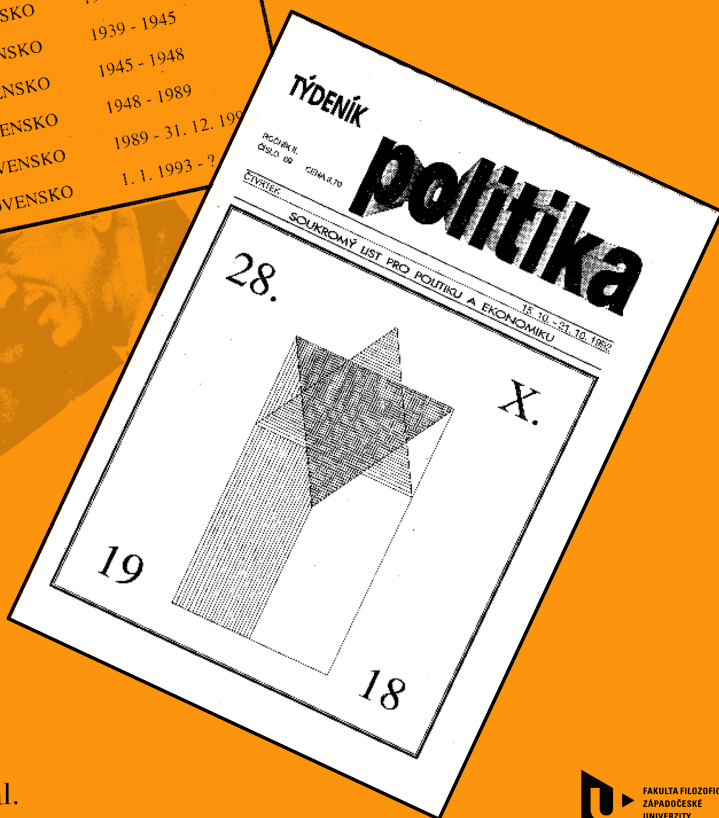


# History of Hatred Hatred of History

Encounters Between Antisemitism and  
Historical Memory

ČESKO	★	SLOVENSKO	1918 - 1939
ČESKO	✠	★ SLOVENSKO	1939 - 1945
ČESKO	★ ★	SLOVENSKO	1945 - 1948
ČESKO	★ ★	SLOVENSKO	1948 - 1989
ČESKO	★ ★	SLOVENSKO	1989 - 31. 12. 199
ČESKO	★	SLOVENSKO	1. 1. 1993 - ?



Zbyněk Tarant,  
Věra Tydlitátová et al.

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and Historical Memory

University of West Bohemia in Pilsen 2013

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and Historical Memory

Department of Middle-Eastern Studies

University of West Bohemia in Pilsen

2013

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# Introduction

This book is an attempt to reflect on the various encounters between antisemitism, history and collective memory. Its primary purpose is to explore various strategies by means of which the anti-Semites relate to historical events and concepts. It is an attempt to contribute to the discussions about the uses and abuses of historical and collective memory. In their analyses of antisemitic discourse, the authors strive to offer new perspectives on how has history been revised and rewritten in the antisemitic thought. The antisemitic interpretation of the Nazi Holocaust is well-known and documented. However, while the Holocaust remains the most important target of revisionist strategies, these attempts at revising, denying or even justifying the Holocaust are only a part of a much broader discourse of an alternative history, constructed to fit the antisemitic imagination. This book will present and analyze some of them. Its authors present numerous examples and case studies of historical constructs from which anti-Semites derive their identity. These constructs fundamentally shape the way in which anti-Semites understand the world around them.

Our studies of antisemitism attempt not to conclude by a mere statement that the analyzed movement, author, ideology, symbolics etc., is or is not antisemitic. For us, this is only the beginning of a further journey. If the anti-Semite's image of a Jew is a combination

of everything the anti-Semite does not want to be, we could, by analyzing such an image, learn more about the anti-Semite himself/herself: Who is he/she? What made him/her to become an anti-Semite in the first place? How does the antisemitic beliefs alter his/her understanding of the world around him or her?

To answer these questions, the authors present a collection of case studies that inquire into the antisemitic concepts of history. Ivo Budil has analyzed the writings of Benjamin Disraeli and Ernest Renan to show how was the image of Jews shaped in the early racial ideology of the nineteenth century and what role did the various interpretations of history play in the formation of this image. A detailed insight into the thought of contemporary Czech antisemitism will be offered in the two following chapters. Both of these chapters demonstrate the encounters between antisemitism and historical memory on concrete examples from the Czech history. Věra Tydlitátová shows, how the contemporary Czech far-right circles relate to the historical personality of the first Czechoslovak president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and his legacy. The next study “Neo-Nazis on the Nation’s Boulevard” analyzes how the Czech far-right scene views the events of Velvet revolution and in particular, the day of 17<sup>th</sup> November, in which the revolution itself started. I am showing, how the most important Czech public holiday was “discovered” by the neo-Nazis and how did it move from the periphery to the center of the neo-Nazi and far-right discourse. Such analyses offer some crucial conclusions about the way the Czech far-right constructs its own identity and relationship towards the mainstream society.

This book is not an easy reading and when I started to gather the texts from my colleagues, I had a feeling that a piece of hope should

be offered at the end. This non-Jewish book on antisemitism should include at least some Jewish perspective. That is why I asked my dear colleague, Pavel Hošek, to provide an insight into the thoughts of one of the most important 20th century Jewish thinkers, Abraham Joshua Heschel, into his reflections on the problem of antisemitism and into his response to this virulent hatred. I hope that Hošek's summary of Heschel's thoughts on reconciliation and forgiveness will relieve at least some of the pain and distress opened by the difficult topics of the previous chapters.

Zbyněk Tarant

October 2013

Pilsen, Czech Republic

# Benjamin Disraeli, Ernest Renan and the Rise of the Concept of Aryan Racial Supremacy

*Ivo Budil*

The symbolic constructions of national memory and history in the works of scholars and writers of the nineteenth century and the rise of political and ideological antisemitism represented an important aspect of the agenda of modernity. The emergence of Aryan and Semitic linguistic and racial identities as an outcome of the orientalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth century and their mutual antagonism should be studied in the context of specific political and ideological developments, aspirations and symbolic strategies of various agents in the Western countries at the dawn of modern era.

When the Whig party was defeated in the general election which took place in the United Kingdom in June and July 1841, Tory leader, Robert Peel, was asked by Queen Victoria in August to form a new government. Benjamin Disraeli, a rising star among the conservatives, was not included in Peel's cabinet.<sup>1</sup> An important factor behind this omission was the opposition of Edward Smith-Stanley, the future fourteenth Earl of Derby.<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Disraeli was

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<sup>1</sup> Monypenny, 1917, Pp. 117-120; Blake, pp. 161-166.

<sup>2</sup> Monypenny, 1917, P. 122.

deeply disappointed. In the following years, he became Peel's prominent opponent. As a supporter of protectionism, Disraeli criticized Peel's shift to free-trade liberal policy.<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Disraeli was convinced that the aristocrats and large landowners, backed by the people, should become natural leaders of England. He proposed a kind of paternalistic feudal socialism based on traditional values. He stood against the *Poor Law Amendment Act* of 1834 and the system of workhouses, and was sympathetic to the requirements of the Chartists.<sup>4</sup>

George Smythe, the seventh Viscount Strangford, Lord John Manners, the second son of the Duke of Rutland, Scottish MP Alexander Baillie Cochrane (later Lord Lamington), and some other young conservative politicians, especially the graduates of Eton and Cambridge, were attracted to Disraeli's political ideas and gathered around him.<sup>5</sup> They called themselves "Young England" and shared a romantic dream of reconciliation between an organic medieval order and the challenges and values of modernity.<sup>6</sup> The foundation of a new political party, which could have won forty or fifty deputies in the Parliament, was considered, with Benjamin Disraeli as its natural political and spiritual leader. However, the Young England movement did not have a long life.<sup>7</sup>

Benjamin Disraeli utilized his personal experience with the Young England phenomenon in his most important novels: *Coningsby*, *Sybil*, and *Tancred*.<sup>8</sup> This trilogy stood at the beginning of the

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 123-125.

<sup>4</sup> Froude, p. 85.

<sup>5</sup> Disraeli, 1844, p. xv.

<sup>6</sup> Monypenny, 1917 p. 162; Schwarz, pp. 81-83.

<sup>7</sup> Blake, pp. 518-519; Monypenny, 1917, pp. 166-168; Wilson, p. 66.

<sup>8</sup> Schwarz, p. 83; Bivona, pp. 305-325.

process during which the Europe learned to think in racial categories, and thus, in a certain sense, it initiated a racial revolution in the Western political imagination. The first volume of *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* by Arthur Gobineau came out nine years later and was inspired (just as Disraeli's novels) by a romantic nostalgia for medieval chivalry.

### **The Young England Trilogy and the Role of Racial Natural Aristocracy**

The novel *Coningsby, or, The New Generation* was published in May 1844.<sup>9</sup> It was one of the first political novels in the history of British literature. The plot of the novel, which begins in May 1832 and takes place during the political disturbances that preceded the passing of the electoral law reform and continued into the early forties, is not very complicated and relates the political beginnings of young Henry Coningsby (inspired by the personality of George Smythe). On the pages of this novel, Benjamin Disraeli introduced a “wise Jew”, Sidonia (allegedly Lionel Nathan Rothschild, son of Nathan Meyer Rothschild, who after the death of his father took over the banking house in London). Sidonia was endowed with almost superhuman qualities. He was depicted as a character in whom all the advantages of typical Jewish attributes reached the most advanced form. Sidonia was a metaphor and epitome of great intellectual power and superiority of the Jewish race that inspires

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<sup>9</sup> Schwarz, pp. 90-98; Braun, pp. 80-84.



and motivates others (such as Coningsby).<sup>10</sup> For Disraeli, Jews were essentially Tories, the “natural aristocracy” of humankind:<sup>11</sup>

The fact is you cannot destroy a pure race of the Caucasian organization. It is a physiological fact; a simple law of nature, which has baffled Egyptian and Assyrian Kings, Roman Emperors, and Christian Inquisitors. No penal laws, no physical tortures, can effect that a superior race should be absorbed in an inferior, or be destroyed by it. The mixed persecuting races disappear; the pure persecuted race remains. And at this moment, in spite of centuries, of tens of centuries, of degradation, the Jewish mind exercises a vast influence on the affairs of Europe ... You never observe a great intellectual movement in Europe in which the Jews do not greatly participate. The first Jesuits were Jews; that mysterious Russian Diplomacy which so alarms Western Europe is organized and principally carried on by Jews; that mighty revolution which is at this moment preparing in Germany, and which will be in fact a second and greater Reformation, and of which so little is as yet known in England, is entirely developing under the auspices of Jews, who almost monopolise the professorial chairs of Germany.<sup>12</sup>

After 1830, the traditional vision of racial rivalry between the Gauls and the Franks in the French history, and between the Saxons and Normans at the British Isles, gradually disappeared from the European political imagination.<sup>13</sup> It was obvious that the conflicts in the modern industrial society would be based on class, not on race. So far, the Aryan race meant very little: it was an obscure

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<sup>10</sup> “... was a man who notoriously would never diminish by marriage the purity of his race” (Disraeli, 1844, p. 383); “No earthly consideration would ever induce him to impair that purity of race on which he prides himself” (Disraeli, 1844, p. 420).

<sup>11</sup> “An unmixed race of a first-rate organization is the aristocracy of Nature” (Disraeli, 1844, p. 267).

<sup>12</sup> Disraeli, 1844, pp. 303-304.

<sup>13</sup> There is an echo of this racial interpretation of history in Disraeli’s statement: “It is still France, little changed; and only more Gallic; as England has become less Norman and more Saxon” (Disraeli, 1844, pp. 365-366).

philological outcome of the orientalism of the last decades of the eighteenth century, not a source of racial arrogance and power. Its “finest hour” came only after the rise of social Darwinism in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the forties, racial thinking was declining in Europe. The continent was frightened by the “spectre of communism”, not by the challenge of a “higher race”. One of the few ethnic groups in the European population which was then demanding, through Benjamin Disraeli, a recognition of its racial exclusivity and superiority, were Sephardic Jews.

In 1845, Benjamin Disraeli published his new novel *Sybil, or, The Two Nations*.<sup>14</sup> In this volume, he described the political events and social struggle in the decade from 1837 to 1844 when Britain was hit by a severe economic crisis. Disraeli was probably inspired by his stay in the industrial centers in the North in 1843 and 1844.<sup>15</sup> His book appeared in the same year as Friedrich Engels’ testimony on the living conditions of the English working class. In his picture of the social struggle<sup>16</sup> in contemporary England, Benjamin Disraeli

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<sup>14</sup> Schwarz, pp. 98-99; pp. 105-124; Braun, pp. 85-110.

<sup>15</sup> Monypenny, 1917, p. 250. Benjamin Disraeli made use of the data from the *Blue Book* on social conditions in the city of Woodgate, *The Factory System Illustrated in a Series of Letters to Lord Ashley* (1842) and *The First Report from the Midland Mining Commission, South Staffs* (1843); see Braun, pp. 87-88.

<sup>16</sup> “There is more serfdom in England now than at any time since the Conquest. I speak of what passes under my daily eyes when I say; that those who labour can as little choose or change their masters now, as when they were born thralls. There are great bodies of the working classes of this country nearer the condition of brutes than they have been at any time since the Conquest. Indeed, I see nothing to distinguish them from brutes, except that their morals are inferior: Incest and infanticide are as common among them as among the lower animals ... I say; for instance, the people were better clothed, better lodged, and better fed just before the War of the Roses than they are at this moment. We know how an English peasant lived in those times: he ate flesh every day; he never drank water; was well housed, and clothed in stout woollens ... The average term of life in this district among the working classes is seventeen ... Of the infants born in Mowbray, more than a moiety die before the age of five” (Disraeli, 1920, pp. 198-199).

questioned the traditional racial interpretation of British politics. He admitted that the principal division of English society did not consist in the descendants of two antagonists races (Normans and Saxons), but in two different nations, defined by distinct social and economic positions: *“Two nations; between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other’s habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws”* the Rich and the Poor.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, the poor people themselves are not able to play an active and progressive political role: *“The People are not strong; the People never can be strong. Their attempts at self-vindication will end only in their suffering and confusion.”*<sup>18</sup>

The only hope is in the rise of a new generation of English aristocracy, no tyrants and oppressors, with intelligence and hearts open to the responsibility of their position: *“But the work that is before them is no holiday-work. It is not the fever of superficial impulse that can remove the deep-fixed barriers of centuries of ignorance and crime. Enough that their sympathies are awakened; time and thought will bring the rest. They are the natural leaders of the People.”*<sup>19</sup> This “natural aristocracy”<sup>20</sup> should replace the “plebeian aristocracy” born from sheer plunder and exploitation.<sup>21</sup> The baronial principle, revived in

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 76-77.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 319.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 319-320.

<sup>20</sup> Tucker, pp. 1-15.

<sup>21</sup> *“In a commercial country like England, every half century develops some new and vast source of public wealth, which brings into national notice a new and powerful class. A couple of centuries ago, a Turkey Merchant was the great creator of wealth; the West India Planter followed him. In the middle of the last century appeared the Nabob. These characters in their zenith in turn*

a new form, should create a viable mode of cohabitation between employers and laborers in local communities.<sup>22</sup> The oligarchical system should be eliminated in the name of feudal socialism: “*The future principle of English politics will not be a leveling principle; not a principle adverse to privileges, but favorable to their extension. It will seek to ensure equality; not by leveling the Few, but by elevating the Many.*”<sup>23</sup> Benjamin Disraeli presented in *Sybil* a romantic, nostalgic and socially paternalistic teaching of the New England movement.

During 1846, Benjamin Disraeli worked on the final volume of his trilogy called *Tancred, or the New Crusade*. He finished it in the autumn in Bradenham and the book was published in March 1847.<sup>24</sup> Bernard N. Langdon-Davies remarked in his preface written in 1904 that “*Coningsby represents the existing state of political parties: the new creed and its mission. Sybil is a study of the conditions and the relations of rich and poor in England, and of the policies required to cure their defects. Tancred illustrates the power of the Church as a national institution and a remedial agency.*”<sup>25</sup>

*Tancred* shares, in terms of plots and characters, more with *Coningsby* than with *Sybil*. Tancred, the hero of the novel, made a spiritual initiatory journey to the Middle East, he became involved in the complicated local political disputes and clashes influenced by the European powers, and faced with the big questions of the

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*merged in the land, and became English aristocrats; while, the Levant decaying, the West Indies exhausted, and Hindostan plundered, the breeds died away; and now exist only in our English comedies ... The expenditure of the revolutionary war produced Loanmonger, who succeeded the Nabob; and the application of science to industry developed the Manufacturer”* (Disraeli, 1920, pp. 87-88).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 210.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 340.

<sup>24</sup> Monypenny, 1918, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> Disraeli, 1904, p. xii.

relationships between monotheistic religions, civilizations and races. Tancred desired to penetrate the “*great Asian mystery*”: Why did God appear, of all places, in Palestine?<sup>26</sup> Sidonia said that the Crusaders renewed the spiritual hegemony of Asia over the North.<sup>27</sup> Today, it seems that it fades, but it is merely a temporary outflow before a new influx. Tancred made a journey to the East to find a response. “*The angel of Arabia, the guardian spirit of that land which governs the world,*” appeared before Tancred on Mount Sinai.<sup>28</sup> He told him that wise Providence guided the course of history so that when the barbaric, but vigorous race that should conquer the whole world emerged from the forests of Europe, they started to be cultivated and civilized by Arabic principles. Therefore the Roman emperors brought the Law of Sinai to the Capitol and an Arab from Galilee became the spiritual leader of the West. Europe has been for centuries an “*intellectual colony of Arabia*”.<sup>29</sup> Now, the Western nations have fallen into unrest again. The Europeans are revolting against the principles which brought about their rise and happiness. They seek other gods and feel desperate and alone. Their original barbaric nature is coming to the surface. However, human equality can be achieved on the basis of God’s sovereignty only. It is therefore useless to search for philosophical solution of contemporary problems and it is necessary to “*announce the sublime and solacing doctrine of theocratic equality.*”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Disraeli, 1904, p. 147; Levine, pp. 71-85.

<sup>27</sup> “*In the old days, truly the good old days, when the magnetic power of Western Asia on the Gothic races had been more puissant, her noble yet delicate spirit might have been found beneath the walls of Ascalon or by the purple waters of Tyre*” (Disraeli, 1904, p. 188).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 343.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 344.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 344.

Benjamin Disraeli regarded the Church as a sacred institution based on the spread and maintenance of certain Asian theocratic principles in Europe.<sup>31</sup> Jews played a crucial role in this process because the Savior came to the world through them and Christianity was essentially a Judaism that left its original ethnic framework and had been modified to suite the masses.<sup>32</sup> Jews and Arabs (Disraeli did not distinguish between them in racial terms)<sup>33</sup> were the teachers of European civilization. Which other race could have provided more legislators, administrators and reformers?<sup>34</sup> Jews (and Arabs) emerged from the Caucasian cradle of the noblest races and spread throughout the Middle East. They represent a perfect prototype of the Caucasian race. It is not surprising that Providence decided to communicate the highest religious truths to the humankind through them.<sup>35</sup> All the humanity should be grateful to Jews.<sup>36</sup> It is therefore absurd and puzzling that the Saxons and the Celts should persecute the members of the “Arab race” from whom they have gained so many benefits.<sup>37</sup> The racial superiority of the Jews was the Disraeli’s response to the “great Asian mystery”. The religious mission of the Jewish race should be considered as a central idea for understanding and interpretation of the novel.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Monypenny, 1918, p. 32.

<sup>32</sup> “*Christianity is Judaism for the multitude, but still it is Judaism*” (Disraeli, 1904, p. 505; Monypenny, 1918, p. 33).

<sup>33</sup> “*The Arabs are only Jews upon horseback*” (Disraeli, 1904, p. 299).

<sup>34</sup> “... *whose wisdom is a proverb in all nations of the earth; the teacher, whose doctrines have modelled civilized Europe; – the greatest of legislators, the greatest of administrators, and the greatest of reformers – what race, extinct or living, can produce three such men as these!*” (Ibid., p. 200).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 270-271.

<sup>36</sup> “*Vast as the obligations of the whole human family are to the Hebrew race, there is no portion of the modern populations so much indebted to them as the British people*” (Ibid., p. 314).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 314-315.

<sup>38</sup> Kalmar, pp. 348-371; Rather, pp. 111-131; Endelman, pp. 109-123.

Disraeli's racial vision of history, which receded into the background in *Sybil*, reappeared in *Tancred* and was enriched by the concept of racial degeneration: *The Spaniards then conquered Mexico, and now they cannot govern it*"; *"The race is the same; why are not the results the same?"*; *"Because it is worn out, said Sidonia. Why do not the Ethiopians build another Thebes, or excavate the colossal temples of the cataracts? The decay of a race is an inevitable necessity; unless it lives in deserts and never mixes its blood."*<sup>39</sup> Benjamin Disraeli was convinced that *"all is race; there is no other truth"*.<sup>40</sup> In his work *Lord George Bentinck: A Political Biography*, published in December 1851<sup>41</sup> Benjamin Disraeli emphasized that:

The truth is progress and reaction are but words to mystify the millions. They mean nothing, they are nothing, they are phrases and not facts. All is race. In the structure, the decay, and the development of the various families of man, the vicissitudes of history find their main solution. The Norman element in our population wanes; the influence of the Saxon population is felt everywhere, and everywhere their characteristics appear. Hence the honour to industry, the love of toil, the love of money, the love of peace, the hatred of the Pope, the aversion to capital punishments, the desire to compensate for injuries, even the loss of life, by a pecuniary mulct, the aversion to central justice, finally the disbelief of our ever being invaded by the French. The state of public opinion in this country at present more resembles that of England under Edward the Confessor than under Queen Anne.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Disraeli, 1904, p. 178.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176. Race was, according to Disraeli, for instance responsible for the special nature of Greek art: *"It was race that produced these inimitable forms, the idealized reflex of their own peculiar organization. Their principles of art, practised by a different race, do not produce the same results. Yet we shut our eyes to the great truth into which all truths merge, and we call upon the Pic tor the Sarmatian to produce the forms of Phidias and Praxiteles"* (*Ibid.*, p. 544).

