Fig. 108) A prominent DDR sculptor Walter Arnold would create busts to Ulbricht (1961 and 1964). Ulbricht would experience the peak of his cult during his life on the occasion of the 75th birthday (1968). The high profile Socrealist sculptor Johannes F. Rogge from Dresden would create his bust and would elaborate upon his

¹¹²⁶ Jan SPURNÝ: Josef Malejovský. Praha 1963, 34-35

¹¹²⁷ Articles in press, dealing with the subject of Normalisation monuments especially by architecture historian Zdeněk Lukeš: Zdeněk LUKEŠ: Sáňkující Smetana i Hopkirk. Normalizace a nepovedené pomníky. 14. listopadu 2013 7:00, in: Lidovky.cz, http://www.lidovky.cz/sankujici-smetana-i-hopkirk-normalizace-a-nepovedene-ceske-pomniky-1fr-/design.aspx?c=A131111_110053_In-bydleni_ter (Retrieved 21. 3. 2017); Zdeněk LUKEŠ: Pomníky normalizační Prahy, in: <http://neviditelnypes.lidovky.cz/> (Retrieved 21. 3. 2017)

¹¹²⁸ Ivan MARTINOVSKÝ (et al.): Dějiny Plzně v datech: od prvních stop osídlení až po současnost. Praha 2004, 442; Věrní Gottwaldovu odkazu. Pravda, 23. listopadu 1971, roč. 52, č. 277, s. 1-2.

¹¹²⁹ Jan Simota (1913-1993), Czech sculptor and medal maker, studied at UMPRUM under J. Horejc, 1935 - 1939 at AVU in Prague under B. Kafka and O. Španiel, whose assistant he was 1946 – 1949, shortly also in Gottwaldov.

¹¹³⁰ Tibor Bártfay (1922-2015), was a Slovak sculptor, studied at AVU under Karel Pokorný.

¹¹³¹ Noch kein Geld für "pieck-feines" Denkmal, in: rbb/24, see: <http://www.rbb-online.de/kultur/beitrag/2014/01/guben-entscheidet-ueber-sanierung-wilhelm-pieck-denkmal.html>

experiences with its preparation in the FDJ-Blatt "Junge Welt".¹¹³² Very similar to the problems, faced by the artists, who endeavoured to create a Gottwald's portrait, he would "struggle to find the true likeness of such a great statesman", but would eventually find the artistic solution in the "individual radiance" of his model.¹¹³³ He also created a bronze relief (1965). A preserved photograph, taken at Schloss Niederschönhausen by Jochen Moll shows him being painted and his bust being finished.¹¹³⁴ (Fig. 109)

From the perspective of the Czechoslovakian experience and compared with almost omnipresent Gottwalds portraits and monuments in the followed period, the almost total disappearance of Ulbricht's legacy, including the artistic reminiscences of his presence, is rather confusing. Upon closer inspection, an apparent intention to obliterate his traces would probably have political reasons, rooted in the Erich Honnecker new economical strategy, not excluding mutual animosity with Ulbricht, his political rival and predecessor. The presidential successors of Gottwald - Antonín Zápotocký (1953-1957), Antonín Novotný (1957-1968) and Ludvík Svoboda (1968-1975) would on the contrary strive to emphasize the continuity and stability by supporting the cult of the first working class president.¹¹³⁵

¹¹³² Johannes F. Rogge: Zubereitung einer Ulbricht-Büste, in: Junge Welt, 1968

¹¹³³ Freude zu Haus, in: DER SPIEGEL 26/1968, published online at: <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-46020882.html> (Retrieved 23. 3. 2017)

¹¹³⁴ See: http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=630&language=german

¹¹³⁵ Ludvík Svoboda (1968-1975) A Czechoslovak general and politician, participated in both world wars and acquired distinction of a National Hero, held in high esteem among the general population. After the Prague spring events 1968-1975 was a President of ČSR, succeeding Antonín Novotný and preceding Gustáv Husák.

Red Army, Liberation and Partisan Monuments 1945-1968

Largest commissions, opening to the sculptors, were related to the construction of memorials, often serving as burial grounds, where remains of the fallen soldiers would be placed either in conventional graves, arranged in neat, standardised rows, or in case the remains were cremated, in columbariums. The concept of the Red Army Memorial statues evolved around the ideological core, consisting of triumphalism, victory, heroism, sense of belonging and commemoration. The statues, employed to contribute to the overall effect of the architectural and landscape design. Another often employed iconographic motive was an individual figure of a Partisan - a civilian or a fighter who is not bound to a regular military troops, but is acknowledged as a part of one of the warring parties - in Czechoslovakia substantially contributed to the victorious fights with the German army and their contribution was recognised as a heroic and patriotic.

Monuments to the Red Army soldiers were placed all over the republic and belonged to the most often employed type - the pro-Soviet orientation that prevailed after 1946 only accentuated this tendency. The monuments belonged to the most generously funded tasks with a large budget and yet larger visions of the decision makers. The sculptors, who won the commission (usually in a team with architects and landscape designers), could count it to the peaks of their careers, both in the sense of monumentality and prestige.

The first architecturally elaborated *monument to the Red Army* was erected in *Olomouc* on 15th July 1945, presenting canelated pillar with Red star on top.¹¹³⁶ A memorial and mausoleum, created in 1946 on the occasion of the first anniversary of the liberation by the Red Army in Ostrava.¹¹³⁷ The memorial consists of architectural structure with pylon in the centre by Josef Jírovec and sculptural components - two reliefs and two-figured bronze by Konrad Babraj and Karel Vavra.¹¹³⁸ (Fig. 110) Also Prague honoured the

¹¹³⁶ Milan TICHAK: Pribehy olomouckych pomniku, Olomouc 2002, 100

¹¹³⁷ <http://monumnet.npu.cz/chruzemi/list.php?IdCis=NP%2C129> (retrieved on 28.12. 2016)

¹¹³⁸ Karel Vavra (1914-1982), sculptor and medal maker, son of a sculptor Rudolf Vavra from Moravska Ostrava. For more see: Karel ˇSTETKAR: Sochař Karel Vavra, Kulturnı mesıcnık, Ro. II, . 9, 15

fallen Soviet soldiers in a *memorial at Olšanské hřbitovy* by Jaroslav Brůha, where the central pylon is adorned with a bronze soldier standing to attention above two rows of individual graves of the Red Army officials.¹¹³⁹ (Fig. 111)

The liberation was honoured in 1946 also by the construction of a *Burial place of the Red Army in Brno* with a dominant figure of a Red Army soldier on a tall column by František Vladimír Fojt. (Fig. 39) The versatility of the regional production is proven in comparison of several of the memorials. A memorial was also built in Pelhřimovsko, called *The Memorial of the Slav Brotherhood* in Mnich with a multi-figural bronze by Jan Přerovský z Tábora retains the conservative tradition of realism. The monument was intended both to promote the brotherhood of Slavic nations and to honour the dead – the monument was covered with plaques, bearing the names of fallen citizens of the region. (Fig. 57) The group of fighters represent a dying partisan, Soviet and Czechoslovakian soldier. Albeit attempting to deliver the pathos by the selection of a touching episode, forward motion of valiant-looking men and employment of streaming flag, the overall effect is below optimal result and lags behind the possibilities of the place and theme.

In the SBZ the acknowledgement of the Red Army role in the defeat of the Fascism had a top priority, resulting in the building of three memorials in Berlin only, all of them commemorating the massive numbers of fallen Soviet soldiers during the Battle of Berlin. Their sculptural components would introduce the Socialist Realism to Germany, as it was executed by Soviet artists in a style typical for the contemporary Soviet art. The *memorial in Tiergarten* was erected shortly after the end of the war (1945) in the British zone of the divided Germany. The rigid architecture of the memorial, topped with the large statue of a soldier is representative of a number of other memorials to the fallen Soviet soldiers, as the conservatively elaborated figure does follow the Idealised realism scheme. (Fig. 113) Another large *memorial in Schönholzer Heide*, sculpturally assigned to Iwan G. Perschudtschew, does on one side consist of an allegory of the Russian Motherland, whose attire cascades on the body of a blanket covered soldier,

¹¹³⁹ Ludmila KARLÍKOVÁ-PRUNAROVÁ: Jaroslav Brůha, *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 28.5. 1963, 107-113

referring to the tradition of the 19th century sculpture, on the other hand, reliefs, adorning the entrance structures are clearly indebted to the Soviet Socialist Realism.¹¹⁴⁰ (Fig. 114)

The Red Army Monument of the largest size and consequence is the Treptower Ehrenmal in Berlin (1949), the central memorial to the fallen Soviets.¹¹⁴¹ The military commemorative site and burial place was festively opened on May 8, 1949 – on the Victory in Europe Day. The sculptural components consist of a large bronze statue by Yegveny Vuchetich, stone figure of the Motherland, two kneeling bronze soldier figures and numerous reliefs. The centre of the composition is the bronze figure of a Soviet soldier standing on the ruins of a swastika. In one hand the soldier holds the lowered sword, and the other a German baby girl he rescued. The monumentalism and pathos of the 12 meter tall statue present an example of a sujet, where the soldier figure escapes mere allegory of a mediocre soldier, only to become a romanticised heroic vanquisher of Fascism. His head, without a helmet, his posture and bearing accentuated by the drapery, all witness his glory and strength. His gigantic sword, determining the dynamism of the statue, was reportedly stipulated on Vuchetich by Stalin himself.¹¹⁴² (Fig. 115)

Monument to the Red Army Victory, a handsome commission, would preoccupy Makovský throughout the early 1950s, until its completion in 1954. As a side product of this extensive task would he produce several models to the final monument, that was exhibited in Moravia's comprehensive exhibitions. (Fig. 49) Two larger than life figures of a Red Army Soldier were exhibited in Brno (1952 and 1954).¹¹⁴³ The statue of a Red Army soldier, who raises one hand in a gesture of halt and in the other lifts a flag, was placed on a large column and was revealed on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the liberation of Brno on 26th April 1955. This task brought Makovský Klement Gottwald's state prize distinction.¹¹⁴⁴

¹¹⁴⁰ Iwan G. Perschudtschew

¹¹⁴¹ Helga KÖPSTEIN: Die sowjetischen Ehrenmale in Berlin. Berlin 2006

¹¹⁴² O. V. KOSTYUNIN: Chelovek iz legendy, in: Sovetskaya Rossiya. 30th April 2005. Nr. 60-61 (12679)

¹¹⁴³ Jiří HLUŠIČKA: Sochař Vincenc Makovský, in: HLUŠIČKA / MALINA / ŠEBEK: Vincenc Makovský. Brno 2002, 65

¹¹⁴⁴ For more on the corresponding period of Makovský's career see: *Official Sculpture 1948/1949 – 1953*

The triumphalism of Makovský's statue was perpetuated as an iconographic motive in a number of high-profile realisations. The soldier, towering to the sky on a tall column would in the Communist ideology take the place of the Plague columns, adorning every major Czech town since the 17th century. The apparatus would reuse the concept of triumph and memory of the deceased. Instead of the figure of the Mother of God, vanquishing the powers of evil, an idealised soldier is introduced, the liberator of the nation and an embodiment of the promise of eternal peace. His raised hands and dominant banner together with a usage of drapery deliver monumental impression. Only with minor changes was this motive employed by Konrad Babraj in Znojmo (1954) and Alexander Trizuljak in his Bratislava monument (1957). (Fig. 87, 67)

Some of the sculptors ventured to provide their soldiers with a sense of heroism, bordering with romanticism. Among consequential realisations belongs Partisan by Josef Malejovsky in Vsetın. The figure of a partisan, obviously inspired by Makovsky adorns also Monument to the Victims of the II. World War in eladna, Mimon, Vnor, Vizovice, and countless other places. The differences in the understanding of the new theme reflected in rather varied approach of the regional sculptors. Antonın Ivansky in Frydlant nad Ostravicı (1949-1950) made *his Monument to the Fallen* with the figure of a partisan in limestone, employing old-fashioned, cascading drapery folds of a heavy coat, making his partisan a romantic hero from a 19th century novel, only with a rifle instead of a sabre. (Fig. 116)

Josef Malejovsky counted among those, who adhered to the conservative line to such a degree, the result is sometimes interchangeable with the monumental production of the late 19th century. This is particularly the case with his Monument to the Liberation (1957) in Pardubice. (Fig. 117) The monument has been since the early phase of preparations in 1949 dedicated to Stalin. The ground stone was placed in Tyršovy sady in December 1952 with the solemn promise to deliver the monument to the greatest of all men. The model elaborated upon a composition consisting of the figures of Stalin and Lenin. Nevertheless, after the revelation of the cult of personality was the prepared monument changed into more neutral *Monument to the Liberation*. The figure of Stalin replaced by a Red Army soldier.

The unique form of the monument, with a figure of a youthful soldier elevated on a column, is surrounded by pioneers standing guard and a woman in a folk costume, presenting the soldier towering above her with a harvest garland. The formal rendition of this stone sculpture, especially due to the folk costumed woman, could be at a cursory glance the soldier mistaken for a hero of the National Revivalism. The hasty changes in the conception of the composition contribute to the impression of inappropriateness - the painfully obvious excessive reverence, paid for the figure of an unassuming, rather humble soldier-boy, betrays the original intention to crown the composition with the godlike figure of Stalin.

A popular motive that would be repeated for its simplicity and visual power time and again, was pioneered by Vincenc Makovský in his *Partisan* (1947). (Fig. 20) The individual bronze figure on a low pedestal set in Zlín, Komenského sad, is facing buildings of the National Baťa factory. The monument was revealed on the occasion of the anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia by the Red Army in 1947. Bronze statue symbolises soldier, bringing flowers to the victims of the war.¹¹⁴⁵ The profoundly civil, humane effect and emotional power of the elaborated episode would be capable of relating to the observer. The rendition of this work brought Makovský eventually the State Prize and served as an inspiration for similar realisations in the following years and is considered by some to be the ground stone of the post-war sculpture, as it pointed towards the trend to relate to the recent historical and societal development.¹¹⁴⁶

A noteworthy example of this peculiar tendency to employ familiar forms stands in Polička, where the partisan is looking so very similar to Jan Nepomucký, with a rifle instead of the crucifix, that with a cursory glance one can very easily mistake one for another. (Fig. 118) Modifications of the individual figure would be conveniently used also for the Red Army soldier monument, wherever the occasion or commissioner would not wish to create a more elaborate concept, as described above. In Tábor, nám T. G. Masaryka, Luděk Varvařovský created life-size figure of a soldier (1949), who rises in his arms in a playful, joyous gesture a child.

¹¹⁴⁵ For more on the corresponding period of Makovský's career see: *Official Sculpture 1948/1949 – 1953*

¹¹⁴⁶ WITTLICH 1978, 233

Heroes of the Resistance Movement

A distinct and consequential place in the pantheon of personalities, supporting the Communist ideological construct, would belong to the pre-war generation of left activists, politicians and journalists. They would be the early members of KSČ and KPD, who either participated in its foundation, actively promoted its goals and fought against the Fascism and who would pay for their political and personal beliefs with their own life. These attributes predestined them to become the martyrs, saintly figures, who would through their powerful example teach values, carefully aligned in their biographies by the Communist party to fulfil premeditated ideological goals. In Czechoslovakia the foremost place among them belonged to journalist Julius Fučík, who to the last point fulfilled the criteria. The female counterparts were writer Jožka Jabůrková and student activist Marie Kudeříková.¹¹⁴⁷ In East Germany was the most celebrated antifascist and hero one of the founders of the KPD, Ernst Thälmann, or left activists of the early 20th century, Rosa Luxemburg or Karl Liebknecht.¹¹⁴⁸

The endeavour of the cultural apparatus to familiarise the public with the legacy of the heroes of the resistance movement would find its expression in all forms of art and culture. Books written by them and on them would be repeatedly published, poems written to celebrate their heroic deeds, youth would be encouraged to emulate them in their saintly traits of valour, compassion, cooperativeness, love for peace and purity of life. The observance of their cult would stretch over decades, as some of their figural monuments would be created even in 1980s in a form largely unchanged from the initial formation of the cult in the early 1950s. Many squares, streets, factories and schools would carry their name and monuments erected, busts installed, countless memorial plaques unveiled, all of that to help instill these values through repeated interaction.

Whereas personalities of the history had often to be converted to the pioneers and

¹¹⁴⁷ *Julius Fučík* (1903-1043), a Czech journalist and theoretician, devout Communist, son of working-class parents, studied at FF UK. In his 18th year entered the Party (1921), worked as an editor at *Tvorba* and *Rudé Právo*. Actively promoted Soviet-style Communism and travelled to Russia. After returning he would convert many to Communism, written his pro-Soviet *Země, kdy zítra již znamená včera* (A country, where tomorrow already means yeasterday). In 1939 imprisoned and 1943 executed.

¹¹⁴⁸ For biographical notes on Ernst Thälmann see note: 1153

predecessors of Communism through complicated argumentation, the pre-war Communists, who in many a case embraced openly Soviet example and fought against Fascism, would seamlessly fit into the narrative, anchoring the legitimacy of the Communist party in the world history. The golden era of the Communist heroes would culminate both in ČSR and DDR, but also the other countries in the realm of Soviet influence, by the 1950s. A construction of monuments, honouring the memory of Fučík and Thälmann, would often would be placed close to schools or factories and become place of various political gatherings.¹¹⁴⁹

J. Fučík, a journalist and avid proponent of the ideas of Communism, would after the war from the initiative of his widow Gusta Fučíková and Ladislav Štoll begin to live his second life as an embodiment of a hero, the ultimate role model for the Communist youth.¹¹⁵⁰ His *Reportáž psaná na oprátce*, an account of his experiences from the Nazi persecution, was smuggled from the prison and after the war became an iconic narrative, adjusted to fit the ideological efforts of the Party.¹¹⁵¹ Fučík's youth and agreeable characteristics, including handsome appearance, would recommend him to become the role model for the emerging generation of young Communists.

In DDR the personality of Ernst Thälmann would in many ways fulfil a similar ideological role as Fučík, albeit he did not have a distinctively pleasing appearance. Thälmann would, became more influential and more widely promoted cult figure, as he was directly relatable to his political successors. He was promoted especially by Walter Ulbricht and Wilhelm Pieck, who would use their professed friendly connections to promote their own authority, legitimising their own role in politics.¹¹⁵² He was the son

¹¹⁴⁹ Leo, ANNETTE: Stimme der Faust und Nation – ThälmannKult kontra Antifaschismus, in: Jürgen DANYEL (Ed.): Die geteilte Vergangenheit. Zum Umgang mit Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand in beiden deutschen Staaten, Berlin 1995 (Zeithistorische Studien, Bd. 4), 205–211

¹¹⁵⁰ With every year from 1945 the number of studies and republics of Fučík's documents would grow Jiří WEIL: Vzpomínky na Julia Fučíka. Praha 1947; Gusta FUČÍKOVÁ: Jak Julius Fučík vydával ilegální tisk. Lískovec u Frýdku 1949; Julius FUČÍK: Revoluční novinář : výbor z článků 1931-1943. Praha 1949;

¹¹⁵¹ Issued immediately after the war, in a version already modified to emphasize Fučík's heroism. Julius FUČÍK: Reportáž psaná na oprátce : [ve vězení Gestapa na Pankráci v r. 1943]. Praha 1945; In the following few years the ideological perception would be further elaborated and expanded, as seen in: Gustav BAREŠ / Josef RYBÁK: Julius Fučík. Brno 1950; Jan MUKAŘOVSKÝ / Ladislav ŠTOLL: Kultura v boji za mír: o významu světových cen míru a o příkladu Julia Fučíka. Praha 1951

¹¹⁵² René BÖRRNERT: Ernst Thälmann als Leitfigur der kommunistischen Erziehung in der DDR. (Dissertation at

of working class parents, arrived soon in life to the Communist worldview and had the highest opinion of the Soviet Union. Also very much like Fučík was Thälmann held in a Nazi camp, where he would allegedly prove himself unwaveringly resilient and died as a martyr, never relinquishing his Communist beliefs.¹¹⁵³

A project, called Fučík's badge,¹¹⁵⁴ launched already in 1949 by the Central Committee of the Czechoslovakian Youth Union and approved by the Central Committee of the KSČ, would endeavour to draw young people to the reading of ideologically approved literature and watching of ideological films. The pupils and students would be encouraged to join local readers' clubs and subsequently participate in quarterly held exams. Those, who would accurately answer questions, related to the understanding of the texts and films, would acquire a Fučík's badge.¹¹⁵⁵ Jiří Wolker was one of those authors, whose works would make the indispensable contribution to the Communist curriculums.¹¹⁵⁶

Also Thälmann would become the ultimate youth inspiration. After the example of V. I. Lenin, he becomes the namesake of a “Pionierorganisation”, founded in 1948. He was constantly promoted through compulsory codes of behaviour, organised events and social gatherings.¹¹⁵⁷ From the 1960's Thälmann pioneers would recite “*Ernst Thälmann ist unser Vorbild. Als Thälmann-Pionier gelobe ich, so zu leben, zu lernen und zu kämpfen, wie es Ernst Thälmann lehrt, getreu unserem Gruß bin ich: Für Frieden und Sozialismus*

Technischen Universität Braunschweig). 2002, 81-84

¹¹⁵³ *Ernst Thälmann* (1886-1944), a Communist politician of the Weimar Era, who was at the foundation of the KPD in 1920, as a member of Central Committee visited 3rd Congress of the Comintern in Moscow and got acquainted with Lenin. He became the Party chairman in 1925 and had pro-stalinist stances, causing quarrel with SPD. After the seizure of power by Adolph Hitler, KPD was declared illegal and Thälmann was imprisoned, held in a separate cell for 11 years, before being shot on the direct order of A. Hitler.

