

**Teaching Humanities and Social Sciences Interculturally:
A Contemporary Central European Perspective**

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A Contemporary Central European Perspective**

edited by

Zdeněk Beran

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Preface

Several experts on history, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and psychology from three Central European countries (Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, and Republic of Poland) joined their efforts to face the issue aptly described by Joshua R. EYLER: “*While research techniques and approaches in the humanities have shifted quite a bit over the last few decades, these changes have not had a significant impact on the classroom.*”¹

In the book, they aimed for the evaluation of specific aspects of the current state of education in the Social Sciences & Humanities (hereinafter referred to as SSH) in respective countries. They looked for historical and cultural burdens, current opportunities and challenges according to needs for life in the 21st Century. Various intercultural approaches represent the scarlet cord of the book, which is primarily intended to be an inspiration for university teachers. However, it reflects the broader reality of the educational system’s and society’s approaches toward selected topics.²

Many education experts observed that the main emphasis of tertiary education shifts from “the teaching for teaching” or “communicating pure scientific information” to the concept of applicable preparation for lifelong learning in an open society and globalized (resp. “glocalized”)³ world. This change, however, presupposes completely new competencies and different mindsets on the part of educators and rethinking content and teaching methods. Modern teaching and learning approaches associated with competence development emphasize the qualities and skills required for effective educators. Without a doubt, the academic staff has a decisive impact on students’ motivations, achievements, and fundamental competencies, which can’t be limited to the future professional life, but includes the integrity of a person’s life in democratic, critically thinking, and open society.

The Covid-19 pandemic’s outbreak in 2020 has brought a new challenge of distance or hybrid teaching to become a standard alternative for the future. The European Union and national ministries have become even more decided to foster “internationalisation at home”, which is a process exceeding the pandemic situation and involving most students and teachers. It became clear that issues such as teaching in international classes, internationalisation of curriculum, etc., must be addressed at each institution, but from an

1 Josh EYLER, *The Liberal Arts by Themselves Will not Save Democracy, but Teaching Them More Effectively Might*, 15. 1. 2021, <https://josheyler.wordpress.com/2021/01/15/the-liberal-arts-by-themselves-will-not-save-democracy-but-teaching-them-more-effectively-might/>.

2 Concept of interculturality is revealingly contested in the space of Central-European education. Cf. some of the most recent works: Fred DERVIN, *Interculturality in Education. A Theoretical and Methodological Toolbox*, London 2016; Robyn MOLONEY – Maria LOBYTSYNA – John DE NOBILE, *Interculturality in Schools: Practice and Research*, London 2022.

3 Cf. F. DERVIN, *Interculturality in Education*, pp. 24–25.

international perspective. An international, or more precisely intercultural,⁴ view of selected topics will provide a valuable output for further development of tertiary education in the SSH.

We must admit that from the educational point of view only a minimum of professional publications have dealt with tertiary education in the SSH in the given countries so far. Universities have published a number of textbooks for their students, but there is a fundamental lack of guidelines or handbooks for higher education teachers themselves to provide helpful guidance on how to raise questions, how to deal with sensitive topics, how to face stereotypes, or how to include intercultural topics in the curriculum. Even works dealing with higher education, in general, are pretty rare and often beyond the latest trends.⁵ The challenges are usually addressed at the institutional level separately, using individual approaches according to the strategic documents and decisions of faculty or university management without systematic sharing of knowledge among institutions.

In this book, we intended to explore several topics important for tertiary education of the SSH. A base for tertiary education can be often traced in curricula and textbooks for lower educational stages which usually form a basic outline of newly enrolled students, furthermore, they reliably reflect general opinions on important issues due to their impact on the majority of the population. The task of critically thinking university teachers thus remains to become well acquainted with their limits and risks to be able to break through when they have found themselves trapped in stereotypical or one-perspective views of multifaceted reality.⁶

The book includes ten chapters, divided into two parts – *Part I: Central Europe at a Crossroads? Interpretation of the Past in the Curricular Documents and History-Civics Textbooks* and *Part II: Current Opportunities and Challenges: Education in the Digitised and Post-Factual Era after Covid-19*. Some chapters focus on the content level, others on forms of education or curricular design in general.

Part I opens with Tomáš Hradecký's chapter *National Curricular Content Comparison of Interdisciplinary and International Approaches in History and the Social Sciences in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland* comparing and analysing history and civics curricular content at upper secondary schools with a special focus on international and interdisciplinary competencies as a precondition

4 Cf. inspiring approach, based on vast scholarship and own experience, presented by ibidem, esp. pp. 103–106.

5 Cf. Martin STROUHAL (ed.), *Učit se být učitelem: k vybraným problémům učitelského vzdělávání*, Praha 2016; Libuše PODLAHOVÁ, *Didaktika pro vysokoškolské učitele*, Praha 2012; Milan SLAVÍK, *Vysokoškolská pedagogika*, Praha 2012; Alena VALIŠOVÁ – Hana KASÍKOVÁ (eds.), *Pedagogika pro učitele*, Praha 2010 – used also by Slovakian HE teachers; in Poland: Anna SAJDAK, *Paradygmaty kształcenia studentów i wspierania rozwoju nauczycieli akademickich*, Kraków 2013; Kazimierz W. JASKOT (ed.), *Wprowadzenie do pedagogiki szkoły wyższej*, Szczecin 2006.

6 Cf. Robert STRADLING, *Multiperspectivity in History Teaching: A Guide for Teachers*, Strasbourg 2003.

for respective education at universities. Secondary and tertiary schools are without a doubt closely interconnected. National histories have played a major role in all three countries relying on the principle “from near to far”. Jan Květina’s chapter *(Post)-National Narratives in the Central European Historical Education: Towards Pluralist or Non-liberal Democracy?* presents a discursive analysis of (post)-national narratives in the given countries weighing risks for the future ways towards non-liberal democracy or chances for strengthening pluralist society providing unique insights into how educators can facilitate further desirable development. Issues of nationalism and minorities – so crucial for the Central-European area – are further researched by Róbert Arpáš, Martin Hetényi, and Beáta Pinterová in two case studies aimed at the idea of so-called Czechoslovakism from the Slovak perspective and Slovak-Hungarian relations both viewed from the scholarly literature and students’ textbooks (cf. chapters *From Czechoslovakism to Nationalism: The Problem of Searching and Defining Slovak Identity* and *The Issues of the Slovak-Hungarian Relations in Educational Process in Selected Slovak and Czech Textbooks*). The principle of multiperspectivity is applied in the East-Central European textbooks by Václav Sixta in chapter *History and Civics: A Complicated Relationship. The Case of East-Central European Textbooks*. In the next chapter *Hidden in History: Reflection of the Female Issue in Selected Slovak and Czech Textbooks* Adriana Kičková points out the disproportion between “theory” in scholarly research and “practice” in students’ textbooks in Czechia and Slovakia regarding the issue of women.

Part II begins with Michal Rigel’s and Petr Matějček’s chapter *Philosophy for Children in the Higher Education System of the Czech Republic and Poland: A General Overview* which presents an innovative method called Philosophy for Children (P4C) as a useful means for teachers at faculties of arts and education. An inspiring approach for educators provides rapidly developing possibilities of digitisation. Marek Kulkovský shares his expertise along with the historian, Jiří Štěpán, on the case of the East-Bohemian Baroque architectural complex Kuks in the chapter *Digitisation of Cultural Heritage and its Interpretation through Augmented Reality on the Example of the Baroque Complex Kuks*. A danger hard to miss in present (East-)Central European societies and repeatedly mentioned in previous chapters is a certain susceptibility to false stereotypes, conspiracy theories, and misinformation. Martin Palecek provides the original theoretical background and possible solutions in the chapter *Misinformation Proclivity as a Product of Cultural Evolution: Why Restrictions Cannot Work*. The last chapter *Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia* offers an overview comparing challenges tied with the Covid-19 pandemic and successful ways to cope with them (and to foster digitisation of the classroom) in the three countries (Barbara Jankowiak, Dorota Mroczkowska, Mariusz Baranowski, Maja Brzozowska-Brywczyńska, Agnieszka Jeran, Łukasz Rogowski, and Agnieszka Nymś-Górna). The book was reviewed by two experts from two different countries and

two different fields – a philosopher and expert on ethics, Tomáš Hejduk (University of Pardubice, Czech Republic) and a historian and expert on the history of education (and education of history), Pavol Matula (Comenius University Bratislava, Slovak Republic) who deserve my deepest gratitude for their critical and inspiring insights applied during the editorial process. I also express my warm thanks to Sean Mark Miller who provided proofreading of the whole book.

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PART I:

Central Europe at a Crossroads? Interpretation of the Past in the Curricular Documents and History-Civics Textbooks

1 National Curricular Content Comparison of Interdisciplinary and International Approaches in History and Social Sciences in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland

Tomáš Hradecký

The development of interdisciplinary and international skills is an essential part of the teaching of pupils and students of lower (ISCED 2) secondary schools and upper secondary schools (ISCED 3) in the selected countries of Central Europe. Within the framework of the comparison of the situation in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland, this text will focus on the content of the curricula of public schools, which expand international and interdisciplinary skills within the teaching of their subjects. In all monitored countries, the contents of the curricula are divided into the national level, which determines the basic subject matter of the teaching, and the school level, within which individual schools can adapt the scope and material of the teaching to a certain extent.⁷ For our purposes, the national framework, which forms the basic substance of the curriculum, is analysed.

The aim of this text is to answer the basic questions:

- a) Is an international and interdisciplinary approach to topics identifiable in the content of national curricula?
- b) What topics require an international and interdisciplinary approach of pupils and students in individual countries?
- c) What topics with an international and interdisciplinary approach are the same in the monitored countries?
- d) Are there international and interdisciplinary topics that receive more attention in individual countries in the content of national curricula?

The methodological starting point is the analysis of the current status of the mandatory range of school subject curricula that contain international and interdisciplinary competencies. The raw data for this study were provided by individual national institutions responsible for implementing the teaching

⁷ Of course, this division does not only apply to the humanities and social sciences. Even in the natural and technical sciences, this framework is primarily determined by national authorities in all countries. Cf. Pavel KÁCOVSKÝ et al., *Lower secondary intended curricula of science subjects and mathematics: a comparison of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland and Slovenia*, *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 54, 2022, pp. 384–405.

content in schools. In the case of the Czech Republic, it is the National Institute for Education, which is responsible for developing the framework of educational programme for lower and upper secondary schools.⁸ In Slovakia, the form of the national curriculum is determined by the State Educational Plan, provided by the National Institute of Education and Youth.⁹ The education system in Poland is centrally managed by the Ministry of National Education. This national educational policy is developed and carried out centrally, while the administration of education is decentralized.¹⁰

The secondary education system differs from country to country. In the Czech Republic, compulsory school attendance is determined by so-called basic school (6–15 years of age), which is divided into 1st and 2nd forms (i.e., elementary school, 1st to 5th forms, and lower secondary school, 6th to 9th forms). After graduating from lower secondary school, the pupil can choose one of the secondary schools, including technical, economic, industrial, or general education. The Slovak system is also similar due to the common history, the so-called primary school is also divided into 1st and 2nd forms, the difference is that pupils move to the 2nd form (i.e. lower secondary school) already after completing the 4th form. In Poland, compulsory school attendance is eight years, of which elementary school consists of pupils from the 1st to 3rd forms, from the 4th to the 8th forms it is already about teaching individual school subjects at the lower secondary school level.

In all countries, there are a number of different types of upper secondary schools, which are often oriented towards a specific direction of education. Thus, we distinguish between schools preparing students for the performance of a profession, e. g. economic, pedagogical, technical schools, etc. Individual types of schools also have different content of educational subjects, in some of them the teaching of history and social sciences must yield space to the teaching of professional subjects. For the purposes of this comparison, teaching at upper secondary schools providing general education is therefore analysed.¹¹

Curriculum Content Principles

Curriculum is generally defined as the content of teaching, i.e., the activity of student, which is aimed at mastering the content of the educational process.¹² The content part of the curriculum then relates to specific teaching material,

8 Cf. <https://archiv-nuv.npi.cz/t/rvp-pro-zakladni-vzdelavani.html>.

9 Cf. <https://www.statpedu.sk/sk/>.

10 Cf. *The System of Education in Poland, Foundation for the Development of the Education System*, Warsaw 2014, https://education.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/the-system_2014_www.pdf.

11 In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, these are mainly named as *Gymnasium*, in Poland the term *Liceum* is used. For the purposes of this study, let's also leave aside the fact that in some cases it is possible to enter these types of schools already during the period of compulsory school attendance.

12 Cf. Josef MAŇÁK – Tomáš JANÍK – Vlastimil ŠVEC, *Kurikulum v současné škole*, Brno 2008.

which also include the acquisition of interdisciplinary and international skills.¹³ In the monitored Central European countries, there is a different approach to the construction and scope of the content curriculum at different levels of education.

In partial cases, the supervisors of the creation of school curricula are central state authorities, which establish basic standards for the scope of teaching subjects that contain interdisciplinary and international skills. Within the SSH, the main such subjects are history and social sciences.¹⁴

In different countries, these school subjects are included for the education of pupils and students at different levels of the school system. Elementary education¹⁵ mainly includes the teaching of the native language, reading and basic skills in working with text, mathematics, and the basic terms of local history. The division of curriculum content into individual subjects takes place at the higher level of compulsory education (lower secondary education). This division of school subjects also persists at the upper secondary level of education, where the individual skills of students are further developed.

Interdisciplinary and International Content of Education

In no case do the basic school subjects of the monitored countries contain only closed areas of education. International and interdisciplinary overlaps of the educational process can be traced in all subjects of the SSH. Within the teaching of history and social sciences, there are basic principles of connecting the teaching content with broader international skills. In the case of teaching history, a comprehensive view of the historical process occurs in the area of:

- a) Cultural and artistic development (self-presentation of individuals and society in history, development of aesthetic perception and art as an expression of a historical epoch).
- b) Legal and constitutional development (principles of state construction, constitutionality, parliamentarism, civil society).
- c) Political theory, theory of democratic and totalitarian development (types of governments, their historical development, concepts of democracy and totalitarianism)

13 Heidi Hayes JACOBS (ed.), *Interdisciplinary Curriculum: Design and Implementation*, Alexandria 1989, pp. 9–10.

14 In different countries, the subjects of social sciences have different names: Basics of Social Sciences, Civic Education, Family Education, Citizenship Education, Knowledge about Society, etc. In this case, the unified term Social Sciences is used for a group of these subjects whose content is the same in relation to interdisciplinarity and internationality.

15 The extent of basic education also varies from country to country. In the Czech Republic, elementary education is provided at the so-called 1st stage of primary schools (první stupeň základní školy; pupils aged 6–10), just as in Slovakia (pupils aged 6–9). In Poland, this basic level (szkoła podstawowa) is shorter (pupils aged 7–9) and follows on one compulsory year of pre-school education.

- d) Power position in the world and territorial approaches (territorial disputes, development of state territories, war as a principle of power).
- e) Geopolitics, units, and regions (development of human society in relation to geographical regions, formation of social units in them).
- f) Nationalities and nationalist (nation, state and individual within the framework of the existence of the historical process).

The framework of the social sciences is overall multidisciplinary, focusing on a synthetic concept of the social sciences. These consist of the following circuits:

- a) Individual and geographical area (homeland, region, region).
- b) Individual and his inner world (similarities and differences of persons, psychological development of the individual, personality development, civil and human rights).
- c) Individual as an economic agent (property and ownership, money and economy, market principles, economic crisis).
- d) Individual in history (the role of key personalities, historical developments and twists and their consequences for the individual and society).
- e) Individual and law (state and personal law, legal order, illegal actions, European integration).

History as an Interdisciplinary and International School Subject

As part of the teaching of history in lower secondary school, attention is mainly paid to national history, but in the context of wider history. Within their framework, pupils' international skills are expanded in the form of acquiring knowledge of the political, cultural, or religious development of different regions. The basic premise of creating curriculum content is "from near to far", i.e., expanding basic knowledge about the wider context of events. At the same time, the concept of basic knowledge is defined in several ways. In Slovakia,¹⁶ educational goals are set within the framework of learning about the context of the development of human society, especially in Europe, and in the context of the history of Slovakia within the Kingdom of Hungary. In this way, two blocks of international connections are created: Slovakia within Hungary and the cultural-political sphere of the wider world, especially the overlap of ideological concepts and their cultural transfer.

¹⁶ The form of the curriculum content is determined by the State Education Programme (Štátny vzdelávací program) within the educational block "Man and Society", https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/dejepis_g_8_r.pdf.

In the Czech Republic, national history develops through acquired skills at several levels: Man as an individual, Man, state and law, Man in society, etc.¹⁷ Thus, part of the content of the curriculum is primarily the individual and his place in local, regional, and global history.

In Poland, the teaching of history is part of the proposed basic curriculum.¹⁸ Similar to the other compared countries, the fundamental principle of approaching international and intercultural history is the basic knowledge of the individual and his homeland in history. As part of historical knowledge, phenomena such as historical memory, truth, justice, freedom, solidarity, responsibility, tolerance, identity, and culture are also emphasised in this concept.¹⁹ Even these phenomena are explicated not only within the national, but also within a global contextual framework.

The individual countries examined understandably vary in their thematic content of the curriculum. The differences are primarily determined by the diverse historical and constitutional development of the individual regions. At the same time, however, in all monitored cases, a significant element of acquired international and interdisciplinary skills is incorporated into the national curricula.

International competence can be defined both by teaching world (general) history, but above all by taking into account the ideological, cultural and political development in history, by pointing out the essence of the understanding of “other” and “different”. The aim is, among other things, to teach pupils and students to perceive currently valid differences in the historical context of their development.²⁰ In the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, the areas of the development of religious systems, humanism and civil society, totalitarian ideologies and reflections on historical themes that are still projected in the present are conceived in this way within the framework of the established national curricula. At the same time, interdisciplinary competence is also a part of the education, i.e., the implementation of the knowledge of the related SSH in the understanding of the teaching content. Emphasis is placed on global understanding,

17 In the Czech Republic, the content of education is determined by the Framework Education Plan (Rámcový vzdělávací program), https://archiv-nuv.npi.cz/uploads/RVP_ZV_2021_word.docx, which can be further developed and specified within the so-called School Education Plans. From the point of view of delineating the meaning of framework educational plans; cf. Jarmila SKALKOVÁ, *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání – dlouhodobý úkol*, *Pedagogická orientace* 14 (3), 2004, pp. 21–35.

18 In Poland, the new basic curriculum (*Nowa Podstawa Programowa*, <https://podstawaprogramowa.pl/>), is oriented towards broader educational frameworks that can be further elaborated and specified at the level of individual schools. Cf. Ewa KORZECKA, *Podstawa programowa z historii. Program nauczania dla szkoły podstawowej – klasy IV–VIII*, <https://historia.org.pl/2020/03/27/podstawa-programowa-z-historii-szkola-podstawowa-klasy-iv-viii/>.

19 Cf. <https://podstawaprogramowa.pl/Szkola-podstawowa-IV-VIII/Historia>.

20 Cf. Linda A. COOK – Walter S. SMITH – William Y. LAN – Daniel CARPENTER, *The development of global competencies and global mindedness through global education experiences*, *International Journal of Global Education* 5 (2), 2016, pp. 1–16.

communicative understanding, development of critical thinking and individual responsibility.²¹

The fundamental difference lies primarily in the explicit emphasis of certain topics in the national curricula of individual countries. The basic criterion for the thematic profiling of individual national curricula is primarily the relationship to national history and political history.

Tab. 1: Topics in national curricula, including the development of interdisciplinary and international skills of pupils in the teaching of history in lower secondary schools (as included by countries)²²

	Poland	Czechia	Slovakia
Ancient civilization	•	•	•
Pagan religion	•		
Christianity	•	•	•
Islam	•	•	•
Humanism and the Enlightenment		•	•
Civil society and the nation		•	•
Fascism, nazism	•	•	•
Communism	•	•	•
Development of science and technology		•	
Historical problems of the present	•	•	•
Globalisation effects (ecology, terrorism)	•	•	•

All the monitored states show a significant concentration on the foundations of Europe’s Christian heritage, which is seen as one of the cornerstones of European civilization. The basic development is traced from the origin of the Christian religion, through its role in medieval society, to the period of the Reformation of the 14th to 16th centuries. We find differences mainly in the perception of the process of Christian reformation. In the Czech Republic, the Hussite phenomenon is logically accentuated, both in an ideological and (above all) political role,²³ in Poland, the curriculum focuses more on the differentiation of Lutheranism and Calvinism on the background

21 Cf. Katrine LINDVIG – Lars ULRIKSEN, *Different, Difficult, and Local: A Review of Interdisciplinary Teaching Activities*, *The Review of Higher Education* 43 (2), 2019, pp. 697–725.

22 The following content comparison was created by thematic analysis of the current national educational frameworks, i.e. compulsory school curricula in the Czech Republic, https://archiv-nuv.npi.cz/uploads/RVP_ZV_2021_word.docx; Slovakia, https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/dejepis_g_8_r.pdf and Poland, <https://podstawaprogramowa.pl/Szkola-podstawowa-IV-VIII/Historia>. Individual learning objectives and standards of individual countries are cited according to the specific content of these listed resources.

23 *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání*, *Dějepis*, learning objective D-9-4-03p: příčiny, průběh a důsledky husitského hnutí; part D-9-5-02: význam husitské tradice pro český politický a kulturní život.

of Poland's political history,²⁴ in Slovakia, the Reformation is part of the development of ideas with an emphasis on a deeper division of Catholicism from Protestantism.²⁵ The educational systems of all three countries also pay attention to Islam, but at the same time they place it in a historical context mainly with the expansion of Islamic countries in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period. The ideological concept of Islamic civilization thus gives way in Central Europe to the need to connect regional development with the Christian tradition and its intellectual heritage. Pre-Christian pagan religions are explicitly discussed in national curricula, mainly in connection with ancient civilization and the rise of monotheistic religions. Separate sections dedicated to the structures of polytheistic pre-Christian systems cannot be found in national curricula.

However, all three states consider the ancient era to be the foundation of modern European civilization. The continuity of pre-Christian Antiquity with later European and Central European civilization and the cultural heritage of the ancient world is emphasized. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, antiquity is interpreted mainly through the prism of cultural heritage, the idea of democracy, and the typology of the ancient state system.²⁶ In addition, Poland gives more priority to trying to teach students to understand the individual structures and organisations of ancient societies (especially in the relationship between ancient Greece and ancient Rome).²⁷ It can be argued that knowledge of the basics of European civilization and culture is an integral part of school teaching in all three monitored school systems. The ancient heritage in all three countries is logically followed by late medieval and early modern humanism. In Poland, this is perceived primarily as part of the spiritual development of Renaissance art and culture, with an emphasis on typical cultural-historical manifestations of the Polish Renaissance, which forms a unique educational unit.²⁸ In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the humanist era of European history is associated not only with Renaissance art, but also with the European Christian Reformation, with the era of overseas discoveries and the development of modern thought. The difference in the interpretation of the international and interdisciplinary context of teaching is mainly brought to history education of the 19th

24 *Podstawa programowa, szkoła podstawowa IV–VIII, Historie, part IX: "Złoty wiek" w Polsce na tle europejskim.*

25 *Štátny vzdelávací program, gymnázium s osemročným vzdelávacím programom, part Obrazy nového sveta.*

26 In the Czech Republic, the learning objectives are D-9-3-02: the most important types of monuments that have become part of the world cultural heritage, D-9-3-03: the contribution of ancient culture and the birth of Christianity, D-9-3-04: forms governments and the position of social groups in individual states and the essence of ancient democracy. In Slovakia, ancient heritage is part of the section Images of the Ancient World, in which the knowledge of a certain level of ancient knowledge, which also applies to the contemporary world, is named as a part.

27 *Podstawa programowa, szkoła podstawowa IV–VIII, Historie, part I, Cywilizacje starożytne, subparts 3 and 4.*

28 *Ibidem, part IX: "Złoty wiek" w Polsce na tle europejskim, subpart 7.*

century. In this century, the historical development in individual countries is fundamentally different. While the Czech lands were a key part of the Austrian (since 1867 Austro-Hungarian) state, Slovakia was a non-autonomous part of the unified and strongly culturally and politically homogeneous Kingdom of Hungary. Twenty years after the third division of the state (1795), Poland took the form of the so-called Congress Poland (1815–1915), which over time lost its sovereignty as an autonomous state unit and became a *de facto* integral part of the Russian Empire. It is obvious that the individual teaching curriculum of the 19th century focused primarily on questions of national history, the national question, and the problem of individuality. In its national curriculum, the Czech Republic focuses primarily on cultural and social development and modernisation trends, pays attention to the question of the nation's linguistic identity, describes the nationalist movement, distinguishes between political directions (e.g., conservatism, liberalism, socialism), and focuses on the Czech-German national conflict. Attention is also paid to the growth of Czech political parties and movements in the second half of the 19th century.²⁹

Slovakia understands its 19th-century past in the context of Magyarization and centralisation of the Kingdom of Hungary, with special attention to the revolutionary upheaval of 1848 (in a pan-European context) and the connection with the Czech cultural and political milieu. The Slovak-Hungarian antagonism is comparable to the Czech-German antagonism, which in both cases leads to the formation of the modern form of both nations.³⁰

Poland divides its national history by several historical milestones, which are the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the Polish uprisings in the 1930s to the 1960s, and the emergence of the modern Polish nation and its political representation. The level of Polish-Russian antagonism, up to the outbreak of the First World War, is also emphasised.³¹ Despite the fact that the national histories of the observed countries took completely different paths in the 19th century, several common elements can be identified that all three countries have in common when teaching this period. It is mainly about defining the national principle, the rise of modern civil society and linguistic, cultural, and political antagonisms.

The First World War, its consequences in the form of the establishment of the Republic of Poland and the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, as well as the tendencies of the national policies of these states in the interwar period, give the basic content of the national history of the first half of the 20th century. The phenomena of Nazism and fascism, as well as the history of communist regimes, are the major thematic units of the history of the 20th century. In all

29 *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání, Dějepis*, learning objectives D-9-6-03 and D-9-6-04.

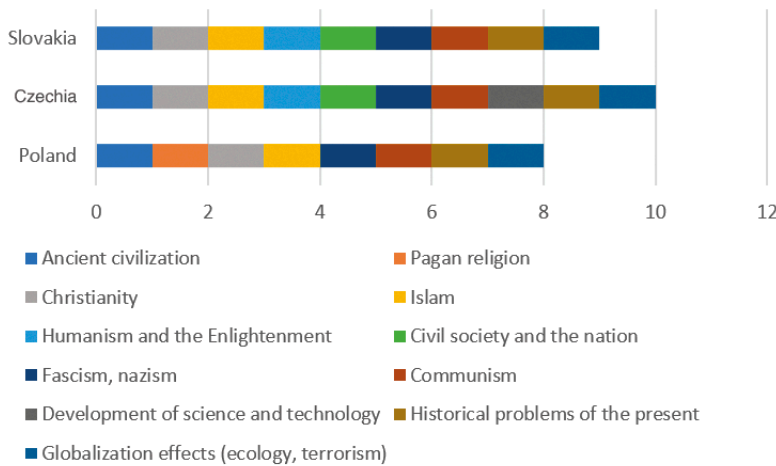
30 *Štátny vzdelávací program, gymnázium s osemročným vzdelávacím programom, Dejepis*, part *Moderný slovenský národ*.