<sup>41</sup> It was his personal tribute to a political ally and a friend who unexpectedly died because of a heart attack in September 1848.

<sup>42</sup> Disraeli, 1905, p. 215.

What Sidonia implied haphazardly and occasionally in the previous novels of the trilogy, Benjamin Disraeli grasped systematically and consistently in *Lord George Bentinck: A Political Biography*: “*The relations that subsist between the Bedoueen race that under the name of Jews is found in every country of Europe, and the Teutonic, Sclavonian, and Celtic races which have appropriated that division of the globe, will form hereafter one of the most remarkable chapters in a philosophical history of man.*”<sup>43</sup> Benjamin Disraeli emphasized that “*there is no race at this present, and following in this only the example of a long period, that so much delights, and fascinates, and elevates, and ennobles Europe, as the Jewish*”.<sup>44</sup>

Disraeli was convinced that of all the contemporary Western creativity, only music was equal to the greatest artistic achievements of ancient world. In all other areas of human creativity, the old patterns have been merely copied and imitated: “*Were it not for music, we might in these days say, the beautiful is dead. Music seems to be the only means of creating the beautiful in which we not only equal but in all probability greatly excel the ancients. The music of modern Europe ranks with the transcendent creations of human genius; the poetry, the statues, the temples of Greece.*”<sup>45</sup> And who are the great composers that can be equated with Homer, Praxiteles, Sophocles, or Phidias? They are the descendants of Arab tribes who conquered Canaan: the Jews.

Benjamin Disraeli argued that even forty years ago the two races that were most despised in Europe were the two who contributed mostly to the rise of humanity: Greeks and Jews. Historical destinies

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 314.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 320.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp. 320-321.



of Greeks and Jews were marked by a certain similarity. They came from a small and poor, but famous region. They were divided into tribes and built their holiest temples on acropolises. The Greeks and the Jews created literatures that still evoke deep admiration and respect in Europeans. Athens was conquered more often than Jerusalem, but its inhabitants escaped deportation which was the Eastern custom. The suffering of the Jews was also, historically, infinitely longer and more varied than that of the Athenians. The mind a vitality of the Greeks seemed to be exhausted. However, the creative genius of Israel never shone brighter. When the Russians, the French and the Anglo-Saxons applauded Mozart and Mendelssohn, it was difficult to understand how they could accept the persecution of the Jews in other respects.<sup>46</sup>

Benjamin Disraeli emphasized that “*the world has by this time discovered that it is impossible to destroy the Jews*”.<sup>47</sup> Egyptian pharaohs, Assyrian kings, Roman emperors, Scandinavian crusaders, Goth princes and inquisitors tried to achieve it without success. No method would work efficiently: Expulsion, exile, imprisonment, confiscation of property, torture, genocide, social humiliation or discrimination — everything was exerted. However, despite this history full of persecution, the Jews are still more numerous than under the rule of Solomon and they enjoy prosperity in all countries they inhabit.<sup>48</sup> Through Christianity, which is a mere popular variant of Judaism, the Jews conquered the Roman Empire and Europe: “*All which proves, that it is in vain for man to attempt to baffle the inexorable law of nature which has decreed that a superior race*

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 321.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 322.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

*shall never be destroyed or absorbed by an inferior.*"<sup>49</sup> One cannot overcome the laws of nature according to which a higher race can never be destroyed or absorbed by the lower race: "*The influence of a great race will be felt.*"<sup>50</sup> Its value never depends on the amount of people, otherwise the English could not have been able to defeat the Chinese and Cortés, with a handful of Goths, would not have conquered the Aztecs: "*That greatness results from its organization, the consequences of which are shown in its energy and enterprise, in the strength of its will and the fertility of its brain.*"<sup>51</sup>

The Jewish race links modern nations of the world with the early times, when the relations between the Creator and the created beings were much more intimate than they are today, when the angels visited the Earth and when God spoke directly to man.<sup>52</sup> "*The Jews represent the Semitic principle; all that is spiritual in our nature. They are a living and most striking evidence of the falsity of that pernicious doctrine of modern times, the natural equality of man*".<sup>53</sup> Their existence is living and striking evidence of the falsity of that pernicious doctrine of modern times, the natural equality of man: "*The natural equality of man now in vogue, and taking the form of cosmopolitan fraternity, is a principle which, were it possible to act on it, would deteriorate the great races and destroy all the genius of the world.*"<sup>54</sup> What would have happened for example if the white residents of the United States of America mingled with the black population and created a nation of mulattoes? In the near future, they would have fallen so much that they would have been probably

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 322-323.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 323.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

beaten by the racially superior Native Americans.<sup>55</sup> Jewish blood endogamy reflects the pride challenging all racial egalitarianism. Jews are by their nature conservative: religion, property, and natural aristocracy constitute the building blocks of their identity.<sup>56</sup>

### Ernest Renan and Aryan Racial Supremacy

Disraeli's vision of the Jewish and Semitic spiritual and racial supremacy was challenged and openly questioned by the French scholar and orientalist Ernest Renan who started his scientific career about the same time when Benjamin Disraeli was writing his last novel of the New England trilogy. Ernest Renan received *Doctorat ès Lettres* in 1852, after having defended his Latin dissertation *De philosophia peripatetica apud Syros commentatio historica* and a French study *Averroës et l'Averroïsme*. He was writing short articles for *La Liberté de Penser*, *Revue des Deux Mondes* and *Journal des Débats*.<sup>57</sup> *Histoire Générale et Système des Langues Compare Sémitiques*, Renan's principal work which deeply influenced Western racial thinking in the second half of the nineteenth century, was published in 1855.

Renan's original intention was to do for the Semitic languages the same Franz Bopp had done for Indo-European languages, namely to interpret their evolution and diversity in the light of a new paradigm of historical linguistics: "*Je m'étais proposé de faire, selon la mesure de mes forces, pour les langues sémitiques ce que M. Bopp a fait pour les langues indo-européennes, c'est-à-dire un tableau du système*

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Espinasse, p. 66.

*grammatical qui montrât de quelle manière les Sémites sont arrivés à donner par la parole une expression complète à la pensée.*"<sup>58</sup> However, the final result was a comprehensive comparison of Indo-European (Aryan) and Semitic races.

In the *Introduction* of his book Ernest Renan noted that the Semitic idioms are compared to Indo-European languages static, without the active inner life, revolutionary upheavals and progress. No great linguist could be born through the study of the Semitic dialects, just as no great historian could emerge by means of exploring the Chinese history: "*L'étude exclusive des langues sémitiques ne pouvait former de grands linguistes, pas plus que le spectacle de l'histoire de la Chine ne saurait inspirer de grands historiens.*"<sup>59</sup>

Semitic writing does not record vowels, thus depriving the individual dialects of their individuality and changing the Semitic texts into mere skeletons. Ernest Renan, whose work on the Semitic languages was published at the same time as the second volume of Arthur Gobineau's *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, did not consider race (whose properties are reflected in the nature of language) as the main historical factor determining the fate of human populations. For him, civilization presented a greater and more important historical force than the racial substrate:

L'influence primordiale de la race, quelque immense part qu'il convienne de lui attribuer dans le mouvement des choses humaines, est balancée par une foule d'autres influences, qui parfois semblent dominer ou même étouffer entièrement celle du sang. Combien d'Israélites de nos jours, qui descendent en droite ligne des anciens habitants de la Palestine, n'ont rien du caractère sémitique, et ne sont plus que des hommes modernes, entraînés et assimilés par cette grande force

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<sup>58</sup> Renan, p. ix.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.

supérieure aux races et destructive des originalités locales, qu'on appelle la civilisation!<sup>60</sup>

Arthur Gobineau, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Otto Ammon or Georges Vacher de Lapouge resolutely rejected this idea. Their skepticism toward the power of modern civilization resulted either in stoic resignation (Arthur Gobineau), or in racial activism (Georges Vacher de Lapouge).

The ancient Semites represented a distinct population characterized by specific features, although Ernest Renan did not think that the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia were Semitic by nature. It is possible that the first great historical rise of the Semites could be attributed to Islam.<sup>61</sup> While members of the Indo-European race seek the truth through rational systems and philosophical arguments, Semites are equipped with a religious instinct tending to prophecy, psalms, mysticism and wisdom manifested through esoteric symbolic language. This theocratic Semitic race gave birth to three world religions whilst the Indo-European race has been characterized by philosophical skepticism.<sup>62</sup>

Ernest Renan even attributed to himself the “credit” of being the first scholar to draw attention to the alleged racial inferiority of Semites compared with the Indo-Europeans superior race: “*Je suis donc le premier à reconnaître que la race sémitique, comparée à la race indo-européenne, représente réellement une combinaison inférieure de la nature humaine.*”<sup>63</sup> Renan later admitted that in this respect, Christian Lassen, who had compared the Indo-European and

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. xv.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-4.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

Semitic spirits in the first volume of his extensive works on Indian antiquities (*Indische Alterthumskunde*, 1843), had surpassed him.<sup>64</sup>

Ernest Renan argued that the Semites never reached the Indian spirituality, the Germanic, Latin and Greek sense of beauty, or the Celtic sensitivity. The Semitic consciousness has a sense of unity, not of multiplicity and uniqueness. Therefore, the natural expression of Semitic religious instinct is monotheism, to which for

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<sup>64</sup> *“Im Hintergrunde des ganzen Entwicklung des Indischen Geistes, die nur durch die eigenthümliche Natur des Landes und die Geschichte mit ihren Thaten ihre bestimmter umgränzte Gestaltung erhalten hat, liegt die ursprüngliche geistige Anlage des Arischen Volkes, die ihm mit den stammverwandten Völkern gemeinschaftlich war ... Denn nur wenige Völker der Erde sind dieser höheren Befähigung selbständiger Bildung theilhaftig; von Völkern anderer Rasse sind es nur die Chinesen und Aegyptier, von der Kaukasischen nur die Semiten und Indogermanen. Die letzten sind aber ohne Zweifel die am höchsten begabten, beide haben sie ausser sich selbst den meisten übrigen Völkern ihre Bildung zugeführt; sie übertreffen alle anderen in der Entdeckung der nützlichen Künste, der Einrichtung des gesetzlichen Staates, der Vervollkommung der gesellschaftlichen Zustände, in der Schöpfung und Ausbildung der Wissenschaften, in der Hervorbringung der herrlichsten Werke in jeder schönen Kunst. Sie stehen sich bei dieser Leistungen nicht gleich und wir müssen unter den Kaukasischen Völkern den Indogermanen entschieden die Palme zuerkennen ... Die Geschichte bezeugt, dass die Semiten nicht das harmonische Gleichmass aller Seelenkräfte besitzen, durch welche die Indogermanen hervorragen. Das Gemüth und mit ihm die Leidenschaft, die besondere Persönlichkeit mit energischem Willen und scharfem Verstande waltet bei dem Semiten vor; er kann die Beziehung der Welt zum Menschen überhaupt von der zu dem eigenen Ich nicht trennen, er kann den Gedanken nicht in reiner Objectivität dem Geiste vorstellen; seine Anschauungsweise ist subjectiv und egoistisch. Seine Poesie ist lyrisch, daher subjectiv, es spricht das Gemüth seine Freude und seinen Schmerz, seine Liebe und seinen Hass ... Die Indogermanischen Völker besitzen neben der lyrischen auch die anderen Gattung der Poesie; bei ihnen kommt allein ein nationales Drama vor; sie haben allein die grossen Heldengedichte hervorgebracht, welche die von der Sage überlieferten grossen Thaten des Alterthums in verherrlichter Gestalt widerspiegeln, die ganze Weltanschauung eines Volksgeistes uns vorführen und als das Ergebniss der dichterischen Arbeit des gesammten Volks dastehen. Den Semiten fehlt der Stoss des Epos, die Sage nicht, die er auch dichterisch verschönert und ausbildet, er fügt sie aber nicht zu grossen Kreisen zusammen, sondern bewahrt sie im Gedächtnisse als älteste Geschichte ... Auch die Philosophie gehört den Semiten nicht, sie haben sich, und zwar nur die Araber, bei den Philosophen der Indogermanen eingemietet ... In seiner Religion ist der Semite selbstsüchtig und ausschliessend ... Zwischen der hohen Stufe, auf welcher die am weitesten fortgeschrittenen Indogermanischen Völker jetzt stehen, und dem*

instance Indians or Greeks, despite their genius, never arrived. On the other hand, the Semites have no understanding of polytheism and of natural and cultural diversity. They rejected the symbolic richness of pagan mythology. God rules the Semitic world as an absolute monarch. Monotheism has its homeland in the Arab desert. The spiritual asceticism caused the stagnation of the Semitic mind and society. This simple patriarchal cult created a sophisticated theology prone to intolerance and fanaticism. The Semitic society is then described by Renan as totally devoid of curiosity and genuine philosophical and scientific culture that emerged only on its periphery: in Spain, Morocco and Samarkand. The Semitic wisdom speaks in parables and proverbs only. Lyrical poetry is much more important than the epic and drama.<sup>65</sup>

Ernest Renan stressed the Semitic symbolic and material poverty, monotony, lack of imagination and fantasy, political anarchy, despotism, egoism and absence of civic virtues. These were for him the permanent attributes of the Semitic race whose members were resistant to the modern, positivist, scientific and liberal civilization: *“La race sémitique nous apparaît comme une race incomplète par sa simplicité même”*.<sup>66</sup> For Renan, the Semites constituted a denial of practically everything what he associated with his own intellectual and professional aspirations. It was a race based on the negation of almost all values of the Indo-European (Aryan) race and modern civilization:

Ainsi la race sémitique se reconnaît presque uniquement à des caractères négatifs: elle n'a ni mythologie, ni épopée, ni science, ni

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*ersten, allen gemeinschaftlichen Anfänge liegt ein grosser Zwischenraum”* (Lassen, pp. 414-417).

<sup>65</sup> Renan, pp. 4-11.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

philosophie, ni fiction, ni arts plastiques, ni vie civile; en tout, absence de complexité, de nuances, sentiment exclusif de l'unité. Il n'y a pas de variété dans le monothéisme.<sup>67</sup>

It is one of the great malicious paradoxes of history that antisemitism, inspired by arguments of Ernest Renan, attacked the Jews primarily as the bearers of a universalistic ethos of modernity, whereas Ernest Renan himself reproached them for their alleged incompatibility with the values of the modern world.

*Histoire Générale et Système des Langues Compare Sémitiques* ensured the recognition of Ernest Renan as one of the leading French scientists. He was elected a member (instead of the old and sick Augustin Thierry) of *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*. In the following years, the idea of the manicheistic dualism of Indo-European and Semitic races, outlined by Ernest Renan, spread throughout Europe. For instance, the Austrian orientalist Adolf Wahrmund (who influenced Adolf Hitler) adopted Renan's view in his book *Das Gesetz der Nomadenthums und die heutige Juden herrschaft* (1887).<sup>68</sup>

In January 1862, Ernest Renan became professor of Hebrew and Semitic languages at the *Collège de France*. His first public lecture, delivered in February 1862 before a crowded hall, was devoted entirely to the differences between the Indo-European and the Semitic race. Renan declared that monotheism was of Semitic

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>68</sup> "In dieser Schrift wird das Judentum in seiner Besonderheit als ein punisirtes semitisch-nomadisches, und zwar vor- und antichristliches Wesen isoliert hingestellt, und gezeigt, dass seine Lebenselemente ihm nur aus der allgemeinen Entwicklung zugeflossen sind, dass es aus eigener Kraft nicht leben, auf eigenen Füßen nicht stehen kann, also, um zu leben, auf die Lüge angewiesen ist, womit es zugleich zur Selbstumgestaltung – der Wiedergeburt im Sinne Christi – aufgefordert wird, wozu aber seine Ausscheidung aus den christlich-arischen Volkskörpern Vorbedingung ist" (Wahrmund, p. vii).



origin, and spread to the Western world through Judaism and Christianity, when the Roman polytheism was in decline. Renan conceded a certain positive civilizing role of Christianity (as a derivative of Judaism), but he refused to attribute it to Islam. In his opinion, Islam was hostile to science and civilization and presented a complete denial of Europe. And Europe, according to Renan, is future.<sup>69</sup>

## Conclusion

*Tancred* could be seen as an intellectual expression of the “second Oriental Renaissance”, less known than the first one initiated by William Jones and his colleagues from the *Royal Asiatic Society* in Calcutta in the last decades of the eighteenth century. The “Aryan” Oriental Renaissance of the Calcutta school was stopped at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the rise of evangelical and utilitarian movements. In the meantime, however, it was transferred by some French scholars into Germany, where it became part of the agenda of the romantic cultural circles, which later contributed to the ideological basis of racial totalitarianism. Disraeli’s concept of the spiritual revitalization of the West was based on the Semitic, not on the Aryan element. Ernest Renan and his followers rejected and denigrated the Semitic contribution to the Western civilization and thus paved the way for the rise and expansion of the Aryan ideology in modern political culture.

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<sup>69</sup> Espinasse, pp. 95-96.

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# Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and the Hilsner Affair in the Interpretation of Electronic antisemitism

*Věra Tydlitátová*

The first Czechoslovak president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk has been for many years either a worshipped or a denied figure, but always an important icon representing the “founding father” of the modern free Czechoslovak state. Whilst before the outbreak of the First World War, Masaryk, as a professor, enjoyed the reputation of a rebel, if not of a traitor of his own fatherland on the basis of his nonconformist attitudes to the question of authenticity of the Královédvorský and Zelenohorský Manuscripts<sup>1</sup> or of his critique of the blood libel in the Hilsner affair; his triumphal return home on 20 December 1918 seemingly wiped out or at least temporarily overshadowed such criticism. For most of the citizens of the new republic, “papa Masaryk” became the symbol and the personification of the new state: at times almost a kitschy image that followed up the traditional respect for the emperor. Masaryk, who

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<sup>1</sup> The affair of “Královédvorský and Zelenohorský Manuscripts” involved two fake manuscripts, whose counterfeiters, Václav Hanka and Josef Linda, hoped to stimulate interest in the Czech language and the Czech national revival in general – by presenting forged examples of the alleged sophistication of early medieval Czech literature.

dwelt at the Prague Castle like the old kings, was transformed into an icon that to a certain extent covered up the human characteristics of the first president. Today, it is rather difficult to judge whether this image had a provocative effect on the national minorities mechanically included into the Czechoslovak statehood, on the adherents of traditional Catholicism and the extinct monarchy, or on the admirers of fascism and communism. This idealized image, deliberately reinforced even in the minds of school pupils, suppressed not only Masaryk's human weaknesses and shortcomings, but, paradoxically, also his unquestionable originality and greatness.

The young republic had too little historical time to secure its position and to strengthen the foundations of its young democracy and the ageing president had even less. The society was struggling with many unresolved problems. Among others, the social and national issues were not yet solved to a satisfactory degree: the separation of the state and the church had not been carried out, the political bodies had not reached the necessary consensus and were driven by their own particular interests, corruption and bureaucracy could not be rooted out. However, during the twenty years of the state's duration, promising foundations were laid on which, under more favorable conditions, a modern, democratic and prosperous state could have been built.

Not even later was the Czechoslovak society given enough distance to consider the absolutely unique situation of the inter-war period impartially. The German occupation put the promising project of the modern democratic republic to an end and before the society could have coped with the extensive devastation that followed, a new totalitarian regime came into power. The Communist regime

gave no space, apart from several short periods of relative freedom, for critical inspection of Masaryk's personality.

After the Velvet Revolution in 1989, a number of deeper studies on Masaryk appeared and reflections on less known circumstances of Masaryk's life and political activities could be found as well. At the same time, as the freedom of speech was established again and the evolution of new information technologies, especially of the internet, continued, traditional accusations, suspicions and assaults were revitalized. The attacks on Masaryk have been coming from Catholic traditionalists and neo-fascists as well as from Communists and neo-Nazis. A majority of these assaults and calumnies have been picking up the threads of pre-war defamations.

Even during his scholarly and pedagogical work at the university in Vienna and, since 1882, at the university in Prague, Masaryk exhibited a broad interest in various subjects and also in political and nationalist developments. Due to his general knowledge, experiences from abroad and critical thinking, Masaryk necessarily stood out among the Czech politicians and it was merely a question of time when he would become suspected of insufficient loyalty to the Czech movement. The quarrel broke out as soon as in 1886, when Masaryk stepped into the argument about the authenticity of the Manuscripts. However, in relation to antisemitism, his well-known intervention in the Hilsner affair is more important.<sup>2</sup>

The reason for Masaryk's intervention was not philosemitism of any kind, but rather his astonishment at the absurdity of the blood libel. He himself admitted that when he was a child, he was aware of the

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of the Hilsner case, see: for example Kovtun, Jiří. *Tajuplná vražda: Případ Leopolda Hilsnera*. See also: Vařejčka, Roman. *Hilsneriáda*.

libel as a matter of fact. His friend Karel Čapek – a famous Czech novelist and playwright, well-known for coining the term “robot” – quotes a comment by Masaryk in his *Conversations with TGM (Hovory s TGM)*: “When did I overcome this popular antisemitism in myself? My dear man, in terms of feelings, perhaps never, only in terms of reason; it was even my own mother who made me believe in blood libel.”<sup>3</sup> Masaryk’s interest in Hilsner’s case was allegedly provoked by his conversation with a colleague at the university, Alois Zucker, who once approached Masaryk: “You should not have interfered in this affair in such a public manner. As you know, I am a Jew myself and you also know that I believe the tale about the ritual murder to be a mere superstition. However, the Polná case proves that the possibility that some secret sect exists and has the ritual murder in its statutes cannot be ruled out.”<sup>4</sup> This doubt, expressed by a Jewish intellectual, provoked Masaryk, made him study the whole case and triggered his polemic with the medieval superstition. His aim was therefore not to deny Hilsner’s involvement in the murder itself – that was the matter of the police and the trial as far as Masaryk was concerned – but to disprove the absurd and false motive that was wrongly attributed to Leopold Hilsner.