¹¹⁵⁴ *Jak získám Fučíkův odznak*. Praha: Sekr. ústř. výb. ČSM. 1950; Ladislav NEJEDLÝ: *Julius Fučík, bojovník za vlast a socialismus : pásmo pro besedy závodních klubů a knihoven*. Praha: Ústřední kulturně-propagační oddělení URO, 1950

¹¹⁵⁵ Jiří KNAPÍK / Martin FRANC: *Průvodce kulturním děním a životním stylem v českých zemích 1948-1967*. Praha 2011, 56

For more see: <https://www.ustrcr.cz/uvod/antologie-ideologicky-textu/fucikuv-odznak/> (retrieved 7.3. 2017)

¹¹⁵⁶ *Jiří Wolker* (1920-1924), was a Czech Poet, representative of the working-class poetry, who was after his early death used for the purposes of the Communist propaganda. Jiří WOLKER: *Dnešek je jistě nesmírný zázrak*. Praha 2006; F.X. ŠALDA: *Básnický typ Jiřího Wolkra*, in: *Šaldův Zápisník 1, 1928–1929*, č. 5/6, 174–187

¹¹⁵⁷ BÖRRNERT 2002, 103-108

*immer bereit!*¹¹⁵⁸

The cult of Fučík needed an easily relatable, substantially agreeable visual component, an image, to adorn schools, books, meeting venues, libraries and reading clubs. The iconic profile depiction by Max Švabinský (1950), originally produced for a personal use of Fučík's widow Gusta Fučíková, would find its way to the issue of the *Reportáž psaná na oprátce*.¹¹⁵⁹ (Fig. 119) The most powerful and flattering depiction of the handsome hero, whose pleasing appearance would belong to the foremost reasons, why the Communist ideologues would decide to utilize him above other victims of the Nazi persecution, would gradually spread to become notorious and universally known.¹¹⁶⁰ The East German ideologues had no other choice than to accept Thälmann's sturdy stature and bald head, as there was no other martyr, whose legacy would be so conveniently transformed to the ideological purposes.¹¹⁶¹ Unlike Fučík, whose profile likeness by Švabinský would elevate him to the idealised modern Apollo, in case of Thälmann no such modification was attempted, as all his depictions and portraits would adhere to his true appearance.¹¹⁶²

Fučík's cults would, as it was with the tributes to all emerging national personalities, find its manifestation in the placement of memorial plaques. Prague, Fučík's native city, had ample places, connected to his life, where a plaque could be installed. Among others also Plzeň or Domažlice would not miss their chance to honour the hero. Fučík's native home in Prague, Smíchov, would acquire its *memorial marble plaque*, adorned with a bronze head (1948).¹¹⁶³ (Fig. 120) *A plaque in Havlíčkova street*,¹¹⁶⁴ in Plzeň by J. Dittrich

¹¹⁵⁸ Gelöbnis der Thälmannpioniere, in: documentArchiv.de [Ed.], <http://www.documentArchiv.de/ddr/tp-eid.html>. (retrieved 7.3. 2017)

¹¹⁵⁹ Zuzana ŠVABINSKÁ: Světla paměti. Praha 2002, 189

¹¹⁶⁰ J. BURSÍK: Švabinského portrét Julia Fučíka, in: Výtvarné umění roč. 1, č. 6, 252-253

An essay on Švabinský's portrait of Fučík, dealing with widespread myths, surrounding the creation of this portrait see: Zdeněk HRABICA: Švabinského Fučík, in: Literatura – Umění – kultura, roč. 2015, 40/2015 - 7. října 2015

¹¹⁶¹ For more on Thälmann in arts see: Martin SCHÖNFELD: Die Konstruktion eines Idols - Darstellungen Ernst Thälmanns in der Kunst der SBZ/DDR, in: Ernst Thälmann : Mensch und Mythos. Amsterdam / Atlanta 2000

¹¹⁶² Annette LEO: Deutschlands unsterblicher Sohn... Der Held des Widerstands Ernst Thälmann, in: Rainer GRIES / Silke SATJUKOW (Ed.), Sozialistische Helden. Eine Kulturgeschichte von Propagandafiguren in Osteuropa und der DDR. Berlin 2002, 101-114

¹¹⁶³ See also: <http://www.pametni-desky-v-praze.cz/products/fucik-julius/> (retrieved 7.3. 2017)

¹¹⁶⁴ See also: <http://www.pametni-desky-v-praze.cz/products/fucik-julius-1/> (retrieved 7.3. 2017)

(1953),¹¹⁶⁵ in *Praha 10* by J. Smetana (1961) and *Domažlice* by B. Holakovský (1957-1958).¹¹⁶⁶ (Fig. 121) Most of the memorial plaques would be adorned with more or less precise imitation of Švabinský's drawing without any innovation and therefore would, as the vast majority of memorial plaques at the time, witness most of all the birth of the cult, rather than being an intriguing artistic object.

The same applies for Thälmann's memorial plaques, often adorned with a relief, depicting him either with or without the cap – an often present attribute, captured also on some of his photographs. The number of memorial plaques and small-scale reliefs would count in thousands and could be found all over the East Germany, majority in cities, such as Berlin, but also in towns and villages, including Schlettau (1953), Wismar (1954), Löbau, Ernst-Thälmann-Ring (1959), often without any visible attribution to an author. The greatest surge of these commemorations would East Germany experience on the 100th Anniversary of his birth in 1986.¹¹⁶⁷

J. The Fučík's full-size statues would appear in numerous embodiments all across the country, a vast majority following the officially established features of Fučík's appearance. One of the cities, acknowledging ties to the Fučík's life, was Plzeň. Here Fučík had spent his youth and early adolescence. Plzeň's representation would decide to express gratitude to the martyred fighter for freedom and Communism by *a full-sized monument*.¹¹⁶⁸ (Fig. 122) The task to produce the model for a bronze statue was bestowed upon Irena Sedlecká,¹¹⁶⁹ whose model in the size of the final statue (1963) was exhibited in Západočeské muzeum.¹¹⁷⁰ The foundation stone was set on 8th September 1958, the unveiling took place no sooner than seven years later on 5th September 1965.¹¹⁷¹ The unveiling would be accompanied by compulsory speech by

¹¹⁶⁵ Josef GRUBER / Zdeněk KNOFLÍČEK / Marie MADEROVÁ. Pomníky a pamětní desky v Plzni. Plzeň 1997, 24-25

¹¹⁶⁶ Marcel FIŠER: Břetislav Holakovský, Pamětní deska Juliu Fučíkovi v Domažlicích, in: www.socharstvi.info (retrieved 7.3. 2017)

¹¹⁶⁷ Stefanie ENDLICH / Nora GOLDENBOGEN/ Beatrix HERLEMANN / Monika KAHL / Regina SCHEER: Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus. Band II: Bundesländer Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen-Anhalt, Sachsen, Thüringen. Bonn 2000, 16

¹¹⁶⁸ Hold Plzně Juliu Fučíkovi, in: Pravda, 6. září 1958, roč. 39, č. 106, 1; Only year later would a local school be renamed to bear Fučík's name.

¹¹⁶⁹ For more on Sedlecká see: 868

¹¹⁷⁰ Socha Julia Fučíka, in: Pravda, 19. září 1963, roč. 44, č. 224, 1

¹¹⁷¹ Václav JÍLEK: Vděk i závazek, in: Pravda, 5. září 1965, roč. 46, č. 213, 1

Gusta Fučíková, who emphasized Fučík's warm regard for Plzeň, the city of his youth.¹¹⁷²

Albeit the statue was removed after 1989 and its fate is unknown, the scarce photographs allow to draw conclusions from the visual characteristics of the work. I. Sedlecká would employ the canonised type, as derived from Max Švabinský. Fučík is presented as an attractive youth in a casual everyday wear with his jacket on one shoulder, with a determined look fixed upon the horizon. Regular, de-individualised facial features, are achieving typification, rather than individualism of the person, thus transforming Fučík into the idealized Communist hero. The form is strongly influenced by the Soviet style and conforming to the Socialist Realism demands.

What would be the impression, an observer should according to the Communist leadership acquire, facing the monument of Julius Fučík, is fittingly summarised in a propagandist article, written by a pupil of elementary school in Pravda magazine. Young Communist regards with emotional sentiment the monument, taking in Fučík's face, untouched by aging, friendly smile and broad eyes, "thinking of Fučík's reportages, his human valour and his legacy", while timidly laying the gillyflowers on the granite pedestal.¹¹⁷³ Agile boy would not forget to mention, many people of various professions are coming to lay the flowers to the memory of the brave man.

The intention to modify minds of children and youth by Fučík's example, was employed also in the *monument in Pelhřimov* (1960), placed in the vicinity of the local school building.¹¹⁷⁴ (Fig. 123) Josef Kříž, who modelled the figure, diverted from the most often utilized form to present otherwise robust Fučík as a slender, almost languid figure with elongated neck, most certainly one of the most individualist of all Fučík's monuments.¹¹⁷⁵ On the contrary, monuments by Miloš Axman *in Brno* (1965) and *Prague* (1976), or even later, Karel Kuneš *in Karlovy Vary* (1982) are just uninventive repetitions of the same subject, only Axman employs entirely an obsolete and

¹¹⁷² Odhalení pomníku Julia Fučíka v Plzni: Oslavy dne tisku. Pravda, 7. září 1965, roč. 46, č., 214, 1

¹¹⁷³ Jaroslav KLEMENT: U pomníku Julia Fučíka, in: Pravda, 23. února 1978, roč. 59, č. 46, 3

¹¹⁷⁴ Josef BÍLEK: Druhý život reportáže, in: Kurýr, Občasník společnosti Julia Fučíka, č. 32, 1. 11. 2009

¹¹⁷⁵ Josef Kříž (*1932), a Czech sculptor, firstly schooled as a wood craver. In 1950 accepted to AVU as a pupil of J. Lauda. Participated in collective exhibitions and authored number of small-scale and large-scale statues and sculptures. Active in Pelhřimov, recently lives and works near České Budějovice.

inappropriate form of drapery.¹¹⁷⁶ (Fig. 124, fig. 125)

Beside the few named monuments would emerge countless other artistically more or less inferior regional varieties of the same subject. Albeit the authentic personality of J. Fučík would possess undeniable charisma and pleasing appearance, the facial features of the statues would without any exception follow the line set by M. Švabinský, more or less prominently rendered, and mostly idealized to the point of the obliteration of his Fučík's individual human characteristics. The individual monuments would therefore differ in the mastery of basic sculptural capacities – monumentality, volume, level of realism and overall skill. The effect on the observer is often difficult to establish, as many of these statues were after 1989 destroyed or removed.

Already in 1949 a commission was formed to promote a building of *the Thälmanns monument on the Thälmann Platz* in Berlin. The *II. Deutsche Kunstausstellung* at the same year would introduce entirely propagandist and ideological perspective. The importance, ascribed to the task was clear – President Otto Grotewohl and general secretary of the SED Walter Ulbricht were actively engaged in the process. The statue ought to embody all the celebrated characteristics related to the figure and also the universal values of the newly established state: his Antifascism, Working-class promotion and fight for world peace and independence.¹¹⁷⁷

The task was in 1950 given to the group of sculptors, who most successfully expressed in their models the required characteristics – Ruthild Hahne, high profile sculptress, assisted by René Graetz.¹¹⁷⁸ Albeit Hahne would work on the commission until 1965, the project was never realised, yet its early models present one of the first opportunities to appreciate the scope and generosity of the project, as well as the fact, the political profile of a sculptor was in this case more relevant than the professional abilities of the author.

¹¹⁷⁶ *Karel Kuneš* (1920-1997), a Czech sculptor. 1949 concluded his studies at AVU, a pupil of K. Pokorný. His field of occupation was especially monumental, decorative and lyrical sculpture. 1979 the title Meritorious Artist. For more see: Václav FORMÁNEK: *Karel Kuneš*. Plzeň 1979

¹¹⁷⁷ Peter MONTEATH: *Ernst Thälmann : Mensch und Mythos*. Amsterdam / Atlanta 2000, 185

¹¹⁷⁸ For more Ruthild Hahne see note 476

¹¹⁷⁹ (Fig. 53)

The larger than life statue would employ what would become the most prevalent gesture associated with Thälmann's statues, the gesture of a raised clenched fist. The gesture would imply Thälmann's assertivity in speech, his readiness to step forward with his persuasive arguments. This gesture would be with slight modifications repeated in numerous statues in the coming decades, often determining the impression of the statue. Hahne's Thälmann holds his fist above his head, transforming originally argumentative gesture into a gesture of menace. The evolution of the gesture would result within decades in some greatly exaggerated, rather symbolic portraits of Thälmann with enormously large fist, such as in the monument placed in front of Schwermaschinenbau-Kombinat Ernst Thälmann in Magdeburg by Gerhard Rommel (1986).¹¹⁸⁰ (Fig. 126)

The first full-size *monument to E. Thälmann* (1958) was erected on the occasion of the anniversary of his death in Weimar at today's Buchenwaldplatz and was authored by Walter Arnold. The same sculptor created very similar *Thälmann's statue*, unveiled in Stralsund (1962).¹¹⁸¹ (Fig. 127) The visual characteristics of the figure of the Communist leader would be with the first statues of Thälmann canonised and typified. Thälmann is most often presented with his distinctive physical traits, bald head and corpulent body with slightly protruding waist, clothed in a simple jacket of conservative cut. The characteristic tendency of large, smooth surfaces, observable in the East German sculpture, does contribute to monumentalisation and obliteration of superfluous detail at the same time. Occasionally he would be depicted in a Communist uniform with a cap.

The best known *monument to Thälmann* was installed in *the Prenzlauer Berg* district in 1986 and was created by a Soviet sculptor Lew Kerbel on the occasion of his 100th anniversary of birth, the year of the greatest surge of Thälmann's cult. (Fig. 128) The

¹¹⁷⁹ MONTEATH 2000, 185

¹¹⁸⁰ Gerhard Rommel (1934-2014), a German sculptor, medal maker and painter. 1948 - 1951 visited Fachschule für angewandte Kunst in Sonneberg and 1951-1958 at Hochschule für bildende und angewandte Kunst in Berlin-Weißensee, pupil of Theo Balden and Heinrich Drake. In 1967 received Will-Lammert-Preis der Akademie der Künste der DDR and in 1969 Kunstpreis der DDR.

¹¹⁸¹ For more on Walter Arnold see note: 619

portrait bust with the indispensable clenched fist, effectively supplemented with a decoratively dominant flowing flag is made of bronze and set on a granite pedestal.¹¹⁸² It is clearly the most inventive and imposing of all Thälmann monuments and rightfully also attracted the most attention of the public and scholars.¹¹⁸³ Thälmann is presented as an eternal revolutionary, follower of the great Lenin, whom he even resembles in his expression of focused determination and will.

Marie Kudeříková, young victim of Nazi persecution, was seen as a female parallel to J. Fučík and as such was promoted as a role-model for young girls of school age by the republishing of her letters, organizing writing contests.¹¹⁸⁴ Her memory would be honoured by renaming of streets, a school was dedicated to her in Strážnice and a film inspired by her life was screened in 1972. M. Kudeříková was immortalized in several busts, plaques and statues, such as a *memorial plaque in Brno* (1956) and a *bust in Olomouc* by Vojtěch Hořínek (1966), a *life-sized bronze*, a diploma work at the AVU by Zdeněk J. Preclík, placed *in Brno* (1977).¹¹⁸⁵ (Fig. 129) Preclík in his biography noted, he was subjected to pressure to choose for his diploma work Kudeříková over another personally preferred subject.¹¹⁸⁶ Generally are these works of rather inferior artistic quality.

Also Jožka Jabůrková, a Communist writer and journalist, would fulfil the necessary requirements for a heroin of the Communist era.¹¹⁸⁷ She was an avid admirer of the Soviet Union, her books witnessed her unshaken trust in the path of Communism and

¹¹⁸² Thomas FLIERL: Thälmann und Thälmann vor allen – Ein Nationaldenkmal für die Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin, in: Günter FEIST/Eckhart GILLEN/Beatrice VIERNEISEL: Kunstdokumentation SBZ/DDR 1945–1990: Aufsätze, Berichte, Materialien. Köln 1996. 358–385

¹¹⁸³ Peter MONTEATH: Ein Denkmal für Thälmann, in: Peter MONTEATH: Ernst Thälmann : Mensch und Mythos. Amsterdam / Atlanta 2000, 171

¹¹⁸⁴ Marie Kudeříková (1921-1943) was a young student, active in the communist resistance movement, captured and executed by the Gestapo in her 22nd year.

¹¹⁸⁵ Vojtěch Hořínek (1906-1998), a sculptor from the family of stonemasons, medal maker and restorer. Studied at AVU under B. Kafka, at Staatschulen für freie und angewandte Kunst in Berlin under Gerstl and Klimsch. Mostly active in Olomouc, where he took part in restoration works and created a number of individual stone sculptures, often of pro-regime orientation.

¹¹⁸⁶ Zdeněk J. Preclík (*1949) studied at UMPRUM, at AVU under K. Lidický and later M. Axman. Cooperated with J. Hána. Mainly active in Olomouc. For more see: Zdeněk PRECLÍK / Adam HNOJIL: Útržky života. Praha 2012, 8-9; Marcel FIŠER / Zdeněk PRECLÍK: Pomník Marie Kudeříkové v Brně, in: www.socharstvi.info (retrieved 7.3. 2017)

¹¹⁸⁷ Jožka Jabůrková (1896-1942), a Czechoslovakian communist writer and journalist, active in the promotion of physical education, in 1931 a representative of KSČ in Prague. Imprisoned and executed in Ravensbrück.

was executed in Ravensbrück. She would have streets named after her in eight cities, a memorial plaque in Ostrava, a bust by Dobroslav Kotek (1975) and *two bronze statues* by Věra Merhautová (1965) and Ladislav Kovařík (1970s).¹¹⁸⁸ (Fig. 68) Very much like Fučík, Jabůrková's likeness was devised on the base of a photograph, showing her profile. Her round cheeks would become a prominent feature of her portraits, yet the artists would not have the likeness of Jabůrková canonised in a way Fučík's was. Whereas Merhautová endeavoured to depict a resolute, determined woman of sturdy physique, with rather sombre expression and lips pursed in an obstinate way, Kovařík would drop the monumentalism in favour of a romantical vision of Jabůrková.

The most prominent Communist heroes would be, within the sphere of Soviet influence, exchanged via brotherly cooperation between the states and nations. The export and import of powerful stories and related personalities, planted securely in officially sanctified ideological construct of their country of origin, would contribute to the sense of the universal validity of the presented values and principles in every state of Eastern sphere. With the awareness of the mutual benefit were exchanged also the figures of presented personalities of J. Fučík and E. Thälmann. J. Fučík was exported to the other countries of the Eastern Bloc, streets and places would be named after him, particularly in the area of former East Germany. Even Eastern sculptors, such as Aram Airiyev would create his portraits. E. Thälmann would find its way to Czechoslovaks through translations of the books, written on the grounds of his legacy.

As a part of the brotherly relations with DDR was J. Fučík acknowledged by the DDR representatives in 1973 on the occasion of the X. World Festival of Youth and Students.¹¹⁸⁹ A *monument* by Zdeněk Němeček was given to the East Germans and placed in *Bürgerpark Pankow*.¹¹⁹⁰ (Fig. 130) The monument consists of five vertical

¹¹⁸⁸ Věra Merhautová (1921-1996), a Czech sculptor, at AVU pupil of J. Lauda and K. Pokorný. She authored number of statues, participated regularly at the member exhibitions of SČSVU and won several contests and action tasks. Active mainly in 1950s and 1960s. Her only monumental work is monument to Jožka Jabůrková.

Ladislav Kovařík (*1932), a Czech sculptor, studied at UMPRUM under J. Wagner, member of ČFVU. Exhibited his works at collective exhibitions in the period 1964-1988.

¹¹⁸⁹ Andreas RUHL: Stalin-Kult und Rotes Woodstock. Die Weltjugendfestspiele 1951 und 1973 in Ostberlin. Marburg 2009

¹¹⁹⁰ Zdeněk Němeček (1931-1989), a sculptor, studied at Applied Arts school in Zlín, later at AVU as a pupil of V. Makovský and J. Lauda. He dedicated majority of his career to the sports thematics, most of them created in

stelae, three of which are adorned with abstract motives and the remaining two bearing Fučík's bust and inscription with Fučík's quote.¹¹⁹¹ In Dresden, today's Straßburger Platz, would be on the 20th anniversary of Fučík's death 8th September 1963 unveiled Fučík's monument with a bronze plaque bearing his likeness. Already in 1951 would be the square named Fučíkplatz. Albeit after 1990 was the name changed, the monument, however is still there.¹¹⁹²

Jiří Wolker and Petr Bezruč

A distinctive category of monuments and statues is to be dedicated to the group of the writers and poets, whose works mirrored emerging interest in the working class welfare and corresponding cultural manifestations in the 1920s. They were predecessors or generational peers of the representatives of the antifascist resistance movement who would not, however, perish in the concentration camps. The Communist doctrine would elevate writers and writers such as Josef Hora, Jaroslav Seifert and poets Jiří Wolker or Petr Bezruč to the evangelists of the Communism.¹¹⁹³ Their novels, short stories, poems and manifestos would become indispensable part of school curriculum and would become part of universally shared knowledge among the general population. Albeit not nearly as frequently as in case of J. Fučík, a number of monuments were built to honour the memory of these personalities and therefore a short notice is to be made on the production related to their memory.

1970s and 1980s with occasional works for the KSČ.

¹¹⁹¹ For a German account of Julius Fučík and other Fascism fighters see: Stefan ZWICKER: Der antifaschistische Märtyrer der Tschechoslowakei, in: Silke SATJUKOW / Rainer GRIES (Ed.): Sozialistische Helden. Eine Kulturgeschichte von Propagandafiguren in Osteuropa und der DDR. Berlin 2002

¹¹⁹² For more see: Kunst im öffentlichen Raum, in: Informationsbroschüre der Landeshauptstadt Dresden, Dezember 1996; Walter MAY/Werner PAMPEL/ Hans KONRAD: Architekturführer DDR, Bezirk Dresden. Berlin 1979

¹¹⁹³ *Jiří Wolker* (1920-1924) was a Czech Poet, representative of the working-class poetry, who was after his early death used for the purposes of the Communist propaganda. Jiří WOLKER: Dnešek je jistě nesmírný zázrak. Praha 2006; F.X. ŠALDA: Básnický typ Jiřího Wolkra. Šaldův Zápiskník 1, 1928–1929, č. 5/6, 174–187.

Petr Bezruč (1867-1958) was a Silesian Poet, representative of the working-class poetry, author of single collection of poems Slezské písně. Bezruč is often counted among Czech writers called "Anarchist rebels," who would create influenced by the modernism, decadence of the verge of the century.

Jiří Wolker's monuments and busts would employ, very much like Fučík's monuments, his young age as a major characteristic. The first apt occasion was related to the fiftieth anniversary of his birth in 1950, when two contests were announced for his monument. The tall, emaciated figure and sharp facial features would distinguish Wolker's statue at first sight from Fučík's. All of the sculptors would endeavour to merge his idealised characteristics of a revolutionary – a social justice promoter and the melancholic prospect of his approaching decease. *Monument to Jiří Wolker* in his native town Prostějov by Antonín Kalvoda (1951), made of travertine is a good example.¹¹⁹⁴ (Fig. 154) A bust by V. Navrátil would be placed on the house, where was Wolker born, other busts would be placed in Holešov, Olomouc or Tatranská Polianka. (Fig. 155) Slightly more inventive in the formal approach would be a collection of Wolker's portraits, created as models for the contest for the bust in Tatranská Polianka by Oldřich Peč.¹¹⁹⁵ Three decades later also Prague would acquire monument to Wolker (1975), cast in bronze according to a model by Miloslav Šonka.¹¹⁹⁶ (Fig. 156)

Petr Bezruč, whose combative and often disturbing poems, concerned with the problems of his native land of Silesia, entered the universal heritage of Czech literature under the title *Slezské písně*. Beside memorial plaques in the Silesian Háj, Frýdek-Místek, Bohumín or Kravaře, he was honoured by busts in Karlova Studánka and Opava. Two life-size bronze monuments were unveiled in 1967 on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Bezruč's birth in Kostelec na Hané by Karel Otáhal and in Opava by Vladimír Kýn and Jaroslava Lukešová.¹¹⁹⁷ (Fig. 157)

¹¹⁹⁴ Pomník Jiřího Wolkera, in: in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 1, 1950, 189-190

¹¹⁹⁵ *Oldřich Peč* (1922-1965), a Czech sculptor. 1949 concluded his studies at AVU, as a pupil of O. Španiel. His field of occupation was especially portraiture and figural sculpture, but also the applied arts. For more see: *Slovník českých a slovenských umělců*, sv. 11, 1950-2003. Ostrava 2003

¹¹⁹⁶ *Miloslav Šonka* (1923), a Czech sculptor a restaurátor. 1950-1951 concluded his studies at AVU, as a pupil of J. Lauda and K. Pokorný, B. Stefan. Member of the Group 66. His field of occupation was especially portraiture and figural sculpture. 1984 the title Meritorious Artist. For more see: Jiří KARBAŠ: *Sochař Miloslav Šonka*. In: *Výtvarná kultura* 1988. č. 6.