31 *Podstawa programowa, szkoła podstawowa IV–VIII, Historie*, parts XX to XXIV.

cases, the teaching of the historical process culminates in the emergence and characteristics of the globalised postmodern world.

The teaching of history in all three states focuses primarily on national history, only in certain cases does it extend beyond the Euro-American area of Western civilization.

Tab. 2: Teaching topics in national curricula, including the development of interdisciplinary and international skills of pupils in the teaching of history in lower secondary schools



The teaching of history in upper secondary schools in all three observed states focuses on the same chronological model as seen in the teaching in lower secondary schools.³² The basic thematic units are prehistory and antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Early Modern Period, and the 19th and 20th centuries. Students of upper secondary general education schools thus build on the previously acquired knowledge, which they further develop and deepen at the next, higher level of education. The chronological approach to the teaching of history in lower and upper secondary schools is currently the subject of discussion by teachers and constructive criticism is directed towards it, mainly at the fact that in many schools there is not enough time left to teach contemporary history, which would deserve a larger number of

32 The following content comparison was created by a thematic analysis of current national educational frameworks, i.e. compulsory school curricula in the Czech Republic (*Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia, Dějepis*, https://www.edu.cz/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/RVPG-2007-07_final.pdf), in Slovakia (*Štátny vzdelávací program, Dejepis – gymnázium so štvorročným a päťročným vzdelávacím programom*, https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/dejepis_g_4_5_r.pdf) and in Poland (*Podstawa programowa, Liceum-technikum, Historia*, <https://podstawaprogramowa.pl/Liceum-technikum/Historia>). For the sake of clarity in the footnotes, these documents will be cited hereinafter without full links to the websites.

teaching hours.³³ It can therefore be assumed that in the future there will be a development of the traditional teaching of history in the Central European area towards a non-chronological approach.

All students begin their education in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia with the basic terminology of history, definitions of historical sources and methods of the historian's work, and acquire historical thinking skills. This education also builds on the fundamental knowledge acquired by students in lower secondary schools, but at the same time brings much closer to history as one of the humanities with its own apparatus of scientific approaches (heuristics, criticism of historical sources, typology of periodization, approaches to political, social, economic, or cultural history, work with material sources, etc.).

The basic part of ancient history is without a doubt the ancient heritage of Europe, which manifests itself mainly in the field of philosophy, social and political theories, literature, and art.³⁴ At the same time, the theory of ancient democracy is highlighted in political history,³⁵ as well as the reality of ancient dictatorships. Attention is paid to the beginning of Western civilization in the history of ancient Greece and ancient Rome (e.g., issues of republicanism, the emergence of Christian and Jewish traditions, etc.).³⁶

In the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia, the Middle Ages focus significantly on the issue of individual national histories in a pan-European context. Among the interdisciplinary approaches, it is possible to name the implementation of religious studies and religious history (Christianization, schism in the church, the emergence and development of Christian culture and art, the period of the Crusades),³⁷ as well as the stratification of medieval society (feudalism, serfdom, socio-economic conflicts). In its national curriculum, Poland devotes an entire thematic unit to the history of the Byzantine Empire and Arab civilization, including their influence on the development of Central Europe.³⁸

The early modern period is an opportunity for a global approach to the teaching of history. Attention is paid to overseas discoveries and the beginnings of colonization, Renaissance art and humanistic education, church reformation and its tendencies, the epoch of enlightenment and philosophical development. Religious, political, economic, social, and cultural conditions and consequences of the Reformation, especially in Poland and Slovakia,

33 Cf. Karel ČERNÝ, *Učitelé dějepisu: výuka nejnovějších dějin, historické vědomí a legitimizace školní výuky dějepisu*, *Orbis Scholae* 6 (1), 2021, pp. 41–52.

34 Cf. *Podstawa programowa*, Liceum-technikum, *Historia*, part III: Świat starożytnych Greków, topic 3.

35 Štátný vzdělávací program, *Dejepis – gymnázium so štvorročným a päťročným vzdelávacím programom*, part Stopy antiky.

36 *Rámcový vzdelávací program pro gymnázia*, *Dějepis*, part Starověk.

37 Štátný vzdělávací program, *Dejepis – gymnázium so štvorročným a päťročným vzdelávacím programom*, part Stopy stredoveku.

38 *Podstawa programowa*, Liceum-technikum, *Historia*, part V: Bizancjum i świat islamu.

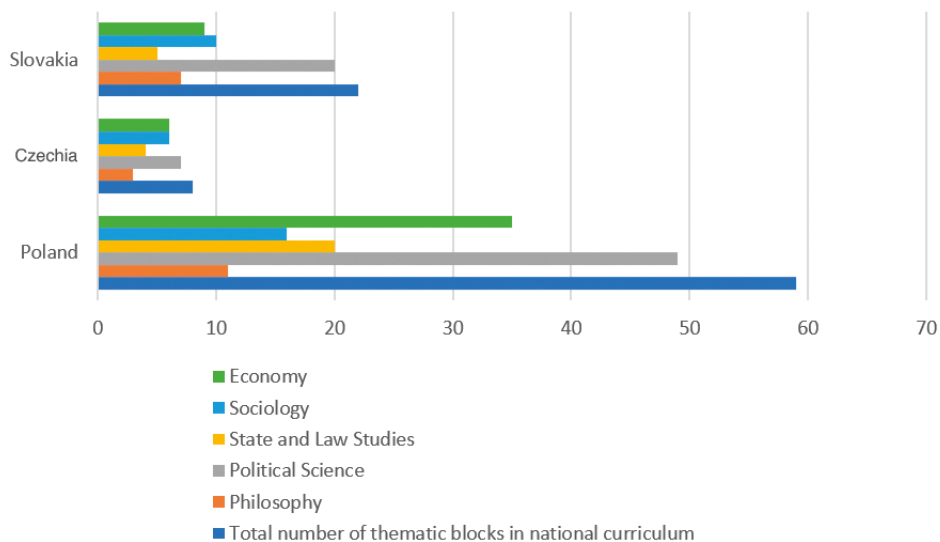
are the essence of not only political, but also social, economic, and cultural overlaps of history.³⁹

The teaching of the history of the 19th and 20th centuries is primarily associated with large interdisciplinary and international overlaps. In all cases, the basic periodization consists of the Vienna Congress of 1815, the revolutionary year 1848, the First and Second World Wars, the era of communist regimes and the birth of the current globalized world are mentioned. Overlaps of historical interpretation here are made up of political sciences (areas of government theory and political ideologies, such as capitalism, liberalism, socialism, Marxism, nationalism, Nazism, communism, etc.), a historical sociological approach (changes in lifestyle, free time, social stratification, national feeling of perception), economic influences on the historical process (economic crises and their causes, world and colonial trade, the economy of nation states after the First World War), demography (emigration, forced displacement of the population) or global approaches to questions of the state and law (colonization and decolonization, the right to self-determination of peoples, the causes and implementation of the Holocaust during the Second World War, the displacement of Germans from the countries of Central Europe after the Second World War, etc.). In all three cases, the end of the “short twentieth century” and the birth of the current era of history can be identified with the fall of the communist regimes in 1989, to which the current global society of the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia is historically related.

In contrast to the teaching of social sciences, the teaching of history in all national curricula takes place in lower and upper secondary schools based on the same principle, i.e., the principle of the same periodization and the same historical periods. At both levels of education, the teaching of national history is also a key part. Thus, in upper secondary schools, students do not approach unknown content, rather they further expand their already acquired knowledge, attained in lower secondary schools. At the same time, at a higher level of education, there is a greater connection between interdisciplinary approaches and global history with national history. In addition to political history, more attention is also paid to the cultural, economic, social, and ideological overlaps of historical development. In this way, students learn the basics of interdisciplinary thought on specific historical periods.

39 Ibidem, part XVI: Reformácia i jej skutki; Štátny vzdelávací program, Dejepis – gymnázium so štvorročným a päťročným vzdelávacím programom, part Odkaz novoveku.

Tab. 3: The majority share of partial humanities and social sciences in the teaching of individual blocks of the subject of history at upper secondary schools in the national curricula



Social Science as an Interdisciplinary and International School Subject

The teaching of social sciences is, by its very nature, a multidisciplinary subject with an international scope. The goal of teaching social sciences is the development of critical and civic thinking with a focus on the international type of thinking and interdisciplinary competence. Recently, the development of social sciences has been combined with other teaching methods, e.g., with the development of digital skills,⁴⁰ which are perceived as necessary global knowledge for the contemporary world. In the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia, social sciences are an integral part of education from the 2nd form of primary schools and are considered the civic basis of education. In fact, the content of teaching social sciences in all observed countries is a construct of an interdisciplinary approach. This school subject combines knowledge of constitutional theory, law, sociology, psychology, political science, philosophy, and ethics. Countries usually classify the curriculum into individual thematically coherent blocks, such as Citizen and State, Man and Society, Individual and Law, International Relations, and the Global World, etc. Within them, individual topics and approaches are interwoven, the aim of which is to create a unified whole.

⁴⁰ Cf. Pavel ANDRES – Petr SVOBODA, *Development of Digital Competences of Teachers of Social Sciences at Secondary Vocational Schools*, in: Michael E. Auer – Thrasyvoulos Tsiatsos (eds.), *The Challenges of the Digital Transformation in Education*, 2018, pp. 720–731.

Tab. 4: Topics in national curricula, including the development of interdisciplinary and international skills of pupils in the teaching of social sciences in upper secondary schools (as included by countries)⁴¹

	Poland	Czechia	Slovakia
The state, its features and role	•	•	•
Extremism, racism, xenophobia	•	•	•
Homeland and nation	•	•	•
Interpersonal relations and ethics	•	•	•
Political system of the homeland	•	•	•
Political systems of the European countries			
Political systems of non-European countries			
Economy, property, finance	•	•	•
Market economy		•	•
Financial literacy			•
European integration	•	•	•
Law, crimes, legal liability	•	•	•
Human rights	•	•	•
Family and its role in society	•		•
Region and municipality	•		•
Personality, communication, and social life	•	•	•
Critical thinking and argumentation	•		
Philosophy and thinking			
Religion in the society			•

Some striking similarities can be seen in the content of the school curriculum of the compared countries. The connection between the citizen and the state is one of the fundamentals of social education. Pupils are guided in all cases to the definition of the state and the state establishment, they are introduced to the concept of democracy and non-democratic elements of state leadership, they recognize state symbols, learn about the basic roles of the state in the life of a citizen and the institution of citizenship. At the same time, the teaching of social sciences at the lower secondary school levels does not leave the national space of perception, in any case there is no more systematic interpretation of

41 The following content comparison was created by thematic analysis of the current national educational frameworks, i.e., compulsory school curricula in the Czech Republic (*Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání, Výchova k občanství*, https://archiv-nuv.npi.cz/uploads/RVP_ZV_2021_word.docx), in Slovakia (*Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie*, https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/obcianska-nauka_nsv_2014.pdf) and in Poland (*Podstawa programowa, Szkoła podstawowa IV-VIII, Wiedza o społeczeństwie*, <https://podstawaprogramowa.pl/Szkola-podstawowa-IV-VIII/Wiedza-o-spoleszenstwie>). For the sake of clarity in the footnotes, these documents will be cited hereinafter without full links to the websites.

the specific political systems of European and non-European countries. This element is rather aimed at a higher level of education.

An understanding of law and the legal system is also an important common element of teaching. Law is always understood in an interdisciplinary way, i.e., in relation to the state and the state establishment, to the rights of citizens and people, to the legal order of individual countries. Specifically, themes of the relationship of law to democratic principles, in relation to the creation of family or social norms (Slovakia) appear,⁴² in the tasks of administration and self-government in the political life of the state (Czech Republic,⁴³ Poland),⁴⁴ in the rights of linguistic and ethnic minorities,⁴⁵ or in the activity of the parliament as a legislative body.⁴⁶ In all educational thematic blocks, a part can be identified that, in addition to rights, also refers to civic duties and personal responsibility. The specific content of the teaching is the topic of homeland and nation. All three national curricula work with these concepts, but each in a slightly different way. While in the Czech Republic it is about defining the content of the concept of homeland and patriotism,⁴⁷ in Slovakia, the homeland is connected more with the state, population, regions, and personalities.⁴⁸ Poland is the only country that includes an explicitly defined education for patriotism, including issues relating to the connection of this term with the national and ethnic community.⁴⁹

A specific part of social science education in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia is economics. The basis of the curriculum in all three cases is money and its role in society, ownership, and property. The Czech Republic also introduces pupils to the principles of banking and the free market.⁵⁰ Poland in a multidisciplinary way links the financing of local representations and civic initiatives and the participation of citizens in public life. There is thus a connection between the larger life of the individual and public finances.⁵¹ Slovakia is the only one of the analysed countries to create a separate learning block for financial literacy, in which students learn about personal and

42 Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie, part Moje rodina.

43 *Rámcový vzdelávací program pro základní vzdělávání*, Výchova k občanství, part Člověk, stát a právo.

44 *Podstawa programowa*, Szkoła podstawowa IV–VIII, Wiedza o społeczeństwie, part VI: Społeczność lokalna.

45 *Ibidem*, part VIII: Wspólnoty narodowe/etniczne i ojczyzna.

46 *Ibidem*, part XI: Demokracja w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej; Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie, part Štát a právo; *Rámcový vzdelávací program pro základní vzdělávání*, Výchova k občanství, part Člověk, stát a právo.

47 *Ibidem*, part Člověk ve společnosti..

48 Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie, part Moja vlasť.

49 *Podstawa programowa*, Szkoła podstawowa IV–VIII, Wiedza o społeczeństwie, part VIII: Wspólnoty narodowe/etniczne i ojczyzna.

50 *Rámcový vzdelávací program pro základní vzdělávání*, Výchova k občanství, part Člověk, stát a hospodářství, esp. output VO-9-3-04.

51 *Podstawa programowa*, Szkoła podstawowa IV–VIII, Wiedza o społeczeństwie, Part IX: Udział obywateli w życiu publicznym – społeczeństwo obywatelskie

family budgets, financial responsibility and the level of risk associated with managing personal finances.⁵²

Both Poland⁵³ and Slovakia⁵⁴ consider the family to be the basic unit of society, while the Czech Republic is more concerned with society as a wider whole, in which family education and family relationships (including ethical and moral behaviour) are one part of the wider social context. Moreover, the curriculum of the Czech Republic does not even include a separate block of family education within the teaching of social sciences.

The difference between the national curricula is made up of some topics that appear separately in the observed countries. Religion and its role in society is most emphasized in the Slovak curriculum, as part of interpersonal and social relations.⁵⁵ There is no direct religious education or the application of a religious perspective. Much more, this curriculum is understood as part of the structure of a specific society and its influence on it.

Slovakia, as already mentioned, is also the only one to have a separate block of financial literacy within the teaching content.⁵⁶ Overall, in the teaching of social sciences in lower secondary schools, there are several points of contact in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland, from which the content of the national curricula is based:

The basic element for understanding society is always the individual, his world, experience, and place in society.

The individual is the basic unit of the state, and statehood has its own civil rights. All three countries are fundamentally oriented towards the democratic principle of education, recognition of extremist, racist or xenophobic tendencies in society, civic duties, and responsibility.

52 Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie, Part Finančná gramotnosť.

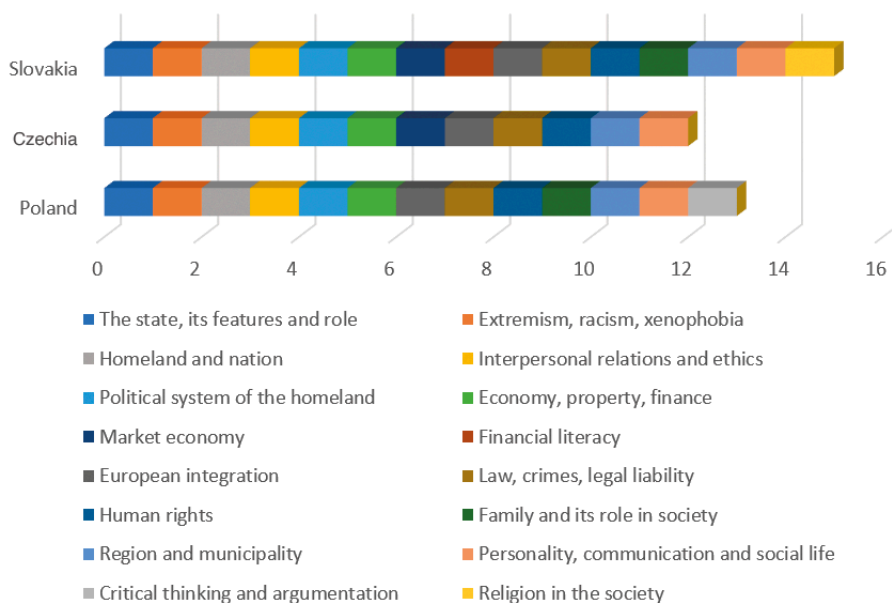
53 *Podstawa programowa*, Szkoła podstawowa IV–VIII, Wiedza o społeczeństwie, part II: Rodzina.

54 Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – nižšie stredné vzdelávanie, Part Moja rodina.

55 *Ibidem*, part Sociálne vzťahy v spoločnosti.

56 *Ibidem*, part Finančná gramotnosť.

Tab. 5: Teaching topics in national curricula, including the development of interdisciplinary and international skills of pupils in the teaching of social sciences in lower secondary schools



Social sciences are also an integral part of teaching in general education of upper secondary schools.⁵⁷ In contrast to the teaching of history, in all the countries the social sciences develop already acquired knowledge of the civics education generally provided by lower secondary schools. Thus, the form and content of teaching curricula at upper secondary general education schools also changes significantly. The thematic content of individual national social science curricula is also expanding.

⁵⁷ The following content comparison was created by a thematic analysis of current national educational frameworks for upper secondary schools, i.e., compulsory school curricula in the Czech Republic (*Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia, Občanský a společenskovední základ*, https://www.edu.cz/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/RVPG-2007-07_final.pdf), in Slovakia (*Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – gymnázium so štvorročným a päťročným vzdelávacím programom*, https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/inovovany-statny-vzdelavaci-program/obcianska_nauka_g_4_5_r.pdf) and in Poland (*Podstawa programowa, Liceum-technikum, Wiedza o społeczeństwie*, <https://podstawaprogramowa.pl/Liceum-technikum/Wiedza-o-spoleczenstwie>). For the sake of clarity in the footnotes, these documents will be cited hereinafter without full links to the websites.

Tab. 6: Topics in national curricula, including the development of interdisciplinary and international skills of pupils in the teaching of history in upper secondary schools (as included by countries)

	Poland	Czechia	Slovakia
Society and Socialization	•	•	•
Social groups and social stratification	•	•	•
Marriage	•		•
Child education and education			•
Political systems	•	•	•
Principles of democracy	•	•	•
Human rights	•	•	•
Morals and ethics			•
Political ideology	•	•	•
Populism	•		
Law and the legal system	•	•	•
Civil Law	•	•	•
Family law	•		•
Criminal Law	•	•	•
Judiciary and advocacy	•		•
National economy	•	•	•
Market economy			•
Labour market and unemployment			•
Business			•
Financial literacy			•
A general introduction to philosophy	•	•	•
Philosophy - specific periods, people, trends...	•	•	•
General welfare	•		•
Social life and civil communities	•	•	
Social differences	•	•	•
Migration and population	•		
Legislation	•	•	
Religious studies and religious studies	•	•	•
Psyche and personality	•	•	•
European integration	•	•	•
Globalization	•	•	•
The Visegrad Group	•		

In all observed national curricula, the involvement of psychological and social education in upper secondary schools is increasing. Students are educated in the basic areas of psychological development of an individual, motivation, coping with stressful situations, motives, and behaviour, including attention to the principles of mental hygiene. In cooperation with this teaching content, some social phenomena related to the social life of certain population groups, social behaviour and stratification are also put into context in all three countries. Part of the teaching also concerns the identification of socio-pathological phenomena in society and possible legal consequences.

In connection with social topics, students' knowledge of the political milieu, systems and styles of government is also developed in all cases. Unlike lower secondary school, more attention is paid to foreign political systems (parliamentary, semi-presidential and presidential systems), political parties and their classification, as well as the importance of elections in the democratic society of Central Europe. A large part of the teaching also thematically touches on the area of human rights, the rights of national and ethnic minorities, gender equality (including the connection with economic topics, such as the gender pay gap). The definition and characteristics of democracy and totalitarianism are among the important building blocks of education in all three states.

The topics of the European Union, its integration, bodies, powers, and European legislation are also the fundamental material of the teaching. In the above-mentioned areas, teaching at upper secondary schools in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia is very similar in terms of content, and it is possible to find similar approaches of the national schools to the essential skills that students have to acquire in today's society.

Some topics are, understandably, conceived in a different way. The concept of economic education within the social sciences is by far the broadest in the Slovak milieu, where the emphasis is not only on general economic development trends, but students' attention is also directed to specific economic sectors, such as the market principles of the economy, the labour market and unemployment, the basics of entrepreneurship and financial literacy.⁵⁸ In the Czech Republic⁵⁹ and Poland⁶⁰ the economic blocks of social science teaching are much more closely related to other topics, such as social development and social differences, or the political system and its economic manifestations. The truth is, however, that knowledge of economics is also projected into other subjects taught at upper secondary schools, in many of which economics is a separate study subject.

58 Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – gymnázium so štvorročným a päťročným vzdelávacím programom, part Základné ekonomické problémy a ich riešenie.

59 *Rámcový vzdelávací program pro gymnázia*, Občanský a společenskovední základ, part Člověk ve společnosti, Sociální struktura ve společnosti.

60 Cf. *Podstawa programowa*, Liceum-technikum, Wiedza o społeczeństwie, part V: Różnice społeczne.

All the studied states include the teaching of philosophical topics in the field of social sciences at the upper secondary level of education. Concepts of philosophy are presented in national curricula mainly in chronological historical development from ancient philosophy to modern trends. Poland presents philosophical topics primarily in relation to man as the bearer of ideas and thought; it focuses on the knowledge of human reason and individuality, the cultural-political significance and heritage of philosophy; it relates philosophy to the religious and psychological development of man and society. In the Polish curriculum, this is the introductory part of the teaching of social sciences in upper secondary schools, which forms the thematic introduction to other teaching blocks.⁶¹ The Czech Republic created a block of philosophy and religious studies within the framework of social sciences in the national curriculum, which mainly includes terminology, a historical overview of philosophy and the basic characteristics of the world's religious systems. Compared to other blocks of the Czech national curriculum, however, this is a relatively small part of the overall teaching of social sciences.⁶² The Slovak national curriculum devotes the most comprehensive part of social science teaching to philosophy. Philosophy is taught systematically; students are introduced to its chronological development and individual directions. Attention is paid to ancient philosophy, the tendencies of medieval Christian thought, the diversity of philosophical trends from the 18th century to the 20th century, including characteristics that influenced political thought (e.g., Marxism, theory of power, etc.). Slovakia devotes two separate blocks to the teaching of philosophy within the social sciences (What is philosophy and what is it good for, Philosophical way of learning the world).⁶³ Some specific topics are unique in specific national curricula and point to some issues that the national education systems of individual countries are currently dealing with. Slovakia has integrated the issue of marriage and its role in society into the teaching of social sciences, as well as the issues of raising and educating children and the typology of family education.⁶⁴ The issue of the family, which is so important in teaching in lower secondary schools, is included in both Poland and the Czech Republic in upper secondary schools rather in general societal topics, such as human rights, the psychological development of the individual or the social structures of societies. The question of migration and population development is an important element

61 *Podstawa programowa, Liceum-technikum, Wiedza o społeczeństwie, part I: Człowiek – koncepcje i aspekty.*

62 *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia, Občanský a společenskovední základ; part Philosophy and religious studies consists of three basic teaching blocks: Essence of philosophy, Key stages and directions of philosophical thinking, and Faith in human life.*

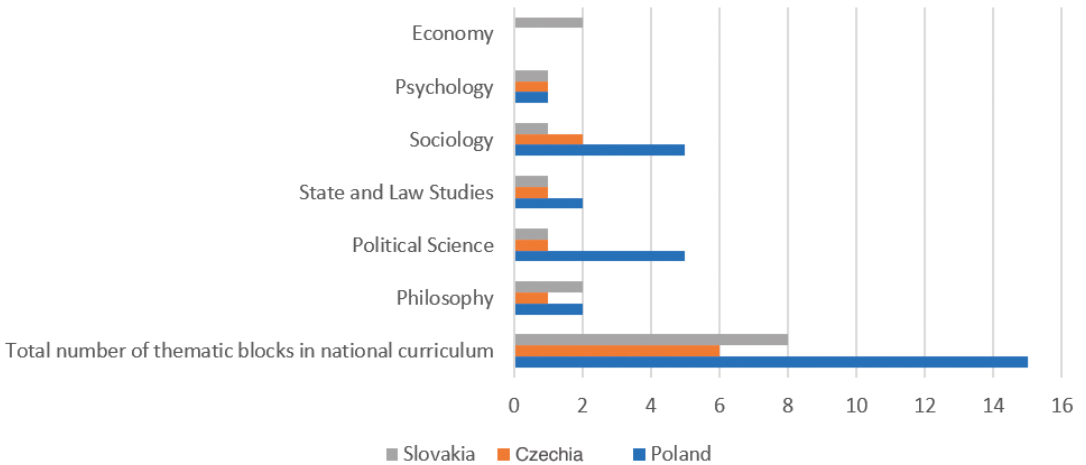
63 *Štátny vzdelávací program, Občianska náuka – gymnázium so štvorročným a päťročným vzdelávacím programom, part Čo je filozofia a k čomu je dobrá, part Filozofický spôsob osvojovania si sveta.*

64 *Ibidem, part. Človek a spoločnosť.*

in the teaching of social sciences in Poland; it is also related to the topics of acculturation, assimilation and the creation of a global society of the present time.⁶⁵ In the same way, Polish education pays specific attention to political populism as a modern trend of political culture in political campaigns today.⁶⁶ Despite the fact that all three observed countries are part of the political association of the Visegrad Group, only the Polish curriculum devotes separate topics to this political group.⁶⁷

It's necessary to conclude this comparison by asserting that the teaching of social sciences in all three countries follows the correct trend of educational development. In lower secondary schools, pupils learn basic terms, definitions, understanding of current trends, social, personal, and political development. In all three cases, upper secondary schools constrict curricula on acquired knowledge and skills, expand them and, above all, put them in deeper context. The subject of social sciences thus fulfils the basic requirement for a general education subject, applying as a basic criterion an interdisciplinary teaching approach with international connotations, which brings about the development of individual knowledge, abilities, and skills at each of the examined levels of knowledge.