Professor Tomáš Masaryk became interested in the case in September 1899. Supposedly, it was his former student Sigmund Münzer who informed him about the events and asked him for help in a letter. Masaryk answered with another letter where he refused the superstitions about Jewish ritual murders.<sup>5</sup> Even educated people adhered to superstitions of this kind in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: for

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<sup>3</sup> Čapek, Karel. *Hovory s T. G. Masarykem*. p. 12

<sup>4</sup> Černý, Bohumil. *Vražda v Polné, Hilsneriáda (k 100. výročí 1899-1999)*. p. 65

<sup>5</sup> *Hilsnerova aféra a česká společnost 1899 – 1999*. p. 51

example August Rohling, professor of the Prague German university, member of the Viennese Imperial Council and a Prague canon, supported statements about the authenticity of information on ritual murder by seemingly scientific arguments.<sup>6</sup>

Masaryk's letter was immediately published, with the author's consent, in *Neue Freie Presse*. In two months, a booklet entitled *The Necessity to Revise the Polná Case (Nutnost revidovati process Polenský)* appeared.<sup>7</sup> In this treatise that caused much public upheaval, Masaryk logically and factually refutes the superstition about Jewish ritual murder.

In 1899, antisemitism was relatively alive, stirred by certain politicians who got inspired by the electoral success of Karl Lueger in Vienna.<sup>8</sup> Apart from traditional religious anti-Judaism, political and social antisemitism was also spreading in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and not only was it manifesting itself openly in the press, but it also penetrated the intellectual and academic circles. As Bohumil Doležal puts it:

Masaryk, however, found himself in the centre of disfavour of the nationalist, clerical, radical Czech and radical German press. Utterly disparate media spheres united themselves in their effort to set the students against him. It was not only a matter of 'ideological stimuli' but also of technical and organizational details. From Vienna, the German *Deutsches Volksblatt* informed its readership about the dates of Masaryk's lectures at the Prague university. The Czech Catholic Paper

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<sup>6</sup> Rohling, August. *Moje odpověď' rabínům aneb pět psaní o Talmudu a židovské rituální vraždě.*

<sup>7</sup> Masaryk, Tomáš G. *Nutnost revidovati process Polenský*

<sup>8</sup> Kieval, Hillel J. *Formování českého židovstva. Národnostní konflikt a židovská společnost v Čechách 1870-1918*, p. 104

went even further and published Masaryk's address and even described which set of windows belonged to his flat."<sup>9</sup>

It is known that the passions raised by the publication of Masaryk's opinions also lead to an uproar at the university. Students were shouting at him and expressed their disfavour by whistling. Masaryk could not speak because of the noise and he therefore wrote the following statement on the blackboard:

I was not afraid to come here, I ask to be allowed to speak. The press's accusations that I have been bribed are mendacious. So are the accusations that I lent my name to another man's work. I stepped out, for I have seen through the clerical antisemitism and I consider it a national evil. Conscientious inquiry convinced me that the execution of the Polná trial is a straightforward attempt to assassinate reason and humanity. I have been defending the freedom of thought and of feeling, without diplomacy, and I will be defending it for ever. What do you, protesters, have against this?<sup>9</sup> Tell me your reasons. I will respect them in the same way as I demand respect from you.<sup>10</sup>

Professor Masaryk intervened into the Hilsner case in order to defend the reputation of the Czech nation as of a modern society, in the interest of academic honesty and civil freedom. On 27 November, he spoke to his students again: "*The question that can be of interest to me and to the Czech students solely and mainly in this matter*" is: "*if the freedom of conscience and of feeling should be retained in the Czech lands, if I am to enjoy freedom in the Czech lands even at the university; if I should be allowed to speak what I consider right, or no [...] I hold my ground firmly in this matter, I will spare no effort to defend it*

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<sup>9</sup> Doležal, Bohumil. *Masaryk a česká média* In: CS Magazin

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



*and I expect of you to defend my freedom as well, for your freedom resides in mine, and mine in yours.*"<sup>11</sup>

It is a widely known fact that some media of the time got seriously involved with antisemitism and strove to besmirch Masaryk. In this test of civic maturity, the otherwise idealised “common people” failed utterly and so did the representatives of the Czech political and intellectual elite. However, Masaryk also found advocates. The fiery rhetoric and scandals during the Hilsner affair have been vividly described by Bohumil Doležal.<sup>12</sup>

After November 1989, the Czech society had to cope with tumultuous changes that, similarly to the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, divided the society into at least two camps. On one side stood those who rejoiced in the newly acquired freedom and could in one way or another come to terms with the new challenges. On the other side stood those who begun to consider themselves defeated. This other side comprises different groups; however, the parallel with the First Republic is rather obvious. Again, there are the Communists whose regime was condemned verbally, but also contemporary fascists, neo-Nazis, ultraconservative Catholics, radical nationalists and in general those groups that knowingly and deliberately follow in the steps of the First Republic opposition “against the Castle.”

Very soon after the Velvet Revolution, antisemitic texts and conspiracy theories appeared, explaining the events of 1989 by referring to an extensive Jewish plot. One of such texts is for example *The Analysis of November 17 (Analýza 17. listopadu)* by Miro-

<sup>11</sup> Skilling, Harold Gordon. *T. G. Masaryk. Proti proudu 1882-1914*. p. 125

<sup>12</sup> Doležal, Bohumil. *Masaryk a česká média* In: CS Magazín

slav Dolejší,<sup>13</sup> closely analyzed by Zbyněk Tarant in his chapter of this book. Dolejší serialized this text in the central-Bohemian periodical *Expres* between 24 and 26 October 1990.

Another source of antisemitism at this time was *Politics Weekly* (*Týdeník Politika*). This periodical, presented as “a weekly for politics and economics” and properly registered under the number 5580 at the Czech Ministry for Culture, was the mouthpiece of Czech antisemitism in 1990s. The first issue was published on 17 January 1991 and its editors were members of the Czechoslovak Folk Party, Josef Tomáš and Jaroslav Voříšek, the latter an anti-Semite who subsequently published bountiful articles on the internet. Jaroslav Voříšek is an advocate of the blood libel and for example his article *A Shameful Blasphemy (Hanebná blasfémie)*<sup>14</sup> criticizes the ban imposed by a bishop on the cult of Andreas of Rinn (Anderl von Rinn, in Czech Andrýsek z Rinnu), an alleged victim of a Jewish ritual murder. Another work of these authors is the well-known *List of 168 Jews and Jewish Half-Breeds in Contemporary Culture (Seznam 168 židů a židovských míšenců v současné kultuře)*.<sup>15</sup> At the moment, *Politics Weekly* enjoys a complete gradual re-edition on the website New World Order Opposition which is dedicated to conspiracy theories and vulgar antisemitism.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Dolejší, Miroslav. *Analýza 17. listopadu a změn ve východní Evropě v roce 1989*

<sup>14</sup> Voříšek, Jaroslav. *Hanebná blasfémie*. In: *Altermedia.info*

<sup>15</sup> The list was published for the first time in the penultimate issue of *Politics Weekly* 2/1992, nr. 96, p. 2. These lists have been gradually published under different titles on the website *Národně-vzdělávací institut* which is no longer in existence. They are currently available under the name of *A Partial List of Jews and Jewish Half-Breeds in the Politics of CSFR, CR and SR After 1989 (Částečný seznam Židů a židovských míšenců v politice ČSFR, ČR a SR po roce 1989)*. For more information see: Osúch, Jan. *Po internetu koluje seznam Židů v politice*. In: iHNED

<sup>16</sup> New World Order Opposition

The legacy of *Politics Weekly*<sup>17</sup> is currently followed by the website *Conspiracy against the Church and Humanity* which is in fact an e-library containing many antisemitic pamphlets, often digitalized traditional texts from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Jaroslav Voříšek explains that this website “*thematically picks up the threads of Politics Weekly which was in our country eliminated in 1992 by the Jewish powers.*”<sup>18</sup> On this website, solely antisemitic texts appear and among them, examples concerning the defence of blood libel and some concerned with Masaryk can be found. Every treatise has been designed for downloading and is accompanied by a short annotation provided by the publisher.

Among the texts available on this website is, for example, a translation of *Der Jüdische Ritualmord – Eine historische Untersuchung* by Hellmut Schramm.<sup>19</sup> The editor of the website introduces this treatise in a following manner: “*The hardly believable and for a normally thinking and feeling human being actually inconceivable fact of the Jewish ritual murder for blood is here proved by the German author, in detail and indisputably, by means of credible historical documents, testimonies and trial records from all times and places [...]*”<sup>20</sup>

The same treatise can be found in the database of the neo-Nazi and strongly antisemitic website entitled The National Educational Institute, which is actually an e-library focused on anti-Jewish texts,

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<sup>17</sup> Spiknutí proti Církví a lidstvu

<sup>18</sup> *Kdo jsme?* In: Spiknutí proti Církví a lidstvu.

<sup>19</sup> Schramm, Hellmut. *Židovská rituální vražda – Historická studie* In: Národně vzdělávací institut.

<sup>20</sup> Schramm, Hellmut. *Židovská rituální vražda – Historická studie. Komentáře* In: Národně vzdělávací institut.

including themes like Holocaust denial. Again, it presents Schramm's text with an editorial introduction:

Every time the conversation turns to, in any context, to the Jewish ritual murder, immediately the well-known cry is heard about the “bloody spectre of ritual murder”, about the “barbaric and unreasonable medieval fable”, about “testimonies extracted from poor, innocent Jews by torture”, about “stupid prejudices” and so on and so forth. And that's what we ask of our readers: read carefully and without “stupid prejudices” whose origin you do not even realize most of the time, and then make your own opinion. Bloody human sacrifices were known to many ancient nations, but only the Jews retained them. What other reason would account for the fact that, throughout history, only the Jews and no one else have been accused of the murder for blood? [...] <sup>21</sup>

The website Conspiracy against the Church and Humanity offers other titles concerned with the phenomenon of the alleged Jewish ritual murder: *Jewish Ritual Murder – A Non-Jewish Explanation* (*Židovská rituální vražda – Nežidovské objasnění*),<sup>22</sup> a pamphlet by Gerhard Utikal, Christian Log's *Do Jewish Ritual Murders Exist? – An Inquiry and a Psychological Explanation of Historical Material* (*Existují židovské rituální vraždy? – Probádání a psychol. objasnění hist. mater.*) or *Jewish Bloody Murders Since the First Occurrence in History until the Present Day* (*Židovské krvavé vraždy od prvního výskytu v dějinách až po současnost*) by Bernardin Freimut.<sup>23</sup> Last but not least, *The Jewish Morals and the Mystery of Blood* (*Židovská morálka a mystérium krve*) by

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<sup>21</sup> *Židovská rituální vražda: Historická studie – Schramm, Hellmut (1943)* In: Národně vzdělávací institut.

<sup>22</sup> Utikal, Gerhard. *Židovská rituální vražda – Nežidovské objasnění* In: Spiknutí proti Církvi a lidstvu.

<sup>23</sup> Freimut, Bernardin. *Židovské krvavé vraždy od prvního výskytu v dějinách až po současnost* In: Spiknutí proti Církvi a lidstvu.

Athanasius Fern should be mentioned here.<sup>24</sup> From the printed version of the antisemitic *Politics Weekly*, the website Conspiracy against the Church and Humanity also adopted treatises concerning directly Masaryk himself. An article by a Czech fascist publicist Josef Rozsévač (writing under the pseudonym Jan Rys) *The Hilsner Affair and TGM – To the Fortieth Anniversary of the Polná Murders (Hilsneriáda a TGM – Ke čtyřicátému výročí vražd polenských)* was also published here.<sup>25</sup>

In September 1991, another author, writing under the name “Dr Jan Příhoda”, published his article *Masaryk – A Study of the Chosen One’s Cover Legend (Masaryk – Studie vyvolencovy krycí legendy)* in *Politics Weekly*.<sup>26</sup> Here, the author brings together arguments supporting the widespread rumour that Tomáš Masaryk was a secret Jew. The editor comments on the text in a following manner:

“A Study of the Chosen One’s Cover Legend” is a slight but important contribution to the exposure of the deeply rooted myth about Masaryk, systematically created mostly by the Jewish press and also by the strongly Judified schools of the First Republic, a myth on which the new regime after November 1989 also, to some extent, based its “legitimacy”.

Out of Masaryk’s anti-Czech, diligently pro-Bolshevik activities in service of Jewish aims, the author has only hinted at many things or left them out altogether, which is understandable, given the scope of the study. What is a substantially more thorough lesson lies in the above-mentioned and frequently quoted basic work by prof. Jan Vrzalík, “T. G.

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<sup>24</sup> Fern, Athanasius. *Židovská morálka a mystérium krve* In: Spiknutí proti Církvi a lidstvu.

<sup>25</sup> Rys, Jan. *Hilsneriáda a TGM – Ke čtyřicátému výročí vražd polenských* In: Spiknutí proti Církvi a lidstvu.

<sup>26</sup> Příhoda, Jan. *Masaryk – Studie vyvolencovy krycí legendy* In: Spiknutí proti Církvi a lidstvu.

Masaryk”, which has unfortunately so far remained in the form of a manuscript.

In the question of the Polná ritual murder, the best source is a book by Jan Rys, “The Hilsner Affair and T. G. M.”, which is just as informative about Masaryk’s disputed membership in the Freemason movement.

Given the specifically conspirative character of the Freemason brotherhood, it is hardly ever possible to produce indisputable proofs of someone’s membership in the lodge. This is also the reason why the author of the study concludes the chapter dealing with Masaryk’s lodge affiliation thus: ‘... it is impossible to overlook that he complied with all the requirements for being a member just ideally.’

The work of dr. Jan Příhoda shows, with all possible brevity, the true face of the idealized T. G. Masaryk who, due to his lineage on the side of his real father, fanatically defended the cause of the Jewry by lie, economic and political pressure, social isolation and, when needed, he would employ physical liquidation.<sup>27</sup>

The treatise itself is in fact an article where the author strives to refute completely the traditional role of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and his humanist ideals. For example, Příhoda explains Masaryk’s intervention into the Hilsner affair in the following manner:

In order to rehabilitate Hilsner in Masaryk’s eyes, it was enough that:

1. Hilsner was a Jew, therefore the only ‘man’ in the orthodox view, in contrast to others who were non-Jews;
2. The motive for the murder, for which the murder ceased to be a murder, was obvious even to Masaryk. Only in this perspective it is possible to understand the self-assurance and unbelievable impertinence of Masaryk and his Jewish friends who tried to turn the roles upside

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<sup>27</sup> Příhoda, Jan. *Masaryk – Studie vyvolencovy krycí legendy: Komentáře* In: Spiknutí proti Církvi a lidstvu.

down and themselves behaved like plaintiffs! The most disgusting climax of this unparalleled, unashamed and cynical demagogy was Masaryk's attempt to put the blame for the ritual murder on the Czech or alternatively on another host nation: "... *It has been getting clearer and clearer to me: the blood libel is a horrible charge against the Czech nation [!!!] ... And if these educated and morally elevated Czech Jews would have in their middle a mere ritual sect – how barbaric would then have to be the general cultural situation of us Christians, in which such a sect could evolve and remain in existence?*"<sup>28</sup> It is not the ordinary Jewish argumentation but rabbinic dialectics par excellence which is able to explain and account for everything and in ten different ways, if need be. Non-Jewish understanding and way of argumentation are utterly hopeless against this! The trial in Písek, on the request of Prague and Vienna, complied with the demand of Masaryk's Jewish group by an essential dismissal of the ritual motive: moreover, even though it deemed Hilsner the only perpetrator, he was merely sentenced for complicity in murder [!!!], although his two companions remained unknown to the trial and to history. Thanks to Masaryk, Hilsner's case won international publicity, so it will live as a notion for ever, although some of its details are cloudy and others are deformed. For Hilsner's head, which they managed to save in this way, the rabbinic Jewry had to pay the price of the eternal reminder to the non-Jewish nations.<sup>29</sup>

Conservative Catholics (some of them even outside the confines of the Roman Church, as they adhered to the excommunicated group of Marcel Lefebvre's followers) smoothly picked up the threads of the conservative Catholic opposition to Masaryk during the First Republic. Some criticized his republican views,<sup>30</sup> others his

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<sup>28</sup> Příhoda quotes here Masaryk's *Importance of Polná Case for the Beliefs in Ritual Murder (Význam procesu polenského pro pověru rituální)* from 1900.

<sup>29</sup> Příhoda, Jan. *Masaryk – Studie vyvolencovy krycí legendy* In: Spiknutí proti Církvi a lidstvu.

<sup>30</sup> Pijáček, Miroslav. *K. 14. červenec – počátek krvavého teroru Velké francouzské revoluce a zbožňovaný tatíček Masaryk* In: Euportál.cz.

humanism. Some pointed to his unfriendly attitude to the Roman Catholic Church, for example the conservative historian Radomír Malý.<sup>31</sup> Adherents of other groups expressed their disfavoured of Masaryk after November 1989 as well and frequently, Masaryk's legacy was compared to the legacy of Václav Havel whom these groups hated just as profoundly. On the symbolical level, these two presidents were merging into one entity that represented all that was evil. Aversion to the two democratic representatives of the state can be demonstrated, for example, on the opinions of young Communists. Here, an anonymous author here compares Václav Havel and Masaryk in a typically Communist rhetoric: "... *for this, Havel gets so much praise from the bourgeoisie today. For deceiving people, for making fools of them – after his own example. For this reason, a personality cult is being constructed for Havel, a cult which currently exceeds the personality cult of the first Czechoslovak bourgeois president T. G. Masaryk who has probably 'went out of fashion' and has become weak fo the present-day bourgeoisie*"<sup>32</sup> In spite of the usual Communist presentation of Masaryk as of the bourgeois president who "let the striking workers in Duchcov to be fired at,"<sup>33</sup> antisemitic arguments do not appear in the Communist rhetoric in relation to Masaryk. Communists were indeed not fond of Masaryk and antisemitism was not a foreign concept to them, but in this specific matter, they left the association of Masaryk with the Jews to their enemies – to Nazis, fascists and conservative Catholics.

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<sup>31</sup> Malý, Radomír. *TGM proslul hrubými, agresivními výpady proti katolíkům. Tatiček Masaryk o Judově afěře* In: Euportal.cz.

<sup>32</sup> Kračmar, Petr. *Kult osobnosti Václava Havla aneb Masaryk už vyšel z módy* In: Svaz mladých komunistů Československa 5.1.2012.

<sup>33</sup> *Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk* In: Prague.cz



The developments of the media approach to Hilsner's case present an apt example for demonstrating the "fluid nature" of antisemitism. The originally religious antisemitism accentuated in the Hilsner affair gradually acquired features of traditional social and racial antisemitism, whilst the accusation of ritual murder took the form of searching for typical negative features of the alleged Jewish race. The anti-Jewish propaganda, initially spread by means of booklets, postcards and the press, has again become, in the electronic era, a living political tool.

E-antisemitism is employed by various communities and political groupings ranging from one edge of the political spectrum to the other. Just like at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these groups use suggestive rhetoric in order to address the broader public and they are trying to gain support by pointing to the alleged wrecker and common enemy. A one-time blog concerned solely with the events in Polná was founded. The website is entitled *Anežka Hruřová: Dedicated to All Victims of Judaism (Anežka Hruřová. Věnováno všem obětem judaismu)*. The heading of the website features a picture of a grinning Jewish murderer at the moment when he puts his knife to the victim's throat. The authors introduce themselves in this way:

Let this blog serve as a reminder of the times when dreadful deeds and violent acts related to religious brutality took place in our society. The Jewish ritual murder was a frequently used term which filled our ancestors with aversion to its executors and their minions. We remind the public of one of the most infamous deeds on which many starlets who later ruled our small heaven capitalized for the benefit of their political careers. Let this website be an expression of respect to all those slain by a Jewish murderer's hand!<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Memento* In: Anežka Hruřová. Věnováno všem obětem judaismu.

# Anežka Hruřová

Věnováno všem obětem judaismu



Blog Memento Vraždy Anežka Hruřová Žid Hilsner Download Kontakt

## Dobové fotografie

Publikováno březn 31, 2008 main Leave a Comment

Přinášíme ukádku dobových fotografií vázajících se k městečku Polná u Jihlavy a k případu vraždy Anežky Hruřové. Komentář k jednotlivým snímkům není nutný, jelikož vše je již výstižně popsáno přímo na fotografiích. Je to další důkaz nezlomného přesvědčení o hrůze, kterou tento čin vyvolal v širokých vrstvách tehdejšího obyvatelstva. Lítost vystupující v návalu pocitu beznaděje při shlížení na mrtvolu nebohé Anežky je zcela na místě, proto o to více musíme na tento čin

hledat  go

### Nejnovější

Dobové fotografie  
Brutální vraždy zakořeněné v judaismu  
Vraždy na Anežce Hruřové  
Jak T.G.M. pravdu nemluvil  
Všete nevěřte... ale co důkazy?  
F.W.Ghillan

A screenshot of the website “Anežka Hruřová – Dedicated to all the Victims of Judaism”

This website is at the same time an archive of texts related to the Hilsner affair and to the polemic with Masaryk. The articles have been adopted from other sources and are in turn adopted by other websites. Again, we find here Helmut Schramm's treatise, Rys's pamphlet, an article by Milada Hamerníková,<sup>35</sup> *How T.G.M. Did Not Speak the Truth (Jak T.G.M. pravdu nemluvil)* by Peter Bielik<sup>36</sup> and other texts concerning the Hilsner affair. An interesting author whose presence proves that the authors of the website did not adhere strictly to the Catholic position is Johann van Leers.<sup>37</sup> Leers was one of the most important official ideologists of the Third Reich, a member of Waffen-SS and a fanatical anti-Semite who after the war converted to Islam and chose the name Omar Amin.

<sup>35</sup> Hamerníková, Milada. *Vraždy na Anežce Hruřové* In: Anežka Hruřová. Věnováno všem obětem judaismu 30.12.2007.

<sup>36</sup> Bielik, Peter. *Jak T.G.M. pravdu nemluvil* In: Anežka Hruřová. Věnováno všem obětem judaismu 30.12.2007.

<sup>37</sup> Leers von, Johann. *Brutální vraždy zakořeněné v judaismu* In: Anežka Hruřová. Věnováno všem obětem judaismu 3.2.2008.

Leers was famous not only for his profound aversion to Judaism, but also his hatred of Christianity.

The question of Jewish ritual murder is one of the themes dealt with by the authors on the website of The National Unification (Národní sjednocení, NSJ). This website also features a regularly updated “Library” where classical antisemitic texts are available for download. One of its prominent authors is Ladislav Malý. On the occasion of the anniversary of Masaryk’s birthday on 7 March 2010, he did not forget to publish a text by Jaroslav Lhotka *When the Parish Registers Spoke about Tomáš Masaryk (Když matriky promluví o Tomáši Masarykovi)*<sup>38</sup> and wrote an introduction to the text. Both writers are coming to terms with the alleged Jewish origin of Tomáš Masaryk. First, a quote from Ladislav Malý’s introduction:

Again, it is 7 March, the day when the Freemasons and Zionists in the Czech Republic, and also those whose brains have been washed out and there are all too many in this nation – remember the birthday of the “Freemason without apron”, philosemite and an active agent of Zionism, the first Czechoslovak president Masaryk. Let us have a look at what MUDr. Jaroslav Lhotka thinks about this matter in his older article.