¹¹⁹⁷ Vladimír Kýn (1923-2004), was a Czech sculptor. In 1950 he concluded his studies at AVU as a pupil of K. Pokorný and V. Makovský. He mostly created portrait and decorative sculpture. For more see: *Slovník českých a slovenských výtvarných umělců*, sv. 6, 1950-2001. Ostrava 2001

National and Working Class History Monuments

As to the effect on the masses, all the features of the 1950's cultural politics were intertwined in a single mechanism of attempted modification of the mass psyche towards the common cause. The complex endeavour to promote the values of Marxism-Leninism, applied to the perception and understanding of history, would find its popular form in historical films, mass distribution of historical novels, museum expositions and monuments to the giants of Czech culture. The regime did not endeavour to overthrow the tradition of national personalities, rather to modify its understanding and effect. The building of the monuments, dedicated to the historical personalities of the Czech lands, was interconnected with the general line of cultural politics, defined in 1949. Many large-scale commissions would be re-launched shortly after the war, such as Makovský's J. A. Komenský and A. Jirásek, Pokorný's A. Jirásek and B. Němcová, J. Wagner's J. Vrchlický. Some would be launched newly, such as the contest for the decoration of the Karolinum.

As a rule, the portraiture of a recent historical personality (1890+) would provide relatively secure sphere for a sculptor who wished to avoid any dissonance with the regime. Unlike some other commissions of Socrealist style would depend heavily on the second category – the realism. Portrait of a personality, whose appearances were known, would allow the artist to find safe refuge in the excellent rendition of the head, posture and drapery, as without the employment of allegory or symbolism, abolished decades ago in favour of the more civil individual figure, would be challenging, if not impossible to deliver the Socialist aspect. Therefore the favored works of historical sculptural portraiture would be those, succeeding to deliver an immaculate portrait of conservative and dignified myslbekian form. In exceptional cases would the artist succeed to deliver pathos and heroism, highly valued categories of art, conforming to the requirements of the regime.

A different problem emerged before the sculptor with the commission for a depiction of historical figures of the history more distant. In that situation the author could not depend on mere technical skill to deliver good likeness, handsome posture and drapery

as the means to accomplish the task satisfactorily. He would need to enter the realm of Communist ideals, to search for a generalization, a category, higher meaning and purpose of the depiction. A study of biographies, consulting the Communist directives had surely been of great help to grasp the required meaning. The historical personality, distant and mythical, would become more of a representative of a principle, through typological parallelism alluding to the current situations, rather than an individual personality. In this sense the task would remind more of another widely employed sculptural category - statues of the representatives of the working class and agriculture professions. All successful sculptors would necessarily need to succeed in this capacity to generalize and grasp the true core of the underlying principles.

A substantial role in the ideological revision of the history sprang up from the initiative of the Minister of Education, Zdeněk Nejedlý, who, ever since 1920s developed his understanding of history as a single phenomenon, which, albeit consisting of sub-categories such as philosophy, politics or art, is still “one culture”. Nejedlý's conception of national history was devised in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist perspective of the class-struggle and merged with purposeful distortion and selective understanding of past events.¹¹⁹⁸ He would accentuate the values of national culture, stemming from the lower classes. In a lecture, held in Slovanský dům, on 18th February 1946, he marked the subjects as the decisive force of the society development, instead of the gentry.¹¹⁹⁹ Nejedlý's perception of national history lead to the accentuation of the personalities and events, that would seamlessly fit into the narrative of Czech history from the Communist perspective. Nejedlý's systemic undertaking to subject the history of Marxist-Leninist perspective and educate the people as to the famous episodes of the class-struggle, influenced Czech culture for decades to come.¹²⁰⁰

The acknowledgement of A. Jirásek as the ultimate authority of the Czech history

¹¹⁹⁸ Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878-1962), was a historian, literary critic, musicologist and Communist politician, a Minister of Education (1945-1946, 1948-1953). Author of numerous historical works, most notably cultural history of Hussite Era, biographical works on T. G. Masaryk, B. Smetana, B. Němcová, V.I. Lenin. Significantly influenced modification of the understanding of Czech history.

¹¹⁹⁹ Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: *Komunisté, dědici velikých tradic českého národa*, Praha 1953, 10

¹²⁰⁰ This chapter is dedicated to the historical personalities, who would be subjected to mass promotion among the wide masses through the systematic political endeavor.

interpretation would lead to resurfacing of certain historical subjects and themes he accentuated, especially those, that would create an analogical point to the present situation.¹²⁰¹ The typological parallelism, demonstrated on particular examples from the past, would bring justification to the Communist doctrine and help people to find common cause in the heroic moments of their shared history. From this perspective the most suitable were episodes of the Hussite Movement in the 15th Century, including the personality of Jan Hus, the peasant revolts and National Revival Movement of the 19th Century.

The Exhibition of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts (PČSVU) would also contain the most numerous category of portraits is dedicated to the most distinguished personalities of cultural life. This rather wide group is further distinguishable to a) National personalities of more or less distant past, such as J. Hus, J. Želivský, A. Jirásek, B. Smetana b) Heroes of the Resistance Movement, to whom belong J. Fučík or M. Kudeříková, b) Living or deceased personalities of public life: Artists, such as Jan Slavíček, Karel Holan, Sculptors L. Varvažovský, K. Pokorný. Bedřich Smetana (Josef Wagner) or Alois Jirásek (J. L. Kofránek or J. Malejovský), L. Varvažovský (Václav Bejček) etc. There is a remarkable upsurge of the subject of celebrated national characters, especially when comparing number of these portraits in 1950-1951 with their presence at an exhibition in 1955.

It is to be assumed that depiction of an outstanding personality was regarded as a safe path to satisfy the Party without the necessity to decipher indistinct directives of the ideological guidance published by the organs of the Party in the art-related magazines on the subject of “engaged art”. Another decisive factor was the influence of Z. Nejedlý, who relentlessly promoted his interpretation of history through his office as a Minister of Education and who clung to the cult of A. Jirásek and Hussite Revolution, that he saw it as his mission to promote it through the state structures of the Party. This mania of portraiture is proved by an interesting increase of 18% in the prevalence of the “National Portrait”, when PČSVU I. and III. are compared.

¹²⁰¹ For an account of Nejedlý's works on Jirásek see chapter: *National and Working Class History Monuments*

All kinds of portraits Percentage of all exhibited works	
1950 I. PČSVU (76 Exhibits)	1955 III. PČSVU (157 Exhibits)
21 of 76	76 of 157
27%	48%

Historical Subject Percentage of all exhibited works	
1950 I. PČSVU	1955 III. PČSVU
1 of 76	16 of 157
0,01%	0,1%
"National" Portraits Percentage of the Overall number of portraits	
1950 I. PČSVU	1955 III. PČSVU
7 of 21	39 of 76
33%	51%

The last category comprises of all other portraits that does not fit into the previous categories. Often they belong to the portraiture of artists, acquaintances or relatives, parents of the artist, alternatively named or anonymous models.

When considering roots and outcomes of the increase of the number of historical subjects in the official sculpture, one of the factors was already mentioned the influence of Z. Nejedlý, the Minister of Education, who was extraordinarily fond of A. Jirásek and his understanding of Hussite Revolution. It is undoubtedly and deservedly Nejedlý's merit that some themes of national history were abused to construct the class-oriented interpretation of history, where the Hussites and their "social revolt" were installed in

the core of the pseudo-egalitarian perception of the past and personalities of Jan Hus or Jan Želivský promoted to the martyrs of the new cult. Aside from this theme emerged the celebration of Peasant revolts. Last but not least did the KSČ made use of their own history and promoted all noteworthy historical milestones of the Party, such as the “Victorious February”.

15th – 17th Century “Pioneers of the Class Conscience”

Jan Hus

The Jan Hus' life and subsequent Hussite Era would belong to Nejedlý's preferred periods of Czech history. Nejedlý's perceived Jan Hus, the pioneer of the reformation, as an announcer of the new social order, who was a revolutionary and not a mere religious preacher or a moralist. Hus' bold determination and perseverance, teamed with his active resistance against the oppressors in the Church, was to Nejedlý a distinct parallel to the more recent struggle of the working class with the bourgeois evil. Jan Hus' life and death are to Nejedlý a quintessential watershed moment of Czech history, the moment when the subjugated people would find their courage to fight the class injustice.¹²⁰²

Jan Hus belonged to the most cherished figures of the Bohemian national history for centuries and more than a cursory glance over the last decades of Hus' related art, preceding the timeframe of this work, would greatly exceed the scope of this work. It is to be mentioned, however, that on the verge of the 20th century, mostly from 1890s would figure of the priest and reformist find its way to the focus of many artists, who recognised both the societal significance and extraordinary potential of the subject for artistic elaboration.¹²⁰³ The greatest surge of Hus' monument building as a sign of

¹²⁰² For Nejedlý's works on Jan Hus see especially: Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Mistr Jan Hus a jeho význam sociální. Praha 1925; Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Jan Hus. 1952; Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Jan Hus a naše doba. 1952

¹²⁰³ See: V.V. ŠTECH: Mistr Jan Hus ve výtvarném umění. Praha 1924; Kamil KROFTA (ed.): Mistr Jan Hus v životě a památkách českého lidu. Praha 1915

Many other Hus' monuments would emerge all across the country, such as Jindřich Říha's in Lomnice nad Popelkou (1900), František Velík's in Beroun (1908), Jan Mařatka's for Chrudim (1914), Vojtěch Šíp's in Plzeň

evolving national conscience, was seen around 1915 amid the First World War. The most high-profile commissions would be named Ladislav Šaloun Monument to Jan Hus in Prague (1915), the most notoriously known Hus' dedicated work, influenced by Art Nouveau.¹²⁰⁴ (Fig. 131) The Symbolist current would mirror in the Hus' *Monument for Kolín* (1914) and for *Tábor* (1928) by František Bílek.¹²⁰⁵ (Fig. 132)

The reinterpretation of Hus' life as one of a revolutionary and a fighter, paired with intentional ommittance of his profoundly religious nature would decidedly influence the understanding of Hus for the generations to come. Hus was, however, also a Master and briefly also a rector at Charles University in Prague. He belonged therefore together with Charles IV to the personalities, to whom a statue for the Karolinum buildings ought to be dedicated. A contest for a creation of Jan Hus and Charles IV statues was related to the celebrations of 600th anniversary of the foundation of Charles University and a limited number of sculptors were summoned to participate in the contest. For the Hus statue were aside from Lidický selected Karel Dvořák and Vincenc Makovský.¹²⁰⁶ (Fig. 29, 30)

The winner of the contest was Karel Lidický. Right in 1947, the year when he began to focus more closely on monumental commissions, he won the contest for a commission of high relevance. The approval, formulated in the expert appraisal by professors Josef Cibulka and Jan Květ, value the Lidický's sketch, because *it contains both sides of Hus' personality as a professor of the Charles University and reformer.*¹²⁰⁷ (Fig. 28)

In his model Karel Lidický achieved great monumentality and cleverly referred to the

(1915), Emanuel Kodet's in Sušice (1923), Rudolf Březa's in Roudnice nad Labem (1928), Miloš Suchánek's in Benešov (1933), František J. Žák's Monument in Praha – Zbraslav (1935).

¹²⁰⁴ For more on the Monument to Jan Hus see: Jan GELANDAUER: Pomník Mistra Jana Husa. Český symbol ze žuly a bronzu, Praha 2008

¹²⁰⁵ *Ladislav Šaloun* (1870-1946), was a distinctive Czech sculptor of the Art Nouveau era. Studied at AVU under B. Schnirch. Member of the SVU Mánes and Unity of Fine Artists. 1906-1914 was teaching at UMPRUM, at 1912 member of the Czech academy of Arts. The foremost representative of the Symbolism in sculpture, author of the Jan Hus Monument in Prague. In 1946 acquired the title of National Artist.

František Bílek (1872-1941), was a Czech sculptor, wood carver, writer, architect. A distinguished representative of the Symbolism of the Art Nouveau era. 1887 – 1890 studied painting at AVU under M. Pirner, later transferred to the sculpture department to J. Mauder. Had spent one year in Paris on a scholarship. 1898-1912 member of the SVU Mánes. Lived predominantly in Chýnov and Prague.

¹²⁰⁶ Jaroslav RATAJ: Karel Lidický. Praha 1977

¹²⁰⁷ Quoted in: KUNŠTÁT 1998, 345

myslbekian monumental sculpture, making use of its most valued features of gravity, measured proportions and realism of surface rendition, together with the idealisation of face. Lidický's approach to the appearance of the figure is entirely different to the conventional understanding of Hus as a seasoned preacher with a goatee, as was often depicted in painting and sculpture in the established tradition of Czech revivalist movement. As such, it contributed to the ideological transformation of Jan Hus and his legacy. This was noted by Diviš in 1954, who wrote in a magazine *Výtvarné umění*:

These works are an attempt, very serious one, for the creation of a new iconographic type, which is, however, not the most important point. More important is that it introduces a new ideal conception, where is Hus perceived as a revolutionary thinker, not as a religious mystic, exaltedly floating above people.¹²⁰⁸

Lidický's innovative concept of Hus introduces him as a young, yet austere and a resolute university master, a rebellious fighter for the abolishment of the class stratification and social justice promotion. The sketches of head and figure would be employed in the bronze cast in 1955. Karel Lidický succeeded in the strive for an important official commission and conveyed the result satisfactory as to secure himself a place among the privileged.

The Hussites

The Hussites, more specifically the Taborites, would in Nejedlý's perspective represent the first historical example of practically realised Communism and relevant example of the attempt to impose a classless society.¹²⁰⁹ This notion was elaborated further by historians in the 1950s. The charismatic leaders of the Hussite Movement such as Jan Želivský or Jan Žižka, Jan Roháč z Dubé but also Jan Milíč z Kroměříže, were endowed with heroic attributes and used as symbols, embodied in monuments, celebrated in novels, films and stage plays.¹²¹⁰

¹²⁰⁸ Vladimír DIVIŠ: Karel Lidický, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč. 4 č.1-10, 1954, 359

¹²⁰⁹ Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: Úvod, in: Kamil KROFTA: *Duchovní odkaz husitství*. Praha 1946; In the 1950s was praised Nejedlý's six volume publication on the history of Hussite singing. Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: *Dějiny husitského zpěvu*, vol. 1-6. Praha 1954-1955

¹²¹⁰ Josef MACEK: *Husitské revoluční hnutí*. Praha 1953; Jan FAJKUS: *Husitské revoluční hnutí*. Praha 1956

A monument to Jan Želivský was placed next to the New Town Hall in 1960, a simple bronze statue, created in 1952 by a young sculptor Jaroslava Lukešová, for whom it was one of the first representative commission.¹²¹¹ (Fig. 133) Her Jan Želivský belongs to the good examples of Socrealistic sculpture, as it comprises several aspects – monumental heroism in a dynamically stanced, manly figure of an audacious revolutionary and folkish impression, stemming from unpretentious clothing, reminding of the famous epoque in the history of the nation.¹²¹²

The greatest figure of the Hussite Movement was Jan Žižka z Trocnova, the follower of Jan Hus and successful military leader of the Movement, whose valour and determination became legendary.¹²¹³ He was repeatedly ideologically modified to incite fighting spirit, bravery and sense of a common cause. This was the case with the Czechoslovakian legionnaires, soldiers, who belonged to the so-called First Resistance Movement and made use of the Hussite traditions to build loyalty, nationalism and patriotism.¹²¹⁴ His appearance in the popular culture was standardised by Mikoláš Aleš, whose *romantic portrait of Žižka* (1908) became the universally accepted image of the person, replicated in arts, including sculpture and film, throughout the 20th century. (Fig. 134)

The upsurge of the patriotic feelings among the Czech population, who ever since the National Revival Movement took greater interest in national history and personalities,

Jan Želivský (1380-1422), a radical Hussite priest and preacher, favourite with the lower Prague classes, related to the events of the First Prague Defenestration (1419), in a command of military operation, lost the battle of Brůx (1421). He was arrested during the Hussite civil wars by the Prague Council and executed.

¹²¹¹ *Jaroslava Lukešová* (1920-2007), Academical sculptress, a pupil of K. Pokorný, O. Španiel and J. Lauda. She is best known for her portraiture skills and throughout her life created 50 busts. Some of her works, such as a bust to general Heliodor Píka or monument to Petr Bezruč were placed in her nativ city, Opava. Most of her works were realized in Prague (most notably bust to Milada Horáková, or plaques for National Museum), where she lived and also died.

¹²¹² The statue was removed from its original place and translated to Želiv, where was Jan Želivský born.

¹²¹³ *Jan Žižka* (1360-1424), a Hussite military commander, follower of Jan Hus. Born of a yeoman family in Trocnov, spent his youth at the court, later on leader of Hus' followers. An inventor of innovative military tactics. Commanded Hussite army in the Hussite Wars (1419 – 1434) against the Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg. Faced four crusades, summoned to vanquish what the Church and allies considered dangerous movement, promoting heretical apostasy.

¹²¹⁴ Jan GALANDAUER: *Chrám bez boha nad Prahou: Památník na Vítkově*. Praha 2014

resulted in several Jan Žižka's monuments and memorials.¹²¹⁵ A large, sixteen meters tall *sculpture of Jan Žižka* was built in remembrance of five hundred year anniversary of the battle of at Sudoměř of stone blocks and finished five years later (1925). (Fig. 135) A crude collos, of intentionally unrealistic modelation reminds of a primitive cult sculpture, yet the proportions are awe-inspiring. More conservative in modelation is larger than life *statue of Žižka in Hradec Králové* by Jiří Dušek (1971), set in an orchard dedicated to Žižka. This figure belongs entirely to the realm of inspiration by Mikoláš Aleš. (Fig. 136) The modelation of the head, endowed with charismatic features is prominent in otherwise mediocre sculpture. The attributes of a Hussite military leader, a heavy sword and mace, provide further identification. A similar likeness with employment of all above stated attributes was endeavoured also years later, in a limestone *sculpture of Jan Roháč z Dubé* by Alois Sopr (1957-1960), again witnessing remarkable time-freezing capacity of Socrealism.¹²¹⁶ (Fig. 137) The most consequential sculpture is an *equestrian portrait of Jan Žižka* created by Bohumil Kafka, as his masterpiece.¹²¹⁷ (Fig. 15) The large project that would take many years, would be cast in bronze only after Kafka's death.¹²¹⁸

The cult of Jan Žižka, as a representative of the desired values of Communism, would acquire another representation in the portrait for the *Memorial to Jan Žižka in Trocnov*. The memorial would stretch over large site and comprise the places, thought to be connected to the origin of the Hussite leader. With the agile help of the Communist leadership would the area become the pilgrimage location, providing instruction and ideological “support“ to school trips, delegations, supplying the setting for celebrations of anniversaries etc. An enormous stone sculpture by Josef Malejovský (1960) would provide an attractive, monumental impression, with the figure itself being five meters tall. (Fig. 138)

The typus does not deviate from the Aleš's *image of Žižka* (1908). The attributes remain unchanged, as the military leader is clenching mace in his fleshy hand. With regards to

¹²¹⁵ <http://www.horicko.cz/img/sady/husite.html> (retrieved 3. 6. 2017)

¹²¹⁶ *Jan Roháč z Dubé* (1374-1473), was a Hussite leader, closely related to Jan Žižka. After the battle of Lipany he became the frontman of the Tábor. He was hanged for the constant efforts against Emperor Sigismund. The sculpture was originally placed next to the Old Town Hall in Prague, after 1966 moved to the game park Hvězda in Liboc, close to the attendant's house Hvězda Summer House.

¹²¹⁷ Petr WITTLICH: Bohumil Kafka. Praha 2014, 195

¹²¹⁸ For more on Kafka's equestrian portrait of Jan Žižka see chapter *National Monument at Prague Vítkov Hill*

the form, compared to the previously presented examples, Malejovský's sculpture is endowed with greater volume and breadth. The Žižka's body is truly massive with protruding trunk, achieving yet larger proportions through broadly set cloak. Already in his model from 1957 Malejovský's endeavour to find the most voluminous and monumental form is clearly visible.¹²¹⁹

Jan Amos Komenský

Nejedlý, as a Minister of Education, was also determined to promote historical significance and legacy Jan Amos Komenský.¹²²⁰ The great personality of the so-called Teacher of the Nations, "*whose love for the Freedom stemmed from the same root as the national Hussite revolution,*" would be appointed to represent the values of socialist education.¹²²¹ "*Komenský speaks to our Socialist presence with a clear voice, comprehensible and close to our hearts. He speaks as a Teacher of the nations, a social reformer and fighter for the world peace. He fights for understanding among nations, science and education that would serve the good of all*" stated Karel Galla.¹²²²

Komenský's, reformist thoughts, humanism and ideas on the participation of all people in the quest for universal good, was seen in the mirror of Marxist dialectics as the archetype of Communist dogmas of internationalism, classlessness and strive for the creation of the New man.¹²²³ In 1956 was Komenský's biography, accompanied with excerpts from Komenský's works, translated into several languages and his methods

¹²¹⁹ See: Jiří KOTALÍK: K výstavě Josefa Malejovského, in: Josef Malejovský: katalog výstavy, Národní galerie břez-en-květen 1986. Praha 1986, 11

¹²²⁰ Jan Amos Komenský (1592-1670) was a Czech pedagogue, theologian and philosopher, born in the Margraviate of Moravia. He was the last bishop of Unity of the Brethren and due to the danger of persecution fled from the country. He pioneered concepts of modern education and championed universal education, summarised in his Didactica Magna. Komenský died in exile, in Naarden (The Netherlands).