Tab. 7: *The majority share of partial humanities and social sciences in the teaching of individual blocks of the subject of social science at upper secondary schools in the national curricula*



65 *Podstawa programowa, Liceum-technikum, Wiedza o społeczeństwie, part III. Społeczności i wspólnoty, topic 12.*

66 *Ibidem, part VIII: Polityka i kultura polityczna, topic 7.*

67 *Ibidem, part XIV: Polityka zagraniczna Polski po 1989 roku, topic 3.*

Conclusion

All three analysed countries include history and social studies in their lower secondary and upper secondary school curricula. In their framework, they regularly include international and interdisciplinary skills, the aim of which is to provide pupils and students with knowledge, abilities, and skills in these areas. The Central European region largely determines the similarity of individual national curricula, especially in the area of history and political development. Nevertheless, the presented content analysis of the curricula finds partial differences to a certain extent.

We find similarities mainly in the teaching of history. All three countries rely primarily on the teaching of national history, which they supplement with international connections. Interdisciplinary and international skills are acquired primarily by teaching the historical development of religion, society, national interests, cultural and artistic influences, or economic factors. It is important that the teaching of history is traditionally linear in all countries, so it leads to the development of thinking in cooperation with the process of historical development. Even if the excessiveness of some teaching over the teaching of other periods is sometimes criticized, the teaching of history in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia is an essential school subject, the curriculum of which is designed for the development not only of national history, but also of international and interdisciplinary contexts of historical development. History thus has its irreplaceable place in this learning process. We find greater differentiation in the content of the school curricula of lower and upper secondary schools in all three countries in the case of the school subject of social sciences. These subjects are in all cases conceived as multidisciplinary subjects; they contain the required acquired knowledge in the fields of political science, sociology, religious studies, political science, and law. At the same time, these learning objectives are never singled out separately, but are intertwined in mutually supportive contexts. The difference is mainly in the amount of content of individual humanities and social disciplines in the contents of individual curricula. The curricula for lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools also differ significantly. While the teaching of history is always chronological and linear in both levels of study, upper secondary education in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, within the subject of social sciences, tries in an appropriate way to build on already acquired knowledge, abilities and skills that students have acquired at lower levels high school. This creates the necessary content continuity and logical continuity of the examined curricula.

Despite the fact that there has been a discussion about the form of school teaching, the quality of education and the content of school curricula in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland in recent years, all three analysed

countries have a solid foundation for the further future development of international and interdisciplinary approaches and acquired knowledge in education. Due to the similarity of much of the teaching in upper secondary schools, there is also a good chance to develop joint teaching and international mobility at the level of university students. Through their reflection, even these students can significantly contribute to the development of the content of national curricula in the field of teaching history and social sciences in the future.

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2 (Post)-National Narratives in the Central European Historical Education: Towards Pluralist or Non-liberal Democracy?

Jan Květina

Central European Endangered Democracy in the 21st Century?

Even though the history of Central or rather East-Central Europe⁶⁸ has been frequently omitted from the global narratives and major perspectives of the worldwide historical research, the critical analysis or even revision of the public debate over Central European history should be treated as one of cornerstones concerning the question of the future stability and sustainability of democratic development of the region or even the whole contemporary European structure as such. Despite the fact that the local Central European history has been standardly considered as “too Eastern” for the comparative historians and social scientists tackling the main attributes of Western European development and at the same time “too ordinary” for the fashionable post-colonialist perspectives applied to the revelation of “authentic identities” of historically oppressed minorities,⁶⁹ its relevance for understanding global history has been repeatedly proven by the identification of Central European space as the major cause of recurrent military and symbolic conflicts.⁷⁰ However, it is not possible to treat the clash over the Central European history only as a part of “more significant” and worldwide conflicts, because the whole political, social and economic development of this regions in last two decades has demonstrated that the stability of East-Central European region is strongly dependent on two interlinked factors: first, on strengthening the local democratic culture which was permanently endangered or even

68 For the concept of East-Central Europe, see the classical schematization by O. Halecki – Oskar HALECKI, *Borderlands of Western Civilization: A History of East Central Europe*, New York 1952; A more recent conceptualization of East-Central European space can be found in: David STARK et al., *Post-socialist pathways: Transforming politics and property in East Central Europe*, Cambridge 1998.

69 For the application of the post-colonialist approaches in Central European context, see Doro-ta KOŁODZIEJCZYK – Cristina ȘANDRU, *Introduction: On colonialism, communism and east-central Europe – some reflections*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 48 (2), 2012, pp. 113–116; Hana CERVINKOVÁ, *Postcolonialism, postsocialism and the anthropology of east-central Europe*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 48 (2), 2012, pp. 155–163.

70 The thesis formulated particularly by Timothy SNYDER, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*, New York 2010.

destroyed in this area after 1918;⁷¹ and second, on the maintenance of pluralist narrativization of the “national past” that would include also the “voices of the silenced”,⁷² but exclude false ideological misinterpretations at the same time. Furthermore, the interconnection between both these phenomena should be treated as crucial, because the capacity of any democratic regime⁷³ is strongly dependent on the rejection of too black-and-white and authoritarian interpretations of history. Moreover, if one takes into account that the main collective patterns of general historical awareness and the interpretation of “national past” is realised in the framework of national obligatory educational process, the “triangle” between the setting of national educational curriculum, mainstream narrativization of the past and democratic political culture is to be considered as one of the cornerstones and challenges for today’s debates about the future role of civic education in Central European discourses. In addition, if one highlights the above mentioned importance of the proper development of the democratic culture for both the national as well as general Central European stability, it must be stated that both the quality and sustainability of such civic cultures in Central European countries (i.e., the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary) have started to drop in the last ten years,⁷⁴ which can be of course explained both by “objectivist” materialist criteria such as the decline of economic progress as well as by more symbolical and constructivist perspectives taking the role of civic self-reflection and collective relation towards values and identity into consideration. Nonetheless, since the optimistic visions of the 21st century development as the triumphal march of liberal democracy⁷⁵ have faded out, it has become evident that one of the major obstacles in the formation of more resilient and open societies concerns the permanent threat of vivid historical traumas and

71 For the depiction of such permanent and turbulent changes regarding the instability of East-Central European regimes, the example of the town of Uzhorod (today in Ukraine) is frequently used. Just imagine that someone was born at this place in 1910 and died in 1992 – in such case you started your life as a subject of Austrian emperor in a Hungarian town and then you had to switch your allegiance several times to Czechoslovakia, Subcarpathian Ruthenia, again Hungary, the Soviet Union, or Ukraine with the fatal transformation of the political regime in each case.

72 The thesis had been presented by J. G. A. Pocock in several essays that were later labelled as a concept of a “new British history”, see John G. A. POCKOCK, *The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History*, Cambridge 2005, p. 297.

73 In this case, we have in mind the classical concept of liberal democracy, because other rival conceptions of democracy – for instance the one formulated by Carl Schmitt – would quite the contrarily reject pluralist interpretations in the favour of national homogeneity and ability to specify the “common enemy”. See Carl SCHMITT, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, E. Kennedy (transl.), London 2000, pp. 9–11.

74 For the decline of Central European democracies in the 21st century according to the annual reports of the Democracy Index, see Jan BUREŠ – Jan KVĚTINA, *Post-communist Regimes in Central Europe Thirty Years After: Time for Another Revolution?*, in: Tomáš Čížik – Ingrid Borárosová (eds.), *The Future Revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe*, Bratislava 2018, pp. 85–104.

75 The well-known belief presented in 1989 by Francis FUKUYAMA, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York 1992.

ethno-nationalist (mostly xenophobic) need to maintain stereotypical images of the past – frequently inherited from the period of the 19th century Romantic nationalism or even state socialism after 1945.

DEMOCRACY INDEX 2022

FRONTLINE DEMOCRACY AND THE BATTLE FOR UKRAINE

Table 2
Democracy Index 2022

	Overall score	Rank	Change in rank from previous year	I Electoral process and pluralism	II Functioning of government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties
Spain	8.07	22=	2	9.58	7.50	7.22	7.50	8.53
South Korea	8.03	24	-8	9.58	8.57	7.22	6.25	8.53
Flawed democracy								
Czech Republic	7.97	25=	4	9.58	6.43	7.22	7.50	9.12
Greece	7.97	25=	9	10.00	7.14	6.67	7.50	8.53
Estonia	7.96	27	0	9.58	7.86	6.67	6.88	8.82
Portugal	7.95	28	0	9.58	7.50	6.67	6.88	9.12
Israel	7.93	29	-6	9.58	7.86	9.44	6.88	5.88
United States of America	7.85	30	-4	9.17	6.43	8.89	6.25	8.53
Slovenia	7.75	31	4	9.58	7.14	7.22	6.25	8.53
Botswana	7.73	32	-2	9.17	6.79	6.67	7.50	8.53
Malta	7.70	33	0	9.17	7.14	5.56	8.13	8.53
Italy	7.69	34	-3	9.58	6.79	7.22	7.50	7.35
Cabo Verde	7.65	35	-3	9.17	7.00	6.67	6.88	8.53
Belgium	7.64	36	0	9.58	8.21	5.00	6.88	8.53
Cyprus	7.38	37	0	9.17	5.36	6.67	6.88	8.82
Latvia	7.37	38	0	9.58	6.07	6.11	6.25	8.82
Lithuania	7.31	39	1	9.58	6.43	6.11	5.63	8.82
Malaysia	7.30	40	-1	9.58	7.86	7.22	6.25	5.59
Trinidad and Tobago	7.16	41	0	9.58	7.14	6.11	5.63	7.35
Jamaica	7.13	42	0	8.75	7.14	5.00	6.25	8.53
Slovakia	7.07	43	2	9.58	6.07	5.56	5.63	8.53
Timor-Leste	7.06	44	-1	9.58	5.93	5.56	6.88	7.35
South Africa	7.05	45	-1	7.42	7.14	8.33	5.00	7.35
India	7.04	46=	0	8.67	7.50	7.22	5.63	6.18
Poland	7.04	46=	5	9.17	6.07	6.67	6.25	7.06
Suriname	6.95	48	1	9.58	6.43	6.11	5.00	7.65
Panama	6.91	49	-1	9.58	6.07	7.22	3.75	7.94
Argentina	6.85	50	0	9.17	5.00	7.78	4.38	7.94
Brazil	6.78	51	-4	9.58	5.00	6.67	5.00	7.65
Philippines	6.73	52	2	9.17	5.00	7.78	4.38	7.35
Colombia	6.72	53	6	9.17	6.07	6.67	3.75	7.94
Indonesia	6.71	54	-2	7.92	7.86	7.22	4.38	6.18
Thailand	6.67	55	17	7.42	6.07	8.33	5.63	5.88
Hungary	6.64	56	0	8.33	6.79	4.44	6.88	6.76
Bulgaria	6.53	57	-4	9.17	5.36	6.11	4.38	7.65
Namibia	6.52	58	-3	7.00	5.36	6.67	5.63	7.94
Croatia	6.50	59	-3	9.17	6.07	6.11	4.38	6.76

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Fig. 1: Score of Central European (“Visegrad”) countries according to Democracy Index 2022 that assessed all four regimes as flawed democracies. Democracy Index 2022.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Democracy Index 2022. Frontline democracy and the battle for Ukraine, Economic Intelligence Unit, London 2023, p. 8.

Such a threat is especially urgent in the case of Central European countries, whose path from developing liberal democracies or rather flawed democracies⁷⁷ to defective democracies or even specific forms of illiberal democracies⁷⁸ in recent years has been frequently followed by the governmental ambition to gain control over the national collective memory and thus the official interpretation of modern national past. In this regard, the common trend regarding the heroic narrativization of the Polish ancestors as unique freedom fighters⁷⁹ from the Polish ruling party *PiS* (Law and Justice) as well as the official interpretation of the Hungarian history as the similar legitimate effort to save one's own homeland together with the "victims' discourse" expressed by the Orbán's administration⁸⁰ can be found. In the Polish case, there have been several serious domestic disputes over the interpretation of one's own "national" past that can be read as "markers" of the ongoing "cultural wars"⁸¹ as a significant part of the current ideological and identity fights – among others one can name remarkable public conflict caused by the publication of the book *Neighbours* that helped to reveal shocking true story of *Jedwabne*,⁸² but also unleashed the debate over scientific and educational "legitimacy" to present and interpret facts that endanger the traditional conservative nationalistic narrative of the Polish past. Similar effects can be moreover traced even in further Polish events concerning the clash over national collective memory: most noticeable was probably the case with the unfortunate collocation "Polish death

77 Sabrina P. RAMET, *The Czech Republic: A Flawed Democracy – An Introduction*, in: Sabrina P. Ramet – Vladimir Đorđević – Christine M. Hassenstab (eds.), *Civic and Uncivic Values in the Czech Republic*, Cham 2022, pp. 3–23.

78 The specific concept of illiberal democracy – not just as a category of political science, but an intended doctrine with positive meaning – started to be introduced especially by V. Orbán in Hungary, Jacques RUPNIK, *Hungary's Illiberal Turn: How Things Went Wrong*, *Journal of Democracy* 23 (3), 2012, pp. 132–137; András BÍRÓ-NAGY, *Illiberal Democracy in Hungary: The Social Background and Practical Steps of Building an Illiberal State*, 01/2017, https://www.cidob.org/en/articulos/monografias/illiberals/illiberal_democracy_in_hungary_the_social_background_and_practical_steps_of_building_an_illiberal_state); for the concept of illiberal or non-liberal democracies see also Fareed ZAKARIA, *The Rise of Illiberal Democracy*, *Foreign Affairs* 76 (6), 1997, pp. 22–43.

79 See David CADIER – Kacper SZULECKI, *Populism, historical discourse and foreign policy: the case of Poland's Law and Justice Government*, in: Lina Klymenko – Marco Siddi (eds.), *Historical Memory and Foreign Policy*, Cham 2022, pp. 49–70.

80 Michael TOOMEY, *History, Nationalism and Democracy: Myth and Narrative in Viktor Orbán's 'Illiberal Hungary'*, *New Perspectives* 26 (1), 2018, pp. 87–108.

81 For the importance of educational dimension in such cultural wars, see Tony TAYLOR – Stuart MACINTYRE, *Cultural wars and history textbooks in democratic societies*, in: Mario Carretero – Stefan Berger – Maria Grever (eds.), *Palgrave handbook of research in historical culture and education*, London 2017, pp. 613–635.

82 Jan T. GROSS, *Neighbors: the destruction of the Jewish community in Jedwabne, Poland*, New York 2002.

camps”⁸³ which initiated the controversial official prohibition of mentions which might suggest the participation of the Polish nation in the Holocaust⁸⁴ as well as the internationally reflected governmental intervention into the main message and impression of the exhibition in the newly established Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk.⁸⁵



For years, Jan Karski's students at Cr
what they didn't realize was he was a
photographic memory, Jan served as
of World War II. Before one trip ac
were being murdered on a massive s
Polish death camp to see for himself
Roosevelt, giving one of the first ac
action. It was decades before Jan w
encourage anymore. So I teach comp

Fig. 2: Barack Obama at the ceremony giving the medal to the Polish WW2 hero Jan Karski in 2012 when the US president used the controversial collocation about “Polish death camps”. Google Arts & Culture.⁸⁶

83 Obama angers Poles with ‘death camp’ remark, 30. 5. 2012, BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18264036>.

84 Rick NOACK, Obama once referred to a ‘Polish death camp.’ In Poland, that could soon be punishable by 3 years in prison, Washington Post, 17. 8. 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/08/17/obama-once-referred-to-a-polish-death-camp-in-poland-that-could-soon-be-punishable-by-3-years-in-prison/>.

85 Marco SIDDI – Barbara GAWEDA, The national agents of transnational memory and their limits: the case of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, Journal of Contemporary European Studies 27 (2), 2019, pp. 258–271.

86 <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/presidential-medal-of-freedom-for-jan-karski/1gHawLr1IfPr4g>.

Nonetheless, it is very important that such tendency cannot be considered only as a peculiar trait of the specific “Polish trauma”, since very similar situations – even with comparable outcomes and political debates – can also be found in other Central European countries. In this regard, it is apt to point out that despite several relevant unique peculiarities – which are linked to specific traits of each national narrative such as Polish and Hungarian relationship towards the interwar non-democratic regimes as well as Polish ambition to be treated as a “great historical” nation with a status of “*a subject and not an object of history*” or the Slovak effort to break out from the Czechoslovakian discourse with the help of postcolonial perspectives – one can think about Central European collective memory and the problem of its politicisation or even ideological misuse in education as a common comparative phenomenon or “communicating vessels”.

Even though there are several significant nuances in the both narrativization of the past as well as its implementation into educational discourses when it comes to national curricula and textbooks, as Tomáš Hradecký and Václav Sixta demonstrate in the first (*National Curricular Content Comparison of Interdisciplinary and International Approaches in History and Social Sciences in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland*) and the fifth chapter (*History and Civics: A Complicated Relationship. The Case of East-Central European Textbooks*) of this publication, the main common attribute of this “Central European fate” can be thus seen in the way that Jacques Rupnik expressed allegorically as “*a bird with its eyes looking behind.*”⁸⁷ To that extent, he highlights the fact that Central European identities have been founded as complicated networks of historical conflicts and traumas from the past which means that the Polish, Czech, Hungarian or Slovak definition of one’s own togetherness lies much more in the “proper” narrativization of “one’s own roots” and “ancestors” than on defining any future goal, common values or civic loyalties. In addition, such a Central European obsession with one’s own past requires also strong delimitation of “national enemies” and “traitors” whose constructions are prone to stereotypisations as well as clashes between various socio-economic and identity national groups over the “right image” and sustainable narrative of the national history.

Just to name the most distinctive Central European cases of cultural wars over the interpretation of one’s own national past that have been repeatedly highlighted in the public debates and that even gained the international attention, one can state for instance prime examples such as the scandal with

87 Jacques RUPNIK, *Střední Evropa je jako pták s očima vzadu: o české minulosti a přítomnosti*, Praha 2018.

the nationalistic video presentation made by *Matica Slovenská* in Slovakia,⁸⁸ Czech political and media conflicts over the controversial issue of the expulsion of Czech Germans after the Second World War that played a key role during the Czech presidential campaign in 2013;⁸⁹ or the Hungarian dilemma of the desirable national attitude towards the questionable interwar authoritarian leader Miklos Horthy whose statue has been recently unveiled in front of the Budapest parliamentary building with a full recognition of the Orban's government and other right-wing patriotic parties.⁹⁰



Fig. 3: Slovakian controversial calendar from 2017 celebrating Jozef Tiso as the main representative of the Slovakian state during the Second World War under strong German Nazi control; this calendar also includes a photograph depicting Tiso using the Nazi salute "Heil Hitler" which can be treated as an expression of complicated relationship of Slovakian society to its own sovereign past. *Denník N.*⁹¹

88 *Matica slovenská* vyrobila dokument obhajujúci Tisův Slovenský štát, *Novinky.cz*, 1. 3. 2017, <https://www.stream.cz/zahranicni-9232/14-brezna-1939-jiny-pohled-na-slovensky-stat-390392>. For the nationalist background of *Matica Slovenská*, see also Martin PRIEČKO, *Between Patriotism and Far-Right Extremism: A Case of Youth Activism in Matica slovenská*, *Ethnologia Actualis* 15 (1), 2015, pp. 65–90. For the long-term problems regarding the construction of Slovakian modern narrative see Adam HUDEK, *Twenty years wasted? Constructing a Narrative of 1989 in Slovakia*, in: Adam Hudek et al., *Overcoming the Old Borders. Beyond the Paradigm of Slovak National History*, Bratislava 2013, pp. 167–178; Alexander MAXWELL, *Choosing Slovakia: Slavic Hungary, the Czechoslovak Language and Accidental Nationalism*, New York 2009.

89 Hynek JEŘÁBEK – Jan RÖSSLER – Pavel SKLENAŘÍK, *Mediální obraz Karla Schwarzenberga v tištěných denících před prezidentskými volbami 2013*, *Naše společnost* 2, 2013, pp. 3–15.

90 *Orban's Hungary looks to set historical autocrat's reputation in stone*, *Balkaninsight*, 24. 10. 2022, <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/10/24/orbans-hungary-looks-to-seal-an-historical-autocrats-reputation-in-stone/>.

91 <https://dennikn.sk/665478/narodenie-a-popravu-tisa-pripominaju-kalendarom/>.



Fig. 4: The statue of interwar Hungarian political leader Miklos Horthy that partially renewed the borders of “Greater Hungary”, but installed an authoritarian regime; the statue was installed in 2022 in front of the national parliament in Budapest and demonstrates the controversy of the current Hungarian narrativization of the past. Safarway.⁹²



Fig. 5: The page from the Czech leading tabloid newspaper “Blesk” from January 2013 during the presidential elections campaign – the poster suggests not to vote for Karel Schwarzenberg due to his anti-nationalist interpretation of the expulsion of Germans after the Second World War and Munich Crisis in 1938. Manipulátoři.⁹³

92 <https://www.safarway.com/en/property/miklos-horthy-statue#gallery>.

93 <https://manipulatori.cz/milos-zeman-prekroutil-nazor-karla-schwarzenberga-odsun-sudetskych-nemcu-aneb-se-dostal-hrad/>.

Naturally, we should not ignore that even though the aforementioned cases from distinguished national milieus are connected with the same issue of the fate of Central European collective identities in the tragic era around the Second World War, the problem regarding educational narrativization and ideological misuses of the national past events does not concern only the phenomenon of modern history. It is understandable that topics from modern history tackling strong emotional as well as popular dichotomies such as freedom and democracy against totalitarianism (or incomprehensible phenomena like the Holocaust and genocide) are among the most visible ones in the public sphere (mostly precisely because of their capacity to gain the global strong and black-and-white attention), but it should not be ignored that the political conflict over the collective memory and “permissible” interpretation of the past is also “fought” in the case of much earlier histories; in this regard one can name particularly the Czech tense discussion about the renewal of the Marian Column at the Old Town Square in Prague⁹⁴ or similar disputes over the legacy of 19th century military commander Václav Radecký⁹⁵ and in the Slovakian case the politicization of even older matter of the early mediaeval “statehood” of Great Moravia.⁹⁶ Taking the importance of such early histories into consideration, it is thus not surprising that one of the most significant levels of the current military conflict between Russia and Ukraine is represented exactly by the “war” over the “right” interpretation of the history of Eastern Europe since the early modern period⁹⁷ which is of course strongly linked to the stereotypisation of the Central European past as well.

94 Tomáš BUBÍK, *The Czech Struggle for and against Religion in Public Space: The Case of Re-Erecting of Marian Column in Prague from the Perspective of the Media, Religion and Society in Central and Eastern Europe* 15 (1), 2022, pp. 21–35.

95 Reportéři ČT: *Spory kolem sochy maršála Radeckého pokračují. Pro jedny „masový vrah“, pro jiné unikátní dílo*, Česká televize, 13. 4. 2021, <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/domaci/3296971-reporteri-ct-spory-kolem-sochy-marsala-radeckeho-pokracuji-pro-jedny-masovy-vrah-pro>.

96 Frank HADLER, *Historiografický mýtus Velké Moravy v 19. a 20. století*, *Časopis Matice Moravské* 120 (1), 2001, p. 155.

97 Vladimir PUTIN, *On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians*, President of Russia, 12. 7. 2021, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181>; *Putin's angry speech rewriting Ukraine's history*, BBC, 22. 2. 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-60458300>.

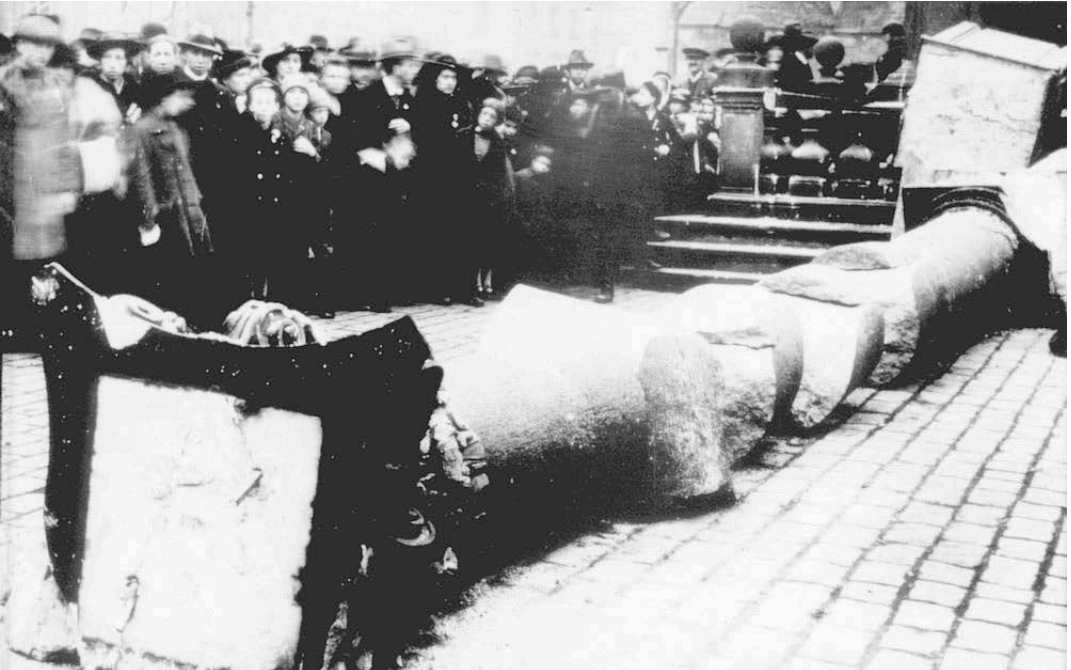


Fig. 6: The reconstruction of the Marian Column in Prague has caused a strong dispute in the Czech public debate over the “correct” interpretation of national history: the column was spontaneously destroyed in 1918 as a symbol of the decayed Habsburg monarchy, but in 2022 it was re-installed as a symbol of reconciliation which was however rejected by the part of Czech society as an undesirable demonstration of a conservative turn and increasing Catholic domination. *Wikipedia.org.*



Fig. 7: The statue of the Great Moravian king Svatopluk that ruled in the 9th century was revealed in front of Bratislava Castle in 2011; this instalment was reflected with high controversy, since the narrativization of the Great Moravian ruler as a Slovakian predecessor is a part of Slovakian nationalist ideological discourse. [Wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Svatopluk).