And the article itself:

Masaryk’s origin and the identity of his real father was, during the times of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy, a public secret, but this is not the case in our times when the people’s brains are being washed out by today’s historians who celebrate an idol, just like when the Christians worship the golden calf and prioritize mammon over God.

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<sup>38</sup> Malý Ladislav. *Když matriky promluví o Tomáši Masarykovi* In: NSJ – Národní sjednocení 7.3.2010.

In Královo Pole near Brno, there used to be a Carthusian monastery and more than 200 years, its brewery prospered. A man by the name of Kropáček worked in the brewery. He was a thrifty man. When he acquired a decent sum of money by working for the Carthusian monks, he set himself up as an innkeeper in Hustopeč, a town with prevalingly German-speaking population. Kropáček started to sign himself as Kropaczek. He married a woman of German ethnicity called Tekla Wurm and they began to improve the inn together. Their son even married the daughter of the burgomaster of Hustopeč, a decided German Josef Ruprecht. In 1815, the Kropaczeks had a daughter, christened by the name of Terezie. The parents so longed for their daughter to have a bourgeois upbringing that they sent her as a servant to a rich Jewish family, the Fleischmanns, as a companion to their daughter, in order to learn superior manners and surpass the provincial environment.

A Mr Redlich was courting Fleischmann's daughter and came to visit her. He was a tenant of the state large farms in Hodonín and Čejč, the founder of the well-known sugar factory dynasty of the Redlichs and the son of the important financial baron Redlich. However, Mr Redlich was a Jew by ethnicity and by religion. Mr Redlich Jr devoted his attention not only to his future bride, but also to her comely companion Tereza. When the results of this attention were revealed in the form of Tereza's pregnancy, a family upheaval burst out. The main aim was to prevent this foolishness from becoming a public scandal. The solution was found in the promotion of a coach driver on Redlich Jr's estate, a man called Masařík, to the position of the "shaffer". Josef Masařík saw his bride for the first time at the day of his wedding with Miss Kropaczek on 18 August 1849.

6 months and 21 days after the wedding, the Masaříks had a son. They had him christened and registered in the parish record as Thomas Johann Masarik. Josef Masarik was entered as his father – and the name was spelled without the wedge above "r". Mrs Masarik later signed herself as Masaryková and so did her son. Redlich sent her alimony on regular basis through his legal representative JUDr. Alois Pražák, a

lawyer in Brno, who, due to Redlich's favour, became a minister in Vienna. His son, JUDr. Otokar Pražák, who took over his father's office, continued to pay child maintenance to Mrs Masaryk. All this was well-known in the Moravian Slovakia (Moravské Slovácko), and also the famous painter of this region and its people, Józsa Úprka, knew it. Therefore he was not in Masaryk's special favour even in Prague and these common people were as distant from Masaryk as he was from them.<sup>39</sup>

The text itself is a mixture of conjectures, speculations and obvious manipulative inaccuracies – even lies. Speculations about Masaryk's illegitimate origin cannot be proved in any way and although they are persistently repeated, especially in texts by Masaryk's adversaries, there is no historical basis for them. Similarly the memoirs of the painter Úprka express nothing more than a strictly private and isolated opinion.

Between 2007 and 2009, when the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Polná murder was commemorated, the interest in the Hilsner affair reached its climax also among the Czech neo-Nazis. They organized couple of memorial ceremonies at the place where the victim was found in Polná and published several accounts of these meetings on the internet.<sup>40</sup> On the website Civic Disobedience, entreaties commemorating the Hilsner process appeared, for example this anonymous text:<sup>41</sup>

On 29 March 1899, a common girl called Anežka Hřůzová suffered a violent death. She fell by the hand of the Jewish murderer who killed her in an inhuman and drastic manner on her way to her native village.

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<sup>39</sup> Malý Ladislav. *Když matriky promluvily o Tomáši Masarykovi* In: NsJ Národní sjednocení 7.3.2010.

<sup>40</sup> *Neonacisté se sešli u hrobu Anežky Hřůzové v Polné* In: Jihlavský deník 10.1.2008.

<sup>41</sup> *Vzpomínka na Anežku Hřůzovou* In: Občanská neposlušnost. 4.1.2008.

What is even worse is that the Jew Leopold Hilsner who had been found guilty of her death was subsequently discharged! Surely, you have heard about this deed, but we cannot commemorate such historical facts, from which we must learn and draw experience, frequently enough, in order to prevent more such events from happening and that we might avert them! ... Let us be disobedient and distrustful of the System that wants these acts to be forgotten! There is nothing wrong in pointing your finger at murderers!

In the discussion below the article, a writer using a nickname “Jan Kilop” expressed his opinion:

It is good that you commemorate these crimes! The Jewish ritual murder is as old as humanity itself! Several hundreds of Jewish ritual murders committed throughout centuries have been established by trials. These bloody crimes of the Jews are indelibly recorded in trial records and chronicles of almost every state in Europe. There is also a very abundant bibliography which clearly illustrates these cases.

All these are however only those cases that have been known and proved, but in reality, there must have been tens of thousands of victims throughout the long centuries! Today, when the Jews dispose of enormous power on the world scale, when they control finance, politics, mass media and transnational institutions, they commit these murders in a completely anonymous way and of course on a greater scale. It is known that in the USA, several thousand children go missing every year and it is a public secret that a greater part of them become victims of these bloody crimes. However, this does not concern the USA only but almost all states in the world. Naturally, not all Jews commit these crimes only small orthodox groups that nowadays exist in every state where the Jews live.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> *Vzpomínka na Anežku Hřízovou. Diskuse* In: *Občanská neposlušnost*. 4.1.2008.

At the same time, the then member of the Workers' Party Ladislav Malý published his own pathetic article about the Polná murder. In the conclusion, he writes:

Anežka Hružová was born on 16 April 1879 in a small homestead of Věžička near Polná in the Jihlava region. She led a very modest village life, but, in spite of the poverty of her surroundings, she had never resorted to anything in the way of stealth. Despite the social problems of the time, she retained her human dignity and the concept of hatred was unknown to her. Anežka was religious, she believed in God, she believed in love and truth (not to be confused with the Zionist-Freemasonic love and truth of V. Havel!)<sup>43</sup> Anežka frequented the church of the Assumption in Polná where she listened to the sermons of the dean Šimek with incredible interest. According to preserved testimonies of the people who knew Anežka, she was an honest and respectable girl. After her father's death, she helped her mother with the farm, she was nice and obliging. "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright." (Psalm 10.)<sup>44</sup> Requiescat in pace, Anežka – holy virgin and martyr!<sup>45</sup>

Malý's epilogue clearly points to the frequent practice of worshipping the victims of supposed ritual murders during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period, when the compassion for the victims blended with outbursts of violence against the Jews and with the tendency to worship these new "martyrs". Among the well-known objects of such worshipping are the young William of Norwich from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Simon of Trident from the 15<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> A reference to the famous Václav Havel's famous motto: "The truth and love must prevail over falsity and hatred". Havel's fierce critics sometimes use the neologism „truthlover“ (“pravdoláskovec”) to denote their opponents.

<sup>44</sup> Malý's Biblical reference is made according to the Latin Vulgata. In contemporary Biblical translations, it would be Psalm no. 11.

<sup>45</sup> The article is available in the websites's archive from 2011: Malý, Ladislav. *Panna a mučednice*. In: Národní sjednocení.

century, the twelve-year-old Simon Abeles from Prague from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and many others. According to the chronicles of the time, there were even numerous miracles taking place in the presence of their relics.

A special category has to be reserved for articles and statements that abuse the Hilsner affair in the contemporary political contest, even at a completely official level. When it was revealed in spring 2011 that the radically conservative activist Ladislav Bátora should become an assistant of the minister for education, the public responded negatively. This man provoked considerable unease by his vulgar assaults, arrogance, intolerance, extreme opinions and suspicious interests and activities. He called his opponents among the journalists “quasisanitary hyenas”,<sup>46</sup> he ran in the election for the National Party which has fascist inclinations, he took part, as both a listener and a lecturer, in private antisemitic lectures<sup>47</sup> where he appeared alongside with the most infamous neo-Nazis. Later on, he praised in public the antisemitic treatise by the pre-war anti-Semite, Father Rudolf Vrba.<sup>48</sup> When more and more details were revealed about Bátora’s activities and when he in August 2011 at that time as an officer of the ministry attacked not only the participants of the Prague Pride but also contacted foreign embassies about his protest, the pressure of the public demanding

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<sup>46</sup> Bátora, Ladislav. *O kvazisanitárních hyenách*. In: Národní myšlenka 49, 10.12.2010.

<sup>47</sup> *Bátora měl k extremistům blíž, než se zdálo. Přednášel i neonacistům*. In: iDNES 18.8.2011. See also: *Bátora se před několika lety účastnil nevěřejné antisemitské přednášky* In: Novinky.cz 30.4.2011. See also: *Bátora se zúčastnil přednášky o českém protizidovství* In: Novinky.cz 30.4.2011.

<sup>48</sup> Bátora, Ladislav. *Česká revue – Můj národ a má vlast*. In: Národní myšlenka 19.4.2007. See also: Vrba, Rudolf. *Vražda v Polné a židovská otázka v rakouském parlamentu, s interpelací posl. Schneidera o konfiskaci této brožury*: See also: Vrba, Rudolf. *Zkáza Slovanů za světové války. Denník poválečný: Díl I. a II.*



his removal culminated. This campaign requesting Bátor's removal was strictly condemned by the then president Václav Klaus who was instrumental in Bátor's career growth and who appreciated his sense of "conservative values". Klaus called the activities of the media and the public in this respect "a small Czech Hilsner affair".<sup>49</sup>

Another especially active protagonist of Czech antisemitism has been, since 2007, Adam Benjamín Bartoš. However, approximately until 2007, Bartoš had been holding pro-Jewish and pro-American neo-conservative opinions. Yet, after experiencing a sort of personal conversion, he joined the ranks of the passionate adherents of conspiracy theories and antisemites.<sup>50</sup> His bibliography contains a great number of anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli articles, some of them concerned with the Hilsner affair and T. G. Masaryk. As soon as on the Masaryk anniversary on 7 March 2011, Bartoš published his apologia of Klaus's statement about the "Bátor affair" at the website of the D.O.S.T. initiative: *The Bátor Affair: Is It the Nation that has Changed, or the Press? (Bátoriáda: Změnil se národ, nebo tisk?)*.<sup>51</sup> When Václav Klaus earned himself reproaches for the comparison of the media criticizing the anti-Semite Bátor to the Hilsner affair, Bartoš rushed in to defend Klaus:

As far as the media lynching is concerned, it is comparable. Both Masaryk and Klaus had to exhibit a great deal of courage in order to defend the demonized one, in spite of the disapproving shouts from the

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<sup>49</sup> Klaus, Václav. *Malá česká hilsneriáda aneb další případ diktatury politické korektnosti*. In: Novinky.cz 28.2.201. See also: Hloušek, Petr. *Václav Klaus: Malá česká hilsneriáda aneb další případ diktatury politické korektnosti*. In: Novinky.cz 27.2.2011.

<sup>50</sup> Tydlitátová, Věra. *E-antisemitismus. Projevy antisemitismu na českém internetu* or: Tarant, Zbyněk; Tydlitátová, Věra. *Faces of Hatred. Contemporary Antisemitism in its Historical Context*. p. 114-152

<sup>51</sup> Bartoš, Adam B. *Bátoriáda: Změnil se národ, nebo tisk?* In: Akce D.O.S.T. 7.3.2011.

political representation, and to go alone against everyone else. Back then, it was the press that went against Hilsner and against Masaryk who stood up for him. Today, the press goes against Bátor a and against Klaus who defended him. So far, the comparison is not out of place. Even the symbol of blood, which the clever media manipulation foists subliminally in Bátor a's case (Bathory),<sup>52</sup> can be found here.

In spite of this, I would dare to develop this thought further and have a look at those aspects of the comparison I am not happy about. In a sense, Pehe is right after all – it is not the same thing. Hilsner probably was (according to all evidence) a murderer who really killed Anežka Hřůzová (although I do not profess it was for the motive indicated). Bátor a, however, is inconvenient merely for his opinions. The Bátor a affair is maybe even worse than the Hilsner affair, for Bátor a did not commit any crime, but he suffers nonetheless. Only the antisemitic passions have been replaced by the anti-nationalist ones.

Paradoxically, the roles have thus been switched. Whilst the Czech nationalists then publicly cursed Hilsner and Masaryk, the cosmopolite friend of the Zionists, had to defend him, today the cosmopolitans (truth-lovers) publicly lynch the nationalist Bátor a.

Has the Czech nation changed then? I do not know about the nation, but surely the media has changed. The patriotic press inveighed at that time against (the guilty) Hilsner and later started to attack the cosmopolitan Masaryk. Today, the anti-patriotic press hunts Bátor a and through him the equally patriotic Klaus.

At the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Masaryk's death, Bartoř published several texts. His article entitled *T.G. Masaryk Rejoiced in Destroying What Was Dear to the Nation. Just Like Havel, He Served Foreign Interests* (*T. G. Masaryk si liboval v boření toho, co bylo národu*

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<sup>52</sup> A reference to the infamous myth about the Hungarian countess Elisabeth Báthory, who allegedly bathed in the blood of her murdered victims.

*drahé. Stejně jako Havel přisluhoval cizím zájmům.*)<sup>53</sup> appeared on the website of the Czech monarchists. On 16 September 2012, the very same text appeared under the heading *The Legend of TGM. On the Anniversary of Masaryk's Death (Legenda o TGM. K výročí Masarykovy smrti)* on the website [Freeglobe.cz](http://Freeglobe.cz)<sup>54</sup> which is edited by Bartoš, and, three days later, on Bartoš's personal website.<sup>55</sup>

As one could expect, Bartoš got especially interested in the information about Masaryk's alleged Jewish origin. He writes in the article:

An interesting question in itself is that of Masaryk's origin. According to some testimonies, Masaryk was an illegitimate son of the Jewish large farmer Nathan Redlich (as for example Heinz Jakob Tauber, a Jewish writer and a medical doctor, writes in his memoirs), when he made pregnant a servant who worked for the Redlich family by then, Tereza Kropaczek, and covered this love affair by an arranged marriage of Tereza to another one of his employees, the poor and illiterate coachman Josef Masárik. This would account for Masaryk's extraordinarily positive relationship to the Jews, his Zionist feelings and also for the deep respect the Jews showed to Masaryk during his life and which they have retained to this day.

For the next state anniversary, Bartoš published a text entitled *T. G. Masaryk the Freemason (Svobodný zednář T.G. Masaryk)*,<sup>56</sup> which forms a part of his extensive and to the present day unfinished work *The Circumcised Republic*.

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<sup>53</sup> Bartoš, Adam B. *T. G. Masaryk si líboval v boření toho, co bylo národu drahé. Stejně jako Havel přisluhoval cizím zájmům.* In: Monos. Monarchistické občanské sdružení 17.9.2012.

<sup>54</sup> Bartoš, Adam B. *Legenda o TGM. K výročí Masarykovy smrti* In: [Freeglobe.cz](http://Freeglobe.cz) 16.9.2012.

<sup>55</sup> *Adam b. Bartoš – personal blog*

<sup>56</sup> Bartoš, Adam B. *Svobodný zednář T.G. Masaryk* In: [Freeglobe.cz](http://Freeglobe.cz) 28.10.2012.

Immediately after the publication of this article, Adam Bartoš took another sweeping step to accomplish the above-mentioned study and published its first part called *The Circumcised Republic. T. G. Masaryk and the Jews*, with the subtitle: *The Jewish Traces in Modern Czech History. On the Relationship of the Jews to the Czech State and their Influence on Politics, Culture and Economy. (Obřezaná republika. T. G. Masaryk a Židé: Židovská stopa v moderních českých dějinách. O vztahu Židů k českému státu a jejich vlivu na politiku, kulturu a hospodářství)*.<sup>57</sup> This text was enthusiastically adopted or offered for download by the neo-Nazi websites The Free Resistance and The Educational Institute.

From what one can gather from the first part of the study, Adam Bartoš strives to pick up the threads of the traditional theses concerning Masaryk's relationship to the Jewish environment. Speculations about Masaryk's secret Jewish origin occupy a central place in such reflections. Even Charlotte Garrigue, Masaryk's American wife, did not escape the author's obsessive interest whilst he exploits unreliable sources, such as Zdeněk Nejedlý,<sup>58</sup> in an uncritical manner. Nejedlý's ignorance of the facts can be demonstrated on the scarce quotations he employs, such as about the use of tefilin, from a pamphlet by Jan Příhoda,<sup>59</sup> or from the biased sources from the time of the Second Republic. Adam Bartoš for example writes:

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<sup>57</sup> Bartoš, Adam B. *Obřezaná republika. T. G. Masaryk a Židé* In: Svobodnyodpor.info. 26.11.2012.

<sup>58</sup> Nejedlý, Zdeněk. *T. G. Masaryk. Kniha druhá, Mladá Morava, Ve světě*

<sup>59</sup> Příhoda, Jan. *Masaryk – Studie vyvolencovy krycí legendy* In: Spiknutí proti Církvi a lidstvu.

According to some sources (Příhoda, the Second Republic press), Charlotta Garrigue was of Jewish origin. As traditional Old Testament Jewish names appear with a surprising frequency in one of her family trees, especially the Protectorate press often referred to her as being Jewish. Also some of the features of her physiognomy would hint at the fact, just as the facial features of her son, Jan Masaryk, who after all protested that he had “something of the Jewish blood in his veins”. According to Příhoda, Masaryk supposedly knew Hebrew, which would also most probably point to the family background.<sup>60</sup>

This argumentation, of course, reveals at first glance either ignorance or bias on the author’s part, for Biblical names are entirely common both in the Anglo-Saxon and in the American tradition due to the influence of pietism, the press of the Second Czechoslovak Republic sniffing around for the Semite physiognomy cannot be taken too seriously either and the contemporary widespread knowledge of classical languages, which included, apart from Latin and Greek, also the Biblical Hebrew, formed a part of the common general knowledge of a university professor. Bartoš’s argumentation tries to retain a would-be objective outlook and he quotes, alongside unreliable sources, also respected references, such as texts by distinguished urban anthropologist Blanka Soukupová,<sup>61</sup> historian Jan Herben<sup>62</sup> or Čapek’s already mentioned *Conversations with TGM*,<sup>63</sup> but in fact he only recycles old themes and accusations and uses the respected sources only to quote sentences that suit his construct. Many of his reflections prove that Bartoš was unable to step out of his ideology and prejudices:

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<sup>60</sup> Bartoš, Adam B. *Obřezaná republika. T. G. Masaryk a Židé*. p. 9-10

<sup>61</sup> Soukupová, Blanka. *T. G. Masaryk a židé (Židé): legenda a skutečnost*

<sup>62</sup> Herben, Jan. *Masarykův rodinný život*

<sup>63</sup> Čapek, Karel. *Hovory s T. G. Masarykem*

The way in which Masaryk defended Jewish interests could have been caused by the fact that he felt personally obliged to many representatives of this minority. The number of cases when influential Jews helped him on his way through life is so startling that it would be far more easily explicable if we conceded to his own belonging to the Jewish race (as we will try to prove in the conclusion) – then it would be the traditional loyalty and mutual solidarity which exists within this ethnic group, and the whole story would become more understandable. This at the same time does not exclude commitments (in terms of paying off a debt) on the political level.<sup>64</sup>

Apart from general and previously known statements documented on extensive quotations, Bartoš also concerns himself with speculations about Masaryk's relationship to Zionists, Freemasonry and occultism. A great amount of space is devoted, for obvious reasons, to the Hilsner affair. Bartoš introduces the chapter in the following manner:

The most telling illustration of the defence of Jewish interests in Masaryk's life is probably his action during the so-called Hilsner affair; although Masaryk himself always refused such interpretations. Masaryk, at that time a university professor, stood up for the intellectually not very capable Jewish youth called Leopold Hilsner, who was at the turn of the centuries accused and found guilty of the murder of Anežka Hružová from Polná. The murder exhibited, according to many, a religious motive

Anežka Hružová's throat was slit and the fact that almost no traces of blood were found on the crime scene led many to the assumption that the blood had been collected and used for Jewish ritual purposes, as has been suggested for centuries in the popular tradition and as has been demonstrated on several tens of cases from ancient or recent past. The truth is that Hilsner was indeed a murderer; as even some of the Jews acknowledged.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Bartoš, Adam B. *Obřezaná republika. T. G. Masaryk a Židé*. p. 12

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* p. 33

Bartoš's treatise consists of 83 pages including a bibliography and 17 pages of visual supplements with no references to sources. It basically repeats several given themes and by means of extensive, although in terms of quality quite diverse, footnotes strives to give an impression of scholarly expertise. The treatise itself cannot be unequivocally deemed primitive and simplistically antisemitic; nonetheless, certain stereotypes and prejudices may be traced even in the seemingly objective text. At some points, there is almost constraint effort to rewrite the official history, to "fell down the idol", to revise history in the way of Tomáš Krystlík,<sup>66</sup> who wrote, with a touch of scandal, that the Hilsner affair was one of the reasons why Masaryk got the access to the influential Jewish circles in the U.S. and their political support. The author, however, considers this necessary political pragmatism contemptible. In fact, Masaryk himself did not conceal this information: "*As everywhere, the Jews supported me in America, too. And it was mainly in America that the Hilsner affair, so to say, proved as having been worth my while.*"<sup>67</sup> Adam Bartoš could not and perhaps even did not want to step out of his own shadow. The whole work can be read as the author's attempt to give his obsessive preoccupation with Judaism a semblance of scientific research.