¹²²¹ Zdeněk Nejedlý, Tvorba 1947, č. 14

Josef NOVOTNÝ: Zdeněk Nejedlý našemu učitelstvu, in: Pedagogika 1958, roč. 3., č. 2, 273-278; A.A. Krasnovskij: Ján Amos Komenský. Bratislava 1955

¹²²² Karel GALLA: Jan Amos Komenský a dnešek, in: Pedagogika roč. 5, č.1, 639-655

¹²²³ Numerous efforts to apply Komenský's thought on the Socialist education, resulting in the establishment of Comeniology, was endeavoured: Československá socialistická pedagogika, in: Opera Universitatis Brunensis, Facultas philosophica, 1987, 1_12, 142

implemented into curriculums.¹²²⁴

J. A. Komenský was highly regarded and his legacy treasured by the intelligentsia from the 19th Century, long before the appropriation of the tradition by the Communists. The necessity to commemorate the personality of Komenský would lead to the production of his first statue-adorned monument, unveiled in Přerov in 1874, authored by Tomáš Seidan.¹²²⁵ The international renown of Komenský, paired with the tireless effort of Komenský's admirers both in his motherland and abroad, would result in 1919 in the idea to build him a monument in Amsterdam, where he spent last fourteen years of his life.¹²²⁶ The next year a *bust of Komenský* (1920) by Ladislav Šaloun would be placed in Naarden next to the church, where was Komenský buried. (Fig. 139)

The connections to the compatriots in the Netherlands, related to the burial site of Komenský in Naarden, were in the coming decade cultivated and resulted in the reconstruction of the church, previously in a deteriorating state, unfit for the last resting place of the renowned scholar. The commission contributed also to international engagement of Czech artists, who welcomed the opportunity to participate in this prestigious commission. The contest for the monument would attract many important names. Jan Štursa would win the commission and endeavoured to construct the monument as an ambitious composition, employing, as witnessed by number of sketches, complex geometrical composition, setting the figure of Komenský on top of either a sphere or two embedded triangles. Many circumstances, including Štursa's own dissatisfaction with his work, lead to his failing to deliver the final monument to be cast in bronze.¹²²⁷ The decoration of the church, however, was accomplished and employed foremost Czech artists. The sculptor Jaroslav Horejc created *eight reliefs from the life of*

¹²²⁴ Jiřina POPELOVÁ: Jan Amos Komenský. Praha 1956

¹²²⁵ František HÝBL / Marcela KLECKEROVÁ: Seidanův pomník Jana Amose Komenského v Přerově: 1874-1974. Přerov 1974

Among others monuments would spring up, in Kunvald (1910) by O. Fiedler, in Nové Město na Moravě (1920) and Náměšť nad Oslavou by Julius Pelikán. Reliefs and busts would increasingly adorn school buildings. Number of fine artists dealt with the intriguing subject of Komenský, in order to deliver the most convincing expression of the profound and charismatic personality. See: Statues hither and thither, <http://www.vanderkrogt.net/statues/subject> (retrieved 28. 2. 2017)

¹²²⁶ Jiří V. KLÍMA: Dobudujme pomník J. A. Komenskému v Amsterdamě! Praha 1922

¹²²⁷ Petr WITTLICH: Jan Štursa. Praha 2008, 176-179

*Komenský. (1937)*¹²²⁸ (fig. 140)

Štursa's pupil Jan Lauda would rise again the effort to finish the monument and would dedicate to the challenging task twenty years, interrupted only by the occupation. Honouring his teacher, he would endeavour to overtake his composition, adhering to the ambitious and difficult concept. In his sketches is Komenský's figure, seen as a pilgrim, arriving in Amsterdam. The figure is situated on a high pedestal, flanked by allegorical figures, of tormented motherland, rebellious priest, homesick expat and allegory of the listening nation, are gathered around the base of the pedestal. Lauda's work would go through stages, documented in a number of sketches and models witnessing Lauda's determination to meet the high expectations and live up to the full potential of the remarkable monument.¹²²⁹ (Fig. 141) The task remained yet again unfinished.

J. A Komenský as a humanist and visionary, man grounded in his unique vision of peace, and unrelenting believer in the capacity of humanity to live to its best abilities without war, quarrels and dissonance, would become Vincenc Makovský's contribution to the theme of *Komenský's monument*. (Fig. 21) It would be him, who would finally succeed in delivering the monument for the Netherlands, albeit it would eventually be placed in Naarden, instead of Amsterdam. It is reasonable to assume, that his eagerness and dedication to the task, resulting in a convincing work, was influenced by his being raised in an evangelic family in reverence to Komenský's personality.¹²³⁰

The models for Komenský's monument, especially the *bust of Komenský (1943)*, would be copied in plaster, spread and according to Šindelář "*became the symbol of Czechness and moral fortitude of Our people.*"¹²³¹ The same statue, that adorns both Uherský Brod and Naarden in the Netherlands, would be in 1960 also set in the area of Moravian College in Pennsylvania (USA), thus distinguishing as to the international significance any of his pro-regime peers.¹²³² Makovský received thanks to the monument to J. A.

¹²²⁸ Památník a Muzeum J. A. Komenského v Naardenu, in: Muzeum Jana Amose Komenského v Uherském Brodě, <http://www.mjakub.cz/pamatnik-a-muzeum-j.-a.-komenskeho-v-naardenu?idm=42> (retrieved 28. 2. 2017)

¹²²⁹ For more see: Petr WITTLICH: Životní dílo Jana Laudy, in: Umění roč. 10, 1962, 294-298; Jan TOMEŠ: Jan Lauda. Praha 1952, 30

¹²³⁰ HLUŠIČKA 2002, 83, pozn. 112

¹²³¹ ŠINDELÁŘ 1963, 36

¹²³² For more see: HLUŠIČKA 1979, 46

Komenský his already third Klement Gottwald's State Prize.

Unlike his predecessors J. Štursa and J. Lauda, Makovský decided to abandon the multi-figural composition in favour of a single, stately figure. His decision was a lucky one, as his employment of heavy, hyperbolised broad coat, together with the gesture of gathered hands, delivers an impression of great mental power and vision, even heroism, albeit at the same time succeeding in reminding of the mournful fate of the Bohemian nation he contemplates. The unity and closed form would bring a monumentality and happen to also express integrity and cohesiveness of Komenský's inner world of ideals.¹²³³

The 19th Century “National Revivalists“

Beside the Hussite Movement was Nejedlý's scholarly interest and subsequently also his cultural politics dedicated to the legacy and tradition of the National Revival. Carefully chosen figures, that would in the retrospective exhibit desirable features of popular spirit, class conscience, would become part of the pantheon. Mandatory reverence towards their works, spread among the general population, would find its way into the school curriculums. Nejedlý would on the grounds of his understanding of history determine the most suitable adepts for the inclusion into the pantheon of national artists. In that respect were beside Alois Jirásek idolised especially Božena Němcová and Bedřich Smetana.

¹²³³ A continuation of the tradition of Komenský's figural monuments was secured in 1984 by academical sculptor Miroslav Hudeček, who was entrusted with the task to create a bronze statue of Komenský for Strážnice. Unlike Makovský he decided to depict the figure as sitting in a renaissance chair. The monument was unveiled in March 1984 on the occasion of the 392th anniversary of the birth of Komenský. For more see. Jiří KOTALÍK: Jan Amos Komenský v pojetí sochaře Miroslava Hudečka. Praha 1992; Odhalení pomníku J. A. Komenského, in: Slovácko, 4.4.1984; Pajer J.: J. A. Komenský a Strážnice. Strážničan 1993, č. 3

Božena Němcová

A romantic novelist, considered the first great female writer, was to become one of the celebrated figures of national pantheon. To Nejedlý's idolizing eye, she was "*an independent Czech woman, who in the middle of false bourgeois society, full of hypocritical morals, could live for the short duration of her life truly majestically and purely.*"¹²³⁴ Nejedlý understanding of Němcová was in the officially authorised version of her life merged with the interpretation of Julius Fučík, published in 1940 under the title *Božena Němcová fighting* (Božena Němcová bojující). The title itself is a testimony to Fučík's effort to illustrate Němcová's life and work in the perspective of her fight against the injustice and insincerity of the bourgeois society. Through his lens Němcová acquires more heroism and drama.¹²³⁵ This perspective introduces Němcová as an early apostle of the class struggle, who defended women's rights, was interested in the abstract idea of utopic socialism while bringing to her readers optimism and folk-spirit.¹²³⁶

B. Němcová would become popular among the patriotically oriented man and women already during her life. When she died in 1862, an intention was formed among them to provide her with *a limestone bust over her grave at Vyšehrad* (1869). The first sculptural bust was later joined by a bust on a pillar, with *two life-sized allegorical figures at Česká Skalice* (1888) by Mořic Černil.¹²³⁷ The full-sized monuments would appear after 1900. In Zlích by Česká Skalice would be erected a *monument by František Vejs*, (1913), showing B. Němcová in her 30s sitting dressed in a 1850 gown with a book on her lap, gazing beyond the horizon as if in a melancholic contemplation.¹²³⁸ (Fig. 142)

¹²³⁴ *Božena Němcová* (1820-1862), was a Czech writer, novelist and poet of Czech-Austrian origin, born in Vienna. She was active in the final phase of the National Revival Movement. After 1842 influenced by her acquaintance with Revivalists. She had written an iconic novel *Babička* (1855), presenting picturesque life in the Czech countryside and authored number of short stories.

¹²³⁵ MUKAŘOVSKÝ 1950, 10

¹²³⁶ For a highly relevant study on the ideological deformity of the Němcová perception in 1950's see: Joanna KRÓLAK: Aktualizace díla Boženy Němcové v padesátých letech 20. století, in: *Božena Němcová a její Babička*, in: *Sborník příspěvků z III. kongresu světové literárněvědné bohemistiky*. Sv. 3 . Praha 28. 6. – 3. 7. 2005, 225-234

¹²³⁷ *Mořic Černil* (1859-1933), was a Czech sculptor and teacher of arts. Studied at Academy of Arts in Vienna under Edmund Hellmer and Karl Kundmann. After concluding his studies he would become teacher at the Hořice school of stonemasonry.

¹²³⁸ *František Vejs* (1871-1951), a Czech sculptor and stone mason, studied at the Hořice school of stonemasonry, Hořice were also his native town.

On the occasion of the 120th anniversary of the birth of B. Němcová in July 1940 a contest for a monument was announced. A year later the commission would count unusually high number of 77 participants. The selection of the preliminary models and sketches was exhibited in the UMPRUM halls, yet the jury did not award the first prize. A number of successful artists of Socrealist artists such as Karel Lidický, Josef Malejovský or Alois Sopr also participated.¹²³⁹ The commission was eventually assigned to Karel Pokorný, who would work on the model for many years. Some of the authors, such as Josef Václav Škoda or František Navrátil would use their models decade later for regional monuments of Němcová. The last pre-February sculptural work is an unpretentious limestone bust of Němcová (1947), situated in Jaroměř and created by Václav Wagner.¹²⁴⁰

The war would suspend many projects of monumental sculpture construction. Karel Pokorný, the artist selected for the elaboration of the monument of Božena Němcová, moved it after the war to the forefront of his efforts. Countless preparatory sketches and models were used to seek the best possible form, consonant with the importance, the current society ascribed to national writers. (Fig. 47) The understanding of the development of Pokorný's sketches sheds light on the premeditation, that would allow Pokorný to arrive in the most suitable form, satisfying both the need for a formally perfect sculpture and fulfilment of every requirement, set by the officials. Beside Pokorný's own account, published in *Lidová demokracie* in 1953, serves the purpose of deeper analysis, providing unique probe into the soul of regime obliging artist.¹²⁴¹ Dušan Šindelář's article in *Výtvarné umění*, "Karla Pokorného Božena Němcová bojující" is another of resources, where accentuation of the ideological perspective comes handy to the comprehension of the official sculpture.¹²⁴²

¹²³⁹ Milena NOVÁKOVÁ: Úvodní stať, in: Společnost Boženy Němcové v Praze: k její pětadvacetileté činnosti: 1933-1958. Praha 1958, 4-12

¹²⁴⁰ Ludvík MÜHLSTEIN: Božena Němcová v plastice. Česká Skalice 1970, 3-9

Václav Wagner (1897-1944), a Czech sculptor and restorer, brother to Josef Wagner, studied at the Hořice school of stonemasonry, 1916-1923 studied at AVU under O. Španiel and J. V. Myslbek. Prevalently lived and created in Dvůr Králové, mostly creating small-scale sculptures.

¹²⁴¹ Karel POKORNÝ: Pomník Boženy Němcové, in: *Lidová demokracie*, roč. 9, 9. května 1953, 54

¹²⁴² Dušan ŠINDELÁŘ: Karla Pokorného Božena Němcová bojující, in: *Výtvarné umění*, roč.4 č.1-10, 1954, 113-117

Pokorný's superior characteristic, laying according to Šindelář in his ability to achieve harmony of form and content, happened to be very convenient in the long-term search for optimal expression of the Socialist Realism and reflected also in the design for Němcová's monument.¹²⁴³ The case of Němcová, whose Pokorný's sketches for Němcová's oscillated around the conservative form, modified in the level of romanticism, drapery and posture only, not in the scope of the formal traditionalism. The first design from 1940, was according to Pokorný inspired by Šalda's description of Němcová as an inwardly destitute and tormented person, who at the same time defies narrow-mindedness, selfishness and false morals.¹²⁴⁴ The figure, halted in a walk, is captured in silent musing with a book clutched in a defensive gesture to her bosom. Her modest attire, posture, emanates timidity and unpretentiousness.

The Šalda's perception was replaced in Pokorný's designs by the interpretation of authors, way more suitable to the post-1948 art theory, Julius Fučík and Zdeněk Nejedlý. In 1942 Pokorný began another of his models, entirely different in the rendition of the posture, attire and attitude. Němcová is transformed into the heroic national writer, whose unsettled character is interpreted as romantic, rebellious, dignified and intrepid.¹²⁴⁵ The sculptor decided to capture more of unrestrained passion, willingness to face the trials of life with unwavering determination, very much in accordance with the image of heroine of the calibre of Jane Eyre. (Fig. 143)

In the final monument, that would find its place at Slovanský ostrov, unveiled no sooner than 1955, Němcová's figure is captured walking, her hands bent in front of her body, clutching a book and fresh-cut flowers. (Fig. 144) Varied drapery rendition, witnessed in the sketch series, made way to moderately wind-swept skirts, with a silhouette enhancing broad shawl. The genesis towards idealised, romantic and rebellious figure of the national heroine, delivering both pathos and heroism in a beautifully realistic form, would win Pokorný praise of the pro-regime theoreticians. The sculpture would be often presented as a desirable model for all artists, who strived to achieve Socialist Realism, as

¹²⁴³ For the detailed analysis of the features of Socialist Realism refer to chapter: *Paradigm Shift of the Art Theory*

¹²⁴⁴ POKORNÝ 1953, 12

¹²⁴⁵ ŠINDELÁŘ 1954, 113-117

the ideal harmony of content and form, as a proof of viability of the realist, myslbekian tradition.

The comprehension of the difference, seen between the Pokorný's monument, acclaimed for the successful depiction of the unity of Němcová personality and her historical role and the mass of other, less striking examples of the Němcová's statues in following years, is possible only in the understanding of the vital difference in the interpretation of Němcová. Pokorný, leveraging eventually the interpretation of Fučík, by focusing more on the final impression of revolutionarism and heroism, rather than historical accurateness, would create a prototype of a Socrealist portrait. By freeing Němcová's hair from the constraints of the conservative, flat Biedermeier styling in favour of streaming strands, loosened somewhat from stiff bun, as well as in the lively drapery, he achieved vibrant eager and thrilled expression. Pokorný's understanding of Němcová was replicated in a limestone monument in Červený Kostelec by Ladislav Faltejsek (1962), who also attempted to wave the skirt in dramatic folds and dynamise the figure.¹²⁴⁶ (Fig. 145)

What would Pokorný wish to avoid – the outward attributes of a Biedermeier constraint, manifested in dress, hair and manner – would be widely employed by his contemporaries.¹²⁴⁷ In case of regional realisations the pressure on the observance of the Socrealist characteristics in the monuments was not so strong and the final rendition would often result in a work less ideological. It is difficult to determine, whether it was caused by the negligence, ignorance or intention of the responsible decision makers, conscious decision of the author, or his failing to comply with the Socrealist doctrine.

The interpretation of Němcová's as a lonely woman, gazing in melancholy contemplation and musing in silent solitude would become prevalent. Needless to say,

¹²⁴⁶ *Ladislav Faltejsek* (1912-1989), a Czech sculptor and wood carver. 1929-1937 studied at UMRUM under J. Mařatka. Together with J. Lauda worked on the Monument to J. A. Komenský in Naarden. One of the founding members of SČSVU. Lived predominantly in Kostelec nad Orlicí.

¹²⁴⁷ A number of busts of various quality, generally observing the most traditional and conservative strands to be found in Jaroměř II, náměstí B. Němcové, Josef Kalfus (1955), in Blansko by Vincenc Makovský (1960), in Žeravice, district Přerov, (1961) in Chvalkovice by Františka Stupecká (1962), Tuhaň, village Červená Píška in the district Mělník by B. Neužil (1962).

that none of the monuments, failing to present Němcová as a revolutionary and determined fighter for social justice could receive distinctions of the decision makers such as Pokorný's work. This applies to monument for Hradec Králové, Slezské předměstí, in front of the Gymnasium bearing writer's name, by Josef Václav Škoda (1950).¹²⁴⁸ (Fig. 146) The model was created for and presented at the Prague contest on the occasion of the 120th anniversary of the birth of B. Němcová in July 1940. The stone statue depicts sitting figure, in many respects resembling František Vejs' in Zlích by Česká Skalice. It is also showing B. Němcová sitting dressed in a 1850s gown, gazing beyond the horizon in silent musing, only her trunk is bent forward. In the realist rendition the statue does provide a dignified, conservative homage to the writer, yet it fails to deliver aspects of Socrealist style.

A different conception, closer to Šalda's interpretation was chosen by Vladimír Navrátil for Olomouc, Čechovy sady (1965).¹²⁴⁹ (Fig. 147) Němcová's figure is standing proud and erect, with prolonged limbs in gothic proportions, Renaissance-shaped neck, slender and fragile, yet imposing. Her right hand, wrapped around her body is clenching her shawl, as if protecting her slight frame against cold. This work with sketchy, intentionally unfinished touch of the skirts' elaboration does depart from the myslbekian perception in favour of modern form. Navrátil intended to diversify the psychologism of the statue by the combination of the Nejedlý's perspective of Němcová with eternal qualities of beauty embodied in proud, unbroken, yet inwardly fragile form.¹²⁵⁰

¹²⁴⁸ *Josef Václav Škoda* (1901-1949), was a Czech sculptor. Coming from a stonemason family, studied at the Hořice school of stonemasonry, 1921-1925 at AVU as a pupil of J. Štursa, 1926-1927 at UMPRUM under O. Gutfreund. Worked mainly in the Hradec Králové region.

¹²⁴⁹ *Vladimír Navrátil* (1907-1975), was a Czech sculptor. 1925-1929 studied at the Hořice school of stonemasonry, 1929-1934 at AVU as a pupil of pupil of B. Kafka. 1934-1936 teacher at AVU. 1948-1974 teacher at the Institute for art education of the Univerzita Palackého, 1956 acquired professorship.

¹²⁵⁰ NAVRÁTIL, Vladimír: Olomoucký pomník Boženy Němcové, in: *Lidová demokracie*, roč. 26, 1970, č. 204, 29.8., 5

Bedřich Smetana

Zdeněk Nejedlý, most profoundly connected to the discipline of musicology, was also an ardent admirer of the Bedřich Smetana.¹²⁵¹ His extensive, seven volume biographical opus would take him almost ten years to accomplish.¹²⁵² Nejedlý considered Smetana as the most inherently national of all composers, whose genius would not bear any comparison. To promote the giant of Czech music, he made use of the 125th jubilee of Smetana's birth in 1949 to initiate a five year plan, a comprehensive public awareness project, that would be implemented into the general line of cultural politics.¹²⁵³ The aims were to familiarize the public with the person and legacy of Smetana, contribute to the broadening of the education in music, publishing of his works, production of films, and also the building of a dignified monument.¹²⁵⁴ Josef Wagner (1950) would create a monument for Karlovy Vary, other sculptors, Karel Lidický or Vladimír Navrátil would in 1950s contribute to the conservative current of Smetana's portraiture, none of them would divert from it.¹²⁵⁵ (Fig. 148)

Alois Jirásek

Zdeněk Nejedlý esteemed above all other writers Alois Jirásek.¹²⁵⁶ Albeit the greatest expansion of Jirásek's cult was achieved through the systematic support by the Communist apparatus, the recognition of Jirásek's importance dated back several decades. In the 1920s, when the writer was still alive, two busts were created to adorn

¹²⁵¹ *Bedřich Smetana* (1824-1884), a renowned Czech music composer of the Romanticism era. Best known for his opera *The Bartered Bride* (*Prodaná nevěsta*) and for the symphonic cycle *My Homeland* (*Má vlast*), inspired by the history, legends and natural beauty of the Czech lands. Considered the founding father of Czech classical music.

¹²⁵² Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: *Bedřich Smetana I. – VII.* Praha (1924-1933); Zdeněk NEJEDLÝ: *Historie mého smetanovství.* Praha 1962

¹²⁵³ For more details on the five years plan see: *Smetanova pětiletka 1949-1953. Program a pokyny.* Praha 1949

¹²⁵⁴ KNAPÍK / FRANC: 2011, 836

¹²⁵⁵ *Veřejná soutěž na pomník Bedřichu Smetanovi v Praze 1926: Sbor pro postavení pomníku Bedřichu Smetanovi.* Praha 1926

Jaroslav FIALA: *Smetanova hudba a jeho pomník v Karlových Varech, XV. Historický seminář Karla Nejdla, Karlovy Vary 2006.* 41 - 46

¹²⁵⁶ For more on A. Jirásek see note: 1018

National theatre and National Museum. The first was executed by Jan Štursa (1921) and the other by Bohumil Kafka (1926).¹²⁵⁷ The conservative tradition of bust portraiture would provide only limited space for inventive solutions, yet both portraits are honouring the realistic true form while achieving the soulful appearance of the depicted, emphasizing typical features of the personality, typical with an elderly bearded face, prominent bald head and slightly protruding ears. Another step to the recognition of Jirásek was made in 1930, when a society for Alois Jirásek's legacy was established. The society would achieve school, bridge and square renaming in Prague in favour of Jirásek.¹²⁵⁸

On the occasion of the ten year anniversary of Jirásek's death (1940), a contest for a monument in Litomyšl was launched and won by Vincenc Makovský, who not only created a model, but also a definitive form. The progression was halted by the war and re-launched only in 1950s well into Makovský's sixties, cast in bronze for the festivities of the 700th anniversary of the founding of the Litomyšl city in 1959. (Fig. 149) The sculpture by Karel Pokorný in Prague, situated at Jiráskovo náměstí, bears very similar characteristics and was unveiled only one year later (1960), albeit created already in 1954.¹²⁵⁹ (Fig. 41) It was, together with Josef Malejovský's sculpture in Hronov intended for the 30 year anniversary of Jirásek's death.

The similarities and differences between Makovský's and Pokorný's statues are allowing a comparative analysis of the visual traits and what could be their reasons. Makovský's statue of Jirásek, pre-dating Pokorný's, shows Jirásek sitting, leaning forward in a civil posture in a massive, stylised chair with reliefs on the sides. He is sitting in an active posture, not reclining in the chair, just as if he would be engaged in a contemplative thought. He is captured with his right hand lay on his knee, whereas his left hand in elevated to the chest. The drapery is very natural, yet effective, just as the convincing

¹²⁵⁷ Petr WITTLICH: Jan Štursa. Praha 2008, 186 See also for further information on Štursa's busts for the National Theatre.

Another monument to Jirásek was erected in Libín (1921), in 1930 a bronze statue of a woman by Jaroslav Horejc was placed above the grave of Jirásek.

¹²⁵⁸ See: Deset let od smrti Aloise Jiráska: projev Františka Sekaniny při slavnostní valné schůzi Společnosti Aloise Jiráska v sále městské pražské ústřední knihovny v neděli 10. března 1940. Společnost Aloise Jiráska. Praha 1941

¹²⁵⁹ The monument was set close to the place, where Alois Jirásek lived. See: Nové pražské pomníky, in: Výtvarná práce 1951, 12, 1st April 1953

modelation of the features, showing the same true realism as Štursa's bust, yet perhaps with greater emphasis on particular defining details of Jirásek's physique. The same can be said of Pokorný's work, as it shows Jirásek sitting on a low chair, writing in a notebook, just as if he would suddenly come to an idea to sit to take a note on an interesting idea. His coat, set negligently on his shoulders, is contributing to the elegance and compactness of the form. Also the physique and facial features are true to the likeness of the depicted, the skill of both authors to create a convincing portrait of the head in a realistic manner proves their conservative instruction and the two heads are almost interchangeable in their masterful realism – Pokorný's is perhaps slightly more smooth and handsome.