What is more, when one admits that the political construction of collective memory based on the selective interpretation of the past does concern various historical periods, it must be analysed to what extent one can speak about common Central European narrative “meta-principles”, i.e., whether the similarities between contemporary governmental ambitions to form the official mainstream discourse of the national history in all monitored Central European countries (Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia with Hungary as a part of reference framework) are so coherent and systematic that one is able to assume the presence of comparable social cleavages established by similar ideological patterns across these various Central European countries (i.e., if the Czech, Polish, Slovak and Hungarian politicization of the collective memory is carried out according to identical schemes, political beliefs and ideological stereotypes) and what the current impact of such political efforts on the local educational concepts of teaching history in the form of national curricula is. Since the coherent and thorough comparative discourse analysis of all four national educational discourses would of course be beyond the possibilities and extent of this particular study, this approach will be applied to the analysis of two national cases: the Czech and Polish whose selection has been influenced both by conceptual reasons presented below as well as by the fact that the analysis of the current Slovakian curriculum with necessary reflection of its “Czechoslovakian” and “Hungarian” motives is applied in the third and the fourth chapter of this publication written by Róbert Arpáš (*From Czechoslovakism to Nationalism: The problem of Searching and Defining Slovak Identity*) and Martin Hetényi together with Beáta Pinterová (*The Issues of the Slovak-Hungarian Relations in Educational Process*).

The analysis of the Czech case will thus serve as an example of Central European country whose democratic sustainability and political culture is assessed as more or less stable, because despite several threats and problems concerning especially the level of *oligarchization* of the public sphere or the increase of fake information, Czech politics has not been exposed so far to a relevant level of open ideological challenges to the liberal democratic essence of its constitution that would be supposed to be replaced with some kind of alternative – namely, a mostly ethnically nationalist and conservative model. Moreover, this is the main reason one does not assume a massive official one-sided politicization and ideologization of the historical narratives in the analysis of the Czech national discourse and the Polish educational milieu has been selected as the second studied case at the same time. Since Polish democratic development has been strongly criticised for de-liberalization of the democratic procedures, nationalisation of the state discourse with the extreme conservative and xenophobic non-tolerant attitudes and monopolisation of the

public sphere,⁹⁸ the analysis of the current tendencies in the narrativization of the Polish educational discourse is treated as a distinctive example of the contemporary relationship between the concept of democratic government, pluralist society and educational narratives of the “national” past. Hence, if the Czech and the Polish cases can be considered as two model examples of the current development, their analysis should open a broader discussion over similar tendencies and counter-tendencies in the whole Central European context and enable a systematic comparative approach that would include also other national discourses of Central European space (i.e., not only Slovakian and Hungarian but also Austrian or German).

It is of course understandable that looking from the detailed perspective, traditional long-term cleavages in individual Central European societies differ in each case depending on particular historical contexts and specific “traumas” from the past. In the case of the Czech narrative,⁹⁹ the key impact of the concept formulated gradually by František Palacký in the 19th century and Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk at the turn of the 20th century is still very significant, since such a classical approach to the Bohemian and later Czech past presupposes the “*positive smallness*”¹⁰⁰ of the Czech nation claiming that contrary to other neighbouring communities such as German, Polish and Hungarian, the Czech national spirit is typical of its *plebeian egalitarianism* and struggling for peace. Compared to “great nations” and “marvellous civilizations”, Czechs are not expected to amaze the world with the power of weapons or culture, but by the force of the “right ideas” that they are always able to formulate and defend even at the time when the rest of the world does not understand them and thus tries to reject them. From this perspective, modern Czechs are treated as the descendants of medieval adherents to the Hussite movement that predicted the “rightness” of religious reformation a century before Martin Luther’s intervention as well as the followers of the insurgents against absolutism and Catholic dogmatism during the Thirty Years’ War (the paragon of Jan Amos Komenský) or the sons of National Awakeners who did not hesitate to come up with the principle of “democratic federalism” against the assumed “decayed” and “aggressive”

98 Michael A. ORENSTEIN – Daniel R. KELEMAN, *Europe’s Autocracy Problem: Polish Democracy’s Final Days?*, *Foreign Affairs* 7. 1. 2016, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/poland/2016-01-07/europes-autocracy-problem>; Ireneusz Pawel KAROLEWSKI – Roland BENEDIKTER, *Poland’s conservative turn of 2015: Where are its real origins?*, *CIFE Policy Paper* 4. 5. 2016, https://www.cife.eu/Ressources/FCK/files/publications/policy%20paper/CIFE_PP35_Polands_conservative_turn_of_2015_Karolewski_Benedikter_2016.pdf; Ben CARDIN – John McCAIN – Richard J. DURBIN, *Cardin, McCain, Durbin Urge Polish Government to Recommit to the Rule of Law, Human Rights, Protection of Media*, 2016, <https://www.cardin.senate.gov/press-releases/cardin-mccain-durbin-urge-polish-government-to-recommit-to-the-rule-of-law-human-rights-protection-of-media/>.

99 Kamil ČINÁTL, *Dějiny a vyprávění*, Praha 2011.

100 Ladislav HOLÝ, *The little Czech and the great Czech nation: national identity and the post-communist transformation of society*, Cambridge 1996.

Habsburg centralism in the 19th century.

Based on such an understanding of Czech history as a continual progress of democracy, humanity, love and truth,¹⁰¹ all turning points in the modern past in the 20th century can be read in a similar way. Hence, modern traumas such as the Munich Pact in 1938 or Soviet occupation in 1968 might be interpreted not as national failures, but symbolical triumphs when the “innocent and peaceful victims” were sacrificed, since the Czechoslovaks at that time were the only ones who knew the “Truth” and had to wait until the rest of the world community came to the same conclusion – i.e., concerning the narrative of 1938, to the revelation that Hitler represented universal evil and the policy of appeasement was thus false, and regarding the “right reading” of 1968 to the belief that the ideas that were suppressed by the military intervention had represented the “right concept of the social system” standing between authoritarian Bolshevik socialism and unfair exploitive capitalism. In addition, such a “progressive” narrative of the Czech national history helped to create interpretative social cleavages that are based on heroization or rather demonization of particular social groups and classes; since the historical fight for “Truth” has been identified with religious reformers and anti-absolutist fighters from townsmen or even the peasant milieu, its narrativization led to the strong anti-Catholic and anti-aristocratic (or even anti-elitist) discourse of Czech historiography and thus also concept of teaching history as such. The rejection of anything ethnically different – i.e., particularly the anti-German setting of the Czech modern identity¹⁰² followed by several anti-Polish and anti-Hungarian tones¹⁰³ should not be therefore considered not only as a consequence of dominant ethno-nationalist patterns of Central European collective self-identification in the 20th century, but also as a part of the abovementioned egalitarian and anti-Catholic discourse.

101 Such an understanding of Czech history is mostly apparently manifested in the works by T. G. Masaryk, see for instance Tomáš Garrigue MASARYK, *Česká otázka: snahy a tužby národního obrození; Naše nynější krize: pád strany staročeské a počátkové směrů nových*, Praha 1990; idem, *The Making of a State: memories and observations, 1914–1918*, London 1927; Jiří MUSIL, *The Meaning of “The Czech Question” Today*, *Czech Sociological Review* 3 (1), 1995, pp. 33–44.

102 Muriel BLAIVE, *National Narratives of Czech Identity From the 19th Century to the Present*, in: Anton Pelinka et al., *Geschichtsbuch Mitteleuropa. Vom Fin de Siècle bis zur Gegenwart*, Vienna 2016, pp. 161–189.

103 Jan KVĚTINA, *Der Ausgleich und seine Auswirkung auf das tschechische kollektive Gedächtnis anhand des Bereiches Popkultur*, in: Ladislav Cabada – Christopher Walsch (eds.), *Imaginäre Räume in Zentral-europa. Kulturelle Transformationen, politische Repräsentationen und trans/nationale Identitätsentwürfe*, Herne 2019, pp. 179–228.

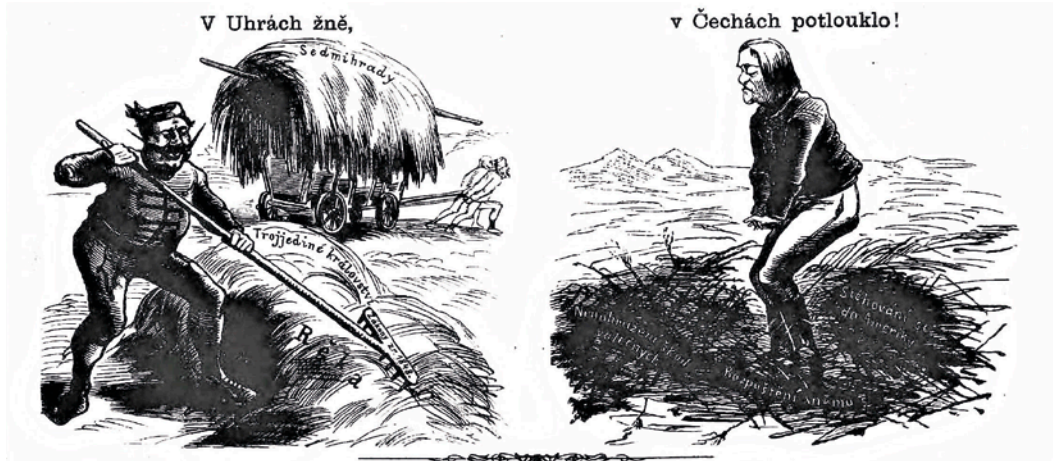


Fig. 8: One of many stereotypisations of Hungarian identity in the Czech media discourse where the Hungarian nobleman is depicted as a parasite enriching oneself at the cost of a poor Czech peasant. *Humoristické listy*, 6. 7. 1867.

However, with the arrival of the postmodern turn and the related decline of meta-narratives, the current Czech society is exposed to the conflict of several social cleavages established on the basis of the interpretation of the past; taking the traditional attributes mentioned into account, it is therefore understandable that such a dispersion of narratives with an effort to include minor narratives into the “game” is built mainly around two relevant issues:

- 1) to apply more conservative standpoints with the rehabilitation of the Czech Catholic clergy and Bohemian aristocratic elite as not enemies, but members of the modern Czech history and therefore also its identity forming process;
- 2) to abandon the rigorous ethno-nationalist approaches and thus to replace the strict anti-German (and the related animosities based on the principle of one dominant homogenous Czech ethnic nationality) understanding of Czechhood with a more open and pluralist concept of togetherness in the Popperian meaning.¹⁰⁴

It must be also added that both these tendencies should be treated as a part of more general turn stemming from the liberal-democratic effort to re-interpret the consequences of Marxist historiography before 1989, which petrified all mentioned older traits (i.e., anti-elitism, anticlericalism, and anti-German ethnic chauvinism) in a very systematic and effective way.

Furthermore, one should not forget that apart from these two influential stereotypic patterns, the impact of the pro-Soviet socialist historiographic interpretations

¹⁰⁴ Karl R. POPPER, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, London 2012.

contributed to the preservation and boost of traditional Pan-Slavist narratives from the 19th century, which meant that instead of a Western understanding of Central Europe as the cultural edge of Western Europe that had been kidnapped by the East,¹⁰⁵ the *Slavist* interpretation of Czech and Central European history tried to demonstrate that Czech historical community along with other local Slavic nationalities had always been deeply rooted in unique Slavic – and thus non-Western – cultural heritage¹⁰⁶ strongly linked to the idea of brotherhood with Russian collective identity. Such understanding of the Czech history – hugely promoted by the official discourse of the Communist Party before 1989 – used also even traditional turning points of the older Czech narrative from the 19th century including the assessment of the Hussite movement or the trauma from the Battle of White Mountain in 1620 in a new guise combining the Marxist criticism of elitist exploitation with the assumption of German aggressivity, Catholic bigotry and aristocratic arrogance.

What is more, the application of this socialist narrative to the modern Czech history in several cases caused a very tight connection between qualitatively different cleavages; this is especially true for the main traumatic event of Munich 1938 whose official communist interpretation before 1989 combined the aforementioned nationalist and anti-elitist patterns of thought with the narrative of the Soviet Union as a reliable “Slavic” partner who was there ready to help but due to the pro-Western arrogance or even betrayal of the Czech establishment the Soviets were not asked for help.¹⁰⁷ It is therefore necessary to accept that the still existing *Slavist* patterns in the traditional Czech narrative which were frequently misused for ideological purposes using the identification of *Slavism* with the concept of “progressive” and “peaceful” *Easternness* standing against the “decayed” and “decadent” Western culture before 1989 might be treated as possible threat in both current tendencies to reinterpret classical ethno-nationalist concepts in the educational process as well as in contemporary hybrid wars.¹⁰⁸

105 Milan KUNDERA, *The Tragedy of Central Europe*, New York Review of Books 31 (7), 26. 4. 1984.

106 See for instance Marxist deduction that the Eastern cultural patterns in the early modern period were more peaceful and progressive and thus the number of witches hunt was supposed to be lower than in Western Europe, Bedřich ŠINDELÁŘ, *Hon na čarodějnice. Západní a střední Evropa v 16.–17. století*, Praha 1986.

107 For the Soviet perspective of Munich crisis, see Michael Jabara CARLEY, “Only the USSR Has ... Clean Hands”: *The Soviet Perspective on the Failure of Collective Security and the Collapse of Czechoslovakia, 1934–1938 (Part 1)*, *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 21 (2), 2010, pp. 202–225. The most expressive manifestation of the Czechoslovakian communist ideological interpretation of the Soviet role in 1938 can be found in the Czechoslovakian propaganda TV series *Gottwald: Jaroslav MATĚJKA – Evžen SOKOLOVSKÝ*, *Gottwald*. 2nd episode. *To je naše zem* [TV series], 1986.

108 Tomáš ČÍŽIK – Monika MASARIKOVÁ, *Cultural Identity as Tool of Russian Information Warfare: Examples from Slovakia*, *Science & Military Journal* 1, 2018, pp. 11–16.

Narrativization of the Past and the Liberal-Pluralist Reform of the Educational Curriculum: The Czech Case

Nevertheless, one should not lose sight of the fact that such a misuse of historical identity concepts in the current hybrid warfare might cut both ways, since relevant warnings against ideological impact in the educational narrativization of the past might sometimes be exaggerated and thus they can be even considered to be a part of counterpropaganda. Regarding the Czech narrative and its educational application, such a situation occurred in 2019 when the Czech national intelligence agency (BIS – *Security Information Service*) published its annual report including the urgent warning concerning the gravity and scope of Russian activity of espionage in the Czech Republic. Apart from the warnings against fake news websites, economic dependence and other systemic problems regarding Czech-Russian relations, this report highlights the “*Pro-Soviet interpretation of modern history and persistent influence of Soviet propaganda*”¹⁰⁹ as a relevant and dangerous attribute of the Czech official educational curriculum and thus also a significant part of everyday schooling regarding especially history or the Czech language. When the BIS highlighted the Pan-Slavist interpretation of Czech history as highly pernicious and concluded that “*modern history presented in (Czech) schools is de facto the Soviet version of modern history and the Pro-Russian Pan-Slavism affects to some extent even the process of teaching the Czech language, respectively literature*”,¹¹⁰ it caused strong reactions from the official political representatives¹¹¹ and led to the broader public debate where the huge majority of Czech historians and teachers rejected the BIS conclusions as too far-fetched, overstated and nonsense.¹¹² No official steps have been thus taken regarding the “anti-Sovietization” and “anti-Slavization” of the national curriculum so far which is of course related not only to the fact that the BIS report was assessed as misleading, but also to the long-term process of such curriculum transformation that after several failures started again no earlier than in 2022.¹¹³

Hence, since the transformation of the current Czech national curriculum (which is more than 20 years old and has been repeatedly criticised for its outdated character as well as for its incoherent work with values and

109 *Výroční zpráva Bezpečnostní informační služby za rok 2017*, Bis.cz, 3. 12. 2018, <https://www.bis.cz/public/site/bis.cz/content/vyrocní-zpravy/2017-vz-cz.pdf>, p. 7.

110 *Ibidem*.

111 Michaela ENDRŠTOVÁ, *Výuka je poznamenána sovětskou interpretací dějin, tvrdí BIS. Ministr chystá změny*, Aktuálně.cz, 14. 1. 2019, <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/sovetska-vyuka-modernich-dejinese-musi-zmenit-mini-bis-minis/r~e7ac6e4417ed11e99168ac1f6b220ee8/>.

112 Radka HRDINOVÁ, *Proruský výklad moderních dějin? Zprávu BIS odmítají historici i učitelé*, Idnes.cz, 23. 2. 2019, https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/historie-dejepis-ucebnice-vyklad-dejiny-skola-narodni-obrozeni-moderni-dejiny.A190220_202712_domaci_evam.

113 See the website about the current reform of the curriculum: <https://velke-revize-zv.rvp.cz/jak-to-bude-probihat>.

ideological context) has not been completed,¹¹⁴ it is necessary to focus on contemporary trends that are both presented in the expert educational circles as well as discussed publicly and that encompass the main dilemma regarding the desirable relation between the educational process concerning particularly the interpretation of history and its framing in the existing liberal-democratic ideological context, dominant worldviews and political clashes.¹¹⁵ To do so, it is possible to assess the present state concerning the extent of both intentional and spontaneously intrinsic politicization of social values in Czech educational values on the basis of the analysis of the main official documents which are currently used as a stepping stone for further evolution of the transformation of the national educational curriculum until its successful implementation planned in 2025.

If one thus looks into such materials – including its fundamental Background study¹¹⁶ created by the panel of ministerial experts from the former National Institute of Education (NÚV), Recommendation of the Czech Ministry of Education for teaching modern history¹¹⁷ or the Research Report regarding the state of teaching modern history¹¹⁸ realised by the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (ÚSTR), one can state that despite several interpretative inconsistencies regarding the concept of collective identities or the multi-perspective approach to the discursive treatment of historical narratives – that are commented on more thoroughly below – the whole complex of the suggested transformation of the curriculum with the highlighted trends towards openness and critical re-evaluation of the “national” past remains strongly embedded in the required framework of pluralist and liberal democratic society.

Such a statement can be documented by several key proclamations that are expressed in all the above-mentioned official materials since they commonly emphasised the concept of the “open past” and multi-perspective viewpoint in history education by claiming that “*the students should be led to the conclusion that there can always be several opinions and views on the particular historical event which might be treated as the right ones and whose character is changeable in time from various angles*”; hence, “*the multi-perspective historical view is a strategy*

114 Jan KVĚTINA, *Koncepce liberalismu a demokracie v edukačním procesu: dekonstrukce neoliberální dominance v RVP*, *Pedagogika* 66 (3), 2016, pp. 312–329.

115 For the importance of such analysis of the relation between educational narrativization of the past and construction of civic identity see for instance Helen HASTE – Angela BERMÚDEZ, *The power of story: Historical narratives and the construction of civic identity*, in: M. Carretero – S. Berger – M. Grever (eds.), *Palgrave handbook*, pp. 427–447; Theodore M. CHRISTOU – Christopher W. BERG, *Introduction: History Education in Theory, Practice, and the Space in Between*, in: Theodore Christou – Christopher W. Berg (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of History and Social Studies Education*, Cham 2020, pp. 3–19.

116 Josef HERINK, *Podkladová studie. Revize RVP – Člověk a společnost. Vzdělávací obor Dějepis*, interní dokument [not published], Praha 2019.

117 Doporučení MŠMT k výuce dějin 20. století, 16. 7. 2013, <https://www.msmt.cz/file/37235/>.

118 ÚSTR, *Výzkumná zpráva. Stav výuky soudobých dějin*, 25. 6. 2012, <https://www.ustrcr.cz/data/vyzkum-vyuky/vyzkumna-zprava.pdf>.

leading to a better understanding of historical events accepting also different opinions than generally acknowledged and known paradigms.”¹¹⁹ Moreover, both the ministerial Recommendation and expert Background study recognize the concept by Robert Stradling as a crucial basis for the planned reform and the recommended patterns for history teaching from 2025 onwards. Among other things, these documents also emphasise that the new national curriculum must be able to “reflect dark chapters in our own national history”¹²⁰ which means that the reformist strategy accepts the necessity of re-interpretation and re-narrativization of the traditional Czech mythologies presented above with the aim to “shift the simplified interpretation of historical events” and for instance to “assess the role of the Czech nobility in the nation’s history.”¹²¹

This approach is moreover in accordance with the ministerial Recommendation that states that the Czech curriculum of historical education still pays an excessive attention to the history of the (ethnic) nation overshadowing other relevant topics – thus it also recommends to apply the comparison of “how various nations (or different groups in one nation) perceived the same event.”¹²² Together with this concept of reinterpretation, the stress is laid on the questions of the perspective of national minorities and ethnic groups as well as on the historical positions of women in the social structure and on gender history as such. Such an approach can be identified in one of the promoted sample lessons included in the ministerial Recommendation entitled “From the history of our nations” the main educational aim of which is presented as to inform students about the “histories of various ethnic groups that have participated or still participates in the life of the Czech Republic.”¹²³ This material – combining different educational programmes, multidisciplinary approaches and the concept of a project education – therefore tries to remove all traditional considerations about the Czech narrative as a matter of one ethnic Czech nation based on mother tongue, place of birth or even race and to offer insight into the multi-ethnic historical “melting pot” of the Czech collective identity. Hence, it opens for instance the question of Jewish customs in the Czech historical culture, the contribution of German-speaking Czech inhabitants in the Middle Ages and early modern period or the development of Czech cohabitation with the Romany people.¹²⁴

Furthermore – alongside with Stradling’s approach – the Czech educational reform elaborates also principles formulated by the international team led by

119 J. HERINK, *Podkladová studie*, p. 66.

120 *Ibidem*, p. 53.

121 *Ibidem*, p. 8.

122 Doporučení MŠMT, pp. 3, 12.

123 *Ibidem*, p. 9.

124 *Ibidem*.

Centkowski¹²⁵ when, apart from historical knowledge and gaining experience with historical facts, it stresses several soft skills focused on the reflection of social values, worldviews and ideological bias as the main expected outcomes of history teaching; their fundamental meanings can be described as “*the maintenance of collective memory, protection from manipulation via the instrumentalization of such memory, critical analysis of ideologies, forming the foundations of critically treated political and social identity and creating distance from emotional historical and political problems.*”¹²⁶

Another important data-based source for the direction of the Czech educational reform is the set of national surveys that were undertaken in recent years both by the Czech School Inspection (ČŠI) or other public institutions involved in the agenda of teaching history such as the mentioned Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (ÚSTR). Taking the results and interpretations of their results into consideration, it is believed that both Czech history teachers and school headmasters/headmistresses emphasise the skill to distinguish between relevant “*historical interpretations on the one hand and propaganda and myths on the other hand*” as well as the need to “*form historical consciousness and historical culture perceived by students*” as one of the primary aims of historical education in general.¹²⁷

In this regard, the surveys also try to identify possible threats and weaknesses regarding the ideological impact of the political discourse on the educational level; such risks and dangers are therefore identified mostly with the prevalent attitudes of the relevant number of Czech teachers and parents who prefer traditional way of teaching based on the false assumption of historical events as “*objective categories*” which can be taught *wie es ist eigentlich gewesen*¹²⁸ – i.e. as pure phenomena of verifiable facts without the presence of any interpretations or critical assessments.¹²⁹ However, such attitudes might be very perilous since their defenders believe not only in the very positivist *chimaera* about material foundation of the social world without taking any role of self-perceptions, symbolical beliefs or collective understandings of the facts into account, but often even succumb to anti-establishment conspiracy theories claiming that the application of constructivist notions and pluralist approaches to education is just a part of new ideologization and totalitarization of the “*free*” and

125 Jerzy CENTKOWSKI et al., *Nowe drogi v nauczaniu historii. Współczesna dydaktyka niemiecka*, Rzeszów 1999.

126 J. CENTKOWSKI et al., *Nowe drogi*, p. 29; Zdeněk BENEŠ – Blažena GRACOVÁ, *Didaktika dějepisu: mezi socializací jedince a jeho individuální výchovou*, in: Iva Stuchlíková – Tomáš Janík et al., *Oborové didaktiky: vývoj – stav – perspektivy*, Brno 2015, p. 300.

127 Josef HERINK, *Podkladová studie*, pp. 32, 34; Česká školní inspekce, *Tematická zpráva. Výuka současných dějin na 2. stupni základních škol a na středních školách*, Praha 2016, pp. 4–5.

128 Wolfgang HARDTWIG (ed.), *Über das Studium der Geschichte*, München 1990, p. 45.

129 See J. HERINK, *Podkladová studie*, p. 27; ÚSTR, *Výzkumná zpráva*, p. 22.

“normal” world.¹³⁰ The related tendency to read the facts falsely and to blindly believe in fake information has been documented in approximately 10 % of Czech teachers¹³¹ and from time to time can be experienced in the public space like in the case of a Czech teacher who was recorded by her students as she presented them the fake Pro-Russian interpretation of the conflict in Ukraine based on explicit disinformation.¹³²

The relevance of such tension concerning the teacher’s understanding of the *meta-meaning* of history education and their relation to facts, interpretations and disinformation is one of the reasons the current Recommendation of the Czech Ministry of Education put an emphasis on the necessity to focus the national learning process on the reflection of “*both strongest non-democratic regimes – Nazism and communism*” and on “*ideological and power mechanisms that were applied.*”¹³³ However, prioritizing the educational reflection of the modern history of non-democratic mechanisms, the Czech Ministry does not limit this scope on the past dimension, as the material warns about possible “*current misuses of ideas of freedom and human rights by political and religious extremism or terrorism.*”¹³⁴

Of course, as it has been already suggested – since the strategy of the reform is still in its infancy and the formulations concerning the ideological framework and value-context are limited to mostly general plans and proclamations – there are several inconsistencies, vague phrases, and unclear concepts in the official documents for the time being. Hence, when the Ministry of Education claims that the “*interpretative frameworks are in no way normative,*”¹³⁵ it cannot avoid several value-laden and ideologically-embedded language expressions especially in sample materials that represent the examples of good practice; this is the case for instance of expected outcomes that – regarding the historical reflection of modern history with the focus on the non-democratic regimes – the students should be able to understand “*how the communist regime destroyed (sic!) the social structure of the Czech countryside*” or “*how it persecuted particular groups of citizens*”¹³⁶ without asking about deeper causes of the then reflection of the communist ideology and

130 Similar proclamations were for instance detected by the survey conducted by ÚSTR where several teachers criticized contemporary trends in the modern history teaching as “*poor propaganda*”, the product of the “*fanatic teachers and media*” and expressed the opinion that “*contrary to the past that is true, its presence is not and will never be*”, ÚSTR, *Výzkumná zpráva*, pp. 33, 35.

131 Kamil KOPECKÝ et al., *Český učitel ve světě médií*. Výzkumná zpráva, Olomouc 2021, p. 20.

132 This teacher was then dismissed from the school for such violation of educational ethics which provoked another wave of the public discussion about the responsibility and possibility of individual teachers to present their own attitudes in the framework of the educational process and to what extent the school or the school system respectively is allowed to exclude such individuals from the system, Kristýna ŠOPFOVÁ, *Učitelka vykládala žákům lži o válce na Ukrajině. Gazdík podpořil její vyhazov*, Novinky.cz, 19. 4. 2022, <https://www.novinky.cz/clanek/domaci-ucitelka-vykladala-zakum-lzi-o-valce-na-ukrajine-gazdik-podporil-jeji-vyhazov-40394164>.