Bartoš returned to TGM again in a polemical article entitled *Let Us Stop Moralizing. TGM also Paid Bribes (Zanechme moralizování. TGM taky uplácel)*.<sup>68</sup> He published the same text again on 10 July 2013 under a more resolute heading: *T. G. Masaryk and Edvard Beneš Were Just the Same Corrupted Thugs as Some Politicians Today (T. G. Masaryk*

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<sup>66</sup> Krystlík, Tomáš. *Zamřčené dějiny 1918-1938-1948-1968*

<sup>67</sup> Weltsch, Felix. *Masaryk a sionismus*. p. 72

<sup>68</sup> Bartoš, Adam B. *Zanechme moralizování. TGM taky uplácel* In. *Freeglobe.cz* 7.7.2013.

*a Edvard Beneš byli stejní zkorumpovaní gaunerři jako někteří dnešní politici*) on Europortal.cz.

Thanks to the internet, conspiracy theories and accusations of Masaryk of Jewish or Freemasonic, i.e. essentially foreign, interests, spread among other chauvinistically inclined young opponents of liberal democracy. A telling example is David Vorovka's short article on Freeglobe.cz.<sup>69</sup> Here, the author, known primarily from neo-Nazi circles, tries to explain some events on the political scene in the middle of 2013 by a play of foreign interests. He concludes his text thus:

They [TOP09]<sup>70</sup> only wait for the fruit of the play they orchestrated and in which they played their own restricted part. Restricted parts are also played by various would-be politicians like Okamura or Janeček, the love-truth oligarchs such as the billionaire Babiš, media figureheads like Václav Moravec or Jan Kraus, or pseudo-Catholics like Tomáš Halík. These are the infantry-ideologists who daily perform their verbal mentoring exercises through our foreign media.

Their aim lies in the transformation of the Czech Republic into an Eldorado of hidden foreign interests, into an obedient puppet who will not get a chance any more, into a cuckoo's egg in central Europe, into a testing polygon for the processed provinces of the New World Order without which the new world rule – whose installment becomes more and more evident – cannot cope. This curse of our country actually began by the installment of the first president Masaryk by the Freemason international lobby and by the establishment of the Freemason republic for ever. Not so many people know that the blue triangle in our flag is actually the Masonic wedge at their apron...

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<sup>69</sup> Vorovka, David. *O co se skutečně hraje v současné reality show? Trapnohra o dvou neznámých není ničím novým: Na počátku není doktor Rath, ale profesor Masaryk* In: Freeglobe.cz 27.7.2013.

<sup>70</sup> TOP 09 is a Czech mainstream, right-wing, conservative party.



This is what is being played for while the police sirens wail. It has never been otherwise.”<sup>71</sup>

The life of the real Tomáš Masaryk was varied and may remind one of a piece of theatre. His posthumous fortunes are no less interesting. His personality is clouded by arguments, polemics, emotions and mysteries. It is indeed not desirable to support the false, idealized image of the “Papa Liberator”; however, the intensity of the attacks directed at the first president, even after one hundred years, bears witness to an extraordinarily strong personality who could hit the adherents of false and hateful ideologies in their weak spot. On the other hand, these attacks also point to the stability and inertia of the manifestations of human small-mindedness. The interpretation of Masaryk’s arguments in the present day, just as at the time of its climax at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, divides the society and works as an accelerator for the search of truth and decency. Masaryk himself attributed a more general meaning to the Hilsner affair when he wrote these timeless words: *“Anti-Semites are a blind tool of clericalism which strives for spiritual blindness, of clericalism that kills the spirit. It is called the Jew, but in reality it is modern science and philosophy, modern free thought. And to this actual spiritual murder does the Czech intelligence want to assist by the superstition of the ritual murder?”*<sup>72</sup> If these words sound topical even at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we may find that the rationalist and ethical thought, which was typical of Masaryk, could be an answer to present-day crises as well.

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Masaryk, Tomáš G. *O pověře rituální*. p. 589

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Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and the Hilsner Affair in the Interpretation of Electronic  
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## Neo-Nazis on the Nation's Boulevard – How the neo-Nazis Came to Celebrate the International Students' Day

*Zbyněk Tarant*

Since 1941, November 17 has been recognized by the United Nations as the *International Students Day*. In the Czech Republic, it is known as *The Memorial Day of the Students' Struggle for Freedom and Democracy* and it is one of the most important dates of the modern Czech and Slovak history. Every year, November 17 is marked by increased political activity in the Czech Republic as well as in Slovakia. Dozens of rallies, protests, marches and meetings take place in the Czech cities, especially in Prague. November 17 has become the day for going into the streets to criticize the establishment, to call for civic freedoms and social justice as well as to appeal to national consciousness and collective memory. It has become the feast of *homo politicus* and one could hardly find any other “modern” civic holiday in the Czech Republic with a similar rate of civic participation.

While this day has been enjoying significant attention and rate of participation as far as the mainstream democratic society is concerned, especially after it was proclaimed a national holiday by the Czech government in 2000, the relationship of the Czech far-right movements to this national holiday has been much more

complicated. As I try to demonstrate, November 17 raises serious questions about democracy, freedom and national loyalty and in many ways, it presents a significant challenge to the thoughts and ideologies of the Czech far-right movements, organizations and political parties. In this chapter, I attempt to trace the various discursive strategies the far-right employs to overcome these challenges. My aim is to show how may memory and history be shaped today by the far-right ideologues, and how our knowledge about these strategies could be utilized for the purpose of differentiation between the numerous ideological streams inside the highly particularist far-right scene. What I will present is the far-right's struggle to deal with the historical events by creating its own version of them and then building a new revolutionary ideology upon this transformed version. In doing all this, the topic of antisemitism in a society, which has been left nearly without Jews, will show its teeth here and then as well.

### **Historical background**

For the benefit of our discussion and for the sake of foreign readers, the history behind 17<sup>th</sup> November, while notoriously known in the Czech discourse, should be addressed briefly. The roots of 17<sup>th</sup> November are loosely connected to another important date in the Czech history – October 28 which is an anniversary of the Czechoslovak independence gained in 1918. During the period of so-called First Czechoslovak Republic from 1918 to 1938 (the interwar period of Czechoslovak democracy, symbolized by the personalities of Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and Edward Beneš), the

day of national independence was commemorated annually. However, in 1938, the celebrations had to be cancelled. It was about one month after the Munich agreement and the Czechoslovak government was afraid that the celebrations might provoke the Nazi Germany. For the first time, there were no official celebrations of October 28. A year later, in October 1939, already in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia which has been proclaimed by the Nazis after occupation of Czechoslovakia, the Czech students decided to keep the tradition alive by organizing their own protests and marches on October 28. The Nazi regime responded with brutal force. One of the students, Jan Opletal, was lethally injured when the march reached the Nation's boulevard in Prague. He died several days later. His burial on 15 November 1939 led to (or was provoked to become) another anti-Nazi demonstration.

The Nazi occupation regime responded two days later, on 17 November 1939, by closing down all Czech universities in an unprecedented attempt to vanquish the Czech intelligentsia, science and education. About 1 200 students were arrested and deported to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Moreover, nine of the student leaders were immediately executed. Paradoxically – and this fact is going to be of special importance for our topic – some members of the Czech movements that collaborated with the Nazis (like the fascist *Vlajka*) were among the killed and deported as well. Two years later, in 1941, as a response to this persecution of Czech students, the 17<sup>th</sup> of November was proclaimed an *International Students' Day* by the United Nations.

In the present-day Czech Republic, November 17 is mostly known and remembered as the day when the Communist regime blocked

and then brutally dispersed a peaceful student demonstration in 1989. However, the demonstration on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1989 was not originally supposed to be an anti-regime protest. Those young people came to Prague to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nazi atrocities against the Czech nation. As an “anti-Fascist” commemoration event, the gathering was even officially approved of by the Communist regime and organized by the *Socialist Youth Union* (*Socialistický svaz mládeže*).

What started as an officially sanctioned memorial event of the fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi repression of student resistance in Albertov, ended with anti-regime slogans on the Nation's Boulevard. It was not the first anti-regime demonstration. Dozens of anti-regime demonstrations, motivated by economical and environmental causes, preceded this event. As the students' march went through Prague, the atmosphere of reverence and commemoration was replaced by the feeling of revolt. When it reached the Nation's Boulevard, a wide busy street that leads from Wenceslas Square to the National Theatre, the riot police attempted to block the students and disperse the demonstration. Because of the confusion and disorder among the riot police, the students were trapped at the Nation's Boulevard from two sides. They were surrounded by the riot police who failed to realize that the students had nowhere to go, and interpreted their continuous stay in the street as a defiance. They therefore attacked the peaceful gathering with unforgiving brutality. Later that evening, a rumor emerged that one of the protesters – Martin Šmíd, a student – was killed during the crackdown, just like fifty years ago. This analogy with the death of Jan Opletal, the alleged death of a protesting student, on exactly the same day and on exactly the same spot, became the last drop that

made the cup of the nation's patience run over and started the Velvet revolution. The rumor itself was not true and its originator, Drahomíra Drážská, later spoke to the media on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event and confessed that she had made up the whole story.<sup>1</sup> No such student was ever present at the demonstration. The supposedly dead young man, whom some of the protesters saw lying on the ground and being covered with a blanket, was in fact a member of secret police Ludvík Žifčák, who was hit into his arm by his comrade from riot police and fainted (or pretended to faint). However, in the already disturbed social and political atmosphere, the notion that the riot police blocked all exits intentionally and then possibly killed somebody during the pointless crackdown, was the last straw that was enough to bring down the whole regime. Hundreds of thousands angry citizens went to the streets of Prague and other cities during the following days and the weakening regime had decided not to use the already mobilized soldiers and militia and to agree to the negotiations with the strongest opposition movement, the *Civic Forum* (Občanské fórum), led by Václav Havel, about the first free elections after forty years of dictatorship. Such is the story of November 17 in historical terms.<sup>2</sup>

What is known today as the Velvet Revolution was actually a culmination of protests that, inspired by similar protest movements in Poland and Germany, had raged in Czechoslovakia since the beginning of 1989. For some, this so-called "Velvet Revolution" with

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<sup>1</sup> *Autorka fámy o mrtvém studentovi promluvila, s StB prý nespolupracovala.* iDnes.cz 18.11.2009.

<sup>2</sup> Probably the most comprehensive historical account of the Velvet revolution was provided in the Czech by: Suk 2009. For a full edition of relevant documents, prepared in cooperation with the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, see: Žáček 2013.

its non-violent ethos of “truth and love” that shall “prevail over lie and hatred” was too soft. Radical members of the anti-Communist opposition, among whom were also the later exponents of the re-born Czech far-right, felt that the peaceful handover of political power was a result of some silent deal between the Communists and the opposition leaders and that the *Civic Forum* had to offer the Communist rulers “something” in exchange. These beliefs were then expressed in pamphlets of radical anti-Communists and one could actually find examples of them throughout Central Europe, with the Polish *The Myth about Removal of Communism by Solidarność* being probably the most infamous one.<sup>3</sup> The most significant and radical expression of these beliefs in the former Czechoslovakia is a pamphlet known as *The Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November*, written by Miroslav Dolejší.

### **Miroslav Dolejší's Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November**

Miroslav Dolejší was born in 1931, studied on an industrial secondary school in Kladno, but was expelled from further studies for political reasons in 1951. We know the actual name of the Communist party member, whose denunciation caused Dolejší's expulsion and who thus stood at the beginning of destruction of Dolejší's life. It was certain Vladimír Kolmistr.<sup>4</sup> Dolejší was forced to

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<sup>3</sup> The Czech far-right knows this text and its Czech translation is in circulation. See: *Mýtus o odstranění komunismu solidaritou*. In: Národně-vzdělávací institut.

<sup>4</sup> The biography of Dolejší in this text is based on: Tomek 2009. The editors of the academic journal, in which was Tomek's article published, decided to include several archival documents about Dolejší, including the minutes from the hearing in 1951, where was the expulsion of Dolejší decided. The very Dolejší's schoolmates were forced to vote about his expulsion, they refused it for the first time, and only after extended

sign a cooperation agreement with the secret police (the *Státní bezpečnost* or *StB*) in the same year, but there are no documents, from which we could learn whether he truly collaborated or not (and if, to what extent)<sup>5</sup> – it seems that he actually foiled the activities of the secret police by warning his friends.<sup>6</sup> In July 1951, he was arrested, allegedly for displaying a small British flag in a clubhouse of the *Czechoslovak Youth Union* (Československý svaz mládeže). He spent 15 months in custody during which he was tortured, and then sentenced to 23 years of forced labour for “high treason” and “espionage”. He was 19 at the time. He spent 9 years in prisons and labour camps, which were, at the time, built and organized in a fashion similar to the Soviet Gulag. He was released in 1960 after president Novotný's amnesty. After his release, he was unable to find a job. His bright intelligence and mathematical skills opened him the door to the fields of cybernetics, demography and sociology. He learnt the programming languages, used in automatized industrial control systems, which allowed him to work in various positions in industry and information technologies,<sup>7</sup> though sometimes under a pseudonym. His physical health was already deteriorating at that time due to the harsh conditions of his imprisonment and irradiation from the uranium mines. In 1976, he was arrested again. The true reasons for this arrest have not been

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pressure, they have voted for the expulsion. This documents shows a frightening reality of the Communist regime that used the ordinary citizens, even youthful classmates as its accomplices. See: Tomek 2009, p. 431-435.

<sup>5</sup> Dolejší talks about his involvement with the Communist secret police in *Týdeník Politika* 28/1991, p. 2-4.

<sup>6</sup> C.f.: Tomek 2009, p. 422-423.

<sup>7</sup> At that time, he was even able to publish an academic book on the technology of electric resistive furnaces and dryers. See: Dolejší, M., Tomek, V.: *Elektrické odporové pece a sušárny*; Prague: SNTL 1967.

established yet. The official version was that he had revealed a state secret by publishing articles about Czechoslovakia in foreign academic journals. Even the Communist police was not sure, if his works contained classified materials or not. The true reason for the arrest might be the fact that he was involved in the activities of Czechoslovak dissent, especially in the movement K-231. It is possible that he fell victim to StB's provocation that was originally aimed against another dissident – Eugen Vrba.<sup>8</sup> This time, he was imprisoned in the strictest penal category from 1976 to 1985 – for another 10 years. He thus spent in prison 19 years altogether, nearly a quarter of his lifetime. He was finally released in 1985 for health reasons. He was one of the longest serving political prisoners of the Communist era (which lasted 40 years), but unlike the other dissidents, his life-story had never caught attention by the foreign human rights movements. He was left alone. His personal idiosyncrasies made him an outsider among the Czechoslovak dissent. He was very bitter about the former Communists, who later participated in the Charta 77 movement. After the Velvet Revolution, he hoped for satisfaction for the mistreatment, he suffered for most of his life, but despite of his partial personal rehabilitation, the general peaceful nature of the revolution and the willingness of the opposition to make direct negotiations with the former oppressors further deepened his bitterness. According to Prokop Tomek, the last straw responsible for Dolejší's loss of faith in justice came, when the same Communist, who was responsible for his expulsion and imprisonment, Vladimír Kolmistr, appeared as a signatory of

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<sup>8</sup> Tomek 2009, p. 424-426. The number 231 is the paragraph of Czechoslovak penal law under which were most of the political prisoners sentenced.



*Charta 77* and member of *Civic Forum*.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, Kolmistr was later co-opted as a member of the Czechoslovak parliament in 1990. For Dolejší, this might have been the start of his obsession to search for more “disguised” perpetrators of the further regime. This obsession then led him to a suspicion that the peaceful Velvet Revolution was actually a pre-prepared handover of political power. The foreign contacts of the Czechoslovak opposition led him to the conclusion that there were foreign agents involved in the events of 1989.

Shortly after the revolution, Dolejší was rehabilitated, the school that expelled him in the 1950s issued him decree of graduation and he was offered to cooperate on investigations of the Communist crimes. However, this formal satisfaction was not sufficient for him. He joined a newly formed group of radical anti-Communists around Petr Cibulka – the publisher of the *Uncensored press* (*Necenzurované noviny*) and self-proclaimed hunter of StB agents – and former members of the *Czechoslovak People's Party* (ČSL)<sup>10</sup> Josef Tomáš and Jaroslav Voříšek who were expelled from the party in 1990 and who established their own newspaper – the infamous *Politics Weekly* (*Týdeník Politika*).<sup>11</sup> Radical anti-Communist groups like these

<sup>9</sup> Tomek 2009, p. 427. The editors of the academic journal *Soudobé dějiny* asked Mr. Kolmistr for statement that was then published in full length in the following issue of the journal. See: Kolmistr 2009.

<sup>10</sup> The Czechoslovak People's Party was a Christian democratic party, originally established in 1919. It is one of the oldest Czech political parties. During the Nazi and Communist era it joined the resistance. After the Velvet Revolution, it was renamed as Christian Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party and during most of the 1990s and 2000s it received between 6 % to 9 % in the general elections. It attempts to represent the views and opinions of democratic, moderate conservatives, and its electorate consists mostly of religious, both Catholic and Protestant voters.

<sup>11</sup> Josef Tomáš and Jaroslav Voříšek decided to found a brand new newspaper in the early 1990s, when their original newspaper *Young Democracy* (*Mladá demokracie*) was dissolved by the decision of the Czechoslovak People's Party, who owned it and had the magazine

played a significant role in the rebirth of domestic, Czech fascism, whose intellectual tradition can be actually traced back into the period of the First Republic and it reached its climax in the infamous period of so-called Second Republic<sup>12</sup> in 1938–1939 and the subsequent Nazi Protectorate. Foreign sources of inspiration for the *Týdeník Politika* can be traced, for example, to the German Sedevacantist *Pro Fide Catholica*.<sup>13</sup> Important personalities of Czech nationalist populism, like Miroslav Sládek, were to emerge from this scene. And it was Dolejší who provided the re-born far-right scene its constitutional text, today known as *The Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November*.<sup>14</sup>

This text, believed to be only part of a larger corpus<sup>15</sup> which was later allegedly destroyed by Dolejší himself and never published,<sup>16</sup> is a summary of Dolejší's conspiracy theories about the “true” background of the Velvet Revolution. As far as we know, it seems to

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registered at the Ministry of Culture. The first issues of the newspaper were typewritten and copied on Xerox machine in the style of samizdat publications, the later ones since 1991 were printed on cyclostyle as a regular newspaper. See the publishers' editorial in: *Týdeník Politika* 1/1 1990

<sup>12</sup> The so-called Second Republic is a period of 167 days between the Munich agreement in September 1938 and the Nazi occupation of Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939.

<sup>13</sup> The publishers of *Týdeník Politika* even translated several pamphlets that were originally published by *Pro Fide Catholica*, especially those by Johannes Rothkranz (*Woher Stammt Der Islam, Die Kommende Diktatur der Humanität* etc.). These translations can be found today on the website that were founded by Voříšek and Tomáš as a direct continuation of *Týdeník Politika*. See: <http://www.spiknuti-proti-cirkvi-a-lidstvu.com> (online) (23.10.2013).

<sup>14</sup> Some but not all parts of the document were later translated to English: *The Dolejší Analysis (1991)* In: Petr Cibulka 2.7.2005.

<sup>15</sup> According to some hints in *Týdeník Politika* (6/1991, p. 2) Dolejší was working on a book called *The Children of Anger (Děti Hněvu)*.

<sup>16</sup> This is one out of the many rumors that have been surrounding Dolejší. See for example excerpts from Dolejší's obituary written by his brother Josef in: *Hrdina třetího odboje* In: *Časoděj*.

be the first antisemitic text by Dolejší. The now classic text of Czech antisemitism should be primarily read as a personal expression of deep disappointment, bitterness and feeling of injustice, written by a broken man. However, the broken man chose to get his satisfaction by attacking the Jews. The *Analysis* was originally serialized in 1990 on the pages of the newspaper *Central-Bohemian Express (Středočeský Express)*. It was then republished multiple times in various pamphlets and excerpts from the *Analysis* appeared on the pages of far-right magazines like *Republika* and *Týdeník Politika*. The version we are referring to in this chapter comes from a thin booklet published by Miroslav Sládek's *Czechoslovak Republican Party* and consists of about 22 pages.<sup>17</sup> The chaotic text is roughly divided into three main sections: the first one summarizes Dolejší's views on the nature of Czechoslovak democratic dissent and its alleged ties with the Communist regime. The second part puts the Velvet revolution into a larger image of worldwide conspiracy. The third part attempts to outline author's vision of future events.

Dolejší understands November 17 as a part of a secret plot established by Communists, capitalists, secret services, Freemasons and Jews in order to create a false "revolution" and remain *de facto* in charge. The true power in the state was to reside in the hands of a handful of important Masonic / Jewish families. The anti-Communist dissent, especially the *Charta 77*, was seen only as a puppet of the former regime. In order to familiarize the reader with the spirit of the pamphlet, let us quote from page five:

The *Charta 77* was directed by 70 to 85 people, with a core of 42 speakers, who took turns in this position during the existence of the initiative. This

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<sup>17</sup> Dolejší 1991.

group consisted of several clans bound together by kinship and family ties (not to mention the shared interest and financial aims). It applies especially the following families: Havel, Dientsbier, Šabata, Němec, Palouš, Hromádka, Ruml, Marvan, Štern, etc. All of these large families are Communists, or their offspring, Freemasons and their offspring and Jews. Nowadays, about 180 members of these families, their relatives and friends have acquired positions in the highest diplomatic and economical functions of the state. This group of Czechoslovak citizens was approved of for their mission by the authorized organs of the SSSR and the USA (via StB-KGB-CIA-Mossad). Other international organizations expressed their consent as well.<sup>18</sup>

The lists of particular names of Czech families and individuals who are being accused of participation in the plot and/or of being connected to Jewish or Masonic circles are very typical of the whole pamphlet. No sources are listed to prove the allegations and the text is basically a series of speculative accusations. Who is a Jew or Freemason depends entirely on the author's decision. The conflict between socialism and capitalism, both of whom are attributed to the Jews, is explained in *The Analysis* as a mere part of a larger plot. The logical discrepancies in the antisemitic beliefs that Jews are responsible for both socialism and capitalism alike are thus resolved by pointing to an alleged superior plot that uses these logical discrepancies intentionally in order to hide its true nature: "*The antagonism between socialism and capitalism, the SSSR and the USA, fulfilled its purpose by dividing the world, sucking out vast areas and numbers of inhabitants, and removing the early 20th-century heterogeneity of the world. Nowadays, it is called of as useless.*"<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

To some extent, this conspiracy theory could be understood as an anti-Semite's peculiar version of the widespread feeling, which was later popularized in the West by Francis Fukuyama, that with the end of the bipolar confrontation between the USA and the SSSR in 1989, history itself ended. In Dolejší's frightening world, however, the history was far from ending. In his imagination, the mutually hostile secret services of the United States and the Soviet Union cooperated on the Czechoslovak territory and they, of course, needed the Mossad to coordinate their actions. Václav Havel and other dissident leaders then went to do their terms in prison during the 1970s and 1980s willingly (sic) in order to create the impression of the oppressed dissent which was important for this long prepared sophisticated plot. November 17 was believed to had been arranged by the secret services in order to legitimize the transfer of power from the Communists to the puppet opposition.