The difference and subsequent question lie in the year of the production. Whereas Vincenc Makovský created his Alois Jirásek already during the war 1940, it was cast in bronze no sooner than 1958. Pokorný started working on his statue in 1954, in the full flourishing of Socrealism, making the difference of fourteen years between these two realisations. Yet, the both sculptures are, as to the figure of Jirásek, differing in marginal questions, such as the folds of drapery being either less of more natural or idealised. Pokorný's Jirásek arguably presents the writer more as an ideal of a category of national writer. What this remarkable freezing of development proves, is that the Socrealism served throughout is most potent years as an artificial impediment, counter-progressive power, preventing any development. The progressiveness would remain in the sphere of proclamations and it would not reflect in the official commissions.¹²⁶⁰

The remembrance of writers, poets and novelists would require constructions of statues throughout the followed period, albeit they would no other literary active personality would achieve the same level of adoration as A. Jirásek. An interesting example of an outdated form, employing yet again allegory, was seen in the monument to Jaroslav Vrchlický (1956).¹²⁶¹ A monument to Jakub Arbes (1962) by Jan Černý is another in the

¹²⁶⁰ A different formal concept was chosen by Josef Malejovský for his monument, unveiled in the year of 1960 in Jirásek's Hronov. Malejovský premeditated the monument ever since 1949, only to realize in 1959-1961.¹²⁶⁰ He would depict Jirásek in a full attire of hat and cloak, with a walking stick, with a book in his hand.

¹²⁶¹ For more see: *Nové pražské pomníky*, in: *Výtvarná práce 1951*, 12, 1st April 1953

In 1939 was the commission for Vrchlický's monument granted to Josef Wagner, who was to deliver the

row of conservative works, as it depicts the writer in a civil posture of mild contraposto with a book in one hand and a cloak bent over the forearm of his right hand. The bronze figure rests upon a granite base. It belongs to the numerous statues of decent artistic quality, but no outstanding features from the perspective of Socrealism.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

The couple of philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, aside from Lenin the most prominent theoreticians, whose contribution to the establishment of the Communist ideology of Marxism-Leninism would become a core component of its own narrative.¹²⁶² Albeit very influential all over the world, where Communist doctrine expanded, the most generous tribute would be paid to the social visionaries in their homeland, Germany. Here it would become one of the most important symbols of the DDR era. From May 10, 1953 until the disintegration of DDR would the city of Chemnitz called Karl-Marx-Stadt, the University in Leipzig would also bear his name, together with many streets and squares all around the country.¹²⁶³ The Order of Karl Marx would become the highest awarded distinction of DDR.

As the most important historical personality, related to the history of the working class movement would Karl Marx also be integrated into the visual culture of Communism. The manifestations, parades, 1st May celebrations and other public events would host the cultic depiction, showing profiles of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. The monuments would be installed all over the Germany from the 1945, unlike Lenin usually assigned to the best Socrealist German sculptors. The first *bronze double statue of Marx and Engels*

sculpture for the park at Karlovo náměstí in Prague The final result, a sitting figure, with two allegorical figures at his feet, would strongly remind of the 19th century monument and perhaps due to this rather obsolete form it was in 1960 set in the Petřínské sady rather than at the originally intended, frequented Karlovo náměstí.

Jaroslav Vrchlický (1853-1912), Czech writer, poet, translator and dramatist. Born in Louny, studied at Charles-Ferdinand University, 1893 professor of comparative literature. Editor of Světozor, member of the Lumír group, author of many epical, dramatical and lyrical poetry collections.

¹²⁶² František HAMERNÍK: Vznik marxistické filosofie a hlavní etapy jejího vývoje. Praha 1973, 1-15; Miloš PAPÍRNÍK: Bibliografický průvodce ke klasikům Marxismu-leninismu. Praha 1956

¹²⁶³ Günter TAUTZ: Orden und Medaillen. Staatliche Auszeichnungen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik., VEB Bibliographisches Institut Leipzig. Leipzig 1983; Gabriele VIERTTEL / Stephan WEINGART: Geschichte der Stadt Chemnitz. Gudensberg 2002, 94

in Germany was unveiled in 1957 at the Karl-Marx-Platz (Park der Opfer des Faschismus) in Karl-Marx-Stadt, by the sculptor Walter Howard.¹²⁶⁴ (Fig. 150)

In 1962 a *memorial in Berlin-Stralau* was installed on the banks of the Spree river, made of two red stone walls, adorned with two semi-reliefs, showing a profile of Marx and a scene of the general strike of German glass workers in 1901, inspired by the works of Karl Marx.¹²⁶⁵ This monument was created by the Berlin sculptor Hans Kies.¹²⁶⁶ *The Karl Marx monument in Frankfurt (Oder)* is a memorial, standing on the edge on Karl-Marx-Straße and created in 1968. (Fig. 151) The bronze bust was created by Fritz Cremer and unveiled on the occasion of the 150th birthday of Marx on 5 May 1968. Perhaps the best known Marx' sculptural portrait and at the same time *the second largest portrait bust* in the world is placed *in the city of Chemnitz* (1971). (Fig. 152) At *Strausberger Platz* in Berlin had Willi Lammert created *a bust* (1983) and another distinct double sculpture of Marx and Engels was designed by Ludwig Engelhart (1986).

In Czechoslovakia was a commemorative sculpture to Karl Marx situated in the largest number of specimens situated in Karlovy Vary, city where Marx dwelled during his visit of the region. *A memorial plaque* (1961), *a bust* (1957) and *a monument* (1984), all created by the local author Karel Kuneš. (Fig. 153)

Socialist Construction Heroes and Allegories

The Socialist state would engage in a complex endeavour to promote Socialist construction among the people of all social groups. The method of doing so would remain throughout the decades unchanged, yet the allegories and symbols employed and subjects depicted would shift and modify according to the perceived success of the previous “campaigns”. In order to achieve awareness and awake enthusiasm for the task of the socialist society building among the general population, the One Party required

¹²⁶⁴ Walter Howard see note: 870

¹²⁶⁵ Karl-Marx-Gedenkstätte, in: <http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/denkmal/> (Retrieved 29.3. 2017)

¹²⁶⁶ For the visit of Hans Kies in Prague see page 233-234

systematic support of the cultural apparatus. One of its numerous endeavours would be materialised in sculpture. An examination of the exhibition lists of the *Exhibitions of the Czechoslovakian Fine Arts* in 1950, 1953 and 1955 provide a valuable insight into the structure of the effort, with role models and allegories forming substantial part of the mass of the official sculpture presented.

The long-term vision of the Socialist state with regards to the economy, employability and agriculture would reflect on the promoted sculptural subjects most distinctly. In 1950-1953 Czechoslovakia, the defence, agriculture and heavy industry subjects, employment were encouraged through the action tasks and contests. The intentions were several: to raise morales of the labourers and soldiers, attract new recruits, acquire new heavy industry workers, promote the Socialist perspective and indoctrinate the population.¹²⁶⁷ In East Germany the situation was very similar, with a slight difference in the rhetoric. The emphasis was laid on the “Wiederaufbau”, reconstruction of the destroyed cities, such as Berlin and Dresden, notwithstanding the evolvement of the heavy industry.¹²⁶⁸ Therefore the most common and most easily comprehensible theme is the celebration of labour through the means of the figures of workers. These super-human beings possessing an air of pride, determination and unwavering resilience. They represent a “typus,” an allegory of labour or a profession. Sometimes would among the generalised and unified characters appear a specific person, an *udarnik*, the hero of labour, whose diligence and exceptional productivity should serve as an example to others.¹²⁶⁹ The subject of workers would outnumber any other subject and has to be addressed accordingly.

Smaller scale categories, employed throughout 1950s helped to promote further goals in unison with the Socialism construction. The category of the ideal personification, a semantically challenging subject is dealing with a group of works, scarce in number of

¹²⁶⁷ Jiří KNAPÍK: *Průvodce kulturním děním a životním stylem v českých zemích 1948-1967*. Praha 2011, 36

¹²⁶⁸ Simone SIMPSON: *Zwischen Kulturauftrag und künstlerischer Autonomie. Dresdner Plastik der 1950er und 1960er Jahre*. Dresden 2008, 122

¹²⁶⁹ *Udarnik* (Russian: ударник), is a term for highly effective worker, who exceeds several-fold usual productivity withing his profession. This term originated in SSSR and was used throughout the Communist countries for propagandist purposes. The *udarniki* would become part of the ideological construct and were paraded as the ultimate role models for manual labourers, who were supposed to emulate their example. As such they would become part of the popular culture – literature, films and visual arts.

specimens, yet supremely ideological and therefore very much worth an individual assessment. Another group of sculptures, occupying a relevant place next to the workers and peasants, would present the embodiments of hope and perspective: makers of the bright future, the Communist youth. The pioneers, young unionists and teenage apprentices – the future *udarniki* - would need their own role models to acquire the accurate world view and learn to contribute to the great cause.

With the approaching 1960s would the strong emphasis on the ideological message, related to heavy industry, prevalent in the 1950s wean off. Sculptors would in many cases begin to focus on non-political subjects. Throughout the following two decades in 1970s – 1980s would the public space be flooded with statues and group sculptures, emerging ubiquitously on the grounds of the 4% rule.¹²⁷⁰ This directive would oblige the decision makers and local authorities to invest this percentage into decoration – very often sculptures. The works of art would represent either ornamental, floral, organic or abstract design, in many cases also figuration was utilized with entirely neutral subjects of family, couples or children.¹²⁷¹

Collective Farm Workers and Labourers

The themes, related to the manual labour would not present a new genre in the Czechoslovakian neither German art. The preceding tendencies, occurring in the art of the 1920s and 1930s and described in the chapters *Heroisation of Labour in Sculpture* and *Social Art in Sculpture as Alleged Precursor to Socialist Realism*, were endorsed in the Communist historiography of art as a valid vantage point for the construction of the truly Socialist art. Nevertheless, the observational, often naturalist representation of manual labour would need to be replaced with specific idealisation, subjected to typification and filled with a socialist semantic content.

¹²⁷⁰ For more on the 4% rule see: Jana KOŘÍNKOVÁ: Čtyřprocentní umění?, in: KAROUS 2015, 453;

¹²⁷¹ As this production is bound to the Normalization and would fulfill the ideological role only a marginally, they are not part of the following text.

The result – a statue or a group of statues of a male or female workers in mine, factory or agriculture - would present a universally handsome individual of regular de-personalised features, ideal appearance stripped of any distracting subjective characteristics. The bodily form would be favourably shaped by the cultivating effect of the manual labour, yet without traces of work-weariness. The clothing, serving as one of the aspects of the profession, would be rendered so as to promote the pleasing form and contribute to the monumentalisation of the effect. In addition to the attire, also specific attributes could be present, aiding to the easier identification of the category by the beholder. The posture and demeanour were brought into semantic alignment with the concept of the bright Socialist future. The idea projected to the statue was to induce the observer to contemplate the heroism of the labourer and in the best possible scenario to yearn for the emulation and increase in productivity.

The DDR leadership would accentuate particularly two most pressing needs – the renewal of the destroyed cities and construction of the heavy industry, a “Wiederaufbau”. To achieve both these aims, the ideological usage of the workers' statues would represent pathos of the new beginning, optimism in the new construction of the cities and society, as well as the ambitious plans for the flourishing of the heavy industry.¹²⁷²

The most preferred professions of SBZ (later DDR) and ČSR both in the public space statues and exhibitions would be mine worker, steel worker, founder, tanner etc., often the udarnik, depicted in a heroic pose with an attribute of his profession. One of the most often represented profession was mine worker, whose profession was perceived as the most difficult and the miner would therefore belong to the most meritorious members of the Socialist society, worthy of depiction and celebration. The usage of “profession allegory“ peaked in 1950, both in I. PČSVU, where the typus of a profession was represented 30% of all exhibited sculptures, whereas at II. PČSVU in 1955 it was already 34,5%.

¹²⁷² Manuella UHLMANN: Ein neuer Bildtyp. Das Brigadebild in der DDR, in: Paul KAISER (ed.): Enge und Vielfalt - Auftragskunst und Kunstförderung in der DDR : Analysen und Meinungen. Hamburg 1999, 201-210

The Collective Farm Workers and Labourers		
Percentage of all exhibited works		
1950 I. PČSVU (76 Exhibits)	1953 II. PČSVU (138 Exhibits)	1955 III. PČSVU (157 Exhibits)
23 of 76	25 of 138	21 of 157
30%	34,5 %	13%

To achieve greater compliance on the part of artists, SČSVU as a platform for professional artists officially declared thematic tasks through the local unions, UMPRUM or Academy of Arts. Artists were often as a part of the task sent to the countryside, factories or mines, to familiarize themselves with the daily routine of the labourers, earning knowledge and find inspiration.¹²⁷³ One of the sound examples relates to the mining industry, albeit also the steel works and agriculture were heavily promoted.

After the 1953 these thematics remained fixed in the iconographic structure of the Socialist Realism, but it was overshadowed by the effort to promote the national historical narrative.¹²⁷⁴ The decline was related to the change in the economical strategy and subsequent changes in cultural politics. The shift of focus to other themes, probably hand in hand with unfavourable position of the public towards the openly agitational model, resulted in a decline in the usage of this subject, which was in number replaced by more frequent employment of the portraiture. The action tasks for historical themes would result in plummeting percentage of the subject of workers and peasants among the exhibited works at III. PČSVU in 1955, with mere 13%.

Shortly after the cessation of the Second World War many of the young generation of artists (Karel Hladík, Josef Malejovský, Alois, Sopr, Ladislav Zívr, Jindřich Wielgus) would touch upon the subject of the manual labour.¹²⁷⁵ Jindřich Wielgus' *Miner* (1945 and 1946), Karel Hladík's, *Bridge makers* (Mostaři, 1945) would secure their place

¹²⁷³ Komandýrovka, in: KNAPÍK 2011, 58; Posluchači Akademie výtvarných umění o své práci na závodech, in: Výtvarné umění 1950, roč. 1 č. 2, 46-47

¹²⁷⁴ Jiří KOTALÍK: Sběrka českého sochařství XIX. a XX: století. Praha 1976, 27-28

¹²⁷⁵ An Exhibition Mladé české sochařství, in: Topičův salon 10. IX. – 6. X. 1946

Ladislav Zívr (1909-1980), was a Czech sculptor, originally apprenticed as a potter, later studied at UMPRUM. Member of the Skupina 42. He experimented with assemblage, often in combination of plaster and natural materials. His work was inspired by many art currents, especially Cubism and Surrealism, but his own work is not easily categorized.

among pro-regime artists also due to their timely decision to employ these manual labour subjects.¹²⁷⁶ (Fig. 158, 159) Vincenc Makovský would, in apparent inspiration from the Soviet iconography, create a sculpture *Woman and tractor* (*Žena a traktor*) for the Slavonic Agricultural Exhibition (1948). Together with their readiness to promote the goals of the cultural apparatus after 1948 through deliverance of ideologically desirable subjects would help many artists to establish a career under the new circumstances. After the 1948 Karel Hladík would participate in action tasks and provide statues such as *Improver* (1951). (Fig. 159) or Miloš Axman's *Milkmaid* (1952).

The German theme of the “Wiederaufbau” would reflect in sculptures of the reconstruction helpers, the young builders of a new life, by Fritz Cremer *Aufbauhelfer und Aufbauhelferin* (1953-1954), in Berlin-Mitte, known also under the lofty title of “Fort mit den Trümmern und was Neues hingebaut”.¹²⁷⁷ (Fig. 160) Walter Reinhold's *Trümmerfrau* (1952), or Katharina Szelinsky-Singer in Berlin-Neuköln with the same subject (1955) would celebrate the “rubble women”, who after the war helped to clean up the destroyed cities.¹²⁷⁸ (Fig. 161) The idea behind both the monuments and statues of the reconstruction helpers and rubble women was to acknowledge the generous contribution of the individuals towards the post-war renewal and induce/inspire the rest of the population to participate. The volunteering works in construction would

¹²⁷⁶ Jindřich Wielgus (1910-1998), was a Czech sculptor and graphic designer. He studied at the UMRUM at Karel Dvořák, at AVU under Otakar Španiel and he also received instruction at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome. In his work he focused mainly on the motifs from the mining life of his native Ostrava. The author of the Victory Winner, Return home, Crying of Three Maria, Maryčka Magdonova, or Portrait of the Havíř J. K. In 1989 he was awarded the title of National Artist.

Selected bibliography: Horník v díle sochaře Jindřicha Wielguse (Ex. Cat. 12. ledna - 12. února 1950, Praha: Čs. spisovatel). Praha 1950

Karel Hladík (1912 - 1967) was a Czech sculptor, 1940-1944 UMRUM at prof. Jan Lauda 1945-1947 AVU at Karel Pokorný whose assistant and whose successor he became at AVU. Member of the artistic group Skupina 58. In 1959 acquired a post of a Dozent at AVU, in 1961 leader of the Sculpture Department, in 1962 professorship. In 1965 received the title Distinguished Artist and prorektor at AVU. In 1980 a permanent exhibition of his sculptural works opened in Orlická galerie, Rychnov nad Kněžnou. Whereas his post-war works are leveraging the realist tradition, after 1956 experimented with informal tendencies, inspired by Manú and Greco. He used cut gelatine to achieve characteristic abstract shapes, employed often as an architectural decoration. Best known for: Mostaři (1945), Franz Kafka Memorial Plaque (1966)

Selected bibliography:

HLADÍK, Karel / HLADÍKOVÁ, Věra / MAŠÍN, Jiří: Karel Hladík 1912-1967: (Ex. Cat. Mánes, květen - červen 1968) Praha 1968; MAŠÍN, Jiří: Karel Hladík: (stálá expozice sochařského díla zasloužilého umělce Karla Hladíka). Rychnov n/Kněžnou: Orlická galerie, 1980; HLADÍKOVÁ, Věra: Můj manžel sochař Karel Hladík. Praha 2002

¹²⁷⁷ Diether SCHMIDT: Fritz Cremer. Dresden 1972, 62

¹²⁷⁸ SIMPSON 2008, 124

belong also to the themes of the Czechoslovakian politics. Josef Malejovský's and Miloš Zet's *Volunteering Worker* (1950) would cover this theme. (Fig. 162)

A large number of designs and plaster sketches were created by the art schools' students and young sculptors, usually within the action tasks, the most successful of which were installed at collective exhibitions.¹²⁷⁹ In the early 1950's exhibitions the vast majority of presented works of younger authors would be of sub-optimal quality and so would not live up to the final bronze or stone sculpture. Through the analysis of the exhibits and the sculptors, who would most often be engaged in their rendition, the agricultural and labour theme would be used by less experienced young artists, who did not yet have the necessary skills and experience to win the large commissions for monuments, decorative and public sculpture, medals or reliefs.

The subject of agricultural work, typically in the setting of a collective farm, would be readily adopted by many young artists. Taťjana Konstantinová would choose the subject of *a female collective farm worker* (*Kolchoznice*, 1950) and *Bountiful Autumn* (1951), focusing on unpretentious representations of simple women with the attributes of their work. (Fig. 163) The young female worker would be one of the most often employed, with Miroslav Pangrác (1950), R. Knížková-Placáková (1950), Pavla Svobodová (1950), Ján Hučko (1952) presenting their sculptural sketches at I. PČSVU, Art Harvest and other exhibitions.¹²⁸⁰ The agricultural subject was popular also by Jozef Kostka, who would aside from a female field worker also create a statue of a reaper (1952) and a retrospectively rendered figure of a reading *corvée* labourer (1953).¹²⁸¹

Larger variety was offering itself in the form of the manual work theme, yet the preferences would be set centrally, according to the economic needs. The themes would be consequently heavily promoted through action tasks, five year plans and other

¹²⁷⁹ Vladimír ŠOLTA: Připomínky k výstavě „Výtvarná úroda“, in: Výtvarné umění 9-10, 1950, 386 – 398

¹²⁸⁰ Miroslav Pangrác (1924-2012), a Czech sculptor and painter. 1951 concluded his studies at AVU, as a pupil of J. Lauda and K. Pokorný. His field of occupation was especially portraiture. 1983 the title Meritorious Artist. For more see: Luboš HLAVÁČEK: Sochař a malíř (Miroslav Pangrác), in: Výtvarná kultura 1989. č. 5.

¹²⁸¹ Československý lid a jeho kraj v životě, práci a zápasu: Výstava obrazů a soch z let 1918-49 : Jízdárna pražského hradu : Květen-červen 1949 Deset let Československé lidové demokratické republiky ve výtvarném umění 1945-1955. Praha 1955 První Přehlídka československého výtvarného umění 1949-1951. Praha 1951 Výtvarná úroda 1950, Výtvarná úroda 1951 Druhá a třetí Přehlídka československého výtvarného umění atd.

campaigns. Figures of the labourers, both men and women, could easily be accompanied by technical or mechanical attributes, adding to the visual attractiveness and comprehensibility of the work. The emphasis on the heavy industry would offer versatile options – often determined by the location and current need. The steel workers would belong to the popular subject, as seen in Ivan Lošák's sketch at the I. PČSVU (1950) and Alois Sopr's limestone sculpture placed in front of the ČKD (1960)¹²⁸² (fig. 164, 60).

The mining industry belonged unequivocally to the most often rendered subjects in the first half of the 1950'. The flourishing of heavy industry was one of the economic priorities, set by the Communist government soon after 1948. In 1949 was announced so-called Lánská akce, aiming at recruitment of 6 000 apprentices for the mining industry, on the occasion of 700th years of Bohemian mining. The agitational campaign would have a wide base, including public institutions, mining unions, press, poster campaigns and broadcasting.¹²⁸³

The promotion of this profession and mining work would also find its way to arts. Already in 1949, in accordance with the Lánská akce would be opened an exhibition in Ostrava, Dům Umění, called Fine Artists to Our Miners, 11th – 25th September.¹²⁸⁴ František Peťas in his introduction brought a summarising overview of the history of the mining subject in fine arts, having a distinct tradition in the 1920s and 1930s. The sculpture on mining, albeit providing less motivic versatility than painting, would reflect in the works of Karel Pokorný, Josef Kubíček and sculptors active mainly in Ostrava, Antonín Ivanský, Augustin Hanzel.¹²⁸⁵

A sound tradition of the mining theme sculpture was in the traditionally industrial Ostrava, where would a number of individual and architecture-bound sculptures emerge

¹²⁸² ČKD (Českomoravská Kolben-Daněk) an engineering company in the former Czechoslovakia, one of the most successful and also export-oriented.