133 Doporučení MŠMT, pp. 1–2.

134 Ibidem.

135 Ibidem, p. 7.

136 Ibidem, p. 7, 10–11.

party as an attractive option for the relevant part of Czechoslovakian society. Moreover, a similar ideologically biased expression can be found in the sample lesson on colonization whose main educational question is expected to provide the students with the explanation “*why democracy and Western values did not succeed in decolonised countries.*”¹³⁷ Neglecting the fact that the question is more an *a priori* thesis that is not supposed to be falsified but rather supported with empirical and historical evidence in the schooling process, the statement automatically assumes that European model of democracy – that is claimed to be failed in the former colonial countries – should be treated as the desirable model and a benchmark for all political systems in the world; last but not least it also works with very vague concepts of “Western values” without any contextualization or their further elaboration. Such treatment might suggest a Europocentric or even ethnocentric belief that the corpus of desirable “modern” principles such as individual freedom, human rights or civic equality – that one can speculate about as the intended though not specified values – is inherently and uniquely rooted exceptionally in Western culture and cannot be found in any other historical context of political thought. A similar pattern of thought is also demonstrated in the sample material analysed before “From the history of our nations” that apart from the “progressive” inclusion of the viewpoints of ethnic minorities such as Jews, Germans or Roma still operates with language expressions and the idea of Slavism treating Czechs as a predominantly Slavic nation with important historical relations with other *Slavic* communities.¹³⁸ Of course, all these inconsistencies can be eliminated during the creation of the final curriculum in 2025; these critical remarks should be therefore considered as a running analysis which does not cast doubts on the most essential attribute of the currently prepared educational reform which is its fundamental pluralist and liberal democratic character.

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The importance of such statement can be further underlined when one takes the question of educational reforms in neighbouring Central European countries into account and starts asking to what extent one can claim that despite the illiberal tendencies or rather trends not to consider the optimal model of democracy as liberal, but rather non-liberal, the educational sphere still remains as a milieu of free speech or factual and data-based pluralist community of inquiry. This is especially urgent when one focuses on the contemporary changes applied to the Polish national curriculum concerning the interpretation of the past, where since September 2022 the new subject “History and Present Day” has been introduced into the schooling system.

137 Ibidem, p. 7.

138 Ibidem, p. 9.

Even though the motivation of such reform might have been caused by many impulses including necessary changes in the amount of data or frequency of history lessons in each week, the transformation of the curriculum has elicited very stormy protests due to its assumed controversial approach to the interpretation of the “national” past based mostly on one-sided conservative, Catholic and ethno-nationalist ideological point of view.¹³⁹ Hence, instead of general and complex evaluation of the school reform as such, one needs to concentrate primarily on the matters related to this controversial issues (i.e., the language expressions and value-based interpretations of historical events), because if one has concluded that the Czech educational reform currently being prepared is based mostly on a liberal pluralist paradigm, the direction of the Polish official narrativization of the school discourse evinces obviously different tendencies.

If one thus tries to emphasize the most problematic issues in the new Polish concept of teaching history and humanities, one should first mention its rapidness¹⁴⁰ and the limited scope of experts who participated in its elaboration; as the majority of critical voices against the reform warn that the main changes have been implemented by historians and other pundits strongly related to the government or other official conservative platforms.¹⁴¹ Such a selection of experts thus evidently gravely influenced the essential philosophy of the whole reform which is mostly not about the challenges that have been recently identified as the “big issues” for the education in the 21st century and are for instance the crucial pillars of the currently planned Czech educational reform, but primarily about the petrification and “improvement” of the “right” and universal understanding of the past. This motivation can be deduced from the general impression as well as from the detailed analysis of the expressions used. In this regard, when one thinks of the main conceptual roots of the Czech reform, i.e., Stradling’s concept of new modern history based on the reflection of plural viewpoints or re-narrativization of the “big history” of the national majority with the inclusion of the perspective of social minorities, it must be stressed that this plan strongly contradicts the main expected outcome of the reformed Polish history education that is described

139 For the criticism against the reform, see Posłanki KO krytykują podręcznik do HiT. *Książka, która uczy wykluczania, nie powinna być podręcznikiem*, Gazetaprawna.pl, 19. 8. 2022, <https://www.gazetaprawna.pl/wiadomosci/kraj/artykuly/8521187,podrecznik-hit-poslanki-ko-koalicja-obywatelska-historia-i-terazniejszosc-krytyka.html>; *Ostra krytyka ZNP nowego przedmiotu historia i terazniejszość*, Portalsamorzadowy.pl, 4. 4. 2022, <https://www.portalsamorzadowy.pl/edukacja/ostra-krytyka-znp-nowego-predmiotu-historia-i-terazniejszosc,366902.html>.

140 The first mention about such intention was published in September 2021 by the Polish minister of education Przemysław Czarnek.

141 Zuzanna JACEWICZ, *Historia i Terazniejszość, czyli koniec edukacji obywatelskiej*, Młodzypolityce.pl, 26. 9. 2022, <https://młodzypolityce.pl/historia-i-terazniejszosc-czyli-koniec-edukacji-obywatelskiej/#post-826-footnote-8>.

as to “recognize the truth about the history of Poland and the world.”¹⁴²

It is therefore not surprising that the new Polish concept preserves the traditional – mainly very extensive chronological and primarily political – concept of history education that is predominantly oriented to Eurocentric or even “polono-centric” paradigm based on understanding history as a history of one nation without taking any significant shifts concerning the current modification of social structures into account. In this case, when the curriculum talks about social groups that the nation is composed of, it characteristically mentions social classes, differences in occupations, religions or ethnicities without any reference to sexual minorities or similar identity issues.¹⁴³ In addition, the biased character of the material does not concern “only” such omissions or ignorance, but also explicit ideological expressions and value-laden language collocations without any contextualization or specifications that would be needed in such a case. Hence, there is an abundance of collocations such as “Western civilization” or “Western values” which are (as the products of Christian and Greek-Roman culture) moreover contradicted and dichotomised against the currently “expanding ideology of political correctness.”¹⁴⁴ Regarding an inherently ethno-nationalist character of thought, it also expects that students will be able to “present the (historical) manifestations of attractiveness of the cultural Polishness – i.e., to state examples of activities of the foreigners that had been polonized.”¹⁴⁵ Both these phenomena – belief in uniqueness of Western civilization and traditional understanding of Polish patriotism – can be framed by even more general philosophical part of the author’s thought expressed by strong collectivist patterns and principle of common good that is however identified with a particular worldview; students are thus supposed to think about social changes from the perspective of foundations that “our homeland has grown upon,” which are mostly “visions of a man, family and community rooted in the classical Greek-Roman and Christian civilization.”¹⁴⁶

Moreover, it must be added that the impression of the curriculum is even augmented by the brand-new course book¹⁴⁷ that was published as the official study material for the subject “History and Present Day” this year. Similarly as in the case of the complex reform as such, even the authorship of this textbook might be assessed as controversial, since the author – a very respected historian Wojciech Roszkowski – used to be a member of the EU Parliament as the then

142 Rozporządzenie 622 ministra edukacji i nauki z dnia 8 marca 2022 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie w sprawie podstawy programowej kształcenia ogólnego dla liceum ogólnokształcącego, technikum oraz branżowej szkoły II stopnia, Dziennik ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, 17. 3. 2022, Warszawa, p. 2.

143 Rozporządzenie 622, p. 23.

144 Ibidem, p. 27.

145 Ibidem, p. 13.

146 Rozporządzenie 609 ministra edukacji i nauki z dnia 8 marca 2022 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie w sprawie podstawy programowej wychowania przedszkolnego oraz podstawy programowej kształcenia ogólnego dla szkoły podstawowej..., in: Dziennik ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, 16. 3. 2022, Warszawa, p. 6.

147 Wojciech ROSZKOWSKI, *Historia i teraźniejszość 1. Podręcznik dla liceów i techników. 1945–1979*, Kraków 2022.

politician of PiS and in his late career he published historical writings strongly affected by the conservative discourse and a conviction about the decline of the Western civilization.¹⁴⁸ It is therefore expectable that the course book written by Roszkowski is even more black-and-white and intransigent when it comes to controversial issues and trends that are perceived by adherents to conservative paradigm as threats that should be condemned. In accordance with collectivist and institutional patterns that have been highlighted above, Roszkowski for example defends the importance of the Catholic Church both in history and present days. Even though he admits that several representatives of the Church might have been “sinning”, the institution as such must be protected against “mystification from popular media coming most frequently from atheist circles,” since “the Church alleviates and normalizes relations between people and nations.”¹⁴⁹



Fig. 9: The author of the new Polish history textbook for the newly introduced subject “History and Present Day” that is criticized for its conservative and ethnically nationalist narrativization of the educational discourse. *Wikipedia.org*.

Along with this pro-Catholic conservative standpoint, the course book also adheres to a prevalently anti-EU discourse, where the European Union is strongly criticized as supranational bureaucratic machinery with Germans as leading agents struggling to use the European apparatus as a tool of centralization to establish one unified European state. This criticism pointed at the common form of European integration also coincides with the

148 Idem, *Roztrzaskane lustro: upadek cywilizacji zachodniej*, Kraków 2019.

149 Idem, *Historia i teraźniejszość*.

anti-progressive tone of the educational reform that considers all postmodern *-isms* – with the fabricated spectre of Neo-Marxism and LGBT at the forefront – as main threats for social stability. When the curriculum therefore exhorts that the students must distinguish between “*ecology and ecologism*,”¹⁵⁰ it is a part of broader intention that is clearly visible in the course book as well; here Roszkowski treats ideologies as dangers that should be averted, but at the same time he – and the whole curriculum in general – refuse to consider conservatism as ideology at all since it is presented not as a viewpoint but as a Truth. Hence it does not hesitate to equate liberalism with anarchism, since it endangers the “well-established” values and tries to compare feminist considerations to the language of totalitarian rhetoric used in the communist past; this likening might moreover be read as a further attack against sexual minorities, when the textbook criticizes the sexual revolution in the 1960s, currently “loose” sexual behaviour as well as the Pro-Choice movement by distinguishing between the qualities of “naturally” born and *in vitro* children.

For all these reasons it is understandable why the relevant part of the Polish society stand against this reform which has been even labelled by such critics as the “*end of Polish civic education*.”¹⁵¹ Apart from the openly controversial treatment of the recent past – demonstrated especially in the strong emphasis laid on the Smolensk event as one the most tragic events of modern history¹⁵² – the questionable character of the curriculum is identified also especially in the case of the interpretation of the modern Polish history in the first half of the 20th century. In this regard, there are no remarks concerning the controversial character of the Polish ethnic nationalism after 1918 – i.e., students are expected to reflect the “*genocide of the Polish population in Wolhynia*” (without mentioning the Polish revenge),¹⁵³ they are also supposed to repeatedly name and highlight particular examples of Polish heroism, but are not confronted with Polish antisemitism during the Second World War or even later in the case of the so-called “cursed soldiers” who are again presented as non-contradictory heroes. This straightforward depiction of anti-communist guerrillas is moreover strongly linked to the intended demonization of the communist era as a more or less Soviet occupation which is not required to be understood and assessed with a focus on possible causes of the popularity of socialist doctrine after 1945 or the clarification of the motivation of the agents then. The main aim of treating this topic in the schooling process

150 *Rozporządzenie 622*, p. 25

151 Z. JACEWICZ, *Historia i Teraźniejszość, czyli koniec*.

152 Critics of the curriculum point out that the formulation in the curriculum originates in the older parliamentary statement from 2021 describing the Smolensk catastrophe as the worst national tragedy since the Second World War.

153 *Rozporządzenie 622*, p. 17.

is in fact its condemnation; in such a regard, a similar anti-communist narrative has already been slightly identified in the Czech ministerial material above.



Fig. 10: Interpretation of the Polish-Ukrainian relations in the Second World War is highly thorny not only in educational matters, but also in political and public debates; the current Polish protests against Ukrainian positive commemoration of Stepan Bandera. *Visegrad Post*.¹⁵⁴

However, if one analyses the main traits of the educational reform introduced in Poland in general, one can conclude that the ideological shaping of the historical narrative cannot be considered just as a sporadic side effect, but as a significant expression of conservative ideology that does not endeavour to provide students with pluralist perspectives, but struggles more to operate within the classical framework of the Polish past as the history of great national – mostly male – heroes who never hesitated to fight for their nation and freedom which are narratively considered as values that do not need any further specification or critical analysis. Comparing such a tendency with the character of the currently planned Czech educational reform presented above, it is possible to outline that one cannot speak about one common narrativization in Central European education, since their forms differ in the national contexts and are at some kind of crossroads. According

¹⁵⁴ <https://visegradpost.com/en/2023/01/10/ukraines-bandera-commemorations-going-down-badly-with-poland/>.

to the selected path, the educational interpretations of the past will either lean towards the liberal democratic and pluralist paradigm which is based on the concept of teaching history as taking different perspectives into consideration or towards more universalist and ethno-nationalist discourse with strong conservative patterns preferring the exposition of the past as a political paragon for future generations.

Words: 9 943
Characters: 58 573

3 From Czechoslovakism to Nationalism: The Problem of Searching and Defining Slovak Identity

Róbert Arpáš

Czechoslovakia was one of the “national” states that were created after the Great War. In fact, it was a multi-ethnic state with a moderate Czech majority.¹⁵⁵ However, the founders of the state referred to Czechoslovakia as the national state of the “Czechoslovak nation”. Not only for tactical reasons, in order to gain the consent to create it from the victorious powers, but also based on the idea of Czechoslovak unity, which dominated the majority of Czech political representatives. The theory of Czechoslovak unity, or Czechoslovakism,¹⁵⁶ according to which Czechs and Slovaks together formed a single “Czechoslovak” nation, provided the state nation with a majority, and thus became the foundation of Czechoslovakia’s existence.

The following lines will deal with the questions of the attitude to Czechoslovakia, or reflections on Czech-Slovak relations in interwar Czechoslovakia with an emphasis on the Slovak national emancipation movement in high school history textbooks. Knowledge about the events demonstrating the significant activities of the Slovak national emancipation movement in various areas, obtained by the examination of contemporary sources and the study of professional literature, will be confronted with how they are reflected in the study literature. The Slovak textbook *History for the 3rd year of grammar schools and secondary schools*¹⁵⁷ and the Czech textbook *History 4 for grammar schools and secondary schools*¹⁵⁸ became the objects of the research. The comparison also includes the publication *History of Slovakia and the Slovaks*,¹⁵⁹ a book which in the 1990s, shortly after the establishment of

155 According to the census of 1921, the ethnic composition of the population of Czechoslovakia was as follows: 8,760,937 inhabitants claimed Czechoslovak nationality, followed by German nationality with 3,123,568, Hungarians 745,431, Russian nationality 461,849, Jewish 180,855, Polish 75,853, Romanian 13,974, Yugoslav 2,108 and another 9,789 Czechoslovak nationals – Xénia ŠUCHOVÁ, *Prílohy I. – Obyvateľstvo*, in: Milan Zemko – Valerián Bystrický (eds.), *Slovensko v Československu (1918–1939)*, Bratislava 2004, p. 494. At that time, 2,013,792 members of the Czechoslovak nation lived in Slovakia, of which 1,942,059 declared themselves Slovaks and 71,733 Czechs – Andrej TÓTH – Lukáš NOVOTNÝ – Michal STEHLÍK, *Národnostní menšiny v Československu 1918–1938. Od státu národního ke státu národnostnímu?*, Praha 2012, p. 23.

156 The latest comprehensive elaboration of the issue of Czechoslovakism is provided in a collective work Adam HUDEK – Michal KOPEČEK – Jan MERVART (eds.), *Czechoslovakism*, Abingdon – New York 2022.

157 Róbert LETZ – Mária TONKOVÁ – Anna BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií a stredných škôl*, Bratislava 2021, p. 287.

158 Jan KUKLÍK – Jan KUKLÍK, *Dějepis 4 pro gymnázia a střední školy*, Praha 2005, p. 216.

159 Milan S. ĐURICA, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, Bratislava 1995, p. 287.

the independent Slovak Republic, became a handbook for teaching history. Its *Eudácka*¹⁶⁰ interpretation of Slovak history suited the political discourse of the time. This book can illustrate how history education in Slovakia has become more balanced as compared to the mentioned period. However, at the same time, it can explain why numerous Slovak teachers are prone to accept conspiracy theories.¹⁶¹ The state must pay increased attention to unbiased education, especially regarding the teachers, on whose shoulders the education of future generations rests.

The issues of national groups in interwar Czechoslovakia and the question of Czechoslovakia are conveyed to contemporary Slovak high school students in their current history textbook in an aptly titled subsection *The Czechoslovak Republic – Austria-Hungary in miniature?* In addition to the statistical data documenting the national composition, the textbook's authors observe the complicated attitude of Czechoslovak political leaders towards the distinctiveness of the Slovak nation. While it was respected among the more rebellious circles, only politicians promoting the "*opinion that Czechs and Slovaks are one ethnic nation*" were supposed to take part in the leadership of the new state.¹⁶² By contrast, the Czech textbook writes about the state-building concept of "*Czechoslovak unity*", according to which "*Czechs and Slovaks form one political nation*".¹⁶³ The Czech textbook also points out the need for the theory of Czechoslovakism due to the ethnic conditions within the new state. In relation to the issue of the national distinctiveness, the authors state: "*That the Slovaks are a distinctive nation was an objective fact after the first decade of Czechoslovakia's existence.*" When evaluating the impact of Czechoslovakism as an ideology on the relationship between Czechs and Slovaks, they are unambiguously critical of the attitude of Czech politicians. In their opinion, Czech politicians failed to "*recognize the problem and organize the constitutional relations with Slovakia in a reasonable form*".¹⁶⁴ The Slovak textbook also identifies Czechoslovakism as one of the reasons that torpedoed the "*harmonious coexistence of different peoples, nationalities and confessions*" based on the assumptions created by the democratic system of the first Czechoslovak Republic.¹⁶⁵ In spite of agreeing on the criticism of the ideology of Czechoslovakism, its different interpretation – ethnic versus political nation – in current Slovak and Czech textbooks points to persistent differences in the perception of the issue by Czech and Slovak society as well as the expert

160 *Eudácka* (adj.) – supporting the ideology of the pre-war Hlinka's Slovak People's Party.

161 According to a survey of June 2019, more than half of Slovak teachers would recommend their students disinformation websites – cf. *Učitelia považujú Hlavné správy a Zem a vek za dôveryhodné médiá, odporučili by ich žiakom*. Denník N 3. 9. 2019, <https://dennikn.sk/1571894/ucitelia-povazuju-hlavne-spravy-a-zem-a-vek-za-doveryhodne-media-odporucili-by-ich-ziakom/>.

162 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, pp. 80–84.

163 J. KUKLÍK – J. KUKLÍK, *Dějepis 4 pro gymnázia*, p. 14.

164 *Ibidem*, p. 21.

165 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, p. 84.

community, still biased on postulates originating from the period of the first Czechoslovak Republic.¹⁶⁶

In relation to the national emancipation of Slovaks, interwar Czechoslovakia played an ambivalent role. On the one hand, the construction of Czechoslovakism denied the existence of Slovaks as an independent nation; on the other hand, the Czechoslovak state created the conditions for successful national emancipation. This fact is also reflected by the authors of the Slovak textbook, who assess that “*the Czechoslovak Republic created better conditions for development of Slovaks*” which “*strengthened their Slovak national consciousness.*”¹⁶⁷

This process was significantly enhanced by the newly built education system¹⁶⁸ which produced a new educated stratum of Slovak society. This contribution of the Czechoslovak Republic to Slovak society is also pointed out by the Slovak textbook, which informs students both about the establishment of a new school system, including higher education, and about successes in the fight against illiteracy.¹⁶⁹ Czech authors also note the positive results of the new state in the field of education, while not neglecting the important role of the Czech element: “*And so it was the Czechoslovak Republic and the Czechs who raised Slovak education system and Slovak erudition to a relatively high level.*”¹⁷⁰

The Slovak youth, who thanks to Czechoslovak education system and the democratization of the Czechoslovak state gained access to the most recent scientific knowledge, critically perceived the absence of recognition of Slovak national individuality and political self-governance. After completing their education, numerous exponents of the young Slovak intelligentsia became involved in movements striving for wider powers and greater independence of Slovak authorities, whether it was political autonomy promoted by the autonomist movement headed by the Slovak People’s Party of Andrej Hlinka, referring to the Pittsburgh Agreement, or the ambition of administrative self-government, which the leader of the Slovak wing of the strongest government party – the agrarians – Milan Hodža was trying to push through.

166 For a better understanding of the different perceptions of the ideology of Czechoslovakism and a comprehensive assessment of Czech-Slovak relations, see the monograph Jan RYCHLÍK, *Češi a Slováci ve 20. století. Spolupráce a konflikty 1914–1992*, Praha 2015.

167 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, Bratislava, p. 83.

168 For school issues in the monitored period, see the works of Ľubica Kázmerová. Eg. Ľubica KÁZMEROVÁ, *Vzdelávanie budúcich učiteľov na Slovensku v prvých rokoch existencie Československa*, in: Matej Hanula et al., *Dlhá cesta od monarchie k republike. Zmeny režimov, myslenia a životného štýlu na Slovensku a v strednej Európe od polovice 19. do polovice 20. storočia*. Jubileum Dušana Kováča, Bratislava 2021, pp. 193–204; Ľubica KÁZMEROVÁ et al., *Výchova a vzdelávanie v siločiarač času*, Bratislava 2020; eadem, *Príbeh učiteľa. Jozef Sivák v školských službách 1918–1944*, Bratislava 2019; eadem et al., *Premeny osvety a vybraných školských výchovno-vzdelávacích prostriedkov na Slovensku (1918–1939)*, Bratislava 2016.

169 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, pp. 98–99.

170 J. KUKLÍK – J. KUKLÍK, *Dějepis 4 pro gymnázia*, p. 21.

Česko-Slovenská Dohoda,
uzavřená v Pittsburchu, Pa. dňa 30. mája, 1918.

"Predstavitelia slovenských a českých organizácií vo
Spoj. Štátoch,
**Slovenskej Ligy, Českého Národného Sdružení
a Svätu Českých Katolíkov**
porokovali za prítomnosti predsedu Česko-Sloven-
skej Nár. Rady, prof. Masaryka, o česko-slovenskej otázke a o našich
posvädných programových prejavoch a usniesli sa nasledovne:
"Schvaľujeme politický program usilujúci sa o Spojenie
Čechov a Slovákov v samostatnom štáte z Českých Zemi a Slovenska.
"Slovensko bude mať svoju vlastnú administratívu, svoj
snem a svoje súdy.
"Slovenčina bude úradným jazykom v škole, v úrade a vo
verejnom živote vôbec.
"Česko-slovenský štát bude republikou, jeho Konštitúcia
bude demokratická.
"Organizácia spolupráce Čechov a Slovákov vo Spoj.
Štátoch bude podľa potreby a meniacej sa situácie, pri spoločnom
dorozumení, prehlbená a upravená.
"Podrobné ustanovenia o zariadení česko-slovenského
štátu ponechávajú sa osvobodným Čechom a Slovákom a ich
právoplatným predstaviteľom."

Albert Mamates

Konštit. Jan Janišek ml.
Milan Jelling Jan Janišek ml.
Edm. Mikš
Dimitrijaev
Jozef Kuciak
Karel Kralovic

Malis Gyrdik
Petr Kucak
Michal Lovak
Res. Josef Mungas
Rev. Jan Nuland
Josef Sedláček
Josef Šavel z Sečky

T. G. Masarik
Karel Prager
Fr. P. V. J. Stanek
D. Fisher
Bl. J. J. J. J.
W. J. J. J.
Jos. Martinek

Dobal
Glamal
B. J. J. J.
W. J. J. J.
W. J. J. J.
W. J. J. J.

Fig. 11: The Pittsburgh Agreement of May 1918, which was supposed to guarantee Slovakia self-government in Czechoslovakia. Pravda, 29. 5. 2018.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ <https://zurnal.pravda.sk/neznama-historia/clanok/471249-pittsburgh-maj-1918-nenaplнена-dohoda/>.

The economic crisis at the turn of the twenties and thirties became a powerful impetus for more intense involvement of autonomist youth. Due to their own existential problems, they were impelled to more radical steps. They intended to present their disapproval publicly and en masse, in order to reach the largest possible circle of interested parties and encourage them to actively oppose the current arrangement of the state. The “*autonomist and nationalist forces hostile to the democratic order*” tried to use the feeling of disappointment with the current situation among the young generation for their “*nationalist-populist agitation*.”¹⁷² In contrast to the Czech point of view, Slovak authors rather accentuate the economic moment when they emphasize the discrimination against Slovak industry, which “*instead of investments was severely restricted and partly even liquidated, being damaged by tariff and tax policies*.”¹⁷³ Increased interest in national issues surfaced in Slovakia in the beginning of the thirties in the dispute over new rules of Slovak spelling.¹⁷⁴ A significant part of the Slovak cultural community opposed the new language usage which sought to bring Slovak language closer to Czech by erasing the biggest differences.

The defence of the independence of the Slovak language in connection with growing nationalism contributed to the fact that the initially linguistic dispute gradually developed into a political one. Both the Catholic Ľudáks¹⁷⁵ as well as the Evangelic *Nationalists* joined the battle against the new rules, where representatives of the young Slovak intelligentsia played an important role. In May 1932, the cooperation of the leadership of the People’s Party – Ľudáks and the National Party – *Nationalists* resulted in the election of new members of the Executive Committee of Matica Slovenská, the leading national and cultural Slovak institution. The elections brought the victory of the opponents of the new rules, which was enthusiastically welcomed not only by Ľudáks and *Nationalists*, but also by their young generation.

The Slovak textbook evaluates the events in Matica Slovenská simply as an exchange of generations, which contributed to the revival of the movement around Matica.¹⁷⁶ The Czech textbook does not reflect events in Matica. By contrast, Ďurica describes the changes in the leadership of Matica Slovenská as “*a break-out from Czechoslovakization tendencies*.”¹⁷⁷

The initial idea of modernization of the Slovak language turned from the cultural sphere to the political sphere. The conflict drew attention to the

172 J. KUKLÍK – J. KUKLÍK, *Dějepis 4 pro gymnázia*, p. 38.

173 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, p. 101.

174 See more about the issue in Peter ZMÁTLO, *Katolíci a evanjelici na Slovensku (1929–1932)*, Ružomberok 2011, pp. 160–174, 231–249. Also in Róbert ARPÁŠ, *Z učiteľa jazykov k tvorcovi Pravidiel slovenského jazyka. Kariéra Henricha Barteka v medzivojnovom Československu*, in: L. Kázmerová et al., *Výchova a vzdelávanie*, pp. 29–40.

175 Ľudáci (n.) – members or supporters of the pre-war Slovak People’s Party.

176 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, p. 95.