But why would the KGB cooperate with CIA and the Mossad in a tiny country in Central Europe? The answer to this question is given to the reader in the second part of the pamphlet. According to Dolejší, the final goal of the Jewish, Masonic, Zionist and other conspirators was to marginalize the role of Europe in the world system through the process of unification and dissolution of national states. Moreover, Dolejší does not stop at this and claims, in a highly complicated construct, that November 17 was a part of a plan whose first phase was the dismantling of Brežněv's Soviet regime that provided political support for the Arab countries in order to prevent them from forming a large anti-Zionist front. In the realm of conspiracy theories, large and complex power structures are imagined to be performing an extremely complicated way of doing things that could be actually done with one hundredth of the

effort. In Dolejší's fantasy world, the destabilization of Europe was accomplished only to prevent the European states from helping the Arabs, for: "*Control of the pan-European government will prevent the Arabs from obtaining military and economic (and political) support of this unified Europe.*"<sup>20</sup> Making the Arabs powerless by staging the revolutions in Central Europe was important, "*especially for allowing the occupation of most of the Arab territories that constitute the Biblical 'Great Israel' (from Euftrat to Libya) without much risk.*"<sup>21</sup>

Dolejší's *Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November* was strongly rejected and refuted many times immediately after its publication. Dolejší was later forced to resign his membership of the dissident's organizations. Some of those whom Dolejší mentions as the members of the conspiracy, like the Communist functionary Rudolf Hegenbart, sued him for libel, thus pouring more salt to his wounds. Dolejší's cooperation agreement with the Communist secret police was revealed to the public during the trial.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, there were groups and individuals, who at that time identified themselves primarily as radical anti-Communists and who applauded Dolejší's pamphlet. They saw in it an expression of their own disappointment with the result of Velvet revolution. There was, of course, a true reason for such suspicious feelings, as some influential personalities of the Communist era were able to retain their power after the revolution as well. This fact, however, does not prove that there is a conspiracy involved: it merely shows that those who used to had power in the past were able to employ their contacts, wealth,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> For an interview with Dolejší and reactions of the far-right to the trial and the revelation of his involvement with the secret police, see: *Týdeník Politika* 38/1991.

experience and callousness and thus secure a continuation of their businesses and careers under the new regime. There is another side to this coin: one of the strongest supporters of Dolejší and harshest critics of this continuing influence of former Communist cadres in the new regime was Miroslav Sládek. Under the former regime, Sládek worked for 8 years at the *Bureau for Press and Information (Úřad pro tisk a informace)*, which was the official name of the Communist censor office.<sup>23</sup> Sládek later wrote an introduction to one edition of Dolejší's *Analysis* and the version of the pamphlet I quote in this text was published by the Sládek's political party.

*Týdeník Politika* stood up in defense of Dolejší<sup>24</sup> and the text of *The Analysis* was extensively promoted on its pages. Dolejší was one of their most diligent contributors and the newspaper also published several interviews with him.<sup>25</sup> His articles appeared under his real name, but some of the more explicit ones, such as *Adolf Hitler – The Study on The Chosen One's Cover Legend*, were published under pseudonyms like dr. Jan Příhoda.<sup>26</sup> Dolejší also published an influential Czech translation of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* under the title *The Knights of This Age (Knížata Doby)*, under pseudonym Robert Helebrandt.<sup>27</sup> It was on the pages of *Týdeník Politika* where the first ones out of the many rifts in the still young Czech far-right appeared when Dolejší joined *Politika's* publishers Josef Tomáš and Jaroslav Voříšek in an attack against their former supporter and at that time the most successful far-right populist

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<sup>23</sup> *Jak bije srdce Prahy* In: *Policista* 05/2008.

<sup>24</sup> *Týdeník Politika* 12/1991, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> For example: *Týdeník Politika* 6/1991, p. 2, *Týdeník Politika* 7/1991, p. 2, *Týdeník Politika* 8/1991, p. 2, *Týdeník Politika* 9/1991, p. 4, *Týdeník Politika* 11/1991, p. 6-7 etc.

<sup>26</sup> Vybulka, M.: *Případ Politika odebrán dalšímu vyšetřovateli*. In: *Lidové Noviny*, 23.12.1992

<sup>27</sup> Helebrandt, R.: *Knížata doby – Protokoly siónských mudrců*. In: Národně-vzdělávací institut

politician Miroslav Sládek, whom they accused of being a Jew and a Freemason himself.<sup>28</sup> *Týdeník Politika*, which started as a radical anti-Communist project in 1990, was banned in 1992 by the court for propagation of racial hatred, which is a crime according to the Czech law. The last straw was the issue no. 96 from 1992 where a list of personalities of allegedly Jewish origin was published.<sup>29</sup> The publishers were sentenced to seven months of jail with two years of probation. In 1995, one of them published a pamphlet entitled *The Prague Political Trial in the Case of Týdeník Politika*, in which he explains the whole trial as a mere fulfillment of Dolejší's prophetic *Analysis*.<sup>30</sup> It is quite be symbolical that, after serving his sentence, Josef Tomáš, this radical anti-Communist and Catholic Sede-vacantist who accused the Jews of being responsible for Communism, and who supported Dolejší so strongly in his opinion about the staged revolution of 1989, appeared in December 2008 as the press secretary of the *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia* – the successor of the pre-1989 Stalinist *Czechoslovak Communist Party*.<sup>31</sup> He was able to hold his position for ten days only, after which he decided to resign from the post due to the very negative

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<sup>28</sup> The personal reasons behind this accusation are not clear, but they had begun much sooner (see: *Týdeník Politika* 9/1991, p. 2-3). The pretext was taken from the Republicans' newspaper, *Týdeník Republika* no. 25 (June 1992), where Sládek published his pre-election call to his supporters ended with a mobilizing sentence: "We have started building our Temple, let us finish it!" The accusation was started by *Týdeník Politika* (75/1992, p. 4). Sládek mentions this call to his followers from 9<sup>th</sup> of June 1992 in his memoirs *Znamení doby*, but without any further explanation or any remarks on the attacks it attracted. Sládek, M.: *Znamení doby*. Prague: Advent-Orion 1994

<sup>29</sup> *Týdeník Politika* 96/1992, p. 2

<sup>30</sup> Voříšek, J.: *Pražský politický proces 1994 ve věci Týdeníku Politika*.

<sup>31</sup> *Nová tvář KSČM – antisemita*. In: *Lidové noviny*



public response. The leader of the Communist party, Vojtěch Filip, however, defended Tomáš for the whole time.<sup>32</sup>

### Dolejší's *Analysis* as a Living Text

One could say that *The Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November* is comparable to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in its importance for the identity of Czech antisemitic movements. And it is not the only analogy. Just like the *Protocols* that have been many times reedited ex-post to make them more convincing for the reader,<sup>33</sup> *The Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November* has also many different versions, all of whom claim to represent the original text from 1990.

In order to demonstrate this phenomenon of textual changes in detail, two most widespread versions of the document were analyzed and compared by computer – one early version, published by the Republican Party in 1991, which has about 15 540 words and which is still the most widespread one (version 1).<sup>34</sup> On the website of neo-Nazi think-tank *Národně vzdělávací institut* and elsewhere, one can find another version which has about 17 570 words and is therefore noticeably longer (version 2).<sup>35</sup> A simple function called “compare documents”, offered by most of the available word processors, was used to compare these two versions. Some of the textual changes

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<sup>32</sup> *Mluvič KSČM Tomáš rezignoval*. In: Lidové noviny 9.1.2009.

<sup>33</sup> See the various facsimiles of the Russian edition of *The Protocols* from about 1905 in: Bernstein 1971. The facsimiles show that the sentence “we will show one of them our strength by means of violence, that is by terrorism” was replaced to “we have shown one of these governments our powers by assassination, by terrorism”.

<sup>34</sup> Dolejší, M.: *Analýza 17. listopadu 1989*.

<sup>35</sup> *Analýza 17. listopadu 1989 a změny ve východní Evropě (vydáno v roce 1990!!)*

are negligible and should be disregarded as outcome of proofreading and spellchecking. Some were executed clearly to purge the text of Dolejší's archaisms, for the author's spelling gives clear evidence of the fact that he went to school in 1930s. However, there are other changes which affect directly the content of the text, without any explanation given by the editors or publishers. Here is one example that shows both minor language corrections (word order, missing prepositions etc.) as well as textual changes from present to past tense that alter the meaning of the sentences. **Bold** font marks added text, ~~crossed~~ font marks deleted text:

~~They are~~They were informed in a greater advance than others that Czechoslovakia will be oriented primarily on tourist industry, and, following the pattern of the organized crime in the West, they will want to seize the control of the related services **too**: gambling houses, prostitution, drugs, racketeering. In this sense, they will become a part of the international organizations with an analogous specialization, on whom the Soviet KGB **in the West** has been also working for a number of years ~~in the West~~.<sup>36</sup>

These were minor changes. Typical major changes include adding new sentences and, especially, adding new names into the lists of alleged conspirators, probably to make them look as a fulfilled prophecy or to attack some of the contemporary personalities. Let us demonstrate this on specific examples. Here is a part of the text, where the **bold** characters are used to mark, where the computer found textual differences between version 1 and 2:

From the first 217 signatories of Charta 77 from 1.1.1977, 156 were former Communists, among whom are names of personalities compromised by direct or indirect involvement in the 1950s Communist

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<sup>36</sup> Result of a computer comparison which was performed by the author of this chapter.

terror, as for example: František Krigel, Ladislav Lis, **Zdeněk Mlynář**, Ludmila Jankovcová, **Jiří Dienstbier**, **Luboš Dobrovský**, Gertruda Sekaninová-Čakrtová, **Ladislav Kolmistr**, Jiří Hájek, Miloš Hájek, **Jiří Ruml**, Oldřich Hromádko, Karel Šiktanc, **František Šamalík**, Ludvík Vaculík, Pavel Kohout, Jarmila Taussigová, **Věnek Šilhán**, **Libuše Šilhánová**, **Bedřich Placák**, Jaroslav Šabata, **Jan Štern**, **Jiří Kantůrek**, **Rudolf Zukal**, **Luděk Pachman**, etc.<sup>37</sup>

Here, it is clear that some of the names were added only later. Other example of such additions to the lists of names can be demonstrated on the portion of the text whose shorter version has been already quoted above. The changes to the text are again marked by a **bold font**:

This group consisted by several clans tied together by kinship and family ties (not to mention the shared interest and financial aims). It is especially the families of: Havel, Dienstbier, **Píthart**, Šabata, **Uhl**, **Müller**, **Tesař**, Němec, **Bednář**, **Kynel**, Palouš, **Dobrovský**, Hromádko, Ruml, **Mlynář**, **Pelikán**, **Slánský**, Marvan, Štern, **Kantůrek**, **Freund**, **Tomin**, **Korčíš**, **Payne**, **Kocáb**, **Placák**, **Princ**, etc. All of these large families are Communists, or their offspring, Freemasons and their offspring and Jews.<sup>38</sup>

I do not have enough data at my disposal to be able to say who has made these changes to the text. Some of the publishers do include their commentaries to the text, they care to mark those, but they fail to acknowledge the changes the computer has revealed. The extended edition might well have been edited by Dolejší himself, as he died in 2001, but why are these different versions of the text still presented as the original from 1990, as the longer version openly

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<sup>37</sup> Result of a computer comparison which was performed by the author of this chapter.

<sup>38</sup> Result of a computer comparison which was performed by the author of this chapter.

advertises in its subtitle?<sup>39</sup> These textual changes clearly show that there is not one “canonical” version of Dolejší's *Analysis*. It is actually a living text, updated and edited ex-post by Dolejší's admirers and later adherents of the Czech far-right. And as a living and evolving text, it should be analyzed with a due amount of caution.

### In Dolejší's Footsteps

For most of the 1990s and early 2000s, *The Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November*, intensively promoted by Miroslav Sládek, functioned as the foundational document that shaped the relationship of the Czech far-right to the events of Velvet Revolution. An alternative term “*Sametový podvod*” (“the Velvet Swindle”) is being used sometimes to describe the events of 1989 as an expression of this discourse. The vague proclamations from *The Analysis* are being read in a way similar to Biblical testimoniums, for example Dolejší's expectations about dissolution of Czechoslovak federation. Immediately after the Velvet revolution, the debate on Slovakia's national autonomy was very intensive and therefore it is not surprising that Dolejší wrote about it as well. However, in 2003, the *Týdeník Republika*, published by Miroslav Sládek's *Republican Party*, writes: “*Whoever wants to understand some of the contexts and reasons for the dissolution of ČSFR<sup>40</sup> has to find the data in The Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November by Miroslav Dolejší. There, he can read: The significant aspect of Václav Havel's*

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<sup>39</sup> *Analýza 17. listopadu 1989 a změn ve východní Evropě (vydáno v roce 1990!!)* In: Národně vzdělávací institut.

<sup>40</sup> ČSFR was the Czech acronym for *Československá federativní republika* a.k.a.: *Czechoslovak Federation Republic* since 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1990 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1992.

*policy will be preparation for the separation of Slovakia. The main public goal will be to sacrifice Czechoslovakia as an example for other states and politicians in the name of a collective, unified Europe.' Now, we can only watch with concern how does the prediction from The Analysis come true.*"<sup>41</sup> Let us put aside the fact that Dolejší clearly contradicted himself, when he wrote that Slovakia's struggle for national sovereignty is a step towards the dissolution of national states. For our discussion, this way of quoting Dolejší's *Analysis* as a "prophetic" text is very important. Moreover, the Republican party still felt the need to refer to it, even though its original author called the leader of this party a Jew and a Freemason.<sup>42</sup>

In the 2000s, the Czech far-right had been gradually adopting the three different approaches to November 17: rejection, revisionism and adoption. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the rejection and revisionism were the most popular attitudes, whereas adoption seems to be a much later trend. The complete rejection or denial of the very existence of November 17 is rather hard to record, as it manifests itself in the very absence or scarcity of remarks and comments on this date. If we browse through the hundreds of articles, comments and posts on the neo-Nazi and far-right websites, it becomes clear that November 17 was a completely marginal theme until the late 2000s. There had been no article directly related to the topic of 17<sup>th</sup> November on the websites of the neo-Nazi National

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<sup>41</sup> Týdeník *Republika* 1/2003, p. 1

<sup>42</sup> The meme about Sládek's alleged Jewishness or about his membership in the lodges of Freemasons is a recurring one and it has been sporadically raised in the quarrels between the various sections of the highly particularist Czech far-right scene. Sometimes, it led to absurd proportions when two anti-Semites accused one another of being Jewish. See for example: Bednář, J.: *Poznámka k prohlášení republikánů*. In: Odpor.org 22.10.2007.

Resistance (Národní odpor) until 2008, when the Workers' party together with the members of National Resistance attempted to provoke an anti-Romany pogrom on that date.<sup>43</sup> On the old and long defunct version of website of the Workers' Party, whose archive stores all articles since the party's birth in 2003, the oldest remark concerning November 17 is a single article from 17<sup>th</sup> November 2006 (among hundreds from that year), one from 2007 (again from hundreds) and only then, in 2008 when the Janov riot (discussed later in this chapter) took place, the number of articles about 17<sup>th</sup> November rises rapidly to about two dozens among hundreds.<sup>44</sup>

The Czech neo-Nazis have generally a very complicated relationship to the Czech national holidays. Some are indeed remembered and observed, like the The Czech Statehood Day on 28<sup>th</sup> of September that is directly connected to the Catholic tradition of the Czech national patron St. Wenceslas, who is himself highly revered in the far-right circles, especially among the clero-fascistically inclined members of the scene.<sup>45</sup> But others, like the Day of Declaration of Independent Czechoslovakia on 28<sup>th</sup> of October,<sup>46</sup> or The Day of Victory over Fascism on 8<sup>th</sup> of May are strictly rejected. The initial WWII meaning of 17<sup>th</sup> of November was, of course, never mentioned on the contemporary Czech neo-Nazi websites, not even in an attempt to deny or relativize the events of 17<sup>th</sup> November 1939. However, one could find occasional remarks on this topic by neo-

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<sup>43</sup> See the archive of articles at the website of National Resistance: *Odpor.org* (now accessible only via WebArchive)

<sup>44</sup> *Archív tiskových zpráv* DS 2003-2008, Dělnická strana.

<sup>45</sup> For the history of St. Wenceslaus, see: Rataj 1999, p.: 84-96.

<sup>46</sup> For an example of far-right's approaches to 28 October, see the cover of this book taken from *Týdeník Politika*. The same theme appeared later on the website of National Resistance.

fascists or radical nationalists in early 2000s, for example on the Czech version of the *Altermedia* website, whose content was to a great extent a direct continuation of the discourse set by the *Týdeník Politika*. On November 17<sup>th</sup> 2003, *Altermedia* published an article which attempts to adopt the anniversary of 1939 for the sake of Czech fascists and revise the events of 1989 according to Dolejš's *Analysis*. To allow the reader to see how the Czech fascists and nationalists construct their discourse in comparison to neo-Nazis, let us quote the article in its nearly full length:

Today is 17<sup>th</sup> November, a public holiday, The Day of Struggle for Freedom and Democracy. Why does this anniversary appear in the calendar? In our history, there are two important 17<sup>th</sup> Novembers: 1939 and 1989. As for the first one: on November 17, 1939, an execution of 9 representatives of student clubs took place and the Czech universities and colleges were occupied. Officially, it was a revenge for the student riots after the burial of the murdered student Jan Opletal. However, it seems more likely that the Germans wanted to liquidate the Czech intelligentsia. Out of those nine executed, only 8 were in fact student representatives. The last one, Ing. Marek Frauwirth, born 8.12.1911, was not student at all, he was of Slovak nationality and, moreover, he was a Jew. He was probably put on the list of executed to enable the Germans to stress the "Jewish" source of the unrest. In fact, there were primarily members of right-wing groups and movements among the executed: such as the member of *The Flag (Vlajka)* from the Protectorate era Jan Černý, doc. dr. Josef Matoušek, who studied in Italy for several years and who had many friends there etc. There is even a recent theory that he had been trained by the Italian fascists to take part in a coup against Mussolini and that some of the nine executed ones were killed because they knew him. But this is something we cannot resolve today. Important is that November 17 has been proclaimed The International Students' Day.

Neo-Nazis on the Nation's Boulevard – How the neo-Nazis Came to Celebrate the  
International Students' Day

The student gathering at Albertov in 1989 was organized under the patronage of Socialist Youth Union and later developed into an unannounced march through Prague with shouting of anti-Communist slogans. Of course, the vast majority of the people, who took part in it, had good intentions. Nevertheless, the fact is that the demonstration was directed by the StB and was a part of plans of certain circles to overtake the Communist governance. I won't be writing about this more, as it would only make me repeat the thoughts of others – if you're interested to learn the truth about the whole event, then I can only recommend to you the excellent work by Miroslav Dolejší *The Analysis of 17<sup>th</sup> November*.<sup>47</sup>

Here, the reader can see how the Czech fascists included November 17 into their discourse by stressing the far-right background of the executed students. However, the very same event represents a source of problems for the neo-Nazis, as the executioners were the German Nazis. Adoption of November 17 by neo-Nazis would be impossible without an explicit connection of the day to their own struggles. In retrospect, it seems that they finally got such an opportunity on November 17, 2008, when they used the public holiday to organize an anti-Romany march to the Janov suburb in the North-Bohemian industrial town of Litvínov.

### **In Search for the New November 17th**

Out of the three already mentioned discursive strategies, adoption seems to be the newest one. The most important proponent of this attitude is the *Workers' Party (Dělnická strana)* led by Tomáš Vandas. This party emerged from the ashes of the Republican Party's youth

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<sup>47</sup> Nonnemann, F.: *17. listopad*.



organization late in 2002, together with another far-right project, known as the *National Party (Národní strana)*. With the decline of the Republicans, the party, led by former members of the *Republican Youth (Republikánská mládež)*, grew in importance and it was bosted even more after the dissolution of the *National Corporativism (Národní korporativismus)*<sup>48</sup> and the failure of several attempts to integrate the particularist far-right under a neutral banner.<sup>49</sup>

During 2007, the National Party organized several provocations in the streets of the Janov suburb which belongs to the small mining town of Litvínov in North Bohemia.<sup>50</sup> The National Party was trying to utilize the conflicts between the local autochthons and the Romany newcomers who were settled in the suburb by real-estate investors in order to clean other estates in the region. The resulting concentration of these socially excluded persons into one, even more isolated place in an already impoverished mining region, led to conflicts, increased crime rate, gang violence etc. The Workers' Party found inspiration from National Party and begun its own series of provocations in the same suburb.<sup>51</sup> On 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2008, a group of fourteen people in black uniforms (the so-called:

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<sup>48</sup> *Národní korporativismus* was an informal, unofficial, yet very active platform of cooperation between neo-Nazis and other adherents of the far-right scene. Its leader was Jiří Petřivalský who was later active in the *Workers' Party* and in the pro-Assad *European Front of Solidarity for Syria*.

<sup>49</sup> I write extensively about the history, background and neo-Nazi connections of the Workers' Party in English in: Tarant 2009, p.: 84-101.

<sup>50</sup> *Národní politika v Janově*. In: *Národní strana* 20. 7. 2007

<sup>51</sup> *Oznámení Dělnické strany*. In: *Dělnická strana* 20.7.2008

“Protective Crews”<sup>52</sup>) appeared in the streets of the suburb<sup>53</sup> and succeeded in provoking an incident that was recorded and posted in a YouTube video that quickly became viral.<sup>54</sup> On October 18, the Workers' Party returned to Litvínov. However, this time they faced a strong support of the public.<sup>55</sup>

It was November 17, when the whole unrest culminated. On The Day of Struggle for Freedom and Democracy, more than 1500 people came to listen to anti-Romany speeches and possibly to participate in a pogrom attempt against the Romanies. Alongside the, such as the party leader Tomáš Vandas and the “heroine” of the initial provocation and the viral YouTube video, Lucie Šlégrová, guest speakers from Slovakia, Marian Kotleba and Radoslav Novotný, were invited as well. These guest speakers used this opportunity to address hundreds of people for the promotion of antisemitism when they warned the auditorium against “*Zionism and its destructive influence over the events in Europe*” and saluted the gathering by the call: “*Na stráž!*”<sup>56</sup> After the speeches, Tomáš Vandas officially ended the gathering of the Workers' Party, the banners of the party were removed and the same people begun the march

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<sup>52</sup> The resemblance of “Protective crews” to German “Schutzstaffeln” does not seem coincidental and it was actually one of the reasons for later dissolution of the first Workers' Party.