¹²⁸³ KNAPÍK, Jiří / FRANC, Martin: Lánská akce, in: Průvodce kulturním děním a životním stylem v českých zemích 1948-1967. Praha 2011, 493-494; František PEŤAS: Výtvarník mezi horníky (K oslavám 700 let československého hornictví). Praha 1949

¹²⁸⁴ The wave of mining industry related art would be gathered in a collective exhibition, accompanied with a catalogue: Výtvarníci našim horníkům. Výstava obrazů a soch k jubileu 700. let hornictví. Dům umění Ostrava (11.9. – 25. 9. 1949)

¹²⁸⁵ Antonín Ivanský (1910-2000), Refer to: Jan ŠMOLKA: Soupis vybraných uměleckých děl, katastrální území Moravská Ostrava a Přívoz, Ostrava 1985

in the First Republic Era. Hanzel's façade sculptures of Miners for Palace Elektra (1926), Kubíček's four allegories of Mining professions at the façade of Union Bank (1929), and Jan Lauda's large relief *Creation of Coal* (Stvoření uhlí, 1939-1941), a massive granite work, adorning the Directorate of the Ostrava-Karviná Mines.¹²⁸⁶ (Fig. 11, 165) Aside from the last named example, the artists established a type of profession allegory, that would be transmitted to the post-February Era with marginal modifications. Most of the authors, had their age allowed them, continued in the elaboration of this subject.

The continuity with the pre-war production in Ostrava was secured by Antonín Ivanský's Miner statue (1938-1939) that would be installed in bronze in Moravská Ostrava in 1947. (Fig. 166) The heavy industrial reliance of the Ostrava region on the coal and steel production would result in an unceasing line of related art works, that would not cease to be employed with the minor changes in economical preferences. The buildings of factories, schools and public places would acquire thematical decoration, ranging from the Soviet style *Celebration of the Mining Work* by Jan Simota (1955) to the "futurist" horizontal reliefs of Vladislav Gajda (1959) and Vjačeslav Irmanov's high relief *Steel Work, Mine Work and Agriculture* (1955-1960) presented at the Expo 1958.¹²⁸⁷ (Fig. 167, 61).¹²⁸⁸

The individual statues would be most fit to heroise the profession through monumentality and pathos, whereas the reliefs, by nature more suitable for the elaboration of a narrative, would eulogize the interconnectedness of the work with the bright tomorrows, contribution to the greater good and very importantly also with the happy family life. The individual portraits of udarnik miners, such as Jaroslava Lukešová's *portrait of the Udarnik O. Stehlík* (1951) would serve to the boost of revenues and endeavoured to induce greater productivity. (Fig. 168)

In 1960s would be the effort to use the sculpture of workers to promote the heavy industry professions channelled to the greater emphasis on the private, family life and

¹²⁸⁶ Josef Kubíček, Antonín Ivanský, Augustin Hanzel, in: database www.ostravskesochoy.cz (Retrieved 1.4. 2017)

¹²⁸⁷ For more on Vjačeslav Irmanov's high relief "Steel Work, Mine Work and Agriculture" (1955-1960) see: Martin STRAKOŠ: *Kulturní domy na Ostravsku v kontextu architektury a umění 20. století*. Ostrava 2012; For more on Jan Simota and his Ostravian works: Vlastimil VINTER: *Jan Simota: [monografie s ukázkami z výtvarného díla]*. Praha 1988

¹²⁸⁸ For more on Jan Simota, see note 883

free time of the workers. At the same time the DDR the generic Soviet style sculptures gradually replaced by more individualist style, albeit some of the conform artists such as Wilhelm Landgraf and his *Young Workers* (1964), Werner Ryssel's *Worker* (1964) or Gerhard Thieme's *Worker* (1968) would still follow the original course.¹²⁸⁹ The younger generation of sculptors, such as Ludwig Engelhardt, or Gisela Richter-Thiele, who would both choose the subject of a reading worker. They would both address the subject of workers by abandoning the “pure forms” of Socialist Realism, together with the cessation of the highly ideological content, in favour of the modern, more native form and more pronounced individualism.

This phenomenon is visible in the figure of a *Reading Worker* (1961), who no longer stands on a high pedestal in erect posture, has a non-idealised countenance and sits unrestrainedly, lost in contemplation over the book. (Fig. 169), the Richter-Thiele's *Young Worker Reading* (1960) would also elaborate upon the intimate and genre, reminding of Social Civilism current. The stylistic origins of this 60's DDR production are relatable to the surviving local tradition. The Czechoslovakian attempts to arrive to the modern form while retaining the theme of professions, would not be as successful and sometimes result in rather peculiar works of art, such as the “cubist shaped” *Steel Worker* (1961), placed in front of the entrance into the Vítkovice Steelworks. (Fig. 62)

Communist Youth and Family

The promotion of the ideology to the future generation belonged to the top priorities of the Socialist state. The statues of the youth promoters of the Communist ideology were aimed at the unspoiled minds to help raising them in the spirit of Socialism. To that end they unfolded a strategy, including a number of school and free time activities, including the pioneer groups. Therefore the young pioneers, either individual or in groups, would become one of the often presented exhibits within the central exhibitions of the first half of the 1950s. Josef Vitvar, *The Victorious Udarniki* (Vítězná úderka ČSM, 1950) (Fig. 170)

¹²⁸⁹ SIMPSON 2008, 235-242

promoted the goal-orientedness and dynamism of the youth. These values were also represented in an architecture bound sculpture, most often in school buildings or free time houses for the Socialist youth, such as the *figures of schoolchildren in pioneer uniforms* in Ostrava-Poruba (1956) by Damian Pešan. (Fig. 171)

A further elaboration of the concept of Socialist construction in the building, transmitted into the optimist realm of youth and bright tomorrows would emerge in the higher education area in Dresden would spring up during the 1950s, many sculptures, underlining the essential place of the education in the Socialist society – especially in the working class youth. Wilhelm Landgraf would become one of the representatives of “Soviet style” sculpture, seen in his *Working Class Student with a Book* (1955) at TU Dresden- Weberplatz, or *Builder and his Pupil* (1961) in front of original the Berufsschule für Bauwesen. (Fig. 172)

Another favourite subject was the Socialist family – the basic unit of the Socialist society. Presenting a non-controversial subject, it became one of the safe refuges for sculptors, who did not wish to follow the ideological commissions, both in the beginning of the Socrealist instruction in 1950s and in the 1960s, when on the contrary the artists began to abandon the strict course to embark on a new journey of a more free artistic expression.

The form employed spanned from the completely conservative Socrealist elaboration, such as Rudolf Doležal's *The Working Class Family* (Dělnická rodina, 1960), over the more relaxed *Socialist Family* (Socialistická rodina, 1965), employing the popular horizontal composition, by Karel Lenhart. (Fig. 173, 174) A great number of varieties of family or mother with a child sprang up during the Normalisation in the 1970s, when the modernist principles began to be liberally employed all over the public space, without objections of the control organs.

Karel Lidický created a *Victory of Socialism* for the Vítkov Monument, according to the original design of the deceased Pokorný. He was working on the model from 1965, until its unveiling in 1972. The concept of the sculpture, showing the socialist family, would fit neatly into the restrictive atmosphere of the Normalisation, where the principles of the Socrealism have been yet again resuscitated in a portion of the most high-profile official commissions. (Fig. 71)

Personifications of Ideals

Beside the individual or group sculptures of the socialist construction heroes – the collective farm workers, trümmerfrauen, miners and other professions would the construction of the Socialist art require also a portion of more intellectual and more imaginative, corresponding to the idealism and optimism of the Communist future. In the Communist perspective the workers and families through their agile work are approximating the joyous utopic future – the sculptures depicting them in turn help to promote this perspective among the general population. The works, essentially depicting the same subjects and topics as already named, boast with more ornate, optimistic or philosophical titles.

The wish to promote the determination of the nation to preserve their motherland in one breath with the peace and socialism, was rendered by Václav Žalud, *For the Peace – the Homeland – the Socialism* (*Za mír – za vlast – za socialismus*, 1950). (Fig. 17) Also, according to Šolta the moral and political unity of the Czechoslovakian people shows the powers, that through their work and vigilance contribute to the preservation of peace.¹²⁹⁰ Similar concept was used also by Rudolf Pribiš in a bronze plaque *For peace and happy life of our Children* (*Za mier a šťastný život našich dětí*, 1952), or Augustin Handzel, in *a Trust in Peace* (*Důvěra v mír*, 1951–1961) (fig. 175)

¹²⁹⁰ ŠOLTA 1950, 398, fig. at the page 307 ibidem

Part V. Official Socrealist Sculpture Second Life

The monuments to the ruling ideology and its proponents were due to their fundamentally political character always in great danger of being removed or destroyed. To obliterate the traces of the former ruler or regime belongs to the acts of the psycho-social hygiene every afflicted social unit employs after the decomposition of a restrictive regime. Documented both in the ancient Egypt and imperial Rome, the annihilation of the vanquished political force through the bestial violence to the fallen tyrant or by the erasure of the material symbols of his power, would acquire the Latin term *Damnatio Memoriae*. The custom of the defacement, disfiguration and violent of a monument had highly symbolic role throughout the human history.

Also in the 20th century the legacy of the controversial personalities and ideas, interconnected to a deposed system, were to be consigned to oblivion, perhaps with more consideration to the historical memory. The Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Communist SSSR and the Eastern Bloc, all experienced the breakdown of the enforced *Weltanschauung* through the elimination of the supposedly eternal monuments and systematic decomposition of their cult in the public consciousness.

The disassembly of the ideological construct of the former regime in Czechoslovakia is continuously promoted through the modern media and mirror also in the popular culture. Aside from providing the factual resource for the scrutiny of the monument removals, both offer a priceless insight into the transformation of the approach towards the controversial past. The handling of these monuments until the present day is a telling sign of the current socio-political atmosphere. A thorough politological analysis of the relation of the Czech society towards the monuments to the fallen ideology could undoubtedly arrive to intriguing results.

Albeit the removal of the obsolete monuments began only months after the Velvet Revolution, a wider discussion of the fate of these large testaments to the former glory of Communism was launched no sooner than 2003. Resting in depots, preserved in their original state or as mere heads, the sculptures only in the last decade began to adopt a new role in the national historical consciousness, seek its way to the permanent or temporary exhibitions, placed in the parks of Communist sculpture, or in case of personalities, separable from the Communist ideology, even installed in new locations.

The contemporary Czech press, media and digital resources deal from 2003 with the fate of the Socrealist sculptures, of which the Gottwald's monument would be the most often mentioned. The monuments fill now and then pages of magazines and internet media, perhaps due to the numerous inquiries of individuals after the fate of the disappeared statues

In some of the countries of the East Bloc the collecting of the remnants of the Communist Era was transformed into education projects of the Socrealist parks, such as the Memento Park in Budapest, Hungary – the Statue Park (Szoborpark) or Grūtas Park in Lithuania, Vilnius. The former Soviet Union also has its Fallen Monument Park.¹²⁹¹ The museums under the sky present statues and sculptures, gathered from all corners of the former Soviet realm. The concept of such a showcase of the vanquished ideology brings with it the risk of undesirable deformation of the historical reality. The architect of the Budapest park nevertheless claims, “the statues, therefore, were positioned according to the original sculptural and architectural plans. This park is not about the statues or the sculptors, but a critique of the ideology that used these statues as symbols of authority.”¹²⁹²

In 2017 a plan emerged to create a park of redundant Prague statues and sculptural decorations premeditated also by the City of Prague administration. Pavel Karous, a specialist in the Normalisation sculptures criticised the plan with referrals to the necessity to assess the value of individual works by specialists, rather than politicians.¹²⁹³ The idea to remove the superfluous works of art emerged amid the systematic, continuous effort of Pavel Karous' project *Vetřelci a volavky / Aliens and Herons*, presenting thorough a comprehensive publication and online database public sculpture of the Era of Normalisation, widespread in the 1970s and 1980s, in order to

¹²⁹¹ The subject of monumental sculpture in other countries was also addressed by Reuben FAWKES: *The Role of Monumental Sculpture in Hungary*, in: *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*, Berg, Oxford 2002; Reuben FAWKES: *Public Sculpture and Hungarian Revolution of 1956*, in: *Inferno 7*, March 2003; Walter GRASSKAMP (Ed.), *Unerwünschte Monumente. Kunst im Stadtraum*, München 2000; Sergiusz MICHALSKI: *Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage, 1870-1997*, London 1998

¹²⁹² Ákos ELEŐD: *The Designer's Commendation*. <http://www.mementopark.hu/pages/conception/> (4. 9. 2017)

¹²⁹³ Jakub HELLER: *Praha „kádruje“ sochy v ulicích, nechtěné by odsunula do parku padlých*. 17. 7. 2017, http://praha.idnes.cz/praha-kultura-umeni-letnany-sochy-drx-/praha-zpravy.aspx?c=A170717_2339195_praha-zpravy_turc

secure its survival and preservation.¹²⁹⁴

P. Karous pertinently commented the plan of the theme-park by emphasizing, the remnants of Socrealism – the portraits of politicians and downright ideological works were already removed immediately after the fall of Communism. *"The Lenins and Gottwalds, the Zapotockýs and Nejedlýs disappeared from the streets in 1990. Today, politicians often mark as Socialist Realism everything, that was created before 1989 only on the basis of their own taste. In fact, Sorela in our country existed until 1958 and then the state was represented rather late modern,"*

To the most destruction susceptible and endangered monuments truly belonged those, dedicated to the high-profile politicians, leaders of the ČSR and DDR, together with their counterparts in all SSSR subordinated countries.¹²⁹⁵ Klement Gottwald or Walter Ulbricht with Josif V. Stalin and Vladimir I. Lenin formed the trinity of the most often deinstalled or vandalised symbols of the former regime in Czechoslovakia and DDR. Shortly after the fall of the SSSR they belonged to the first objects, falling prey to the public, who welcomed the opportunity to let loose at least on the bronze and stone.

For this reason those Socrealist sculptures of the foremost politicians had almost without exception disappeared from their original setting, either removed into depots, museums, scrap yards, or melted and destroyed. The process of their removal and disposal is often accompanied by oral accounts of eyewitnesses, betraying the inclination of the people to deal with the figure of the former leaders with contempt, irony or ridicule. The enlightened effort to transfer the statues into museums and galleries was less common in the immediate aftermath of the political transition, mounting with the time distance from the ambiguous past.

A statue of Klement Gottwald, was installed in the era of Normalisation in many smaller

¹²⁹⁴ www.vetrelciavolavky.cz, Pavel KAROUS (ed.): *Vetřelci a volavky: atlas výtvarného umění ve veřejném prostoru v Československu v období normalizace (1968-1989) = Aliens and herons: a guide to fine art in the public space in the era of normalisation in Czechoslovakia (1968-1989)*. Praha 2015

¹²⁹⁵ For the Magyar perspective see: Katalin SINKO: *Political Rituals: the Raising and Demolition of Monuments*, in: Peter GYORGY / Hedvig TURAI: *Art and Society in the Age of Stalin*. Budapest 1992, 81

cities and towns, at great expense of the local administration. The resistance of the public towards the idolisation of the personality of the former president, whose cult of personality was denounced already in the early 1960s, was substantial. These feelings resulted, for example, in an isolated incident in 1978, a sabotage on the tenth anniversary of the Occupation of the Czechoslovakia in 1968. A miner Ondřej Stavinoha with the use of explosives knocked down Gottwald's bronze statue in Příbram, square VŘSR (The October Revolution), receiving a sentence of nine years imprisonment.¹²⁹⁶ The statue was repaired to adorn the square another ten years, until removed. In Přerov was the attempt to blast away newly installed Gottwald's statue in 1982 thwarted by the StB (State security). The perpetrator Vladimír Hlučín was arrested.

The post-1989 hasty effort to remove them from sight is perpetuated in the testimonies of contemporaries. The colossal concrete Bratislava Monument to K. Gottwald had to be removed with the help of explosives.¹²⁹⁷ Some of the Gottwald's bronze statues were melted and used to help finalise the Pomník dětským obětem války (Monument to the Children Victims of the War, 1989-2000) in Lidice by Marie Uchytlová. In order to melt the statue, a consent of the author had to be obtained. In this way were melted Gottwald's statues from Jihlava, Písek, Prachatice, or Pelhřimov. The eighty-two small figures of the Lidice children remind of the futility and horrors of war.

Increasingly often individuals and institutions strive to preserve the statues for its value as historical artefacts. Specifically monuments by František Navrátil and Miloš Axman in Brno were from the consideration of the historical legacy deposited in the depots of the Muzeum města Brna (Museum of the Brno City).¹²⁹⁸ A writer Martin Herzán bought the head of the decapitated statue of Gottwald in Jihlava, whose trunk and legs were already melted for the above named Monument to the Children Victims, to be deposited in the

¹²⁹⁶ Adam DRDA: Příběhy 20. století: Koukal jsem, jak bronzový Gottwald padá k zemi. 28. 7. 2012 http://zpravy.idnes.cz/pribehy-atenatnika-na-sochu-gotwalda-ondrej-stavinoha-pi6-domaci.aspx?c=A120726_173103_domaci_brm (4. 9. 2017)

¹²⁹⁷ V roku 1990 vyhodili bratislavské súsošie K. Gottwalda do vzduchu, <http://www.vtedy.sk/pomnik-gottwald-odstrel> (4. 9. 2017)

¹²⁹⁸ Kam zmizely sochy pohlavárů? Leží v prachu nebo stojí v archivech. 23. listopadu 2014. http://brno.idnes.cz/kam-zmizely-sochy-pohlavaru-lezi-v-prachu-nebo-stoji-v-archivech-pxo-/brno-zpravy.aspx?c=A141121_2117831_brno-zpravy_vh

Jihlava museum.¹²⁹⁹ Also a private company DSB Euro, Druhé slévárny Blansko, engaging for decades in art foundry, collected several statues, created by their company during the Communist regime. The statues, including Milan R. Štefánik, Klement Gottwald, Julius Fučík and Georgi Dimitrov became part of the exhibition of artistic foundry in 2008, .¹³⁰⁰

Some of the statues to the Stalin, Lenin and Gottwald are occasionally exhibited as a part of a historical exhibition.¹³⁰¹ Pavol Bán's statue in Bratislava stood in front of the exhibition venue to lure visitors to the exhibition *Přerušená píseň – Umenie socialistického realizmu 1948–1956* (An Interrupted Song – Art of Socialist Realism 1948-1956) in 2012. Also the fragment of a stone sculpture depicting Lenin and Stalin, sculpted by Vojtěch Hořínek according to the design of Rudolf Doležal (1955), travelled to Vienna, exhibition of totalitarian art. The fragment is currently awaiting the building of the much anticipated *Středoevropské fórum* (Central European Forum) in Olomouc. There it would, according to the spokesperson of the Olomouc Muzeum umění (Museum of Art) the statue installed in the open court of the anticipated building. The collections will map post-war culture in Central Europe, where statue like this provides a retrospective of highly controversial stage in the history of art."¹³⁰²

Walter Ulbricht, as is obvious from the accentuation of Lenin's figures, did not achieve such a position as Klement Gottwald – the dominant topic of the Normalisation statues in Czechoslovakia. Yet even an Ulbricht's statue by Walter Arnold was demolished after 1990 and his head found in 2004 his way to the Berliner Stadtmuseum in a bag of a history-conscious citizen.¹³⁰³

¹²⁹⁹ Martin HERZÁN: Utajené dějiny Jihlavy 20. století: dějiny, které žalem žalují. Jihlava 2014, see also: Radek LAUDIN: Hlava čtyřmetrové sochy Klementa Gottwalda se dostala zpět do Jihlavy. 12. října 2014 http://jihlava.idnes.cz/hlava-sochy-klementa-gottwalda-v-jihlave-ffr-/jihlava-zpravy.aspx?c=A141008_2106032_jihlava-zpravy_mv (4. 9. 2017)

¹³⁰⁰ Blanenská slévárna vystavuje sochy bolševických pohlavárů, 19.12.2008 http://brno.idnes.cz/obrazem-blanenska-slevarna-vystavuje-sochy-bolsevickych-pohlavaru-11h-/brno-zpravy.aspx?c=A081219_193208_brno_dmk

¹³⁰¹ Stalin je v Bratislavě (29. červen 2012) <http://www.literarky.cz/kultura/art/10335-stalin-je-v-bratislav>

¹³⁰² Stalin a Lenin čekají na vzkříšení, in: E15, 17. ledna 2011, <http://magazin.e15.cz/regiony/stalin-a-lenin-cekaji-na-vzkriseni-841151>

¹³⁰³ Kai RITZMANN: Wie Walter Ulbrichts Kopf gerettet wurde., in: Die Welt, 5. 11. 2004, <https://www.welt.de/print-welt/article352626/Wie-Walter-Ulbrichts-Kopf-gerettet-wurde.html>

In Germany is, with regards to the former DDR sculpture, the most attention is dedicated to the remnants of the Lenin's statues. An independent platform *Lenin is still around*, substitutes the role of a public discourse on the subject of Soviet related subjects in the DDR sculpture. The focus on Lenin as an aesthetic icon and how the symbol of the Soviet revolutionary is dealt with in the current society is supplemented with historical and iconographic informations and oral history, related to the preserved monuments. The list of surviving works makes this website a valuable resource for the research of the Socrealism.¹³⁰⁴

Collected from the ruins of the statue in the woods near Berlin, where it was resting for decades, the 3,5 tons weighing granite head, removed from the largest Lenin's Monument in Berlin (by Nikolai Tomski), was placed horizontally on a white cube within the exhibition " Enthüllt – Berlin und seine Denkmäler" in Zitadelle Spandau.¹³⁰⁵ The evident hesitation of the city administration to facilitate the exhibition of this artefact, testifies the unwillingness to launch a public debate on the subject of this controversial legacy.

The monuments to the historical personalities of the Communist resistance during the Occupation, such as Julius Fučík, Jožka Jabůrková and in Germany Ernst Thälmann were usually spared the destruction. Albeit all the named were throughout their lives staunch Communists, their valiant resistance against the Nazi Germany gained them some recognition, strong enough to overcome the ideologisation of the Communist era and save their monuments. The commemoration of their legacy is, however, often not meeting with unanimous approval.

As well as during their installation, J. Fučík's and E. Thälmann's monuments had remarkably similar fate. Around 1990 were their sculptures often removed to depots and after 2010 their installation was instigated by petitions and citizen initiatives, who raised the awareness of the unjust removal of their commemorative statues.