177 M. S. ĎURICA, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, p. 141.

Slovak issue not only from experienced political matadors, but also from the younger, upcoming Slovak generation. It was not only the autonomists' camp any more who condemned the unwillingness of the Czech side to respect Slovak demands and pushing the Czech ideas, presenting them as a reinforcement of national unity. The idea of revising Slovakia's position in the republic captured the attention of the young Slovak generation and sparked an attempt to define a common position on the Slovak matter. The autonomist camp did not take the lead in organizing the joint performance of the young representatives across the political spectrum, which even increased the chances for its action. The thing is that the autonomists' proposals had been programmatically ignored by the coalition parties, which made it impossible to find a mutually acceptable way out of the problem by means of direct dialogue. The officially nonpartisan editorial crew of the *Politika* magazine became a sort of mediator between the two political camps, who in June 1932 organized the Congress of the Young Slovak Generation in Trenčianske Teplice. The participants at the event, including the youth of the entire Slovak spectrum, by a majority rejected the centralist policy enforced by the Czechoslovak government. Autonomists used it as a showcase to present their own views and interpreted the conclusions of the Congress as a victory for their ideas.¹⁷⁸ It was also a result of their agility that the Congress adopted a resolution on the need to respect Slovak interests, reject centralism and expand Slovak self-government: "*Centralism in Slovakia was unanimously condemned. The entire young Slovak generation is autonomist; [its] opinions differ only in degree. Some consider federalism necessary, while others are temporarily satisfied with complete regionalism, secured by law.*"¹⁷⁹

The assessment of the conclusions of the Congress of the Young Slovak Generation on the pages of the Slovak history textbook is relatively brief, covered by three sentences. The authors factually state the rejection of centralism and the inconsistency in the attitude of Slovak youth towards the form of Slovak self-government.¹⁸⁰ In contrast to the textbook, Ďurica's publication adopts the contemporary interpretation of the event (presented by the Hlinka's Slovak People's Party – Ľudáks). By erasing the differences between the terms *autonomy* and *federation*, Ľudáks managed to hide the true scope of their political requirements on the one hand, while on the other hand they could claim that the majority of Slovaks supported their policy. Precisely in this spirit Ďurica writes about the demand for a "*federal organization of the common state*", which he relativized by stating that the positions of "*individual*

178 For details on the event, see Róbert ARPÁŠ, *Zjazd mladej slovenskej generácie*, in: Matej Hanula – Michal Kšíňan (eds.), *Slovensko a Európa medzi demokraciou a totalitou. Kapitoly z dejín 20. storočia k jubileu Bohumily Ferenčuhovej*, Bratislava 2017, pp. 121–128.

179 *Dokončenie referátu o sjazde mladej slovenskej generácie. Celá mladá slovenská generácia je autonomistická; názory sa líšia len čo do stupňa*, *Slovák* 14 (147), 1932, p. 3.

180 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, p. 95.

groups only differed on the issue of the extent of autonomy.”¹⁸¹

In October 1932, the process of rapprochement between Ludáks and Nationalists, started on the issue of Matica Slovenská, celebrated success in the form of official acknowledgement of the cooperation declared in the so-called Zvolen Manifesto. The chairmen of both parties – Andrej Hlinka and Martin Rázus repeatedly rejected the idea of a unified “Czechoslovak nation”, they demanded national recognition of the Slovaks and the provision of autonomy according to the principles of the Pittsburgh Agreement.¹⁸² Although we can find an excerpt from the Zvolen Manifesto in the Slovak history textbook,¹⁸³ Slovak publications only mention the event marginally.¹⁸⁴ Therefore, it is not surprising that the Czech textbook does not mention it at all.

The radicalism of the People’s Party was fully manifested in the summer of 1933 in Nitra. The clash between the official conception of the Czechoslovak state and the efforts of the autonomists to attain recognition of the Slovak national identity occurred at an event which was supposed to present the cultural antiquity of Slovakia. The celebrations of the 1100th anniversary of the foundation of the first Christian church on Czechoslovak territory, which was originally to be of religious character, grew into a broadly conceived religious-political event under the patronage of the central government.¹⁸⁵ The cabinet’s interest in the presentation of the Pribina celebrations as a “whole nation” oriented event was manifested in an attempt to merge them with the Cyrilo-Methodian tradition and thus emphasize Czechoslovak mutuality. And this was also the spirit in which most of the activities associated with the celebrations were carried out.

The autonomists also tried to use the legacy of Pribina’s heritage for propaganda in their own way. In their interpretation, they focused on emphasizing the demand of Slovak self-government, which they tried to support by pointing to its roots reaching deep into history. They concentrated their efforts on presenting their own political ideas on one specific day – 13 August 1933. On that day, a public demonstration was planned at the old Nitra airport. The public space was supposed to enable the People’s Party – Ludáks – to

181 M. S. ĎURICA, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, p. 142; R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, p. 95.

182 *Dokumenty slovenskej národnej identity a štátnosti II.*, Bratislava 1998, pp. 150–152.

183 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, pp. 95, 97. Compare M. S. ĎURICA, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, p. 142.

184 P. ZMÁTLO, *Katolíci a evanjelici na Slovensku*, pp. 263–282.

185 For more details on the course of Pribina’s celebrations, see Róbert ARPÁŠ, *Pribinove slávnosti ako pripomienka cirkevno-národnej veľkomoravskej tradície*, *Historický časopis* 65 (4), 2017, pp. 655–674. See also Peter ZMÁTLO, *Pribinove slávnosti v Nitre v auguste 1933. Skúška československého režimu a štátnosti*, *Historica Olomucensia* 44, 2013, pp. 133–158; Alena BARTLOVÁ, *Využitie tradícií a jubilejných osláv v propagačnej politike HSLS v prvej polovici 30. rokov 20. storočia*, *Človek a spoločnosť* 7 (3), 2004, pp. 61–63 (<https://individualandsociety.org/journal/2004/3>); Anna MAGDOLENOVÁ, *Pribinove slávnosti v Nitre roku 1933*, in: Richard Marsina (ed.), *Nitra v slovenských dejinách*, Vrútky 2002, pp. 356–368; Ida ZUBÁCKA, *Nitra za prvej Československej republiky*, Nitra 1997, pp. 51–56.

gather as many committed followers of their own idea as possible and thus demonstrate support for their political programme.

The government offered the chairman of the HSLS (Hlinka's Slovak People's Party) the opportunity to speak only at an event in closed spaces with the participation of invited guests, which would not have the effect desired by Ľudáks. The supporters of the People's Party therefore intervened in the scenario of the public demonstration and, under the direction of the vice-chairman of the HSLS, brought Hlinka up to the podium.¹⁸⁶ And before the planned speakers got a chance to speak, Hlinka read the so-called *Nitra Resolution*,¹⁸⁷ in which he referred to the antiquity of the Slovak nation and demanded the right to self-government, as it had been promised in the Pittsburgh Agreement.¹⁸⁸

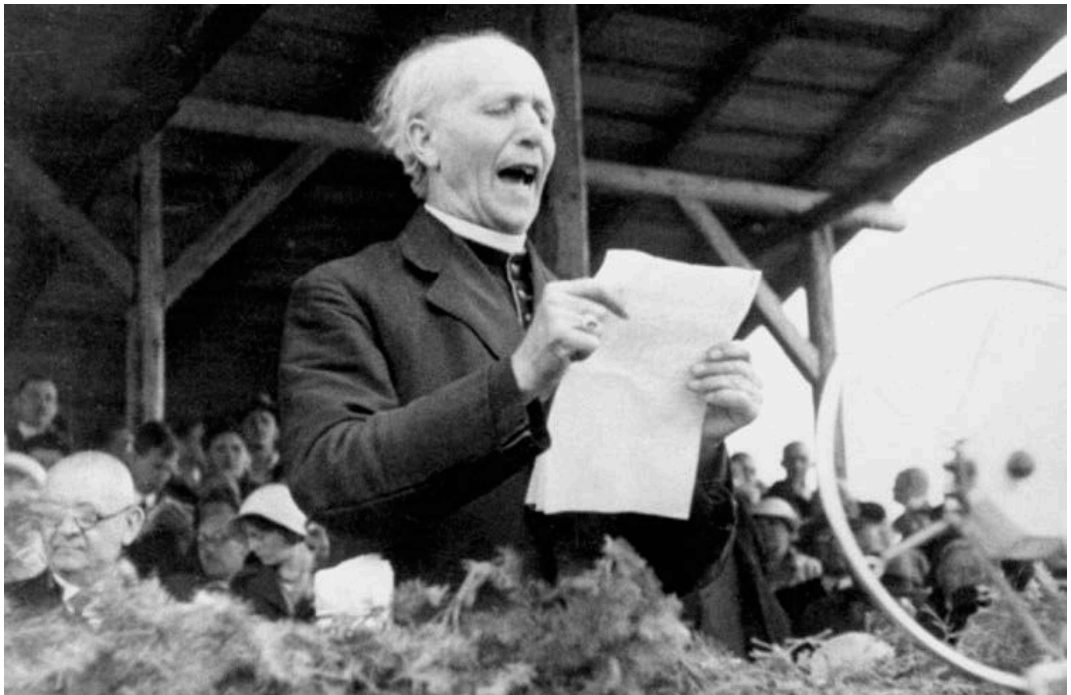


Fig. 12: Andrej Hlinka reads the text of the Nitra Resolution at a demonstration in August 1933 in Nitra. *Denník Postoj*, 20. 7. 2018.¹⁸⁹

186 Prague, National Archives of the Czech Republic, PMV – AMV 225, 1151, 225 – 1151 – 2.

187 "We, the Slovak nation, proud of our 1,100-year-old national and Christian past, freed again today by God's Providence and integrated into the Czechoslovak Republic, certify that we want to live in this republic and consider this state as our own, we want to find our national well-being here. However, when we consider the Czechoslovak Republic as the only possible state entity for us, we declare that in this state we want to see our future not only as a self-governing nation and not only as a nation with equal rights with the Czech nation, but also as an independent, autonomous nation that wants to manage its own things and wants to control its own destiny!" – *Nitrianska rezolúcia*, *Slovák* 15 (182), 1933, p. 1.

188 *Ibidem*.

189 <https://www.postoj.sk/34979/andrej-hlinka-nechal-v-slovenskych-dejinach-hlboku-stopu>.

All three publications dedicate some space to the so-called Nitra Events. The Czech textbook does not deal with Pribina's celebrations in more detail, nor does it mention the official name of the event. In its evaluation, there is only a brief but apt note that the HSLŠ used "*the celebration of the 1,100th anniversary of the founding of the first Christian church in Nitra by Prince Pribina for large-scale demonstrations that assumed a militantly nationalist and offensively anti-Czech and anti-government character.*"¹⁹⁰ By contrast, the Slovak textbook accentuates the government's direction of events, while the actions of the autonomists were only a reaction to the impossibility of the speeches of their leaders: "*It deliberately omitted Andrej Hlinka and Martin Rázus from the programme of celebrations as speakers. Disgruntled demonstrators protested and finally made the organizers allow both Slovak personalities to speak.*"¹⁹¹ However, the authors do not mention that this was a pre-prepared action by the HSLŠ, nor do they assess the content of the speeches not only of autonomists but also of representatives of Czech extremist parties. The largest space devoted to Pribina's celebrations is found in Ďurica's book, which is, as expected, the most radical in their evaluation. Here the HSLŠ is presented in the role of a victim of government intrigues, from which it despite all emerged victorious: "*This is how the Czechoslovak government compromised itself in front of the Slovak nation and in front of many invited foreign guests...*" At the same time, however, he is the only one to mention the consequences that the HSLŠ faced from the authorities: "*As a reprisal, the government then prosecuted the organizers and participants of this public demonstration with punishments.*"¹⁹² He thus indirectly admits that it was a pre-prepared action on the part of the HSLŠ. Paradoxically, the Czech textbook evaluates the events most objectively, although it devotes the least amount of space to them. The authors of the Slovak textbook completely ignore the impact of the autonomists' activities on the internal political stability of the Czechoslovak state. Despite their assessment being milder when compared to Ďurica's publication, it still does not give students an unbiased view of the event in question.

The policies of the People's Party were fundamentally influenced by the convention held in Piešťany in September 1936. Although one part of the party leadership led by its vice-chairman Jozef Tiso intended to reach a consensus with the government, the result was the opposite. The radical youth, through their leader Karol Sidor, convinced the chairman Andrej Hlinka to have their version of the resolution approved by the convention. In contrast to the accommodating version prepared by the party's leadership, the document prepared by the young radicals, referring to the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Agreements, as well as to Pribina's Celebrations in Nitra,

190 J. KUKLÍK – J. KUKLÍK, *Dějepis 4 pro gymnázia*, p. 51.

191 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, pp. 95–96.

192 M. S. ĎURICA, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, p. 143.

demanded *“the autonomy of the Slovak country in the Czecho-Slovak Republic on a federative basis.”*¹⁹³ In addition to the unambiguous radicalization of the politics of People’s Party, the convention also marked a fundamental turning point in the HSLŠ view of the democratic political establishment. The incapability of the Czechoslovak Republic to solve the so-called Slovak question directed the Ľudáks towards non-democratic regimes and a preference for an authoritarian political system.

Even though the resolutions adopted by the Piešťany Convention were to fundamentally affect the internal political stability of the state in the future and their impact was more significant than in the case of Pribina’s celebrations, the convention is not reflected in the Czech textbook. The authors only briefly state that in the mid-1930s the demands of the HSLŠ *“radicalized and escalated”*.¹⁹⁴ However, it is a paradox that even the Slovak textbook does not mention the Piešťany Convention. There is just a general note about the period of the mid-1930s, when *“the HSLŠ hardened its oppositional course and oriented itself more authoritatively. To accomplish its intentions, it also took the advantage of the international situation, especially the support of Poland and the stabilization of the Nazi regime in Germany.”*¹⁹⁵ Unsurprisingly, much more space is devoted to the Piešťany Convention in Ďurica’s publication. In addition to stating the party’s transition into *“hard opposition”* and orientation towards the policy of *“good relations with the closest neighbours, in particular Poland and Austria”*, he mainly focused on criticism of government policy. In his interpretation, *“the overwhelming majority of Slovak youth, regardless of their political affiliation, had already declared their support to the programme of the Slovak autonomists, while the Prague government and especially the president of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Beneš, blindly clung to the ideology of Czechoslovakism, overcome and rejected by the majority of Slovaks, which did not accept the existence of the Slovak nation.”*¹⁹⁶ This assessment corresponds to the Ľudáks’ propaganda of the time, which automatically classified any criticism of the ideology of Czechoslovakism as support for their policy, despite the fact that the Congress of Slovak Youth in Trenčianske Teplice had already recognized the differences in opinions on the scope and form of Slovak self-government. Although neither of the current Slovak or Czech textbooks explicitly mention the Piešťany Convention, their interpretation of the political situation of the time in relation to the HSLŠ may be considered objective.

The radicalization of autonomists in order to achieve their programme’s goal was manifested during the 20th anniversary of the creation of Czechoslovakia. The chairman of the HSLŠ set the slogan for the year 1938 *“In the New*

193 Miroslav FABRICIUS – Ladislav SUŠKO (eds.), *Jozef Tiso – Prejav y a články I. (1913–1938)*, Bratislava 2002, p. 504.

194 J. KUKLÍK – J. KUKLÍK, *Dějepis 4 pro gymnázia*, p. 52.

195 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, p. 96.

196 M. S. ĎURICA, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, p. 145.

Year ready to attack”,¹⁹⁷ while he did not hesitate to take advantage of the difficult international position in which Czechoslovakia found itself during 1938. The Munich Conference, which weakened Czechoslovakia in a fundamental way, was considered by the Ludáks to be a favourable opportunity. The HSLŠ calculated that the central government would be receptive to the Ludáks’ demands in order to keep the domestic political situation stabilized. Therefore, on 5-6 October 1938, the Ludáks convened a meeting of the party’s chairmanship and the Executive Committee in Žilina, which was to decide not only the future of Slovakia but also of the whole of Czechoslovakia. There were justified fears that Ludáks might not be satisfied with just declaring autonomy but could declare complete separation. Therefore, the leadership of the republic endeavoured to accept all the Ludáks’ demands, if this would ensure the continued existence of the Czechoslovak state.¹⁹⁸

The future of the Czechoslovak Republic was thus fully dependent on the decision of the People’s Party’s leaders, who had a debate in a stormy atmosphere in the Žilina’s *Catholic House*. Despite repeating proclamations about autonomy as the main goal of HSLŠ’s political efforts, not everyone identified with it. At that time, the representatives of the radical wing were already promoting the idea of their country’s own statehood, which was supposed to be the logical crowning of the Slovak nation’s right to self-determination. They thus fulfilled the warning of the leader of the Slovak social democracy, Ivan Dérer, according to whom “*the ideology of a special Slovak nation and the negation of Czechoslovak unity will lead to the destruction of the Slovak national idea*”.¹⁹⁹ and will lead to the disintegration of Czechoslovakia.²⁰⁰ Even though the radicals did not carry through an immediate declaration of Slovakia’s state independence and the party leadership decided for autonomy on the basis of the proposal presented in June 1938,²⁰¹ their initiative led to the adoption of a supplementary proposal

197 Jörg K. HOENSCH, *Die Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik. Hlinkas Slowakische Volkspartei zwischen Autonomie und Separation 1938/1939*, Köln – Graz 1965, p. 38.

198 Prague, Archive of the Institute of T. G. Masaryk, 38, 492/2. Ján PAULÍNÝ-TÓTH, *Ako došlo k 14. marcu 1939 II*, in: Valerián Bystrický – Róbert Letz – Ondrej Podolec (eds.), *Vznik Slovenského štátu. 14. marec 1939. Spomienky aktérov historických udalostí. 2. diel*, Bratislava 2008, p. 72.

199 Ivan DÉRER, *Československá otázka*, Praha 1935, p. 91.

200 Martin Vašš tried to analyse “*the background of Dérer’s perception of the Czechoslovak question*”, while considering two options – faith and pragmatism. He found several arguments for both levels. Even on the basis of a detailed analysis, however, he did not dare give a clear answer. In his opinion, Dérer’s “*perception of the Slovak question in the interwar period oscillated between faith in Czechoslovak national unity and political pragmatism*” – Martin VAŠŠ, *Déerova percepcia slovenskej otázky v medzivojnovom období*, in: Miroslav Pekník et al., *Dr. Ivan Dérer politik, právnik a publicista*, Bratislava 2010, pp. 331–351.

201 See the text of the proposal in *Za revíziu ústavnej listiny. Návrh Andreja Hlinku, Karola Sidora, dr. Martina Sokola, dr. Jozefa Tisu a spol. na vydanie ústavného zákona o autonómii Slovenska*, Slovák 20 (129), 1938, p. 2.

by which the party leadership undertook to achieve a “*sovereign Slovak state*” within one to three years.²⁰²

The Czech textbook covers in detail the Žilina events and their impact on the political situation. In addition to the declaration of autonomy and the appointment of an autonomous government headed by Jozef Tiso, the authors also inform the students about the publication of the Manifesto of the Slovak Nation, in which the HSLŠ “*expressed its nationalist and totalitarian political line.*” The textbook also points to the increasing influence of supporters of separatism. It also informs students about the changes in the state politics which followed as a result of the approval of Slovak autonomy on 22 November 1938. Besides the change of the country’s name to Česko-Slovensko (Czecho-Slovakia), the authors also point to the totalitarian practices applied during the elections to the Assembly (Diet) of the Slovak Republic in December 1938.²⁰³ An even more detailed account can be found in the Slovak textbook. Although the authors do not mention the Manifesto of the Slovak Nation, they generally state that in Czecho-Slovakia “*the political system has changed from democracy to an authoritarian state.*” However, the text mentions both the creation of the paramilitary Hlinka’s Guard, as well as the incidents of violence against political opponents, Jewish people, as well as the expulsion of the Czech population from Slovakia. Nevertheless, in their evaluation the elections to the Slovak Assembly the authors do not reflect the pressure that was exerted on the voters.²⁰⁴ Ďurica reports only briefly on the events in Žilina,²⁰⁵ but when evaluating the course of the elections to the Slovak Assembly, he slipped into a clear defence of the People’s Party, denying their nondemocratic nature by stating that “*they were held in accordance with valid Czecho-Slovak laws.*” His interpretation of the results is also fully in line with the intentions of populist propaganda: “*The result of the elections corresponded to the orientation of the overwhelming majority of Slovak voters.*” At the same time does not attribute the supportive attitude of the Jewish population to fears of anti-Jewish violence, but describes it as “*a manifestation of loyalty to the national independence of the Slovak nation.*”²⁰⁶

202 J. K. HOENSCH, *Die Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, p. 108.

203 J. KUKLÍK – J. KUKLÍK, *Dějepis 4 pro gymnázia*, pp. 75–76.

204 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dějepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, p. 141.

205 M. S. ĎURICA, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, p. 150.

206 *Ibidem*, p. 154.



Fig. 13: Declaration of Slovak autonomy in October 1938 in Žilina. Černová, Spomienka na 82. výročie vzniku autonómie Slovenska.²⁰⁷

Even though in Žilina the Ľudáks had not yet decided on the immediate separation, which the government in Prague had been afraid of, by accepting the proposal of the young Ľudáks' radicals to prepare for state independence, they were opening the way to it. The programme statement of the Slovak Government from February 1939 was also in this spirit. In it, Prime Minister Tiso did not mention Czecho-Slovakia even once. On the contrary, he emphasized that *"on the ground of our parliament, we are constructing our new state, our Slovak State."*²⁰⁸ In connection with the activities of the radical wing's representatives, the fears of the Czech leaders that the Ľudáks were only waiting for a suitable opportunity to secede from Czecho-Slovakia were being confirmed. That's why general Alois Eliáš initiated a secret meeting of some Czech politicians in Unhošť, at which a plan for a military intervention in Slovakia was adopted.²⁰⁹

The contacts of Slovak politicians with German Reich representatives continued to escalate – on 12 February, Hitler himself received Vojtech Tuka in Berlin, who, thanks to Slovak autonomy, was not under police supervision and again

²⁰⁷ <https://www.cernova.sk/aktualne/?a=spomienka-na-82-vyrocie-vzniku-autonomie-slovenska&id=2981>.

²⁰⁸ Pavol ČARNOGURSKÝ, *14. marec 1939*, Bratislava 1992, p. 19.

²⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 123–126.

found himself in high politics. The Fuhrer made the urgency of declaring Slovak independence clear to him.²¹⁰ Under the impression of an acute threat, the Czecho-Slovak government decided to implement Eliáš's plan. In the night hours between 9 and 10 March 1939, the army and the gendarmerie took over strategic points, the leaders of the HSLŠ and Hlinka's Guard were interned, and the president dismissed Tiso from the post of chairman of the autonomous government. However, instead of the intended strengthening of pro-Czecho-Slovak positions, this induced an increase in anti-Czech sentiments, which German Reich circles tried to use to their own benefit.

When the newly appointed Slovak Prime Minister Sidor refused the request of German emissaries for an immediate declaration of Slovak independence,²¹¹ the Germans turned their attention to the dismissed Tiso. After Hitler's official invitation, mediated by the German consul E. von Druffel, Tiso set off for Berlin.²¹² On the morning of 14 March he informed the members of the Slovak Assembly about the details of his conversation with Hitler, without taking his own position. He cited Fuhrer's demand that the Slovaks "blitzschnell" prove that they want to live an independent life with all the consequences, otherwise he will leave them at the mercy of the Hungarians. After Tiso's report and a short break, a few minutes after 12 o'clock, the deputies voted by a stand-up vote for the creation of an independent state.²¹³

The Slovak textbook analyses in detail the events leading to the breakup of Czecho-Slovakia and the declaration of the Slovak State. The authors describe Tuka's visit to Hitler, they dedicate quite extensive study to Homola's so-called coup (military intervention from 9-10 March) and its impact on Slovak politics. They express an unequivocal assessment of Tiso's visit to Hitler, as well as the vote of the Slovak Assembly on 14 March, which they describe as "*the only realistic way out of a long-term political crisis and uncertain situation.*"²¹⁴ The authors of the Czech textbook also devoted a larger scope to these events. Although more concise than their Slovak colleagues, they clearly inform students about the unsuccessful attempt of the central government to "*prevent the disintegration of the state*" and "*establish a military regime in Slovakia*". When informing about the creation of a new autonomous government, the name of its chairman is not mentioned, and the authors continuously move on to evaluating Tiso's visit to Hitler which led to the decision of the Slovak Assembly on 14 March. The method of voting is subject to criticism: "*Deputies had to vote in a really strange way from the point of view of*

210 Karol SIDOR, *Takto vznikol Slovenský štát*, Bratislava 1991, p. 128.

211 Ibidem, p.110.

212 Valerián BYSTRICKÝ, *Jozef Tiso a 14. marec 1939*, in: Valerián Bystrický – Štefan Fano (eds.), *Pokus o politický a osobný profil Jozefa Tisu*, Bratislava 1992, p. 132.

213 Valerián BYSTRICKÝ, *Zasadnutie Slovenského snemu 14. marca 1939*, *Historický časopis* 47 (1), 1999, pp. 108–112.

214 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, pp. 144–145.

democratic customs: they stood up from their seats individually so that those who would perhaps not want to vote for breaking the integrity of Czecho-Slovakia could be clearly seen..."²¹⁵ It is not surprising that it is Ďurica's publication which devotes the most space to the events that led to the disintegration of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. In accordance with the interpretation of Ludáks, the March military intervention in Slovakia prepared by the government is described as a "*secret attack against Slovakia's autonomy*".²¹⁶ The author interprets the efforts of radicals to obtain German support as a consequence of the worsening Czecho-Slovak relations,²¹⁷ originating precisely in Prague's concerns about the foreign activities of Slovak ministers. It also describes in detail the government's military intervention in Slovakia, its political consequences, German attempts to obtain a declaration of independence from new Prime Minister Sidor, who, however, refused to surrender to the German pressure.²¹⁸ It also describes in detail Tiso's visit to Berlin, as well as the Slovak Assembly's vote on state independence, which "*was attended by 57 deputies out of a total of 63.*" All of them "*by rising from their seats voted for the creation of an independent Slovak State*", which, according to Ďurica, "*opened a new era of Slovak history.*"²¹⁹

By comparing the three analysed texts, the assumption about the tendentious interpretation of history in Ďurica's book was confirmed. Compared to it, the new Slovak textbook is more objective and reflects more critical views on the disputable aspects of the Czecho-Slovak relationship. Despite that, there were a few statements that tried to apologize or explain the actions of the Slovak side in controversial moments of the relationship between Czechs and Slovaks. These shortcomings are not of a fundamental nature, and I consider the differences in quality between the Slovak and Czech textbooks in selected moments from Czecho-Slovak history to be minimal. Moreover, an experienced, well-prepared, and critically thinking teacher should be able to deal with them. And that is the role of higher education, to provide future adepts of youth education with appropriate training. I have no reservations concerning the text of the Czech textbook. The elaboration of the publication reflects the long-term erudition of its authors-historians. Naturally, they pay less attention to the history of the Slovak part of the state, which is obvious, considering who the book is intended for.