<sup>53</sup> Article about the incident by mainstream media: *Radikálové z Dělnické strany chtějí hlídat Janov*. Czechnews 25.7.2008.

<sup>54</sup> *Vokurka, M.: VIDEO: Zuřící Romové vyhnali radikály z Janova*. In: *Mostecký deník.cz* 5.10.2008.

<sup>55</sup> *VIDEO: Extremisté se střetli s těžkooděnci. V pochodu do romského ghetta jim policisté nezabránili*. In: *Mostecký deník.cz* 5.10.2008.

<sup>56</sup> “*Na stráž!*” was the official greeting of Slovak clero-fascists and *Hlinka's Guards (Hlinkovy gardy)* in Czech and Slovak, a para-military organization of Andrej Hlinka's *Slovak Folk Party*) during WWII in the pro-Nazi Slovak puppet state. It is comparable to the German “*Heil Hitler!*” in its meaning, although it literally means: “*On guard!*”

towards Janov by shouting: “*Czechs, come with us!*” (In colloquial Czech: “*Češi pod'te s náma!*”). Flags of the informal neo-Nazi movement *Autonomous Nationalists* were raised and the black flags of the neo-Nazi movement, the National Resistance followed together with the black banner with the slogan of the National Resistance “*Národně! Radikálně! Sociálně!*” Under the guidance of the neo-Nazis, the march that consisted of about 1 500 people accompanied by more than 600 ordinary citizens of Litvínov, set out towards Janov.<sup>57</sup> Despite of tight security measures, taken by the riot police, a substantial amounts of melee weapons and home-made pyrotechnics were smuggled into the path of the march. A group of the marchers left the path and tried to enter the suburb through another street. The march stopped on a roundabout leading to the neighborhood and split into several groups.<sup>58</sup> This was considered a violation of the agreed route of the march and the riot police decided to ride down the mob. The eruption of violence that followed was deemed one of the worst ones since the events of the Velvet revolution in 1989.

Suddenly, the neo-Nazis “discovered” the November 17. The amount of articles containing the phrase “November 17” on the neo-Nazi websites such as *Odpor.org* (defunct nowadays) rose significantly. A new myth was born – a myth in which the proud nationalists are beaten by the post-bolshevik riot police, just like nineteen years ago. *Dělnické listy (The Workers' Journal)*, a bulletin published by the Workers' Party, dedicated a whole issue to the events of 17<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> A detailed account of the events was published in a local mainstream newspaper: *OV-LINE: Bitva v Janově. Extremisté proti policii. Těžká zranění na obou stranách*. In: *Mostecký deník.cz*

<sup>58</sup> Vokurka, M.: *Janov: Extremisté mohli pochodovat dál, ale nevyžili toho*. In: *Mostecký deník.cz* 18.11.2008.

November 2008 with many references to the Velvet revolution. The rioters were presented as victims of police violence. A large headline dominated the front page: *“Our Fight with the Regime!”*<sup>59</sup> Under the headline, the article continued: *“It came spontaneously; as all revolutions. I am convinced it was a revolution, because it prepared for us many developments none of us had planned. And those events and developments came because they had to come.”*<sup>60</sup>

Several verbal attacks on the Jews appeared in this issue as well, especially because one of the Jewish communities (the liberal community) stood up for the Romanies.<sup>61</sup> Such minor antisemitic manifestations, directed at the *Jewish Liberal Union* (*Židovská liberální unie, JLU*), also kept appearing in the days following the event. As the party had no specific themes on which it could base its attacks, it decided to make some material up by faking posters and banners that allegedly offered the Romanies money loans from the Jews, but they gave themselves away by the following postscript: *“Let’s join our forces against the white Goyyims”*,<sup>62</sup> which clearly shows the text was written by an anti-Semite, who did not know that JLU is, as a religious institution, unable to lend money, not to mention the fact that the author of the posters did not even know how to spell and conjugate the word “Goy”, so he came up with a double plural. Moreover, I have personally checked the streets of the town and looked for these for these advertisements at that time, but after walking through a significant part of the small town, I did not find a single one.

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<sup>59</sup> *Dělnické listy* 10/2008

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Šlégrová, L.: *Co je Židům do toho?* In: *Dělnické listy* 10/2008, p. 3.

<sup>62</sup> Šlégrová, L.: *Jak ŽLUti navádějí černé proti bílým.* In: *Dělnické listy.*

Neo-Nazis on the Nation's Boulevard How the neo-Nazis Came to Celebrate the International Students' Day



The neo-Nazi march approaches the roundabout in Janov (Photo: Zbyněk Tarant, 17.11.2008)

A year later, in 2009, the celebrations of 17<sup>th</sup> November were widely anticipated in the Czech Republic, as it was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, and with the economical crisis at its peak, it was a suitable moment for the whole society to look back and contemplate what have the first twenty years of freedom brought so far. This time, the neo-Nazis decided to organize demonstrations of their own on November 17 (something that would have been unimaginable only two or three years ago) and launched a campaign among their followers to mobilize them for participation in the protests. The Workers' Party attempted to claim the Nation's Boulevard for its protest, but as it was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Velvet Revolution, the place had been already taken and reserved long ago by half a dozen of different gatherings and activities. To sidestep the Czech law on public gatherings, Tomáš Vandas proclaimed that he would just *"take a walk on the Nation's Boulevard and anyone, who*

wants to join him is welcome".<sup>63</sup> One of the posters of Workers' Party called the sympathizers to the gathering under a headline: "Pest Control Needed" and continued: "We do not celebrate the revolution because we know that the real revolution is still before us."<sup>64</sup> In the party's bulletin *Dělnické listy*; the leader Tomáš Vandas wrote about an "agreement between the Communists and the so-called dissidents with Václav Havel in the lead" and called for a "second Janov, this time in Prague."<sup>65</sup> The same issue of the party's bulletin brought an interview with Vandas, from which I quote:

Question: Are you planning a second Velvet Revolution? On one of your posters with the headline "Pest Control Needed", you write that the real revolution is yet to come... What do you want to say to the citizens by this?

Answer: It is definitely not a Velvet Revolution in the sense of 1989. We are not going to negotiate dubious agreements with anyone and we are not going to make pacts with this corrupted regime.<sup>66</sup>

Although Vandas did not make any direct remarks about Dolejší's analysis, its influence over this former member of the Republican Youth is very clear. At the same time, Vandas proclaimed that this "pest control" was to take place by democratic means. However, this situation when Tomáš Vandas is more moderate and cautious in his statements than his radical followers is very typical for the whole party. In an invitation to the same event, published by the neo-Nazi National Resistance, its author calls for hitting the Nation's

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<sup>63</sup> *Dělnické listy* 24/2009, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> *Analýza 17. listopadu 89*, *Dělnické listy* 8.11.2009.

<sup>65</sup> *Dělnické listy* 24/2009, p. 1.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Boulevard once again, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Velvet Revolution, and to create a new symbol out the November 17:

While November 17 was undoubtedly a historical breakpoint, is there anything to celebrate? There are dozens of political prisoners,<sup>67</sup> former Communists still in charge, organized crime connected to the highest ranks of politics, rising powers of police and state as well as a connection between the media and the state, and the involvement of our state in the supranational structures that limits our sovereignty and autonomy... Are these reasons for celebration? Let's make a new symbol out of November 17. Let's open the eyes of those who think they live in a free country. Let's send a message to those who are in charge that we're not interested in them. We demand freedom and a state that doesn't govern the people, but serves them. It's worth it. So, let's hit the streets once again on 17<sup>th</sup> November.<sup>68</sup>

On the crowded Nation's Boulevard that day, the neo-Nazi demonstration was only one out of many that took place at the same time, the anti-fascist radicals disturbed it by using loudspeakers and sirens and the whole gathering was disappearing in the crowded street. The gathering then marched over the Bridge of Legions to the other bank of the river Vltava and the whole "revolutionary" event ended at this point. Only after the official ending and after moving back to the other side of the river, some of the small radical neo-Nazi groups attempted to initiate clashes with the riot police.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> By "political prisoners" the author of the quoted article means the neo-Nazis sentenced to jail for violent crimes or propagation of racism.

<sup>68</sup> *17.11.2009: 20 let po Sametové revoluci stále bojujeme za svobodu! – Praha.* In: Odpor.org.

<sup>69</sup> Personal observation of the event by the author.

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A neo-Nazi memorial gathering at the roundabout in Janov (Photo: Zbyněk Tarant 17.11.2010)

The next year's neo-Nazi gathering on 17<sup>th</sup> November in 2010 took place again in Litvínov. It was one day after the parliamentary election. This time, it was a quiet memorial gathering. About sixty people dressed in black gathered in a late afternoon at the entrance to the Janov suburb near the building of an abandoned supermarket Delvita. After some initial speeches, the march quietly walked to the roundabout where the main clash with the riot police took place two years ago.

The participants formed a semi-circle at the roundabout, silently holding black flags to pay homage to their injured comrades. Tomáš Vandas gave interviews for the press. As the dusk was falling, wreaths were laid and candles were lit *“for the injured comrades”* on

the roundabout itself.<sup>70</sup> It seemed that the Workers' Party was striving to build up an ethos of "the martyrs of Janov" in the place where the attempt at the "real" revolution took place. The success of this attempt is disputable, as only a small group participated and the memorial event was not even reported in the party's bulletin. The gathering then moved to the parking lot near a former commercial center (now a pub and casino) and Lucie Šlégrová, whose provocation helped to start the unrest two years ago, delivered a very harsh speech in a surprisingly strong voice and emphatic diction that clearly resembled some of the speeches of Adolf Hitler. Among others, she said:

[...] Today, I'd like to send a message to all the chosen ones! You can try to silence us, to use various methods of repression, but never, never can you stop us on our way to freedom! You can knock us down to our knees, but we'll always stand up with our heads raised! We'll always go on and one day, we'll come to you. And we'll come to you so close that it will be truly uncomfortable to you. Because, just like you dare to judge us for our pure thoughts, one day, we will judge you for your dirty deeds!! And you can be sure that it will be without remorse [...]<sup>71</sup>

This speech by Lucie Šlégrová led the district prosecutor to file a motion against Šlégrová for instigation of racial hatred and support and propagation of movements that oppress the human rights. During the trial, Šlégrová's attorney raised an objection that the evidence by one of the prosecution's expert witnesses must be biased as his name "Mazel" sounds Jewish. The attorney was later

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<sup>70</sup> Personal observation of the event by the author.

<sup>71</sup> This speech was recorded by the author.

punished by a fine of 100 000,- CZK (about 3 880,- EUR),<sup>72</sup> but Šlégrová herself was acquitted of all charges in September 2013.<sup>73</sup>

The trial with Šlégrová was actually only one out of the several trials against the members of the Workers' Party and the National Resistance. Following the brutal incendiary attack in Vítkov in April 2009 when four neo-Nazis threw molotov cocktails into a house where a whole Romany family was sleeping, the police took harsh measures against the neo-Nazis. At the same time, the Workers' Party was disbanded by the court for propagation of Nazism. The members were prepared for that occasion and quickly moved into another party with a similar name, *The Workers' Party of Social Justice (Dělnická strana sociální spravedlnosti)*, but the whole movement received some serious blows. To stage a protest against the ongoing court processes, the Workers' Party called its next year's 17<sup>th</sup> November meeting to Prague again. Exactly as two years ago, the neo-Nazis marched along the Nation's boulevard, going through the same place where the German Nazis brutally dispersed a demonstration of Czech students against the Nazi occupation 71 years ago. After the speeches that took nearly two hours, the march of about 300 people with flags and banners marched along the Nation's Boulevard while shouting slogans such as "*Czechia to Czechs!*" and "*USA, Israel, go to hell!*"<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> *Za námítku o židovském původu znalce potrestal soud advokáta pokutou sto tisíc*, In: iDnes.cz 15.10.2013.

<sup>73</sup> *Nacionalisté chystají pochody do Chánova a Janova, další shánějí lidi do hlídek*, In: Městský Deník 4.9.2013

<sup>74</sup> Personal observation of the event by the author (17.11.2011)

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A neo-Nazi march on the Nation's Boulevard in Prague. The marchers hold a transparent entitled: "Freedom against the totalitarian practices of the corrupted regime" (Photo: Zbyněk Tarant, 17.11.2011)



A neo-Nazi march on the Nation's Boulevard in Prague on November 17, 2013 (Photo: Zbyněk Tarant)

Although the speeches took such a long time, only scarce remarks towards the history of November 17 were made and, considering the situation in which the movement was at that point, their content was quite vague. A noteworthy attempt to adopt November 17 for the neo-Nazi purposes was made the next year, in 2012. The Workers' Party seems to be slowly abandoning the city of Litvínov and did not attempt to repeat its memorial gathering in Janov. Instead, it called for a gathering in the South Moravian metropolis of Brno. This time, not only that the invitations and calls for the gathering were published on the neo-Nazi websites, but the youth organization of the Workers' Party even created a small dedicated website for it. There, in a section devoted to history, one can find a short article that attempts to explain to the supporters of the far-right why they should participate in such an event: *“Just like the Czech patriots voiced their protests in 1939, so does youth today express its desire for freedom regularly in the streets. Just like they were treated as subversive elements, so are the nationalists today tendentiously labeled by the government of oligarch as so-called extremists.”*<sup>75</sup> The electronic version of the party's bulletin also brought brief biographies of the nine executed students from 1939 (including the Jewish one) introduced by the following text:

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, nine students were executed without trial. Eight of those nine executed students were, during the period of First Republic, supporters of organizations and political parties that would be today labeled as “far-right”, “antisystem”, “non-liberal”, “anti-democratic”. Namely, for example, the Vlajka (the one from the First Republic is significantly different from the war-period), National Unification, Young National Democracy. They rejected the German Nazism, but at the same time, they were strongly critical of the parliamentary system of the First

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<sup>75</sup> *Pozvánka*. In: 17listopad.info

Republic. Moreover, they took a clear stand in relation to the leading representatives of the cultural life in the first republic, influenced by leftist ideas (Voskovec & Werich, Karel Čapek, Jiří Wolker), and, during the civil war in Spain, they provided verbal and printed support for the fascist uprising in Spain. Those students, were they living in our days, would undeniably march with us on November 17!<sup>76</sup>

In calls and proclamations like this one, one can easily trace the ongoing debate inside the Czech far-right about the meaning of November 17, as well as the debate between the radical neo-Nazis, for whom November 17 remains unacceptable, and the more moderate neo-fascists and radical nationalists who see these events as a possible basis for strengthening the specific identity of the Czech far-right as opposed both to the German Nazism and the liberal democracy. I was very curious if the organizers of the event will attempt to build upon this theme any further in their speeches, for that could cause a serious rift between the various fractions that form the Workers' Party, which is far from being ideologically unified. However, November 17 in Brno was just a regular meeting of the Workers' Party. No such remarks towards 17<sup>th</sup> November 1939 were made. Whoever published them on the party's website, he or she did not get the opportunity to voice them in the streets.<sup>77</sup> In the call for the next year's 17<sup>th</sup> November gathering in Prague in 2013 (again on the Nation's boulevard) all remarks towards 1939 were omitted.<sup>78</sup> At the same time, the riots in Janov that were seen as a "new revolution" several years ago, are not mentioned either. The only thing that has been maintained is the fact that the neo-Nazi Workers' Party celebrates November 17. The specific way in which it

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<sup>76</sup> 17.11.1939. In: *Dělnická mládež*

<sup>77</sup> Personal observation of the event by the author (17.11.2012)

<sup>78</sup> *Pozvánka*. In: 17listopad.info



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should be celebrated seems to remain a topic of difficult internal discussions and struggles inside the highly particularist Czech far-right scene.



The gathering of Workers' Party in Brno listens to the speech of the party leader Tomáš Vandas (Photo: Zbyněk Tarant, 17.11.2012)

## Conclusion

The witnesses of November 17 in 1939 would be probably surprised to see the neo-Nazis marching through the Nation's Boulevard in Prague and talking about freedom and heroism. In this chapter, I have attempted to explain the slow transformation of a very complicated relationship of the various streams of the Czech far-right to the memorial day of 17<sup>th</sup> November. This relationship can be

divided into three discursive strategies: rejection, revisionism, adoption. The framework, in terms of which the Czech far-right relates itself to the events of 17<sup>th</sup> November was set very shortly after the Velvet Revolution itself by Miroslav Dolejší. His key idea was that the revolution itself did not take place at all and that November 17 was a plot of Communists and Jews striving to destabilize Central Europe and remain in charge over the global and national events. Most of the ideology of the Czech far-right then builds upon this discourse. Since the mid-2000s there have been attempts to take one step further – if that revolution was not real, another attempt should be made, this time for real. The relationship of neo-Nazis to the 17 November was complicated by the fact that it is a memorial day of Nazi atrocities committed against the Czech nation. Remembering the November 17<sup>th</sup> then means, to some extent, a conflict of loyalties for the Czech supporters of Adolf Hitler. Drawing on this phenomenon, the political scientists and security analytics could analyze the far-right discourse on 17<sup>th</sup> November (and analogical events in the other countries of the post-Soviet bloc) in order to differentiate between pan-Aryan neo-Nazis and other, mostly neo-fascist and ultra-nationalist members of the scene. Several examples have been mentioned throughout the analysis in order to demonstrate how was the antisemitism introduced into this discourse. In order to construct the image of a vast Jewish conspiracy, the ideologues of the far-right movements had to “invent” the Jews in places where they were completely absent. This “antisemitism without Jews” sometimes led to absurd proportions when two anti-Semites accused one another of being Jewish. The events in Janov indicate that even in a society where antisemitism is generally a rather peripheral phenomenon, it can be introduced

into the discourse via other vaguely related themes. The centre of all these possible theoretical conclusions is one memorial day, November 17: the day that is supposed to remind us the price we must be all ready to pay for democracy.

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- [www.narodni-strana.cz](http://www.narodni-strana.cz) – Old website of the National Party
- [www.odpor.org](http://www.odpor.org) – Website of the National Resistance

### Articles from the mainstream media:

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- Nacionalisté chystají pochody do Chánova a Janova, další shánějí lidi do hlídek*, In: Mostecký Deník 4.9.2013. Available at: [http://mostecky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/nacionaliste-](http://mostecky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/nacionaliste-)

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# Mourning that Calls for Mending: Abraham Joshua Heschel's Response to Antisemitism

*Pavel Hošek*

Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972) was one of the most original and influential Jewish thinkers of the twentieth century. In his numerous published works, he proposes and develops a very specific theoretical and practical response to antisemitism, i.e. to the immense injustice and persecution inflicted upon Jewish people throughout history which culminated in the horrors of Holocaust.

Heschel understands antisemitism as a symptom of a very serious disease of the Western civilization. For him, antisemitism is one of the most obvious manifestations of a gradual loss of respect towards human dignity and the sacred value of human life.

The internal logic of Heschel's theoretical and practical response to antisemitism is firmly based on his theology. In other words, it is anchored in his neo-Hasidic religious humanism. This is why, if we want to understand that response, we have to start from Heschel's specific neo-Hasidic theology.<sup>1</sup> His view of the appropriate response to evil and injustice (both generally and also particularly in relation

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. Green, Abraham Joshua Heschel: Recasting Hasidism for Moderns, *Modern Judaism*, vol. 29/1, 2009.

to antisemitism) is based on his view of God and of God's relation to humanity.

### God in Search of Man

Heschel's particular understanding of God, as well as his understanding of the essence of Judaism, is inspired by Eastern European Hasidism, the pietistic movement to which Heschel's family had belonged for generations. One of the most interesting ideas expressed by some of the leaders of this movement is the mystery of mutual interdependence of God and humanity.<sup>2</sup> As the Hasidic teachers say, God *needs* human witnesses in order *to be God*. Just like a king needs his subjects if he is to be a king.<sup>3</sup>

In this mysterious sense, God's glory and power are *proportionate* to human awareness of that glory and power. At the same time (and this is essential for the main theme of this chapter), God's glory has to be acknowledged among men if human dignity and the ultimate value of human life are to be preserved and respected. Why? Because (according to the first chapters of the Hebrew Bible) human dignity is anchored in the fact that man has been created in *God's image*. If God is not acknowledged and respected, neither is God's image in man. And this is, in Heschel's understanding, exactly what has been gradually happening over the last two centuries in Western culture. Western people have been progressively losing awareness of Divine presence in human history. And it became only a matter of

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<sup>2</sup> This understanding is based on a particular interpretation of Biblical passages such as Deut 32, 18, Ps 60, 14, Ps 68, 35, Is 43, 12, cf. for example Zohar 2, 33a.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Heschel, *Between God and Man. An Interpretation of Judaism*, Harper and brothers, New York, 1959, p. 140ff.



time till the awareness of the sacred value and dignity of man as the embodiment of God's holy image would start to disappear from the Western consciousness. And the horror of Auschwitz came as a natural consequence of this process.

If this is the case, then God desperately *needs* faithful human witnesses, both for the sake of God *and* for the sake of men. If there are no faithful witnesses of God's presence, God is not (acknowledged as) God and human dignity and the ultimate value and sanctity of human life are called into question. In other words, the more people are aware of God's holiness, the more will they respect God's holy image in every human being.

This understanding of God and God's relationship with humanity, which Heschel adopted from Hasidic teachings, naturally leads to a very heightened importance of human responsibility when it comes to facing evil. Human beings are ultimately responsible for implementing and realizing God's will in human history. God is not acting as an omnipotent Ruler of the universe. In fact, God needs man as a partner in order to accomplish God's will, in order to repair and restore the world, in order to establish universal peace a justice.

## The Divine Pathos

This idea of Divine human partnership is a key element of Heschel's theology.<sup>4</sup> He rejects all static metaphysical portrayals of

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<sup>4</sup> Heschel, *Man is not Alone. A Philosophy of Religion*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1977, p. 241ff; see also Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, Meridian Books, New York, 1959, p. 281ff.