¹³⁰⁴ <https://leninisstillaround.com/>

¹³⁰⁵ Lotte THAA: Rezension zu: Enthüllt. Berlin und seine Denkmäler, 29.04.2016 Berlin, in: H-Soz-Kult, 11.06.2016

The sculpture of J. Fučík by Miloslav Šonka (1979), which was originally located in front of the entrance gate of the former Garden of Culture and Recreation of Julius Fučík (the present-day Holešovice Exhibition Ground), reposed in the Prague City Gallery's depository, which dedicated due care to its preservation and restoration.¹³⁰⁶ The endeavour to rehabilitate J. Fučík was promoted through a Society of Julius Fučík, supported through assistance from abroad, especially from the German Antifascists. The effort of the left wing initiatives to cleanse Fučík from the ideological ballast was crowned by success, when his large bronze statue was unveiled again in the area of the Olšany Cemeteries in 2013, on the occasion of 110 years of his birth, next to reinstalled Jožka Jabůrková and Jan Šverma Monument. Backed by the authority of a petition with thousands of signatures, the unveiling of the monument became the manifestation of the left political parties and initiatives.¹³⁰⁷ The traditional connection to Thälmann was reintroduced through the speech of Gerd Hommel, chairman of the Revolutionary Union of Ernst Thälmann's Friends, who arrived from Dresden and praised the installation of the Fučík statue.¹³⁰⁸

The restoration of Fučík's statue by Josef Malejovský is currently under process also in Vsetín, where the local KSČM (The Communist Party of the Czech lands and Moravia) aims to reinstall the removed statue, deposited temporarily in the building of the seat of the KSČM District Committee. The statue is not supposed to return to its original place on a square in front of an elementary school, instead it will be installed in front of a said building of the KSČM in Vsetín.¹³⁰⁹ A memorial plaque by Jaroslav Dittrich in Plzeň was installed again in 2015, unlike more distinctive statue by internationally active Irena

¹³⁰⁶ Fučíkova socha je na Olšanech. Komunisté u ní oslavili jeho 110. narozeniny, in: Parlamentní listy. 2013 <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/monitor/Fucikova-socha-je-na-Olsanech-Komuniste-u-ni-oslavili-jeho-110-narozneniny-263774>

¹³⁰⁷ Anna SKÁLOVÁ: Julius Fučík se vrátil do rodné Prahy, in: Pražský patriot. 23. února 2013

<http://www.prazskypatriot.cz/julius-fucik-se-vratil-do-rodne-prahy/> (3. 9. 2017)

Po boku Jožky Jabůrkové stane Julius Fučík: rozhovor Haló novin s Janem Jelínkem, předsedou Společnosti Julia Fučíka v ČR, in: Haló noviny, roč. 22, č. 274, 23. 11. 2012, 3

¹³⁰⁸ Ehrung von Rosa Luxemburg, Ernst Thälmann und Julius Fucik vom Revolutionären Freundschaftsbund e. V., <http://muetter-gegen-den-krieg-berlin.de/Ehrung-Rosa-Luxemburg-Ernst-Thaelmann-Julius-Fucik.htm> (3. 9. 2017)

¹³⁰⁹ Michal BURDA / Dušan PÓČ: Vsetínští komunisté chtějí do města vrátit sochu Julia Fučíka, 10. 12. 2015 http://valassky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/vsetinsti-komuniste-chteji-do-mesta-vratit-sochu-julia-fucika-30151207.html (3. 9. 2017)

Sedlecká, whose monument to Fučík was removed after 1989.¹³¹⁰

The rehabilitation of Julius Fučík, whose commemoration served for decades to the ideological purposes, could not possibly escape the discussion in the media. Some of the media platforms would on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of his execution (commemorated on September 2013 without notable public interest) question the legitimacy of Fučík's rehabilitation. The left wing platforms would generally defend Fučík's cause, whereas right wing would persistently reiterate the perpetuated criticism of Fučík's personality.¹³¹¹ The public service Czech Television would in September 2013 join the negative criticism of J. Fučík, doubting his moral qualities, failing miserably to deliver objective journalism standards.¹³¹² Unfortunately the analysis of the socio-political circumstances of the discussion exceed the scope of this work and remains to be endeavoured on another occasion.

Ernst Thälmann copy in many a respect the fate of Julius Fučík and posthumous fate of his monuments and memorials is not an exception. The destruction of the monumental memorial in Berlin was premeditated in 1990s, yet eventually resulted only in the removal of the propagandist inscription. Such as is often the case with the remnants of the former regime, the monument had often fallen victim to the ravages of sprayers. Eventually a local citizen initiative would push through the regular maintenance of the large bronze composition by emphasizing the martyrdom of Thälmann. Also Thälmann's statue in Weimar, located near Buchenwald, was restored in the late nineties.¹³¹³

The monuments to non-political, historical personalities and national figures, whom the Communist regime appropriated and exploited to reinforce the ideological construct,

¹³¹⁰ Evžen Zavadil: Fučík se vrátil na fasádu domu, kde bydlel. 26.1. 2015

Zdroj: http://plzensky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/fucik-se-vratil-na-fasadu-domu-kde-bydlel-20150126.html (3. 9. 2017)

¹³¹¹ Julius Fučík byl ubíjen, ale nikdy nebyl ubit!, 26.2. 2013 in: <http://www.halonoviny.cz/articles/view/3683743>

¹³¹² -lub-: Až po 52 letech se národ dozvěděl, že Fučík doopravdy mluvil, 8. 9. 2013, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/domaci/1076508-az-po-52-letech-se-narod-do-zvedel-ze-fucik-dopravdy-mluvil>

¹³¹³ Arnold BARTETZKY: Politické pomníky a stavby NDR ve sjednoceném Německu, in: Stavba č. 2/2009, republished: <https://stavbaweb.dumabyt.cz/nesnadne-ddictvi-5380/clanek.html>

were in most cases rehabilitated. Their monuments not only tolerated, but embraced as an inseparable part of the national historical continuity (regardless of the highly ideological motivation of their creation and narrative devised to support it). Their thoroughly conservative realist form, stemming from the sound Myslbekian tradition, does not invoke in the public any reminiscences of the former regime. For that reason majority of the monuments to Alois Jirásek, Božena Němcová, Jan Žižka, installed in many Czech cities during the decades of the Communist rule exists to this day, receiving restorations, attention and care.

Interestingly the same perspective is applicable also to the monuments to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in Germany, who were unlike Lenin or Stalin perceived as part of the national heritage. The exploitation by the Communist ideology could have been effortlessly overthrown and returned into the previous stage – as a commemoration of the German philosophers, rather than pioneers of the Communism. Albeit the Karl-Marx-Stadt was renamed back to Leipzig, some of the streets across Germany would remain named after them, not excluding the western regions of the country. The Berlin bronze monument of both Marx and Engels belongs to the evergreens among the Berlin tourist attractions, sometimes falling prey to the sprayers, but remaining in its original place nevertheless.¹³¹⁴

Rather more complicated is the problem of the monuments and memorials, dedicated to the commemoration of the Red Army. The memorials and monuments in the vast majority of cases remained standing, as they often were constructed on the burial grounds of the Soviet soldiers. Until the present day the large memorials provide backdrop to military showcases and anniversaries of the liberation, serving at the same time as the pilgrimage sites for the Russian relatives of the fallen soldiers.

The role of the Soviet troops in the liberation of the Nazi occupied territories was an indisputable fact, regardless of its subsequent exploitation for the ideological purposes of the Soviet hegemony. Yet the negative feelings towards the memorials, constructed in the era of the Soviets, result in occasional attacks by vandals and sometimes even

¹³¹⁴ BARTETZKY 2009, nepag.

organised effort to thwart the commemoration of the Red Army – too intertwined in the minds of the public with the forceful presence of the SSSR within the region.

In 2011 an eccentric demonstration of the ambiguous relationship of the public toward the Red Army memorials throughout the former Eastern Bloc, took place in Bulgaria, June 2011. An anonymous artist turned Sofia's massive bronze relief sculpture honouring the Red Army's advance on Nazi-allied Bulgaria during World War II into a parade of American comic book heroes and fictional characters, including the Joker, Wolverine, Superman, Santa Claus or Ronald McDonald, using bright sprayer's colours. In addition, the flag held by the soldiers has been painted with U.S. stars and stripes.¹³¹⁵ Quite within the pattern of a playful action art, using colour instead of violence to voice criticism, was David Černý's *Tank Nr. 23*. Černý famously in 1991 painted *The Monument to Soviet Tank Crews* (Památník sovětských tankistů) in pink colour.¹³¹⁶

The Socrealist sculpture, as an important cultural phenomenon, found its way into the popular culture. A film *Goodbye Lenin* (2003) by Wolfgang Becker, skilfully illustrating life in DDR with all its positives and drawbacks, used the removal of the Lenin's statue as one of the highly relevant and symbolic moments of the story narrative. The tabloid fate of the largest granite Stalin in the Eastern Europe, whose menacing figure ought to overlook Prague from its heights at Letná for millennia and was blasted away only seven years after it was finished, was captured in a novel form by Rudla Ceinar. In the Czech Republic is currently (2017) in preparation a film, elaborating upon the fate of the Stalin's Monument and its maker, Otakar Švec. In 2017 was the monument yet again reconstructed as a maquette by the film makers.

¹³¹⁵ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/20/bulgaria-soviet-army-monument-superhero-makeover-superman-captain-america-_n_880583.html

¹³¹⁶

Conclusion

The material, collected for the sake of this dissertation, is widely embracing the socio-political, historical and cultural circumstances of the Socrealist sculpture. The large extent of the text, compromising its conciseness, is to be justified by the honest effort of the author not to underestimate the serious task - the examination of controversial and rather sensitive subject. To provide a thoroughly researched, non-biased and accurate analysis of the problem, free from any speculation and tendentiousness, was the key objective of the author from the very beginning. The comparative character of the dissertation contributes to the understanding of the critical questions of art historical research of the period – such as the (in)authenticity of the local varieties of Socialist Realism and relatedness to the SSSR Socrealism, dates of the Socrealism existence, engagement of modernist sculptors, principles of the state/artist relationship or the second life of the Socrealist produce.

The first Part, called the *Presuppositions of the Socrealist Sculpture and Communist Historiography of Art* examined broad time-frame of 1870-1945 from the perspective of the Socrealist art historiography. The Socialist Realism used a number of self-justifying strategies, one of the most consequential being the emphasis on the historical continuity. The retrospective, employed by the ideologues of the Socrealism to promote it as the one and only acceptable artistic style, reached back into the 19th Century, in some cases even further. This unit therefore endeavours to analyse and subsequently characterize the process, leading to the construction of the pantheon of the “Classical National Artists“, employed without major modifications throughout the existence of the regime.

The chapter *Legacy of the Old Masters and the 19th Century Realists* scrutinized, how the artists of realist style, such as J. V. Myslbek or A. Dürer were exploited to build foundations of Socrealism in the field of sculpture, by coining them the pioneers of the progressive traditions. *Heroisation of Labour in Sculpture* described in greater detail, how did the Communist historiography of art address the epoch of the Industrial Revolution and the interest in manual labour subjects. The personalities such as Constantine Meunier, Jules Dalou or Fritz Koelle, who contributed to the

monumentalisation and heroization of the manual labour within sculpture, were especially easy targets for the conversions into the pioneers of the “Socialism construction“ sculpture.

The first half of the 20th century brought a wide range of artistic and spiritual tendencies on whose grounds Socialist Realism was constructed both on the ideological and material levels. How sculptors who returned in their work to the ideas of closed form, became, in a way, automatically a part of the ideologically correct narrative of the Czech art history was described in the chapter *New Classicism and Return to Order*. The Neoclassical revival was characterized there as efforts to find a new artistic expression tending once again towards accenting the volume and monumentality of shape through the use of classical figural form. Its origins and development is put in the context of European, mainly French art, especially as represented by the foremost representatives of Neoclassical tendencies, Aristide Maillol and Antoine Bourdelle whose influence was crucial in the development of new figuration and influenced also the Central European space. One of many Bourdelle's students was Vera Mukhina, who belonged among the foremost representatives of Soviet sculpture of Socialist Realism. Therefore, the chapter defined the influence of Neoclassical tendencies on the origins of Socialist Realism and assessed the way in which this episode contributed to the creation of the eclectic method.

The return to the classical sculpture form and the crisis of the avant-garde undoubtedly created an environment which was favourable for an artificial implementation of this new figural style. In its art-historical construction, the style stemmed from the social art of the 1920s – the visual art styles of Social Civilism and Neue Sachlichkeit (German: New Objectivity). The chapter *Social Art in Sculpture as Alleged Precursor to Socialist Realism* presented in what manner the artistic interest in social issues typical for the above mentioned artistic trends was misinterpreted in the retrospective of Communist art historians. Some pro-regime theoreticians, such as Jiří Kotalík, mentioned this episode of the art of the Czechoslovak Republic as the precursor of Socialist Realism, especially as an illustration of the local tradition of choosing “progressive topics”. This section, therefore, explains how the inclination to the left-wing ideology and the artistic interest in the everyday life expressed in Social Civilism helped directing certain artists

into the pitfall of the official pro-regime artistic work at the turn of the 1940s and 50s.

The feature of Socialist Realism sculpture which helps to define it as an instrument of ideological indoctrination is its accent on interconnecting the principle of revolution heroism and monumental sculpture intended for public space. The discussion on monumentality as a semiotic category had been going on since the beginning of the 20th century, relating among other to an unprecedented demand for a representative memorial in the century's first decades. The chapter *New Monumentality* explains how this theoretical debate affected the mentioned sculptural production of the period in question.

During the period from 1920 to 1945, the sculptural production was primarily affected by two devastating world wars. The theme of military, wartime, and nationally-political memorials forms the fundamental building blocks of the Socrealist sculpture typology. The chapters *War Monuments and Memorials* and *National History Monument* offered a comparison of both categories as they developed in Wilhelmine Germany and First-Republic Czechoslovakia, regarded as the necessary context for the following chapters. The text primarily shed light on the development towards unpretentiously conceived and pathos-free memorial art production and dealt also with Expressionism or baroquization, tendencies that affected the development of sculpture even in later years. The departure from the Art Nouveau and Neo-Baroque bombast toward the more modest Neoclassical form combining elements of noble, tranquil form and adequate realism was seen by Socrealist theoretician as one of the bases of the memorial art of the Communist era. Both chapters presented some sculptors who became recognized artists during the post-World War II period, such as Karel Pokorný, Karel Lidický, or Otakar Švec.

Part II, titled *Sculpture of Socrealism in the Mirror of Cultural Politics and Art Theory* presents the very core of the dissertation – the development of the official sculpture artwork of the period in question – depicted on the background of the cultural policy, fine art theory, and social and political development of the time. The entire part was divided into time periods structured according to the pivotal milestones of the central cultural policy. The aim of the chapter *PostWar Cultural Politics* is to put the post-war development of the artistic environment and the transformations of the conditions of

the artistic work into the general geopolitical and socio-cultural context.

With regard to the crucial role of the central power and its subordinate institutions in the creation of directives that directly influenced all aspects of the artistic work, it is necessary to explain the mechanisms of functioning of cultural institutions. Understanding the central cultural policy is inevitable if we endeavour to grasp the transformations of the Socialist Realism art. The mentioned chapter also presents the mechanism of the spread of the Soviet model of cultural policy to the satellite countries, which followed a uniform pattern and was aimed at gaining control over the artistic community as well as at careful selection of the suitable pro-regime artists.

The work further focused on the pivotal pillar of the cultural policy of a Socialist state and the necessary theoretical base of all pro-regime art – the method of Socialist Realism which was based in Marxist-Leninist philosophy and should provide ideological support to the Communist Party. The intent of the chapter *Paradigm Shift of the Art Theory* was to provide the necessary ideological fundament on which the official post-1948 sculpture production was based. The chapter primarily focused on the key principles of the “creative method” on their semantic level. It offered the analysis of its ideological dichotomy and presented for evaluation the conceptual paradoxes that lead to ambiguousness of the doctrine as well as to many discussions in artistic associations as well as the press of that time.

The second pillar of the chapter consists of the evaluation of the discussion taking place at that time in Czechoslovak academic press aimed at coping with the so-called crisis of the avant-garde and with the search for the so-called cultural orientation. The passionate debates on the future and orientation of Czechoslovak art in academic press after 1946 were more and more frequently affected by the efforts of pro-Soviet theoreticians to make the Soviet Union a new centre of arts at the expense of the traditionally recognized Francophone and Anglophone areas. The illusions of freedom of determination of the cultural orientation of post-war Czechoslovakia vanished as early as in 1947, when the exhibition of Soviet painters became an unpleasant surprise for artists and theoreticians as it showed the reactionary and openly ideological official art of the Soviet Union. All hopes All hopes for artistic independence were ultimately dashed

after the events of 1948 together with the rigid implementation of the Zhdanov Doctrine.

The sub-chapter *Postwar Situation in Sculpture* was dedicated to the characterization of post-war sculpture. The Protectorate cultural paralysis after the end of the war soon gave way to the effort of artists to continue in their pre-war work. The onerous socio-economic situation in which many of them were could not prevent the restoration of the cultural life. This restoration showed immediately after the end of the war also in in exhibition management as described in the sub-chapter *Postwar Exhibitions*. The gradual penetration of the Soviet influence impersonated in the exhibition “Soviets Sculpture – Exhibition of Photographs” had not stood out yet from the set of Czech and foreign art exhibitions dedicated to sculpture.

In the German environment, Expressionism still resonated as the main topic, having rightfully claimed the title of one of the most influential styles in Germany during the first three decades of the 20th century. Within it, Wilhelm Lehmbruck, Ernst Barlach, and Käthe Kollwitz, whose works became the target of the campaign against modern art during the period of the Third Reich, established themselves as the foremost sculptors. The Expressionist tradition enjoyed ample respect among modern artists and during the interwar and post-war periods it started to get its second wind, fed and supported by the argument of the congeniality of the Expressionist tendencies in the development of German art.

Gradual changes in the rhetoric were documented by key examples of the press of the period and the explanation of differing initial conditions for post-war sculpture in both countries was presented. The analysis of the post-war situation facilitated the understanding of the processes leading to gradual confirmation of the conservative stream as well as the understanding of the creeping ostracism of Modernist artists in the period preceding the February coup d'état in Czechoslovakia and the establishment of the DDR. We see the cause of the difference between the relative freedom of visual arts in pre-1948 Czechoslovakia and its early limitation in the Soviet occupation zone especially in the effects of the geo-political domination of the USSR over East Germany which demonstrated in a significantly more aggressive onset of the pro-Soviet orientation. The preparation of the official policy for sculpture started during the

immediate post-war period in Germany and which clearly demonstrated in numerous Red Army monuments by Soviet sculptors.

The chapter *Emerging Elite Figuralists* was a contribution to the topic of how the artists of the Realist expression who were to obtain the most significant posts after 1948/1949 integrated into the post-war Czechoslovak and East German artistic life. By accepting their role of the acolytes of the regime, these artists predetermined themselves to lose a considerable part of their artistic individuality. This specific somehow complicates the work with the professional and personal curricula of these artists as the sources of that time are heavily affected by this schematism. The aim of this section is therefore to remove the ideological ballast from the selected authors and evaluate the artists and the artwork of the observed period and style in a more objective view.

In Czechoslovakia, this concerns (with the exception of Karel Pokorný, the last significant pupil of Josef V. Myslbek) the generation of Jan Štursa's followers and their peers who later stood behind the restoration of the post-war figural sculpture - Jan Lauda, Karel Dvořák, Otakar Švec, the pupils of Bohumil Kafka and Otakar Španiel - Vincenc Makovský and Karel Lidický, followed by the younger generation of figuralists, Josef Malejovský, Konrád Babraj, or Alois Sopr. In the DDR, artists returning to the figural work of the break of the 19th and 20th centuries seized their opportunity. However, they did not remain unaffected by Modernist principles and the legacy of Expressionism. An exhibition of this early phase of sculpture in the DDR was II. Deutsche Kunstausstellung in Dresden (1949) where the works of Gustav Seitz, Eugen Hoffmann, and Fritz Cremer were presented and which became the last opportunity to see Modernist and traditional artwork within one exhibition. In the DDR, the focus is therefore especially on Fritz Cremer, Eugen Hoffmann, Gustav Seitz, or Ruthild Hahne. The aim is to present the mentioned sculptors on their artistic and professional level as well as to outline the process of their heading for the post of the official artists of the Communist regime.

The immediate post-war realisations, such as *Sbratření* (Fraternizing) by Karel Pokorný and the monuments by Vincenc Makovský in Zlín and Brno as well as the later installation of Žižka's monument by Bohumil Kafka on Vítkov hill in 1950 showed the

way for further work and revived the interest in monumental expression. The chapter *Sculptors in Education* pays attention also to the involvement of these sculptors in public institutions in the immediate post-war period and their influence on the resumption of teaching sculpture. In the atmosphere of great changes in Czechoslovakia, the favour was on certain artists who demonstrated their capability of producing Realist artwork of the required content in the immediate post-war period. Some of those were above mentioned Karel Pokorný and Vincenc Makovský, but also Josef Malejovský or Karel Lidický, the authors of post-war memorials in which they returned to the fundamentals of the traditional Czech sculpture in the form of Myslbek legacy.

A special chapter, *Charles University Karolinum and Sculpture* is dedicated to the rather little-explore topic of the sculptural decoration of Karolinum. There, the most respected artists contributed by bronze statues of John Huss (Karel Lidický) and Charles IV (Karel Pokorný), smaller work was done by Josef Wagner and Jan Lauda. This representative work helped the development of memorials of historical personalities in the following decades. A significant share of average, yet universally spread production of Czechoslovak post-war sculpture belonged to the production of war memorials and memorial plaques. The chapter *Commemoration of the Fallen in ČSR* is dedicated to the typological and iconographical analysis of this visual art works, which provided orders for numerous post-war sculptors all over the country.

The time frame of 1949 – 1953 delimits the most stringent period of Czech Stalinism. As mentioned in the chapters *Action Boards* and *SČSVU a VBK*, the origins of the cultural policies of Czechoslovakia and the DDR from which all other organization and structural changes derive are found in the transformation of independent artist associations and organizations into state-governed unions after 1948. To enhance the context of the issues, a short retrospective to the first post-war years and an outline of their influence on the establishment of the DDR and the February coup d'état in Czechoslovakia are provided. Presenting the context and causes of the growing influence of the Communist Party during the post-war period provides the framework for the further analysis of the development of the cultural scene which lead to the support of a centrally conceived program for all areas of the cultural sphere.

This part focuses especially on the origins of artist associations –Svaz československých výtvarných umělců / SČSVU (the Union of Czechoslovak Visual Artists) and Verband Bildender Künstler Deutschlands / VBKD (the Association of German Visual Artists) – which performed the vital function of umbrella organizations, wielding many authorities over its members. For the years to come, these structures became the ideological, organizational, and administrative authorities, whose analysis is inevitable for following the fates of politically conforming artists in the following parts of the dissertation.

The chapter *Official Sculpture 1948/1949 – 1953* deals with the post-coup changes in the area of fine arts and their effect on sculptors and their work. In this respect, special attention is paid to the origins of the academic journals of *Výtvarné umění* (Visual Arts) and *Bildende Kunst* (Visual arts) the organization of central exhibitions, and plans for the construction of certain monuments. The gradual seizure of control over the public space by the central government lead to politicising all spheres of the public life and also evolved pressure on a broader involvement of artists in the activities of the associations.

The chapter *Sculptors in the Service to the Party* subsequently deals with monographing the professional paths of individual artists. In Czechoslovakia these were sculptors such as Konrád Babraj, Jan Lauda, Vincenc Makovský, Josef Malejovský, Karel Pokorný, or Otakar Švec. The selection of individual artists follows the lists of the laureates of state awards for sculpture, where these sculptors earned the most honours and medals. Similar principle was used to identify the important East German sculptors. Among the most frequent holders of state medals and artistic prizes we can see Fritz Cremer, Waldemar Grzimek, Walter Arnold, Will Lammert, and Ruthild Hähne.