In summary, we can conclude that current textbooks from both countries both are elaborated at a very good level, while the views of the Czech and Slovak authors practically coincide in the assessment of common history. It might therefore be worth considering the idea of implementing a project of

215 J. KUKLÍK – J. KUKLÍK, *Dějepis 4 pro gymnázia*, p. 77.

216 M. S. ĎURICA, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, p. 156.

217 Ibidem, pp. 157–158.

218 Ibidem, pp. 159–160.

219 Ibidem, p. 161.

a joint Czecho-Slovak textbook which would provide students of both parts of the former Czecho-Slovak state with a comprehensive view of its history.

Words: 6 457
Characters: 35 699

4 The Issues of the Slovak-Hungarian Relations in the Educational Process in Selected Slovak and Czech Textbooks

Martin Hetényi – Beáta Pintérová

The perception of Slovaks and Hungarians has been considerably influenced by prejudice, or stereotypes, which has been significantly endorsed by the way of teaching history at schools. Since the textbook is the most important didactic tool in the educational process, it participates greatly in creating of the image of the mutual relations of the two nations. Since the establishment of the Slovak Republic the textbooks and textbook policy have gone through many changes in terms of content, extent, as well as the presentation form of information. That is not only true for elementary and secondary schools but for universities as well. The current textbook for the 1st-year students of secondary schools was approved by the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic in May 2011,²²⁰ and then it was followed by the textbook for the 2nd-year students in 2012²²¹ and the textbook for the 3rd-year students was approved in 2013.²²²

The very issue of Slovak-Hungarian relations has become the subject of research by several historians, such as György Csaba Kiss, István Käfer, László Szarka, Attila Simon, Roman Holec, Rudolf Chmel, István Kollai and others. In didactic and historical reflection through history textbooks, this issue was dealt with, for example, by Július Alberty,²²³ Valéria Chromeková,²²⁴ or Miroslav Kmeť²²⁵ on the Slovak side, Mihály Lásik²²⁶ and others on the Hungarian side.

In order to expand the range of research on this issue, we decided to compare selected textbooks in Slovakia and the Czech Republic in our study.

220 Michal BADA – Anna BOCKOVÁ – Branislav KRASNOVSKÝ – Ján LUKAČKA – Mária TONKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 1. ročník gymnázií a stredných škôl*, Bratislava 2011.

221 Anna BOCKOVÁ – Ľuboš KAČÍREK – Daniela KODAJOVÁ – Mária TONKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 2. ročník gymnázií a stredných škôl*, Bratislava 2012.

222 Róbert LETZ – Mária TONKOVÁ – Anna BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií a stredných škôl*, Bratislava 2013.

223 Július ALBERTY, *Slovensko a Slováci v súčasných maďarských učebniciach dejepisu*, *Historický časopis* 1, 2004, pp. 135–148.

224 Valéria CHROMEKOVÁ, *Problematika slovenských dejín v dejepisných učebniciach Maďarska*, *Acta historica Neosoliensia* 1, 1997, pp. 28–41.

225 Miroslav KMEŤ, *Dejiny slovensko-maďarských vzťahov v didakticko-dejepisnej reflexii*, in: *Acta Academiae Paedagogicae Agriensis, Sectio Historiae*, 2009, pp. 35–48.

226 Mihály LÁSIK, *Učebnice histórie používané v slovenských dvojjazyčných gymnáziách v Maďarsku*, in: *Cesta zarúbaná? Súčasný stav a perspektívy Slovákov v Maďarsku*, Békéscsaba – Nadlak 2002, pp. 144–148.

Unlike in Slovakia, the situation regarding textbook publishing in the Czech Republic has developed more dynamically, hence the students and teachers are in a different position there with many different textbooks available for them. For the sake of comparison, we have chosen the following titles of Didaktis Publishing House.²²⁷

We will make a short stop at the topic of Slovak-Hungarian relations to analyse the issue of the historical period to which Slovak origins may be dated. There have been quite a few essays and expert articles written on the topic. The latest research show that the term Slovaks in their own language goes back to the second half of 14th century in the form Slawak (it occurs in this form in the Moravian milieu) and the term “Slowak”, “Slouak” comes from the territory of nowadays Slovakia from the 1430s and 1440s.²²⁸ However, expert literature puts beginning of the Slovak history to much earlier period, more specifically to the 7th century, which is characteristic by establishment of the first Slavonic state formation. In the case of our territory, it is activity of a merchant Samo and a union he established. The authors then continue with the history of Great Moravia, subsequently (especially after the establishment of the independent Slovak Republic in 1993) they follow up with the history of Hungarian Kingdom. Certain Slovak-Hungarian “disputes” of the 20th century have been already transferred to the early Middle Ages – the reason behind the collapse of Great Moravia is seen in the arrival of Hungarians, or more precisely a there is a theory according to which Hungarians acquired new territories in the land of Great Moravia in exchange for a white horse.²²⁹ The term “old Slovaks” and its legitimacy has also become a subject of interest.²³⁰

Textbooks for the 1st Form of Secondary Schools

A Slovak textbook that covers this part of history was written by collective of authors Michal Bada, Anna Bocková, Branislav Krasnovský, Ján Lukačka, and Mária Tonková, and is entitled History for the 1st Year of Grammar Schools and Secondary Schools.²³¹ The textbook informs of the first written reference

227 Cf. footnotes 232, 233, and 236.

228 Ján LUKAČKA, *Hľadanie názvu Slováka pokračuje*, in: Národný kalendár, Martin 2002 (2003), pp. 54–56. See also on the topic: Eduard KREKOVÍČ, *Kto sme a odkedy sme tu?*, in: Eduard Krekovič – Elena Mannová – Eva Krekovičová, *Mýty naše slovenské*, Bratislava 2005, pp. 19–24; Ján STEINHÜBEL, *Odkedy môžeme hovoriť o Slovensku a Slovákoch?*, in: *Mýty naše slovenské*, pp. 24–30.

229 Slávka OTČENÁŠOVÁ, *Ako Svätopluk svoju zem za bieleho koňa predal... Vzájomné obrazy Slovákov a Maďarov v slovenských a maďarských dejepisných učebniciach vydávaných v rokoch 1918 až 1989*, in: Forum Historiae 2, 2012, pp. 114–122.

230 László VÖRÖS, *Problém s pojmom „starí Slováci“. Otázka narábania s etnonymami v historiografii*, Historická revue 3–4, 2010, pp. 88–93.

231 M. BADA – A. BOCKOVÁ – B. KRASNOVSKÝ – J. LUKAČKA – M. TONKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 1. ročník gymnázií*, pp. 107–127.

regarding Slovaks in a thematic unit called *Mediaeval Hungarian Kingdom*, particularly at the topic of *Kingdom of One Language and Morals?*. It provides an appellation of an ethnic group of Slovaks dated back to the 14th and 15th centuries. Just as in the expert literature, in the textbook ancestors of Slovaks are also mentioned in a much earlier period. It can be found in a thematic unit *Ancestors of Slovaks in the Carpathian Basin*, which describes the arrival of Slavs and the history of Samo's tribal union, continues with the history of the Nitra Principality and Great Moravia. There are also units named *What Was the Life of Our Ancestors Like* and *Legacy of Our First State*. As it is already clear from names of the chapters, the text refers to history of Slovaks in as early as this historical period. The authors do not return to the stereotypes of the previous periods and they do not depict the relations of Great Moravians and Hungarians in a negative way. Subsequently, in the thematic unit *Mediaeval Hungarian Kingdom*, the authors focus on the annexation of the Slovak territory to the Hungarian Kingdom and analyse the events that took place during the reign of specific Hungarian kings.

The textbook for secondary schools that is used in the Czech Republic was created as a result of the co-operation of various authors – Robert Antonín, Michaela Antonín Malaníková, Jarmila Bednaříková, and others, and it was named *Earlier History for Secondary Schools*.²³² It is not essential for a Czech textbook to observe Slovak-Hungarian relations. They do not deal with the issue of dating Slovaks' or Slovakia's origins in the history either. The topic of Great Moravia, as well as arrival of Hungarians to Carpathian Basin, or the establishment of Hungarian Kingdom belongs to the last thematic unit named *Early Middle Ages*, more specifically topic number 33 called *Kievan Rus and beginnings of the Polish and Hungarian States, or Great Moravia*. The authors (already) do not see Great Moravia as an ancestor of the Přemyslid State. The explanatory text only mentions the Slavs as a single community and does not specify exactly which ethnic group colonized the territory of today's Czech Republic and Moravia. Reflecting the Hungarian history, the book briefly informs on the period of the reign of Stephen I until the reign of Coloman, who annexed Croatia and Dalmatia to Hungary. The follow-up of the history of Hungarian Kingdom comes in the textbook *Earlier History for Secondary Schools, Part Two* written by the same collective of authors.²³³ The topic of Hungarian history is also covered in a thematic unit called *The Late Middle Ages*, topic number 17 – *Rus, Poland and Hungary in the High and Late Middle Ages*. The text contains data about the Hungarian king Andrew II, subsequently the extinction of the Arpad dynasty and ascension of the Anjou dynasty. Both

232 Robert ANTONÍN – Michaela ANTONÍN MALANÍKOVÁ – Jarmila BEDNAŘÍKOVÁ et al., *Starší dějiny pro střední školy*, část první, Brno 2018.

233 Robert ANTONÍN – Michaela ANTONÍN MALANÍKOVÁ – Jiří HRBEK et al., *Starší dějiny pro střední školy*, část druhá, Brno 2018.

Anjou rulers, Charles Robert and Louis the Great are mentioned. There is also a separate “mini-paragraph” which covers the summit of three Central European rulers in Visegrad. The successor, Sigismund of Luxembourg, is described more as a monarch of the Bohemian Kingdom, yet he is briefly depicted as a Hungarian ruler, too. Next, there is information on Hungary under Ottoman threat, which was successfully handled by John Hunyadi whose son, Matthias, who ascended the Hungarian throne in 1458. He is mentioned as a Bohemian king, too. The Jagiellonian dynasty, which replaced Matthias Corvinus, ruled in Hungary and in the Czech lands simultaneously. After the death of Louis II Jagiello at the Battle of Mohacs, the power in the Hungarian Kingdom was passed to the Habsburg family.²³⁴

Textbooks for the 2nd Form of Secondary Schools

Information related the topic in question is more frequently found in Slovak textbooks for the 2nd year students of grammar schools and secondary schools, more specifically in the texts that focus on the 18th and 19th centuries. The textbook comes from the authors’ collective Anna Bocková, Ľuboš Kačírek, Daniela Kodajová, and Mária Tonková, and is entitled History for the 2nd year of Grammar Schools and Secondary Schools. The formation of the modern Slovak nation falls in the period of the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. It was in this period that a theory of the autochthonous origin of Slovaks was published in Hungary by Samuel Timon. At the end of 18th century, the Catholic intelligentsia codified a standard language of Slovaks and perceived Slovaks as a distinctive nation. The Protestant intelligentsia viewed Slovaks as a part of the broader Czechoslovak tribe. In the first part of 19th century, the most promoted concept was a nation and its mission, while establishment of a state was considered part and parcel of the process leading to the top grade of a nation’s freedom. These ideas occurred also in the Habsburg monarchy. All nations wanted to be heard – Austrian Germans, Polish, Czechs, but also Hungarians – their leaders were creating an ideology of dominance of the Hungarian ethnic group in Hungary. Apart from Hungarians and among other Slavic nations it was also Slovaks who were announcing their national programmes. They gradually created images of the Slovak national past, a standard language was analysed and codified, while the intelligentsia were trying to spread these ideas among all classes of Slovak society and win them over for their national programme. The period of establishing a modern Slovak nation culminated in the Štúr generation – various societies were founded, and on the eve of the 1848–1849 revolution Slovaks formulated their political programme. These ideas started to cause

234 Ibidem, pp. 60–62.

the first disputes between the representatives of the Slovaks and Hungarians. The textbook is divided into 6 thematic units, in which the above-mentioned topics are analysed within the thematic unit named *Europe and Slovakia Between an Old and a New Age*, more specifically in the articles *Slovaks Are Asking for Their Rights*, *The Idea of Slavic Togetherness* and *The Štúr Generation*. The most significant personalities of the Bernolák and Štúr movements' supporters and their activities are introduced in this section, too. The textbook also briefly introduces Hungarian reformation movement and its representatives – Széchenyi István (in the textbook as Štefan Séčeni) and Lajos Kossuth (in the textbook as Ľudovít Košut), and their ambitions. Among other topics, the thematic unit *Revolutionary Year 1848/49 in Europe and in Slovakia* also analyses the issue of Slovak-Hungarian relations in the articles *Revolution 1848 in Europe*, and *Slovaks and Revolution in 1848*. Finally, in the last thematic unit *Slovaks in Austria-Hungary*, the relations with Hungary, or Hungarians are described more factually than it was in the past, when Austria-Hungary was seen as a “prison of nations”. Even though the texts note that in the case of Slovaks it was just a smaller circle of the intelligentsia and the broader public gained the identity gradually, at times, based on the texts, it may still feel as if there were already as many Slovaks in this period as at present.²³⁵ Although the Czech textbook touches on the topics of nationalism, the revolution of 1848–1849, or the emergence of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it is not from the perspective of Slovak-Hungarian relations.²³⁶

Textbooks for the 3rd Form of Secondary Schools

The textbook for the 3rd-year students of grammar schools and secondary school covers the period from 1914 until the turn of the millennium. The textbook comes from the authors' collective Róbert Letz, Mária Tonková, and Anna Bocková, and is entitled *History for the 3rd year of Grammar Schools and Secondary Schools*. “The Great War”, as the war of 1914–1918 was called by many for a long time, was the first global military conflict. An unprecedentedly large number of people found themselves fighting in battles, while even the people outside battlefields suffered just as much. The changes that altered the world's maps at the very end of the war were equally shocking by their extent. Although not much of fighting took place in the land of Slovakia, its burden was clearly to be felt by all age and social groups of the inhabitants. Just like in the previous period, it could be said also at this time that a soldier of the Hungarian army – be it a Hungarian, a Slovak, a Croatian, a Serb, etc. was fighting for their king and country. The war ended in 1918, Austria-Hungary

235 A. BOCKOVÁ – L. KAČÍREK – D. KODAJOVÁ – M. TONKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 2. ročník gymnázií a stredných škôl*, pp. 36–51.

236 Sixtus BOLOM-KOTARI – Lukáš FASORA – Marian HOCHÉL et al., *Dějiny 19. století pro střední školy*, Brno 2016, pp. 17–20, 64–74, 78–86, 116–122.

signed the capitulation on 3rd November 1918. The capitals of the Slavic states started declaring secession from the Habsburg monarchy and establishment of independent states. The newly-established states and newly-drawn borders caused massive transfers of people – some of them were trying to relocate to their own national states, some of them were leaving unwillingly. A great part of population continued to live in their original homes as so-called national minorities. One of those newly-established states was also Czechoslovakia.

The textbook is divided into 10 thematic units. Its structure is the same as it was in the case of both textbooks analysed above. In a few chapters we will find some brief references regarding the Slovak-Hungarian relations – the Treaty of Trianon is to be found in the unit named *The First Global Conflict* within a topic *Versailles Rearrangement of Europe*, but also in the thematic unit *Slovakia in the Czechoslovak Republic* within a topic *The Czechoslovak Republic – Austria-Hungary on a Small Scale?* There is also a reference to the endeavour of the CSR to recognise the rights of national minorities. We learn about the political parties and the representatives of Hungarians in the first CSR.²³⁷

Another larger topic regarding the Slovak-Hungarian relations – the First Vienna Award – is covered in the thematic unit *The Slovak Republic, 1939–1945* in the topic *The Fate of the Czechoslovak Republic Is Being Decided Upon*. The text begins with unsuccessful negotiations in Komárno in October 1938, which had resulted in the Vienna Arbitration at the presence of representatives from Germany and Italy. The textbook decidedly points out the loss of 21 % of Slovak territory. An additional material specifies the towns which were annexed to Hungary, such as Senec, Galanta, Dunajská Streda, Nové Zámky, Vrábľe, Šurany, Levice, Lučenec, Filakovo, Rimavská Sobota, Rožňava, Košice, and Veľké Kapušany. It also draws attention to a problem with infrastructure due to the transport cut-off between Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus. The text that was added and did not appear in the previous publications notes that many employees of Slovak nationality, such as teachers, clerks, postmen, or railway workers who were working in the annexed territories were dismissed. Some Slovaks were even persecuted. Mária Kokošová, who was shot by Hungarian police officers at Christmas in 1938 in Šurany, became a symbol of the conditions. The section *From Historical Sources* was also supplemented by an extract from official negotiations in Komárno in October 1938. The paper is followed by questions – once the extract has been read, students are supposed to name the arguments and statements of the delegations. In the final part (*We Check and Make the Knowledge Broader*) students are asked to explain the connection between the Munich Agreement and the Vienna Arbitration, as well as its consequences. The dictionary explains the meaning of the concept of arbitration.²³⁸

237 R. LETZ – M. TONKOVÁ – A. BOCKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií*, pp. 6–33, 80–97.

238 *Ibidem*, pp. 137, 140.

The research of a Hungarian minority in Slovakia that has been done up to now has been focused mainly on studying of the beginning of a new lot, which means conditions of its life in inter-war Czechoslovakia.²³⁹ As far as the period after the Vienna Arbitration in 1938 is concerned, due to significantly decreased Hungarian minority, attention of both Slovak and Hungarian historiographies in those rather turbulent times focused only on particular partial issues such as international Slovak-Hungarian relations, or the issues of the then political representation led by the minority leader János Esterházy. It is commonly known fact that life conditions and identity of Hungarian minority in interwar Czechoslovakia were regulated by legal norms which secured civil equality, political self-realization, school education and cultural life in one's mother tongue, while the state promoted civic principles. Based on the Language Act from 29th February 1920, schools for members of national minorities were provided education in their mother tongue, and their cultural institutions were administered in the language of a particular minority just the same. The Hungarian minority made the most of these rights. Despite favourable conditions of pluralistic democracy, due to the two-face national politics, two decades of the existence of CSR gave way to unsuitable, or even discriminatory moments concerning not only the Hungarian minority. In the case of the Hungarian minority, however, discrimination was most visible mainly in the economic and social field. Apart from that, the infamous land reform in the 1920s bore also a national-political ambition of "dehungarianising" the regions of southern Slovakia. Hungarian citizens perceived personal policies in public administration, the issue of their citizenship or the ban on using their national symbols as injustice.²⁴⁰ The Munich Agreement signed on 29th September 1938, which resulted in Germany occupation of the CSR border-line territories, gave way to Polish and Hungarian restoration claims. The issue of the Slovak southern border was resolved by the arbitration of Germany and Italy. At the end of the 1930s, the First Vienna Award was one of the key events influencing the development

239 Due to later tragic fate of the minority members in the renewed post-war Czechoslovakia, a lot of historical research, especially after 1989, focused on their fate just in the period in question.

240 Attila SIMON, *Vplyv štátoprávných a politických zmien z konca roka 1938 a zo začiatku roka 1939 na postavenie maďarskej menšiny (so zvláštnym zreteľom na bratislavských Maďarov)*, in: Valerián Bystrický – Miroslav Michela – Michal Schvarc (eds.), *Rozbitie alebo rozpad?*, Bratislava 2010, p. 313. Cf. Andrej TÓTH – Michal STEHLÍK – Lukáš NOVOTNÝ, *Národnostní menšiny v Československu 1918–1938*, Praha 2012.

of Central Europe.²⁴¹ The resolution had a significant impact not only on the destabilisation of the Slovak-Hungarian relations,²⁴² but it also had an impact on formation of the political regime in Slovakia since it confirmed the role of Hungary as a society-wide enemy of Slovaks, which at the same time gave way to enforcement of totalitarian tools of the People's Party regime.²⁴³

Hungarians in Slovakia were politically represented by the United Hungarian Party (Egyesült Magyar Párt), or by its successor the Hungarian Party in Slovakia (Szlovenszkói Magyar Párt; the new name was adopted in June 1940).²⁴⁴

The Czech textbook, compiled by a collective of authors under supervision of Jan Dvořák, is divided into 5 thematic units, supplemented by self-standing Historical Reading-Book with a special historical map for each unit. The book contains a few topics that refer to the Slovak-Hungarian relations. One of them is an issue of the Trianon Treaty. It is featured in a thematic unit *World War I and New Europe in the topic Peace Treaties and a New Map of Europe*.²⁴⁵ In a separate paragraph – *The Trianon Treaty, Hungarian Revisionism, and a Small*

241 Cf. Magda ÁDÁM (ed.), *Diplomáciai iratok Magyarország külpolitikájához 1936–1945 II. A Müncheni egyezmény létrejötte és Magyarország külpolitikája 1936–1938*, Budapest 1965, pp. 881–882; Dagmar ČIERNA-LANTAYOVÁ, *Podoby česko-slovensko-maďarského vzťahu 1938–1949*, Bratislava 1992, p. 12; Jan EIBEL – František VÁVRA, *Viedenská arbitráž – dôsledok Mnichova*, Bratislava 1963, pp. 16–96; Miloš HEYDUK – Aleš CHALUPA – Robert KVAČEK, *Československý rok 1938*, Praha 1988, pp. 241–244; Eva IRMANOVÁ, *Maďarsko a versailleský mírový systém*, Ústí nad Labem 2002, pp. 197–280; István JANEK, *Cseh-szlovák-magyar diplomáciai kapcsolatok és tárgyalások 1938–1939-ben*, Irodalmi Szemle 48 (9), 2005, pp. 74–89; Jozef KIRSCHBAUM, *Postavenie Slovákov na okupovanom území a politika slovenskej vlády*, in: *Slováci v Maďarsku*, Bratislava 1994, pp. 207–217; Róbert LETZ, *Nácht dejín Uhorska a Maďarska*, Bratislava 1995, pp. 111–112; Michal POTE MRA, *Politický život Slovákov na južnom Slovensku v rokoch 1938–1945*, in: *Slováci v Maďarsku*, pp. 157–182; Lóránt TILKOV SZKY, *Južné Slovensko v rokoch 1938–1945*, Bratislava 1972, pp. 36–40; Martin VIETOR, *Dejiny okupácie južného Slovenska*, Bratislava 1968, p. 42.

242 Cf. István JANEK, *Maďarské a slovenské revizionistické snahy a bilaterálne vzťahy v rokoch 1939–1940*, in: Ján Mitáč (ed.), *Juh Slovenska po Viedenskej arbitráži 1938–1945*, Bratislava 2011, pp. 74–108; István JANEK, *Diplomáciai csatározások a magyar-szlovák kapcsolatokban 1940–1941 között*, in: Ferenc Fischer – Zsolt Vitári – József Vonyó (eds.), *Kutatási Füzetek 12. Ünnepi szám Ormos Mária 75. születésnapjára*, Pécs 2005, pp. 165–180; Dagmar ČIERNA-LANTAYOVÁ, *Problém vzťahu s Maďarskom v aktivitách politikov a diplomatov slovenského štátu (1939–1945)*, in: Vladimír Gonč – Radomír Vlček (eds.), *Z dějin visegrádského prostoru. Richardu Pražákovi k pětasedmdesátinám*, Brno 2006, pp. 233–247; Juraj FABIAN, *Slovensko v strednej Európe (slovensko-maďarské vzťahy za druhej svetovej vojny)*, in: Valerián Bystrický (ed.), *Slovensko v rokoch druhej svetovej vojny*, Bratislava 1991, pp. 63–69; Juraj FABIAN, *Svätoštefánské tiene. Telekiho zahraničná politika a Slovensko 1939–1941*, Bratislava 1966.

243 New border was not decided upon any statistics, economic or historical reasoning, but merely upon the interests of the great powers – cf. Ladislav DEÁK, *Viedenská arbitráž 2. novembra 1938 – „Mnichov pre Slovensko“*, Bratislava 1998, pp. 16–17. See also idem (ed.), *Viedenská arbitráž – 2. november 1938. Dokumenty I. (20. september – 2. november 1938)*, Martin 2002; idem (ed.), *Viedenská arbitráž – 2. november 1938. Dokumenty II. (2. november 1938 – 14. marec 1939)*, Martin 2003; idem, *Viedenská arbitráž – 2. november 1938. Dokumenty III. (3. november 1938 – 4. apríl 1939)*, Martin 2005.

244 The Hungarian Party in Slovakia was a direct successor of the United Hungarian Party. Apart from the name of the party, it was also form of leadership that changed – an authoritative party model was established. Zoltán FÁBRY, *Obžalovaný prehovorí. Dokumenty z dějin Maďarov v Československu*, Bratislava 1994, p. 23. Cf. Peter ZELENÁK, *Zjednotená krajinská kresťansko-socialistická a maďarská národná strana*, in: Lubomír Lipták (ed.), *Politické strany na Slovensku 1860–1989*, Bratislava 1992, pp. 213–218.

245 Jan DVORÁK et al., *Moderní dějiny pro střední školy*, Praha 2014, p. 27.

Agreement – it points out the fact that the treaty did not mean only a loss of territory for Hungary, but had an economic impact, which resulted in attempts of revision of the treaty. It also mentions establishing of the Hungarian Soviet Republic with its leader Béla Kun. The authors also do not omit the fact that the unrest on the Czechoslovak-Hungarian border did not disappear once the agreements were signed and many representatives of the Czechoslovak administration became subjects of assaults (particular cases from 1921 and 1922 are specifically named).²⁴⁶ The details of the treaty and the circumstances of its signing are not paid much attention to.²⁴⁷ The textbook is supplemented by a worksheet by the same collective of authors, featuring exercises related to the Trianon Treaty.

Conclusion

In Slovakia, research that would analyse the real form of teaching history to students of elementary and secondary schools, as well as students of teaching profession, is only marginal. It ought to cover an attitude to history, historical stereotypes, assessment of some historic events in the past, as well as attitudes to some controversial incidents.²⁴⁸

Under standard circumstances, the discussion of experts and findings are usually transformed into curriculum. The basic framework of education in Slovakia is represented by the State Educational Programme, and naturally by the textbooks of history for elementary and secondary schools. Since there is no open policy regarding the textbooks in Slovakia, teachers cannot choose from various educational materials, as they do, for example, in the neighbouring Czech Republic.²⁴⁹ For Slovakia there is always just one set of textbooks for history teaching at elementary and secondary schools. They are approved by the Ministry of Education for a particular year and type of school, while at the moment, they join both national and world history

246 Ibidem, p. 28.

247 The First Vienna Award is briefly described also in the topic *Downfall of the First and the Second Republic*, within a thematic unit *Interwar Period*. Students are only briefly informed that an amendment of the Munich Agreement established necessity of tackling the issue of Hungarian and Polish minority, which happened on the 2nd November 1938. The representatives of Germany and Italy decided that the CSR would yield a part of southern Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus, which was 11 % of the territory, to Hungary (the text does not mention Poland at all). Ibidem, p. 66.

248 Jiří MAREŠ, *Etická dilema učitelů dějepisu aneb jak vyučovat o kontroverzních obdobích dějin?*, *Historie – Otázky – Problémy* 9 (2), 2017, p. 37.