God's being, such as the one proposed by Aristotelian philosophy.<sup>5</sup> God is essentially relational and personal, He is „anthropopathic.“<sup>6</sup> In Heschel's understanding, God is not a detached, unmoved Mover: in fact, the opposite is true. God is the „most moved Mover“. God is concerned as a loving parent. He is passionately interested in man. He is personally involved in human history. So much so that God suffers whenever and wherever human beings suffer.<sup>7</sup> As the Lurianic Kabbalah suggests, God is “in exile”, awaiting universal redemption.<sup>8</sup> The exile of the Jewish people in diaspora is a mirror of an even deeper exile affecting God's very being. God's holy Presence, Shekinah, is imprisoned in the realm of darkness, suffering and awaiting universal redemption.<sup>9</sup>

This is the ultimate reason why God is waiting for faithful men to implement His dream of universal salvation, seeking faithful witnesses to make others aware of His holy Presence in human history, searching for responsive men and women to accept God's calling to repair and restore the world, to work towards *tikkun olam*.

In Heschel's understanding, we must not be afraid of anthropomorphic expressions when we speak about the mystery of God and His commitment to humanity. God passionately desires man's well-being with a Divine “pathos”.<sup>10</sup> He calls His servants to

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<sup>5</sup> Heschel, *Between God and Man. An Interpretation of Judaism*, p. 108ff.

<sup>6</sup> Heschel, *The Prophets*, Harper and Row, New York, 1962, p. 268ff.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. M. Chester, *Divine Pathos and Human Being. The Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, Vallentine Mitchell, London, 2005, p. 95.

<sup>8</sup> Heschel, A Hebrew Evaluation of Reinhold Niebuhr, in F. Rothschild (ed), *Jewish Perspectives on Christianity*, Continuum, New York, 2000, p. 288.

<sup>9</sup> Heschel, *The Prophets*, p. 221ff, 247ff, see also Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, p. 156.

<sup>10</sup> Heschel, *Between God and Man. An Interpretation of Judaism*, p. 118ff.

sympathize with His passionate concern, to feel what He feels and desire what He desires, to be compassionate as He is compassionate.

To sympathize with God's pathos, to identify with His desire is man's ultimate call, a call for *imitatio Dei*.<sup>11</sup> It is a call addressed to every human being, and in particular, it is a call for every Jew. In Heschel's understanding, to sympathize and even identify with the Divine pathos, to be moved in one's heart by the heart of the most moved Mover; to desire what God desires is actually the very essence of *prophetic* experience, the very heart of the prophetic ministry as documented in the writings of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>12</sup>

### Erasing the Image of God in Man

Yet as Heschel emphasizes again and again, in the contemporary Western world, God's goal of human history is seriously threatened. Considering the disasters of the twentieth century, culminating in the gas chambers of Auschwitz, Heschel expresses his deep concern about the future of humankind. He sees a growing spiritual power of nihilism, indifference, resignation and despair gradually destroying the Western civilisation.<sup>13</sup>

Even though the demonic Nazi regime was defeated at the end of World War II, the power of nihilism continues to grow. In Heschel's understanding, the very *humanity of man* is at stake – as the Western

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<sup>11</sup> Heschel, *The Prophets*, 221ff.

<sup>12</sup> This is the key idea of Heschel's monograph *The Prophets*, based on his doctoral dissertation written originally in German and published in 1936.

<sup>13</sup> Heschel in S. Dresner (ed), *I Asked for Wonder*, Crossroad, New York, 2004, p. 70, cf. Heschel, *Man's Quest for God. Studies in Prayer and Symbolism*, Ch. Scribners Sons, New York, 1954, p. 147ff.

culture is gradually forgetting God of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>14</sup> The holy image of God in man is under a serious threat of being completely erased or forgotten.<sup>15</sup> Antisemitism, the causeless hatred of Jews, culminating in the Holocaust, is just one of the symptoms of a most serious crisis of Western culture.

This crisis, in Heschel's view, did not start in the 1930s. The essence of that crisis is the almost unnoticed process of losing faith in the ultimate values, in the dignity and sanctity of human life, which has started long before Hitler.<sup>16</sup> Since many generations ago Western culture has been undergoing a process of gradual decay, caused by forgetting about man's ultimate destiny and calling, by losing awareness of the Divine presence in human history.<sup>17</sup>

The growing monstrosity of antisemitic behavior, which Heschel himself experienced during his childhood and youth in Poland and Germany, was just one of the most obvious indicators of a longterm deadly disease of Western culture.

Having witnessed the unashamed cruelty and violence towards himself and other Jews in the most "civilized" and advanced European countries and cities, Heschel, already as a young man, became extremely worried that the notion of living in the presence of the sacred Mystery is disappearing from the Western consciousness. Having been beaten up and stoned many times as a

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<sup>14</sup> Heschel, No Religion is an Island, in F. Rothschild (ed), *Jewish Perspectives on Christianity*, p. 310, see also Heschel, The Jewish Notion of God and Christian Renewal, in F. Rothschild (ed), *Jewish Perspectives on Christianity*, p. 331.

<sup>15</sup> Heschel, *Man is not Alone. A Philosophy of Religion*, p. 147, 151.

<sup>16</sup> Heschel, *Man's Quest for God. Studies in Prayer and Symbolism*, p. 149. Cf. also Heschel, *A Passion for Truth*, Jewish Lights Publ., Woodstock, 1995, p. 321ff.

<sup>17</sup> Heschel, *Between God and Man, An Interpretation of Judaism*, p. 233ff.

schoolboy by his Christian schoolmates in Poland,<sup>18</sup> having witnessed the shameless discrimination and violence against Jews in Germany where he studied,<sup>19</sup> having been exiled from Germany and later having escaped death at the very last minute by emigrating from Poland,<sup>20</sup> Heschel was horrified and deeply shaken. Not just for having encountered hatred against Jewish people, but for having faced an unprecedented lack of any respect for human dignity and the sacred value of human life.

### The Prophetic Call

As some of the scholars studying his life suggest, Heschel's lifelong response to all these painful experiences is just another example of how antisemitism becomes a very powerful impulse for Jewish creativity.<sup>21</sup> In the light of all the horrors of the twentieth century, Heschel, virtually in all of his writings and public speeches and in every piece of his writing, calls people of good will, Jewish and non-Jewish, to accept their share of responsibility for the disastrous condition of the Western culture. He became a powerful prophetic voice calling all responsible people to join strengths and work towards *tikkun olam*. As we have seen, Heschel's prophetic vision is not secular. It is deeply anchored in his understanding of God and His relation to humankind. God is in need of man, He is waiting and calling all those who are willing to sympathize with the Divine

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<sup>18</sup> E. Kaplan, S. Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel. A Prophetic Witness*, Yale Univ. Press, London, 1998, p. 55.

<sup>19</sup> E. Kaplan, S. Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel. A Prophetic Witness*, p. 103, 176ff.

<sup>20</sup> Heschel left Poland in 1939, only six weeks before the Nazi invasion.

<sup>21</sup> E. Kaplan, S. Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel. A Prophetic Witness*, p. 202, cf. also J. Merkle, *Approaching God. The Way of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, 2009, p. 6

pathos, who are willing to work towards universal redemption, to become God's partners and co-workers in repairing the world, in establishing universal peace and justice.

Since the decay of contemporary Western culture has been caused to a large degree by forgetfulness and indifference, Heschel believes that it is particularly important to remind Western man of his noble origin and destiny, to arouse a new awareness of God's presence in history, a new sensitivity and responsiveness towards the transcendent Mystery of being. God is in search of man. He looks for faithful witnesses of His presence and of His pathos. It is necessary to awaken the Western man from his indifference, to remind him that he lives in the presence of the sacred Mystery. In this sense, the ultimate calling of every human being is *kiddush ha-Shem*, sanctifying the name of God.<sup>22</sup> Why? Because only if God's presence is not forgotten is there hope and future for humanity.<sup>23</sup>

In pronouncing his prophetic message, Heschel does not just blame only the perpetrators of antisemitic crimes. He consistently uses the first person plural: we are all guilty, we are all responsible, we have all forgotten where we come from, we have all to respond to the contemporary crisis. In the light of the martyrdom of millions of innocent people, we all have to become God's partners in realizing His desire for human history, His dream of universal redemption.<sup>24</sup> Our mourning has to lead to the mending of the world.<sup>25</sup> We have to move from prophetic words to prophetic actions. The victims of Auschwitz make us responsible not just for reverent com-

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<sup>22</sup> Heschel, in S. Dresner (ed), *I Asked for Wonder*, p. 45.

<sup>23</sup> Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, p. 417f.

<sup>24</sup> Heschel, *Man's Quest for God. Studies in Prayer and Symbolism*, p. 151.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Heschel, *Israel. An Echo of Eternity*, Farrer, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1967, p. 23.

memoration and *kaddish*, but even more for an unconditional commitment to action, to mending the world.<sup>26</sup>

## Tikkun Olam

For Heschel this is a unique and quite admirable feature of his engagement this responsibility is not limited to the restoration of the Jewish people after the disaster of Auschwitz. It is as universal and inclusive as God's plan for redemption. It concerns not just one nation, but the entire human race. This is why Heschel became actively involved in the American Civil Rights Movement, joining the famous march from Selma to Montgomery in March 1965, walking arm in arm with his friend, the Baptist minister and activist Martin Luther King.<sup>27</sup> This is also why Heschel became a pioneer in the field of interfaith cooperation which earned him much criticism from other Jewish leaders and rabbis.<sup>28</sup> He was also actively engaged in the campaign against Vietnam war.<sup>29</sup> This is why he became one of the most influential American religious leaders, widely known both within and outside the Jewish community: not only for his theological writings, but also for his engagement in many social, cultural and political issues, such as the public discussions concerning racial discrimination, health care, educational system, social care for senior citizens etc.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> M. Chester, *Divine Pathos and Human Being. The Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 95.

<sup>27</sup> That day, as he himself put it, he "prayed with his legs".

<sup>28</sup> Cf. H. Kasimow and B. Sherwin (eds), *No Religion is an Island. Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue*, Orbis Books, New York, 1991.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. J. Merkle, *Approaching God. The Way of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 10.

<sup>30</sup> Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom. Essays on Human Existence*, Schocken Books, New York, 1975, p. 85ff, 101ff. Cf. M. Chester, *Divine Pathos and Human Being. The Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 21ff.

It is quite obvious that Heschel did not understand his responsibility to be a prophetic witness of the Divine pathos as limited to his own religious and national community. At the same time, his commitment to the Jewish people was passionate and unconditional. His engagement on behalf of the Jewish people made him one of the most influential non-Catholic participants of the Second Vatican Council.<sup>31</sup> Heschel did not consider it wise to ignore this important event in the history of the Catholic Church, and neither was he satisfied with just focusing merely on the painful memories of the extremely unfortunate past. In his contributions, therefore, he did not just remind the Church of all the horrible acts of injustice it had committed against the Jews. He actually came up with a series of positive recommendations concerning the future shape of the Jewish-Christian relations. His recommendations were as follows: an official, clear and unambiguous condemnation of antisemitism by the Church, giving up all attempts to convert the Jews to Christianity, acknowledging and respecting the Jews and their distinct religious identity, finding ways to make the Jewish life, faith and traditions known and understood by the Christians, establishing a permanent commission dedicated to the elimination of prejudices that would watch over the Jewish-Christian relationships.<sup>32</sup>

Surprisingly enough, all these recommendations were eventually accepted and implemented by most Christian churches.<sup>33</sup> At the Second Vatican Council itself, Heschel significantly influenced the

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<sup>31</sup> J. Merkle, *Approaching God. The Way of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 11. Cf. G. Spruch, *Wide Horizons. Abraham Joshua Heschel, AJC and the Spirit of Nostra Aetate*, AJC, 2008, p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> G. Spruch, *Wide Horizons. Abraham Joshua Heschel, AJC and the Spirit of Nostra Aetate*, p. 11. See also R. Kimelman, *Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik and Abraham Joshua Heschel on Jewish-Christian Relations*, *Edah Journal*, 4: 2, 2004, p. 5.



very wording of the revolutionary ecclesiastic document *Nostra Aetate*, dealing with the relationship of the Roman Catholic Church to other religions.<sup>34</sup>

## Zakhor!

Another passionate engagement on behalf of his people was Heschel's campaign to rescue Soviet Jewry from enforced assimilation.<sup>35</sup> He, together with Elie Wiesel, was one of the first Jewish leaders who tried to raise awareness of the tragic situation of the Soviet Jews, cut off from their traditions, suffering from Communist antisemitism and gradually forgetting their heritage and their calling. As Heschel pointed out, the worst thing for a Jew is to forget what he stands for.<sup>36</sup> Forgetting about one's roots and the consequent assimilation come from the realm of evil.<sup>37</sup> It is therefore of utmost importance to restore the memory of the Jewish past, if the Jewish people are to have any future.<sup>38</sup> In other words: for Heschel, "to believe is to remember".<sup>39</sup> What therefore needs to be done for the Soviet Jews (and for the Jews everywhere in the

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<sup>33</sup> R. Kimelman, Rabbis Joseph Soloveitchik and Abraham Joshua Heschel on Jewish-Christian Relations, p. 12f.

<sup>34</sup> G. Spruch, Wide Horizons. Abraham Joshua Heschel, AJC and the Spirit of *Nostra Aetate*, Cf. M. Chester, *Divine Pathos and Human Being. The Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 192.

<sup>35</sup> Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom. Essays on Human Existence*, p. 262ff, 274ff.

<sup>36</sup> Heschel, in S. Dresner (ed), *I Asked for Wonder*, p. 109.

<sup>37</sup> Heschel, *Israel. An Echo of Eternity*, p. 60.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Heschel, *Man's Quest for God. Studies in Prayer and Symbolism*, p. 45, 112.

<sup>39</sup> Heschel, *Man is not Alone. A Philosophy of Religion*, p. 147, 151. Cf. also Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, p. 213, and Heschel, *Israel. An Echo of Eternity*, p. 60. Cf. Y. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor. Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, Univ. of Washington Press, London, 1982.

world) is to restore their memory, to remind them of their origin and calling, to awaken them from religious and cultural amnesia.

Yet, it is not enough just to write books about the glorious Jewish past. It is of course one part of what needs to be done. This is why Heschel wrote his "Kaddish for the Holocaust",<sup>40</sup> the book about the vanished world of Eastern European Jewry entitled *The Earth is the Lord's*.<sup>41</sup> This is also why throughout his life Heschel continued to bring out the treasures of Jewish past by writing books and articles dedicated to Biblical prophets,<sup>42</sup> to Maimonides and other medieval Jewish scholars,<sup>43</sup> to the legacy of Hasidism,<sup>44</sup> to the Torah as interpreted throughout generations.<sup>45</sup> Yet, being the prolific writer about Jewish history he was, he insisted that it is not enough just to remind the contemporary generation of the inspiring riches of Jewish religious and cultural past.

In Heschel's own words, the only adequate response to the horrors of Auschwitz is to work towards a renewal of Jewish vitality and spirituality.<sup>46</sup> The only appropriate reaction to the horrible past is to commit oneself to the strife for a hopeful future. This is why, in a sense, Heschel does not write much about the Holocaust.<sup>47</sup> He

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<sup>40</sup> A. Green, *Abraham Joshua Heschel: Recasting Hasidism for Moderns*, p. 64. Cf. F. Rothschild's introduction to *Between God and Man, An Interpretation of Judaism*, p. 8.

<sup>41</sup> Heschel, *The Earth is the Lord's. The Inner World of the Jew in East Europe*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1978.

<sup>42</sup> Heschel, *The Prophets*, Harper and Row, New York, 1962.

<sup>43</sup> Heschel, *Maimonides. A Biography*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1983.

<sup>44</sup> Heschel, *The Passion for Truth*, Jewish Lights, Woodstock, 1995.

<sup>45</sup> Heschel, *Heavenly Torah as Refracted Through the Generations*, Continuum, New York, 2005.

<sup>46</sup> Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom. Essays on Human Existence*, p. 187ff. Cf. Heschel, *Man is not Alone. A Philosophy of Religion*, p. 151ff. Cf. M. Chester, *Divine Pathos and Human Being. The Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 93.

<sup>47</sup> M. Chester, *Divine Pathos and Human Being. The Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 27.

writes always “in the shadow of the Holocaust”,<sup>48</sup> but not very much about Holocaust itself. By focusing on the positive and inspiring values and insights of the pre-Holocaust Jewish history, he strives to find ways of restoration and renewal of the post-Holocaust Western culture and of the post-Holocaust Jewry.<sup>49</sup>

These two issues, i.e. the future of the Western culture and the future of the Jewish people, are intimately related. In Heschel's understanding, the role of Jewish people, faith and tradition is essential for the preservation and restoration of the Western civilization.<sup>50</sup> Why? Because Jews, today as ever before, are called to remind other people of the Divine presence in human history, to bear witness to the sacred image of God in every human being. They are called to be the witnesses of life's ultimate value, of the sacred Mystery of human existence. This, more than anything else, is implied in the prophetic calling of the Jewish people to be the “light for the nations”. Jews are called, both individually and collectively, to raise the awareness of God's holy presence, of the fact that the world is in need of redemption.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> M. Chester, *Divine Pathos and Human Being. The Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 94. See also G. Spruch, *Wide Horizons. Abraham Joshua Heschel, AJC and the Spirit of Nostra Aetate*, p. 2. Cf. Heschel, *Israel. An Echo of Eternity*, p. 197.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. G. Greenebaum in G. Spruch, *Wide Horizons. Abraham Joshua Heschel, AJC and the Spirit of Nostra Aetate*, p. v-vi.

<sup>50</sup> Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom. Essays on Human Existence*, p. 205, 215ff, cf. Heschel, *Protestant Renewal. A Jewish View*, in F. Rothschild (ed), *Jewish Perspectives on Christianity*; p. 303. Cf. also the closing meditation in Heschel, *The Earth is the Lord's. The Inner World of the Jew in East Europe*, chapter 15.

<sup>51</sup> Heschel in S. Dresner (ed), *I Asked for Wonder*, p. 109, cf. Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom. Essays on Human Existence*, p. 218, and also Heschel, *A Hebrew Evaluation of Reinhold Niebuhr*, in F. Rothschild (ed), *Jewish Perspectives on Christianity*; p. 288, see also Heschel, *God in Search of Man. A Philosophy of Judaism*, p. 379f.

## Israel, an Echo of Eternity

This is why Heschel welcomes and celebrates the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 as well as the outcome of the 1967 war. If the continuity of the Jewish people is essential for the future of humankind, that this continuity has to be assured. This is why, even though he was deeply concerned about justice for the Palestinian people,<sup>52</sup> Heschel nevertheless did believe that the establishment of the State of Israel was a part of God's will. In his understanding, it has become a providential shelter for all Jews who could potentially suffer from antisemitism anywhere in the world.<sup>53</sup>

In a religious or theological sense, Heschel believes that the State of Israel is the beginning of the fulfilment of the prophetic visions of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>54</sup> Yet, as the Biblical prophets strongly emphasize, it is not only for the Jews. As a Jewish homeland and a center of Jewish cultural and religious renewal, the State of Israel is destined to help Jewish people to accomplish their universal calling — to remind all nations of the Divine pathos, of God's concern for justice, peace and mercy, and to raise awareness of man's ultimate value and destiny.

The cosmos is finished, says Heschel, but history is not.<sup>55</sup> Human history is an unfinished masterpiece. God is waiting for man to join Him in partnership to bring about God's dream — universal redemption. In this sense, as Heschel points out, mourning the evils

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<sup>52</sup> M. Chester, *Divine Pathos and Human Being: The Theology of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, p. 28.

<sup>53</sup> Heschel, *Israel. An Echo of Eternity*, p. 121.

<sup>54</sup> Heschel, *Israel. An Echo of Eternity*, p. 5.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. G. Spruch, *Wide Horizons. Abraham Joshua Heschel, AJC and the Spirit of Nostra Aetate*, p. 10 and 18.

of the past must lead to mending.<sup>56</sup> A painful memory of the past must be transformed into an unconditional commitment to hopeful future. This, as Heschel argues in his books and confirms by his deeds, is the appropriate response to the evil of antisemitism...

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. Heschel, *Israel. An Echo of Eternity*, p. 23.

Mourning that Calls for Mending: Abraham Joshua Heschel's Response to Antisemitism

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## Abstract

This book aims to contribute into the contemporary “struggle for memory” by documenting the various encounters between antisemitism, history and collective memory. Its primary purpose is to explore various strategies by means of which the anti-Semites relate to historical events and concepts. It is an attempt to contribute to the discussions about the uses and abuses of historical and collective memory. In their analyses of antisemitic discourse, the authors strive to offer new perspectives on how has history been revised and rewritten in the antisemitic thought.

The authors present a collection of case studies that inquire into the antisemitic concepts of history. Ivo Budil has analyzed the writings of Benjamin Disraeli and Ernest Renan to show how was the image of Jews shaped in the early racial ideology of the nineteenth century and what role did the various interpretations of history play in the formation of this image. A detailed insight into the thought of contemporary Czech antisemitism is offered in the two following chapters. Both of these chapters demonstrate the encounters between antisemitism and historical memory on particular examples from the Czech history. Věra Tydlitátová shows, how the contemporary Czech far-right circles relate to the historical personality of the first Czechoslovak president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and his legacy. The next study “Neo-Nazis on the Nation’s Boulevard” analyzes how the Czech far-right scene views the events of Velvet revolution and in particular, the day of 17<sup>th</sup> November, in which the revolution itself started. I am showing, how the most

important Czech public holiday was “discovered” by the neo-Nazis and how did it move from the periphery to the center of the neo-Nazi and far-right discourse. Such analyses offer some crucial conclusions about the way the Czech far-right constructs its own identity and relationship towards the mainstream society.

The last chapter, written by Pavel Hošek, offers an insight into the question, how do the Jewish, rabbinic thinkers respond to antisemitism. Thoughts of one of the most important 20th century Jewish thinkers, Abraham Joshua Heschel, his reflections on the problem of antisemitism and his response to this virulent hatred are thus closely explored.



Mourning that Calls for Mending: Abraham Joshua Heschel's Response to Antisemitism

Zbyněk Tarant, Věra Tydlitátová et al.

## History of Hatred, Hatred of History Encounters Between Antisemitism and Historical Memory

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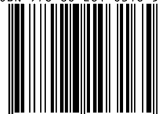
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