One of the most important sources of ideological sculpture was *Armádní výtvarné studio* (*Military Art Studio*), founded in 1953 as one of the subordinate units of the Czechoslovak Army and Ministry of Defence lead by Alexej Čepička. Sculptors Vendelín Zdrůbecký, Bohuslav Burian, and Jan Bartoš significantly contributed to the decline of the quality of sculpture which started to become evident in the official figural work in the second half of the 1960s. The above-mentioned artists belonged to the generation of sculptors born after 1920, whose onset is dealt with in the chapter *New Generation of Socrealists*. Among them, we may find especially the following: Tibor Bartfay, Svata

Hajerová, Jan Hána, Ludvík Kodým, Sylva Lacinová-Jílková, Věra Merhautová, Alexander Trizuljak, Luděk Varvažovský, Vendelín Zdrůbecký, etc., who came from the sculpture schools of Karel Pokorný and Vincenc Makovský.

Young artists whose career beginnings fell into the first years of the Communist regime often participated in action tasks and competitions in search of achieving professional acknowledgement. Thus, their early work was rich in the themes of work, military, and Socialist construction that were promoted the most by the SČSVU. Thus, the majority of Socialist artefacts consisted of a mass of thematically conforming works of average artistic quality which often did not progress beyond plaster models and contributed to the “Sovietization” of Czechoslovak sculpture as the following chapters describe.

The results of exploring the role of sculptors in public offices are presented in the chapter *Sculptors in the Organisational Structures*. The text deals with the activities these persons in the said positions and their influence on the ideological work within the union which directly affected its further orientation. The said mechanisms become evident on the examples of sculptors who achieved influential posts in the political-cultural structures. The dissertation applies this issue on the environment of Czech and East German sculptors in the effort to understand the mechanism of functioning of these artists in relation to the ideology, party, and institution where they worked. In Czechoslovakia, they are demonstrated on the example of a recognized sculptor of Realistic style, Karel Pokorný, the president of the SČSVU and the president of Akademie výtvarných umění (the Academy of Fine Arts), and sculptor Václav Jícha, the SČSVU secretary. East Germany is represented by sculptor and the vice-president of Akademie der Künste (the Academy of Arts), Fritz Cremer.

While the Czechoslovak topic may be construed using solely the union’s correspondence, speeches, and internal materials, the East German part of the issue offers the collected edition of Fritz Cremer’s correspondence which provides an exceptional testimony about the internal state of mind of this pro-regime artist. The work thus offers an analysis of Cremer’s texts, the outputs of which are used to provide understanding his involvement in the public sphere as well as to comprehend the inner feelings of a pro-regime artist. The schism of a sculptor exposed constantly to the pressure of a

centralized state who keeps trying to find an acceptable artistic standpoint, and to justify his conformism in his own eyes, yet keeping the obtained privileges at the same time, stems from the ambivalence of latent integrity standing against the (frequently prevailing) tendency towards pro-regime conformism. F. Cremer may be, as discussed in detail in the dissertation, classified into the category of artists, who were, apparently because of their exceptional value for the regime, forgiven some politically undesirable claims.

The chapter *The New Course in Art Politics* explains the way in which the political trial of General Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Rudolf Slánský in 1951 served the purges in the leadership of the SČSVU, allowing blaming an imaginary inner enemy – the so-called *Slánský's clique* – for the previous failures in the efforts of the leading officials of the artist associations up to 1953. Here, the chapter deals with the yet unexplored topic of the coup within the SČSVU, discussed in detail in the chapters *Public Involvement of Sculptors* and *Sculptors in the Organisational Structures*.

The new orientation that significantly affected the functioning of the associations in Czechoslovakia had a considerably weaker effect on sculpture. As the realisation intervals, expenses, and demands of a public statue are quite large, no crucial changes occurred in this sphere during the period from 1953 to 1956. We may say that some of the most conservative Socrealist sculptural works were created during this very period – e.g. the bronze gate of the monument of Vítkov by Josef Malejovský. As mentioned further mentioned by the chapter *Adherence to the Conservative Line within Sculpture*, 1954, a permanent exhibition of Czech sculpture was opened in the château of Zbraslav. There, the developmental concept of the history of Czech sculpture was materialized according to the principles of the Communist historiography.

The chapter *Echoes of the Soviet Socialist Realism* is a contribution to the crucial topic of the relations of Central European sculpture to the Soviet example. The forced import of the obsolete Russian academicism intensely manifested in the academic press, at Soviet art exhibitions and in the visits of Soviet artists. Svaz československo-sovětského přátelství (the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship Society) and the parallel Gesellschaft für Deutsch-Sowjetische Freundschaft (the German-Soviet Friendship Association) evolved

persistent and intensive activities that reflected in exhibitions of Soviet art and propagation of the USSR in the sphere of culture as well as industry, agriculture, history, or politics. Communist editors of academic journals provided for sufficient information on the art of the USSR by their tireless production of articles on this topic, especially in the period from 1950 to 1953.

Whenever we find excellent examples of “Socialistic Realism” among the post-war production of some older Czech artists such as Karel Pokorný or Jan Lauda, in their case it is almost exclusively the use of conservative figural Myslbeč tradition rather than drawing on Soviet sources. As well as in the case of Russian academicism, the origins of Czech academicism at the end of the 19th century stem from French examples. This pan-European academicism of advanced European countries which spread even to tsarist Russia is thus the reason of the visual compatibility of both traditions. The quality of post-war figural works of the foremost representatives of Czechoslovak figuration, which were later labelled as excellent examples of Socrealism for the purposes of building ideology, thus cannot in any case be attributed to the success of the forced import of the style but is solely the result of the lasting high quality of Czech sculpture.

With the onset of the generation of artists born around 1920 and educated in the sculpture studios of Karel Pokorný and Vincenc Makovský in the 1940s. The young, ambitious sculptors sought their professional debut and were willing to satisfy the demand for ideologically enhanced art oriented towards enthusiastic work, which would be formally Socrealistic. Through their frequent participation in action tasks and competitions and field trips to the country and factories they became the representatives of the first generation of pure Socrealists. The work presents detailed examples of artworks from which it is clearly obvious how the work of these artists lost the professional skill of Myslbeč's and Štursa's pupils to make way for an artistically unconvincing pseudo-style and opened the door to a fatal decline of the figural work in the coming decades.

The relation of East German artistic production to the Soviet import is very different. Although the mentioned pan-European academicism took root here at the break of the

19th and 20th centuries – e.g. in the works of Louis Touillon, in the 20th century we find this tendency very weakened. Figurative work was fundamentally influenced by the German tendency towards expression which could not be broken even by a concentrated effort of the Soviet administration and later of the Communist government to implement Soviet examples into all aspects of life and culture. A great percentage of monumental works of Socialist Realism in the territory of the DDR was created by Soviet artists, be it the Red Army monument in Treptow or monuments to V. I. Lenin or K. Marx. Although there is a part of artistic production of the 1950s in which we can trace the Soviet inspiration easily (especially in Dresden), the mass of visual arts of the DDR resonates the strongest on the notes referencing to the legacy of Expressionism and Neue Sachlichkeit.

Regarding the comparison of the Socialist realism in Czechoslovakia and DDR a final note is related to the understanding of art. The main difference, obvious and observable in the Realist art of the 1920s and 1930s lays in the understanding of sculpture as either being or not being part of its environment. The German sculpture is inclined to retain the closed form and distinctive line, that almost never does venture into the open space, does not adopt many impressionist measures and was not ever tempted to come into the open. This tendency influenced even the Socialist realism, where Czechoslovakian sculpture “succeeded” more thoroughly in replication of the Soviet model, because it was developmentally more suitable to do so. German sculpture in the Socialist time very scarcely acquired the form of Socialist Realism, the way the Czechoslovakian sculpture did, and the most typically Socrealist monumental works were elaborated by the Soviet artists.

An interesting perspective on the Socialist Realism was expressed by Fritz Cremer, who claimed to consider the term inaccurate and conceded he rather uses for his art a term „socialist art,“ which to him more precisely captures the tendencies of the current art epoch. This very aptly summarises the true nature of German Socrealist art, as it never ventured to really grasp the Soviet model. Instead it strived to find the expression of the inner contents in a visual appearance of the work, that in artists mind aligned with the inner idea – in Germany in a highly specific and often non-realist way.

For Czechoslovakia, the membership of the Eastern Bloc meant among other the necessity to strengthen the relationships with the fellow Socialist states, including the DDR. The chapter *Mutual Contact – DDR and ČSR* explains the cultural relationships of both countries on the background of political relations. The aim of the restoration of favourable relationships of East Germans and Czechoslovaks was, apart from official visits, pursued through exhibitions, cultural delegations, newspaper articles or translations of publications. Czechoslovak artists thus could encounter the modern German art through the monographical exhibition of Käthe Kollwitz in March 1951 or the exhibition of Fritz Cremer in July 1957. Similarly, a delegation of East German pedagogues and artists, including sculptor Hans Kies visited Czechoslovakia in 1954 to learn about the local artistic life.

The political development in the USSR was of crucial influence on the creation of the cultural policy over the entire period in question. The turbulences affecting the elites of the political structures had to be absorbed and assimilated. The ways in which the central power coped with the political turbulences in the period from 1956 to 1968 and the way these political fluctuations affected artist associations and the artistic production are outlined in the chapter *From the Destalinisation to the Prague Spring*. All measures taken to eliminate the political instability reflected in the internal processes of cultural institutions and guidelines of the artistic production.

The chapter *Transformation and Socrealist Sculpture 1958-1962 in ČSR* deals with the transformations within the sphere of culture leading to the resurrection of the Modernist tradition and the effort to restore the space for artistic experiment after 1956. The Block of Art Groups (which became a constant annoyance for the SČSVU) associated artist groups of less conforming nature and sought more creative freedom. Some of the sculptors who strived to get rid of the restrictive rules of the Socrealist doctrine were also the pupils of Josef Wagner, sculptors Miloslav Chlupáč, Zdeněk Palcr, Eva Kmentová, or Vladimír Preclík. With their return to orienting towards the inspiring western art, the artists started a new period of the history of Czechoslovak art, which made art a space for a free experiment once again up to 1968.

The structural changes in the leadership of the cultural life oriented at decentralization

and releasing the stringent ties lead both to the gradual weakening of the monopoly of Socialist Realism in the majority production and remarkable, often bizarre, experimental efforts to combine modern expression with the figuration of Socrealism which are described in more detail on the example of the artwork in the region of Ostrava. However, there existed areas of sculpture where the said changes were reflected marginally, as presented in the chapter *Stronghold of Socrealism – Monuments, Portraits and Memorials*. It summarizes the examples of sculpture works which endured the crusade to regain the artistic freedom and preserved all the external attributes of the production prior to 1956. These are primarily the examples of monumental works which preserved the conservative standard – historical and political portraits (Klement Gottwald, Julius Fučík), monuments and memorials, such as the Red Army memorial in Bratislava (1957-1960).

The chapter *Notes on the Decline of the Socrealism after 1962* brings several comments on the situation after 1962. This year became a symbolical turning point as the most explicit residue of Stalinism was removed – the memorial to Stalin in Letná. Although new Socrealist artefacts were still made (as a result of the inertia and clumsiness of monumental sculpture in relation to the dynamic development), real artists already openly oriented to seeking an authentic expression. Authors who established themselves as Socrealists in the 1950s, such as Josef Malejovský, Sylva Jílková-Lacinová, Karel Hladík, or Jindřich Wielgus, started towards artistic experiment in the 1960s. After 1962 we can therefore claim that persisting on the doctrine of Socrealism became the sole domain of self-seekers and opportunists. An example going beyond the temporal definition of the work may especially be certain works from the period of Normalisation, such as Památník Ostravské operace (the Memorial of the Military Campaign of Ostrava) in Hrabyně by Miloš Zet, or Na paměť československých bojovníků v bitvě u Sokolova (In Memory of Czechoslovak Fighters in the Battle of Sokolov) by Vendelín Zdrůbecký.

The section *Promotional Methods and Tools of the Regime* is dedicated to the ways in which a sculptural artefact became part of Socialist public space and to the methods of promoting the correct ideological concepts. Since 1948, the organization of exhibitions, planning, competitions, and constructions of memorials became an affair of the state and its subordinate institutions. The section deals with individual categories of this activity

and tries to analyse individual spheres and subsequently synthesize the characteristic features of these processes and their output in the form of sculptural artefacts.

The sub-chapter titled *Political Monument* deals with the pivotal works where the application of Socialist Realism was most significant. These are the *monument to J. V. Stalin* and the *monument of Vítkov*. In the DDR, the *Buchenwald Memorial* by Fritz Cremer is presented as the representative work. Although monuments and memorials undoubtedly represented the most prestigious orders, sculpture work in the form of minor sculptures and models presented through regular exhibitions serves well as an illustration of the developmental tendencies. The sub-chapter *Exhibitions* therefore deals with exhibitions during the explored period in the territories of Czechoslovakia and the DDR. It illustrates the changes in the cultural policy using the transformations of the iconographic motifs and thematic preferences, which had the tendency to mirror the shifts in the cultural orientation. The transformation of the themes and motifs may be demonstrated, for example, on the accent on mining and heavy industry in the early 1950s, while after 1956, a shift of orientation takes place giving space to the motifs of the life in Socialism such as family or sports.

In order to increase the quality of artwork and to achieve a broader representation of average artists as well as self-taught artists and enthusiastic amateurs, action tasks were offered. Their goal was to foster the creation of artefacts adequate to the existing prevailing thematic preferences, and thus provide the opportunity for the artists to make living. The works created within the action tasks and other partial events were of variable quality, still it is one of the typical features of the artistic production of the early 1950s. The action tasks are therefore dealt with in more detail in the separate sub-chapter *The Action Tasks*. The chapter *Official Prizes and Honorary Titles* was created based on the list of the most significant artists and their pivotal works to help identify the most important pro-regime artists as well as to allow to understand the ideas of the central power concerning the properties of the preferred works of art.

Section IV, titled *Typology and Iconography of the Socialist Realism Sculpture* provides a detailed typological and iconographical analysis of the Socialist Realism art in Czechoslovakia, using the parallel artistic production in the DDR to facilitate

understanding broader relations of its origins and purpose. The collected material is classified according to basic thematic areas into the sculpture of the personality cult, Red Army memorials and monuments, monuments to the heroes of the Communist resistance movement, politically-historical monuments to personalities of the past, allegoric characters – heroes of work, personifications of Communist ideas, and the genre themes of youth, family, and sports. With regards to the principles of the functioning of the cultural bureaucratic machine of the totalitarian state, it should be pointed out that the typological classification is a much more suitable method than monographing, as the artistic individualities of the authors became obliterated.

The most important place within Socialist sculpture belongs to *Personality Cult Sculpture*, a theme comprising especially the representative public orders of portraits of both local and Soviet political leaders. The text is introduced by a brief excursion into the history of the use of monuments for the purposes of Lenin's "monumental propaganda" after 1918, and after 1933 as a part of Stalin's personality cult. The construction of monuments that were meant to be eternal became one of the most ostentatious demonstrations of the cult and was later introduced to all countries within the Soviet sphere of influence. Representative monuments to the leaders became a stimulus for city centre zoning and the gravity centre of the Communist public life.

Although the effort to transfer the cult of Soviet leaders to Czechoslovakia and the DDR did not really succeed among the majority population, political representatives systematically promoted the attainment of the external appearance of this cult by the very construction of monumental memorials. A separate section was dedicated to the sculptural portraits of J. V. Stalin and V. I. Lenin, K. Gottwald and W. Ulbricht which emerged in large cities, often on the occasions round anniversaries of Socialist holidays or birthdays – for example the celebration of Stalin's 70th birthday in 1949. The universal effort of the artists to comply with the traditional types and the iconographical concept became a typical feature of personality cult sculpture.

A remarkable contribution to the relatively monotonous production of this field are complex sculptural sets of reliefs and minor sculptures intended for decorating the agitation-political museums and expositions. The action tasks for the artistic decoration

of the Museum of V. I. Lenin in Hybernská street in Prague or the Museum of Klement Gottwald in Rytířská street inspired to create scenes from the political careers of both leaders. The result were numerous reliefs and minor sculptures among which a series of scenes from the youth years of Klement Gottwald created for the action task of 1954 stands out as its naïve genre evokes certain motifs of Christian iconography.

Throughout the entire observed period, the pivotal theme of monumental sculpture was the victory of the Red Army over fascism. The eternal gratefulness to the Soviet Union which shed the blood of its sons to liberate the subdued nations of its Slavic brethren in the so-called Great Patriotic War, was the central topic of the state ideology. Large monuments and memorials, often in places of fallen soldiers' graves belonged to the most generously conceived and paid public orders, often associating numerous collective of authors. The chapter *Red Army, Liberation and Partisan Monuments 1945-1968* therefore offers a detailed analysis of the topics in the territories of Czechoslovakia and the DDR in terms of typology, iconography, and art history. Apart from representative orders it also pays attention to several regional realisations which document the effort of local authors to cope with new demands using the well-approved patterns.

The Communist Pantheon, which was an integral part of the ideological construct, paid special attention to the personalities of the anti-fascist resistance movement. Such Czechoslovak personalities as Julius Fučík, Jožka Jabůrková, or Marie Kudeříková should, as well as their German counterparts Ernst Thälmann, Rosa Luxemburg, or Karl Liebknecht serve as a role model for the youth. The legacies of J. Fučík and E. Thälmann were promoted by all possible means and their names became the auspices of youth organizations. The sculptural production dedicated to these personalities was determined by carrying this fundamental purpose and was one of the instruments of pursuing an important goal which was the education of a conscious Socialist human being. The chapter *Heroes of the Resistance Movement* uses a detailed analysis of the sculpture production to show the comparison and mutual ties of Czechoslovakia and the DDR in the promotion of the cult of these personalities.

The chapter *National and Working Class History Monuments* presents a thorough analysis of the use of historical themes in the area of both minor and memorial sculpture

production of the official mainstream. The new interpretation of the national history in compliance with the ideological standpoints of Marxism-Leninism strived for a complex change in the understanding of its sense by the majority public. The understanding of the hierarchy of topics and themes is facilitated by the explanation of the ideological concept established by the Minister of Education, Zdeněk Nejedlý, whose weakness for the interpretation of the national history according to Alois Jirásek was the crucial influence on the concept of the Communist historiography. While the portrait of significant personalities of the recent national history became a safe haven for less devout artists after 1948, young careerists actively participated in the materialisation of Nejedlý's visions through the realisation of the themes presented within action tasks and competitions, whose structured overview is offered in the respective sub-chapters.

The sub-chapter *15th – 17th Century “Pioneers of the Class Conscience”* focuses mostly on the theme which formed one of the first chapters of Nejedlý's interpretation of the national history – the Hussite revolution and its predecessor, Christian reformer John Huss. The depiction of the reformation efforts of John Huss and the Hussite rebellions as class war, as the demonstration of the class conscience awake for the first time, contributed primarily to the construction and support of the historical continuity of the Communist movement. The text deals with partial realisations of monuments to John Huss, Jan Žižka, a special category is dedicated to John Amos Comenius.

The subject of the special chapter *The 19th Century “Communism Revivalists”* is a clear evidence of the capability and willingness of the Communist ideology to recast the representatives of the 19th century culture, linked indisputably to the values and the life of bourgeoisie to make them the predecessors of the Communist culture. The way in which the legacies of Božena Němcová, Bedřich Smetana, or Alois Jirásek were used to suit the construction of the Communist ideology and the ways in which this effort reflected in building their memorials are the subject of the individual sub-chapters. A special case are Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, whose legacy even in the form of memorial art survived in Germany to these days.

The last area which may be classified as a separate category in terms of typology is the topic of the *Socialist Construction Heroes and Allegories*. The standardized representatives of manual and labour professions were elevated to become the heroes

of Socialist construction through public sculptures and minor sculptures in the 1950. The targeted promotion of these themes was connected to the branches of industry and agriculture that played the key part in the environment of the centrally directed economy. The chapter recognizes the changes in the theme and the accent on the individual professions which reflect the changes in the area of the national economy. The immortalization of the “Stakhanovites” enthusiastic and diligent workers in factories, heavy industry and agricultural workers in the heroic form of bronze or stone statues should strengthen the central ideology of Communism and, at the same time, contribute to the increase of the productiveness of work

The chapter *Collective Farm Workers and Labourers* deals in detail with the frequent topic of mining and “Wiederaufbau (Restoration)” in the territory of the DDR and offers an analysis of exhibitions in Czechoslovakia documenting the changes in the use of the themes during the 1950s. The section *Communist Youth and Family* then deals with the question of how the Socialist state used sculpture to indoctrinate the youth and with the glorification of the family as the basic unit of the Socialist society. A separate category is the *Personifications of Ideals*, which, at the first sight do not stand out of the above-mentioned categories. However, these compositions, usually group figural ones, boast exalted names referring to higher ideas.

Section V, *Official Socrealist Sculpture Second Life* concentrates on the remarkable second life of the sculpture production in question which, especially during the recent years undergoes an interesting development, attracting also the interest of the public. While the statues of young pioneers and cooperative farm girls rest in the depositories of museums, the statues of the Communist chiefs disappeared from their prominent pedestals immediately after 1989. According to the foundry tradition, their heads were separated from the rest and preserved, while the remaining material was sold or used to cast new statues. The Socrealist statues, however, often found a new use in theme parks which may be seen in Vilnius, Lithuania or Budapest, Hungary.

The dissertation was written with the ambition to contribute to the rehabilitation of the research subject of the Socrealist art. Being an inseparable part of the Communist regime cultural history, its analysis hopefully contributed to the overall knowledge of this highly intriguing subject.

List of Abbreviations

AVU – Akademie výtvarných umění

AVS – Armádní výtvarné studio (The Army's Art Studio)

BRD – Bundesrepublik Deutschland (the Federal Republic of Germany)

CPSU – Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

ČFVU – Český fond výtvarných umění

ČSR – Československá republika

DČVU – Dějiny českého výtvarného umění (The History of Czech Fine Arts), eds. PETRASOVÁ, Dagmar / LORENZOVÁ, Helena. Praha 1984 –

DVV – Deutsche Zentralverwaltung für Volksbildung (German Central Administration for National Education)

FF MU – Filozofická fakulta Masarykovy univerzity (The Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University)

FF UK – Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy (The Faculty of Arts, Charles University)

FHS UK – Fakulta humanitních studií Univerzity Karlovy (Faculty of Humanities, Charles University)

FDGB – Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (Free German Trade Union Confederation)

GHMP – Galerie hlavního města Prahy

KPD – Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (The Communist Party of Germany)

KSČ – Komunistická strana Československa (The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia)

NA – Národní Archiv (The National Archive)

NVA – Nationale Volksarmee (The National People's Army)

PLSU – Present location and state unknown

SBZ – Sowjetische Besatzungszone Deutschland (The Soviet Occupation Zone)

SED – Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, (The Socialist Unity Party)

SMAD – Sowjetische Militäradministration in Deutschland (The Soviet Military Administration)

UMPRUM – Vysoká škola uměleckoprůmyslová v Praze (The Academy of Applied Arts)

SČSVU – Svaz československých výtvarných umělců

SSSR – Soyuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Republik (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

SUA – Státní ústřední archiv

SVU Mánes – Spolek výtvarných umělců Mánes (The Mánes Association of Fine Artists)

ÚV KSČ – Ústřední výbor KSČ (The Central Committee of the KSČ)

Notes on Translation

The apology of the author for the quality of the English text is rendered necessary by the fact, the limited resources made the professional grammar check impossible. The titles of art works are translated, with the original title in brackets. Abbreviations are used in their accustomed form and are not translated. Names of institutions, groups and local places are translated where found reasonable, otherwise is translation provided in a note within the page.

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