249 This problem could be helped by educational methodical portal, which is fully functioning in the Czech Republic – rvp.cz, which is absent in Slovakia as yet. It would help to interconnect didactic approaches and methods with the latest findings of historiography. It would assist (not only) starting teachers to grasp a topic in a flexible manner, which would result in improvement of the educational process itself.

in each of them.²⁵⁰ And also because of that, the textbooks to come ought to reflect the latest findings of scientific research, indeed in a simplified manner, yet presenting the most complex picture of events and incidents of the past that happened both in the world and in Slovakia to make the skills of students develop to their fullest potential. Martin Pekár, a representative of a younger generation of Slovak historiography, who has analysed the image of Hungarians in the history textbooks in the period of 1989–2008, concluded that in the case of grammar-school textbooks, the view on the national history of majority of authors is stereotypical, superficial, with no opinion alternatives and sometimes even buck-passing.²⁵¹ What ought to be the task of didactics of history in eliminating such stereotypes then? Regarding this particular issue, many experts claim that first and foremost the stereotypical features should not be ignored by textbook writers and history teachers. On the contrary, they ought to proactively try to eliminate them by proper and profound explanation of the historical topic, accepting plurality of opinions. This goal can be reached only if the topics will not be “abstractly” walked around and findings will not be minimalised. Only when a student learns causation of phenomena are they able to reveal and see connections among particular pieces of information and demonstrate causes of historical facts.

Words: 4 762
Characters: 25 496

250 Until 2010 there were available two separate textbooks of history for each year of elementary as well as secondary schools in Slovakia – one for the national history and the other one for the world history.

251 Martin PEKÁR, *Maďari a maďarská menšina na Slovensku v slovenských učebniciach dejepisu po roku 1989*, in: Štefan Šutaj et al., *Maďarská menšina na Slovensku po roku 1989*, Prešov 2008, p. 198.

5 History and Civics: A Complicated Relationship. The Case of East-Central European Textbooks

Václav Sixta

Historical and civic education are commonly linked as meaningful and natural. This is true for the broader public debate as well as for educational policy and professional discussion.²⁵² In the following text I will focus on this phenomenon in the mirror of civic education textbooks for the final years of primary schools in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia. The aim of this text is to explore the modes in which the past is presented in these educational tools and what this means for the education of future teachers. In which modes is the past represented in civic education textbooks? How do the national versions differ from each other and what do they have in common? How can the findings be used in the education of future civic education teachers? With these questions, the text aims to contribute to the debate on the disciplinary identity of civic education in schools.

This text is to some extent a continuation of my previous research on Czech civics textbooks.²⁵³ In it, I was particularly concerned with the changes in the function of the past in textbooks for 8th and 9th form primary schools from the 1990s to the present. Although the main question focused on discontinuities and continuities, some of its conclusions can be taken as initial hypotheses for the current text. Firstly, it concerns the very modes of relationship of the past to civic education topics. I identified these as three:

- 1) knowledge of the story, where citizenship is manifested by knowledge of the national historical narrative;
- 2) awareness of change, where the past serves as evidence that some aspects of social life have changed or, conversely, have not changed (e.g., the shape of the family, modes of communication, etc.);
- 3) an example that illustrates a phenomenon in a particular chapter. For example, the photograph of A. Hitler or J. V. Stalin may illustrate the theme of dictatorship, etc.²⁵⁴

Another conclusion concerning contemporary Czech textbooks was the

252 Eva ŠVARCOVÁ, *Učitelství výchovy k občanství*, in: Martin Bílek et al., *Učitelské studijní programy a formování občanských a sociálních kompetencí*, Hradec Králové 2019, pp. 214, 217; Antonín STANĚK – František MEZIHORÁK (eds.), *Výchova k občanství pro 21. století*, Praha 2008. Compare also the studies below.

253 Václav SIXTA, *Minulost a výchova k občanství v učebnicích*, HOP. Historie – Otázky – Problémy 10 (1), 2018, pp. 73–88.

254 *Ibidem*, pp. 86–87.

illustrative role of historical photographs. These often represent historical themes, bringing “historicity” to the text, but are presented without context or information about the origin of the photograph. In other words, the photographs do not serve as a historical source, but only represent a vague illustration of the topic. This is often the case with portraits of personalities (presidents, scientists, etc.) or iconic photographs of historical events (e.g., the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968).²⁵⁵ For the following text, this raises the question of whether the types of functions held by references to the past in the citizenship education textbooks under study will differ. It will also be important to look at what media represent the past in these materials.

If we look at the existing literature on the relationship between historical and civic education, we can encounter several typologies of the relationship between civic and historical education that can help to structure the field more clearly for textbook research as well. In particular, the article by the British author duo Peter Lee and Denis Shemilt is an important contribution to this debate.²⁵⁶ They present three types of connections between history and civic education that can be traced in both curriculum and school practice.

The first mode is called “history as cornucopia”.²⁵⁷ Its essence is that historical examples are available to civic education whenever they are needed. Considering that all social phenomena can be considered in a historical perspective, this is a very simple way of linking the two fields without the need to develop more demanding educational objectives. One of the conclusions of my previous research, where it turned out that historical themes simply serve as examples or illustrations of contemporary phenomena, would be consistent with this type of approach. A similar type was also traced in their research by the authors of a publication devoted to historical and human rights education.²⁵⁸ Based on their research of two hundred and fifty educational programmes, they also defined a trio of approaches, one of which they refer to as “content linkage.” In it, the content of one area is used in another without linking educational goals.

The second mode, in Lee and Shemilt’s terms, is “*history as a vehicle for citizenship*.”²⁵⁹ In this case, some history lessons are prepared and delivered to meet the educational objectives of citizenship education. A particular risk of this approach is the possibility of the loss of the identity of history education and its gradual erosion in favour of civic education objectives. In addition,

255 Ibidem.

256 Peter LEE – Denis SHEMILT, *New alchemy or fatal attraction? History and citizenship*, Teaching History 129, 2007, pp. 14–19.

257 Ibidem.

258 Martin LÜCKE – Felisa TIBBITS – Else ENGEL – Lea FENNER (eds.), *Change, history learning and human rights education*, Schwabach 2016.

259 P. LEE – D. SHEMILT, *New alchemy or fatal attraction?*, p. 15.

there is a risk of presentism, i.e., the subordination of historical material to our contemporary values and perspectives. While Lee and Shemilt consider this type of linkage from the perspective of history education, a collective of authors focused on human rights education demonstrates that such a potentially unbalanced relationship can go both ways.²⁶⁰ That is, the goals of one field often prevail in educational activities at the expense of the other. They speak about “additive approach” in this case.

Both typologies also led to a third mode of connection between historical and civic education, which is considered ideal in the eyes of their authors. Lee and Shemilt call this type “history as a complement to citizenship.” They describe the complement as follows, “*History education focuses on developing an understanding of how and why things happen, setting the stage for ‘top-down’ civic education.*”²⁶¹ Thus, the historical concept of cause and effect can be linked, for example, to the concept of civic participation and its impact on social change. The ideal of linking historical and human rights education is the so-called “combined approach”.²⁶² The authors themselves develop this in their concept linked to historical change, which they do not see as a closed process but as a dynamic that exists in the present and in which pupils can participate.

The typology described above can be used to name the relationship between historical and civic education as represented in textbooks. Does history serve only as a reservoir of examples, or is its inclusion in the textbook systematically grasped?

The method I will follow in analysing each textbook is based on a consistent description of all places that refer in some way to the past. This category includes all references in texts, historical photographs, graphic elements, or the formulation of tasks for pupils. The aim is therefore first to describe all the possible ways in which the past is present in textbooks. I will then relate these descriptions to the categories and questions presented above. The reason for such a “close reading” of textbooks is the need not to limit the category “history” in advance: if, for example, I would to focus only on political history, it is likely that many topics in the history of everyday life, etc., would remain outside the scope of the research. The same applies if I were to concentrate only on textbook texts and omit pictorial material.

Part of this method involves overcoming the limitations that are associated with textbook research.²⁶³ I do not see textbooks as the only or dominant elements of the educational system. Similarly, in asking research questions and choosing a method, I am aware that textbooks alone tell almost nothing about the actual form of learning. I approach textbooks as one of many

260 M. LÜCKE – F. TIBBITS – E. ENGEL – L. FENNER (eds.), *Change, history learning*, p. 21

261 P. LEE – D. SHEMILT, *New alchemy or fatal attraction?*, p. 15.

262 M. LÜCKE – F. TIBBITS – E. ENGEL – L. FENNER (eds.), *Change, history learning*, pp. 25–38.

263 Petr KNECHT et al., *Učebnice z pohledu pedagogického výzkumu*, Brno 2008; Eckhardt FUCHS – Annekatrien BOCK, *The Palgrave Handbook of Textbook Studies*, London 2018.

elements that influence the educational process, mainly through the weight of traditional authority associated with the medium, their close relationship to the curriculum, and last but not least, the complexity of the material being treated. For the same reasons, textbooks can be part of the university training of future teachers. The question for this text, however, is how to incorporate them into tertiary education.

Czech Republic

Czech textbooks represent two cases in this study. The first one is Civics and Family Education for 9th form published by Fraus in 2014.²⁶⁴ Fraus Publishing House is one of the traditional textbook publishers with a strong position on the Czech textbook market. The textbook covers the following topics: Citizen or Where I Belong, Where I am at Home, Citizen and the Law, Legal Protection, Choice of Profession, Economy, Family and Laws, Global World and Life perspectives or What Awaits You? In addition, the textbook includes an introductory and concluding passage that articulate the educational objectives of the textbook.

Already in the opening passage, in which the authors address the pupils, the past is present in two ways. First, in the text itself, a paragraph is devoted to the fact that the rules of the contemporary world were often created in the past, and although the pupil may not agree with them, they are time-tested. This opens the theme of duration and change as an important part of citizenship education. The second way is represented by two black and white photographs of Mahatma Gandhi and Robert Baden Powell with their quotes and questions: *“Who were these men and what were they famous for?”*²⁶⁵ Famous historical figures – exclusively men – can thus serve as models or inspirations for the present. The final passage then merely enumerates the educational goals articulated in the curriculum, without any relation to historical education.²⁶⁶

In the chapters themselves, the past is most often found in the form of a photograph of a historical figure, a quotation, and a question. For example, in the chapter on entrepreneurship, Tomáš Baťa is mentioned with the question *“Do you know any other famous Czech entrepreneurs or companies?”*²⁶⁷ Similarly with Albert Einstein for the choice of profession, or Cicero for the topic of law. History is represented in this layer through great personalities – again,

264 M. URBAN et al., *Občanská výchova 8. Pro základní školy a víceletá gymnázia*, Plzeň 2013. In my earlier text on the past and education for citizenship I worked with the 2011 edition of the same textbook. The newer edition is different, so I have analysed it again, although some sub-elements may be repeated.

265 Ibidem, p. 5.

266 Ibidem, pp. 103–104.

267 Ibidem, p. 76.

exclusively male – who are partly inspirational examples and partly represent the historical roots of the selected topics (e.g., Joseph II for the chapter on bureaucracy). A specific case in this series is Václav Havel, who does not appear like other historical figures in the supplementary section of the textbook on the right side of the page, but his texts open certain thematic units or serve as a basis for discussion. Although the textbook was published three years after Václav Havel's death, his ideas (all of which date from the post-1989 period) are presented not as those of a historical figure but as contemporary perspectives. In general, the topics included in this textbook are interpreted in a purely contemporary perspective. The historical attraction then serves only as an extension of the content, and only at the level of knowledge that students are expected to find from sources outside the textbook. The past is often present through a photograph or portrait, accompanied by a question or short text. The second case is a textbook from Nová škola Publishing House.²⁶⁸ In the textbook for the 9th form, topics from the past are represented very little. Apart from the addition of some topics in the form of one sentence, two excursions are important from the point of view of the relationship between the past and citizenship education. The first is an excursion into the history of money. This offers a brief overview from barter to coinage to paper money. The text is accompanied by a simple diagram, based on the arrow motif, showing the changes between the different forms of payment. The second excursus is the history of European integration. It consists of a description of the origins of the various institutions and communities that preceded today's European Union. The description of the institutions includes an explanation of their function. Here, too, we find the whole process illustrated on a timeline. The past is procedural in nature. In its representation, the main point is to emphasise the duration and change, or development, from earlier to present-day forms of a particular social phenomenon.

Slovak Republic

The Slovak textbooks are represented in this text by the 2012 publication *Civics* for the 9th year of primary school and the 4th year of grammar school with eight years of study.²⁶⁹ The book is entirely devoted to economic topics and is divided into basic and extension material. The book is divided into chapters: Basic Concepts, Basic Forms of Business, Money, and Financial Institutions in a Market Economy. Extension material covers topics such as Consumer Protection,

²⁶⁸ Antonie LAICMANOVÁ, *Výchova k občanství: [učebnice pro 9. ročník]*, Brno 2013. The passage devoted to this textbook is taken from my earlier text cited above.

²⁶⁹ Erika MUCHOVÁ – Elena KOPECKÁ, *Občianska náuka pre 9. ročník základnej školy a 4. ročník gymnázia s osemročným štúdiom*, Bratislava 2012.

The State Budget, Household Management Advertising, and others.

The central part of the textbook is an explanatory text that explains the basic concepts, principles, and institutions of economic life. This text is supplemented by tables, diagrams, a glossary and always a summary. Each chapter is followed by Questions, Tasks and Suggestions and a “We were interested” section to deepen the learning content.

In the explanatory text, the historical dimension plays an important role in the chapter Types of Economies. The three types of economies (market, centrally controlled and mixed) are explained in connection with historical examples. The market economy is associated with 19th century Europe, the centrally planned (*Príkazová*) with the communist regimes in the Soviet Union and the so-called Eastern Bloc after the Second World War. The mixed type, according to the textbook authors, is associated with the response to the Great Depression of the 1930s and is prevalent in most countries in the contemporary world.²⁷⁰ This is confirmed by the list in the “We were interested” section, which assigns different types of economies to the various forms of Slovak statehood since 1918. The mixed type of economy thus appears to be the pinnacle of historical development. The introduction to the text on insurance companies is similar, stating that: *“If in the past a person fell ill, suffered an accident, was unemployed or, due to old age, could no longer work, had no income and was dependent on the support of others. In a developed society, the state allows citizens to protect themselves against these events in advance by means of insurance.”*²⁷¹

Similarly to Fraus’s textbook, this textbook also contains profiles of historical personalities. In particular, Aristotle and Adam Smith are presented as the main thinkers of economics. These are the only such profiles in the entire book. One of the exercises in the textbook is also linked to the historical dimension. Students are asked to solve three basic economic questions (What to produce? How to produce? For whom to produce?) in the context of different societies. Among them we find prehistoric societies, Indians, African tribes, or medieval societies. In contrast to the historical interpretation of types of economy, here economic questions are presented as something of an anthropological constant that applies to all societies.

The last appearance of historical material in the textbook is a text on the emergence of banks in the 17th century in a chapter devoted to banking. There is only one place in the extension text that is related to the past. This is the statement in the explanatory text on taxes that taxes are historically linked to the creation of states.²⁷² This is then the focus of one of the questions at the end of the chapter.

270 Ibidem, p. 15.

271 Ibidem, p. 43.

272 Ibidem, p. 63.

The first of the pair of Polish textbooks analysed is called “Today and Tomorrow”.²⁷³ It was published by Nowa Era Publishing House in 2021 and is intended for the entire second level of primary schools. The publication of more than 250 pages includes, in addition to six thematic sections, suggestions for pupils’ projects and the full text of the current Polish constitution. The textbook covers the following topics: Life in Society, Law, Human Rights, Local and Regional Communities, National Communities, Poland as a Democratic State, and International Affairs.

All chapters are introduced by references to specific passages of the Polish Constitution, which is thus the book’s central point of reference. The main part of each chapter consists of an explanatory text, which is supplemented by interesting information in the boxes “Did you know...”, tables and diagrams. Each topic is rounded off with exercises for pupils (short exercises for working with the text, crosswords, group discussion), a discussion page called “Facts and Opinions” where pupils discuss two scholarly or journalistic texts, a summary of basic concepts and facts, and a test, which usually consists partly of multiple choice and open questions. The textbook also includes a series of infographics that treat various topics in a structured and visually appealing way.

The first use of the historical perspective in this textbook can be found in the chapter on the family, which highlights within the main text the changes that this traditional form of cohabitation has undergone. These include both the loosening of traditional gender roles and changes in the way we communicate as a result of the development of communication technologies.²⁷⁴ Thus, one paragraph in four pages of the text highlights the changes in family life. This is, however, a rather atypical case, as most of the chapters in the textbook are written in a descriptive style in the present tense. The past then serves more as an illustration or supplement in the “Did you know...” paragraphs. For example, when the Holocaust is mentioned as a consequence of anti-Semitism, or the Solidarity movement in a text explaining the nature of trade unions.²⁷⁵ The past plays an important role in the theme of national community. Here the past is presented as something that can be useful to the citizens of the state and to which they should relate. Here, the past takes the form of national history and national cultural heritage, which includes material

273 Arkadiusz JANICKI – Iwona JANICKA – Tomasz MAĆKOWSKI – Aleksandra KUCIA-MAĆKOWSKA, *Dziś i jutro*, Warsaw 2012. On the situation of Polish civic education, cf. Ewa BACIA – Filip PAZDERSKI – Sylwia ŻMIJEWSKA-KWIREŃ, *Edukacja obywatelska w Polsce. Analiza aktualnej sytuacji, zidentyfikowanych potrzeb oraz szans i barier rozwoju*, Warszawa 2016, https://eul.ceo.org.pl/sites/eul.ceo.org.pl/files/edukacja_obywatelska_w_polsce.pdf /.

274 A. JANICKI – I. JANICKA – T. MAĆKOWSKI – A. KUCIA-MAĆKOWSKA, *Dziś i jutro*, p. 24.

275 *Ibidem*, pp. 124, 169.

monuments as well as important personalities or dates from the history of Polish statehood.²⁷⁶ The infographic dedicated to Poland's national heritage states that *"The collection of priceless national wealth consists of ideas, values and attitudes, knowledge about the past, customs, as well as literary works of art and music, monuments or places of special historical or natural value."*²⁷⁷ Examples are 1) national holidays, anniversaries and customs, 2) merits of Polish soldiers, 3) ideas of freedom and democracy, 4) past power of the Polish state, 5) unique nature and 6) achievements of famous Poles.²⁷⁸ Each group is accompanied by a photograph and particular examples.

Pupils have two tasks related to this topic. In the first, they have to choose one of the examples and explain what makes it special. The second one is: *"Assess to what extent knowledge of history has an impact on understanding the current situation of the Polish nation."*²⁷⁹ It is the second question that well expresses the shape of the relationship to historical topics in this chapter. The past is thematized here directly, but from a contemporary perspective. The aim is not to give pupils knowledge about the past or an idea of how historical knowledge is created, but to teach them to use the past as a source of national identity. Thus, in the later parts of the chapter, pupils have, for example, to list historical events connected with national holidays, prepare a presentation on Polish UNESCO sites, etc. The historical topics in the textbook are selected exclusively from Polish history. The inclusion of the deeds of Poles abroad (F. Chopin, the Battle of Monte Cassino) underlines the ethnocentric approach to the past.

All the features described above are even more evident in the chapter entitled *"Civic Values"*.²⁸⁰ These values are illustrated by a number of examples of specific personalities; most of them historical: five men and one woman. Among the values we can find: activity (the current basketball player Marcin Gortat), responsibility (the doctor Janusz Korczak), entrepreneurship (Franciszek Stefczyk), civic courage (Irena Sendlerowa), foresight (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński) and solidarity (Marek Kotański). The didactic principle is the same here: pupils are asked to identify important character traits of the personalities and evaluate their contribution to Polish society.

Although most of the textbook is written in the present tense, there are two exceptions in the form of chapters on human rights and the European Union. Typically, the main explanatory text is written chronologically as a historical narrative rather than as a description of a contemporary issue or principle of how society works. In the case of human rights, the description of the development from the Enlightenment to the present gives way to

276 Ibidem, pp. 100–103.

277 Ibidem, p. 102.

278 Ibidem, pp. 102–103.

279 Ibidem, p. 103.

280 Ibidem, pp. 108–109.

the main principles of the functioning and protection of human rights in the contemporary world. While the past serves as the main explanatory framework, the result is that students should learn to recognize human rights violations and learn about their own rights.

The chapter on Poland's foreign policy is followed by a chapter on the European Union at the end of the textbook.²⁸¹ Here, too, a similar principle operates: the explanation of the origins of the institution is followed by a section on its current state. Unlike the chapter on human rights, the past is also present at the level of the exercise. For example, students are asked to read the Schuman Declaration of 1950, to name the "founding fathers" of the Union or to explain the reasons that led European countries to start the integration process after the Second World War.²⁸² It is not until the next chapter that the relationship between Poland and the European Union is discussed, and here too there is a section on the history of Poland's accession to the European Union.²⁸³

Thus, three ways of using historical material can be identified in this textbook. The use of historical examples to supplement or illustrate the interpretation has already been encountered in previous cases. In particular, the section "Did you know that..." often uses historical themes, but individual references can also be found directly in the explanatory text. It is particularly important for the research questions of this text that the past plays a significant role in some chapters. In the case of the chapter on the nation, the past is clearly linked to identity and civic authority. In the case of human rights and the European Union, on the other hand, the past is more a matter of knowledge of development, but it is not linked either to the formation of students' identity or to the development of their civic competencies.

The second textbook for Polish schools is called *Social Sciences*.²⁸⁴ Its thematic structure is very similar to the textbook described above. The book contains the following topics in turn: Man in Society – Family, School and Education, Rights in Human Life, Citizen Participation in Public Life – Civil Society, Mass Media, Nation and State, Democracy in the Republic of Poland, Regional Self-Government, and Poland in the Contemporary World. Each chapter contains a list of the main learning objectives, explanatory text, a glossary of key terms, boxes with extra information, quotations from a prominent figure, and questions for students at the end. The text is accompanied by photographs and diagrams related to the topic. Each section then concludes with a summary of the chapter content, source texts with questions for pupils, and a knowledge test.

In general, this textbook uses references to the past more frequently than the

281 Ibidem, pp. 190–195.

282 Ibidem, p. 194.

283 Ibidem, p. 196.

284 Elżbieta DOBRZYCKA – Krzysztof MAKARA, *Wiedza o społeczeństwie 8: podręcznik dla szkoły podstawowej*, Gdynia 2020.

previous ones, but the structure is very similar. This is especially true for the continuous use of history in the form of supplementary material in boxes, quotations from historical figures or as examples of the phenomenon being discussed. In the explanatory text, the historical roots of the material discussed are more frequently mentioned, but their function is no different. Also, the chapters interpreted predominantly through historicizing perspectives overlap significantly. Again, these chapters include those on human rights, children's rights and European integration. In addition to these, the chapters on the state and democracy have among their objectives to "*describe the historical genesis.*"²⁸⁵ The use of profiles of historical figures is formally and functionally the same. However, in terms of content, there is a difference in that this textbook lists only men as historical figures.²⁸⁶

In the chapter on national identity, the past plays a central role.²⁸⁷ While in other parts of the textbook it serves more as evidence of the historicity of the phenomena in question (the European Union, human rights), here it figures more in a primordialist spirit as the basis of patriotism, to which the citizen should actively relate. This is explicitly stated in the explanatory text: "*Love of country today also means knowledge of and care for Polish culture, traditions, and language. At the same time, it is very easy for customs from other countries to infiltrate into Poland and for many English words to enter the Polish language; moreover, we often resign ourselves on Polish traditions.*"²⁸⁸

If we focus on the differences between the two Polish textbooks, the Social Studies textbook contains more references to contemporary cultural practices related to the past such as genealogy, preservation of monuments, but also re-enactment.²⁸⁹ It also has a weaker link to the Constitution. The entirety of the textbook is framed by its relationship to the historical figure of Henri Dunant. The cover states that the textbook is inspired by his person and on the back cover we find his profile and main biographical data. The reference to a figure of international importance and representative of humanism contrasts with the national-oriented content of the textbook. Indeed, the story of Henri Dunant is not systematically treated in the textbook. He is not even mentioned in the text dedicated to the International Red Cross.²⁹⁰

A glance at this textbook does nothing to expand the range of functions that history can serve in civics textbooks. Again, the past can be seen as an example or supplement, as well as a source of national identity, or as an origin story of a given phenomenon. It can also be tentatively hypothesized that there is

285 Ibidem, pp. 67, 71, 184, 189, 249.

286 Ibidem, pp. 75, 104–105, 120.

287 Ibidem, pp. 159–164.

288 Ibidem, p. 161.

289 Ibidem, pp. 31, 124, 161.

290 Ibidem, p. 79.

a direct proportionality between the number of historical examples and the degree of nationalism in a textbook.²⁹¹

The Past and Civic Education

Looking at the set of textbooks described above, it is clear that although they differ in content and structure, they are similar in many ways in their approach to historical topics. This is perhaps most evident where the past plays the role of example or illustration. Elements, whether textual or visual, that supplement the topic with information from the past appear regularly and continuously in all the textbooks examined. They may take the form of quotations from historical figures, supplementary “Did you know...” boxes or biographical profiles. Pupils may acquire this information, but reproducing it is not one of the educational objectives of the textbooks. We could say that it is extension content without deeper integration into the educational objectives of the textbook. On the other hand, these small elements ensure the constant and unreflected presence of the past in civic education textbooks. Conversely, none of the textbooks mention that historical knowledge is constructed by examining sources whose interpretations may differ.

The second mode in which the past serves in civic education textbooks is knowledge of the historical narrative. In this case, the historical content is already linked to the educational objectives of the chapter or the textbook as a whole. What these chapters have in common is that their basic content is a historical narrative and not a description of the present state of affairs. In the Czech and Polish textbooks, it is the same interpretation of the creation and codification of human rights and the topic of European integration after the Second World War. In the case of the Slovak textbook, the chapter is devoted to different types of economies. The basic plot of these narratives is that they refer to a phenomenon that was not there in the past and has gradually gained the influence that it has today. These chapters are usually followed by sections on the current state of human rights, the role of the country in the European Union or the principles of the contemporary market economy.

It is not entirely clear why the topics of human rights and European integration are interpreted in a historical framework. The hypothesis is that they are topics that are understood as open, not fully anchored, and thus “natural”. Awareness of their relative novelty may thus create a certain distance. While national identity is here “naturally” and the nation-state has already completed its emancipation, the transnational projects of human rights and an integrated Europe cannot be understood in this way according to the textbooks. The

²⁹¹ See also chapter *(Post)-National Narratives in the Central European Historical Education: Towards Pluralist or Non-liberal Democracy?*.

historicizing view thus creates more of a form of distance from the subject. This interpretation would be confirmed by the chapters devoted to bravery and national identity. In them – especially in Polish and Czech textbooks – the past also plays a central role. Here, too, one of the educational objectives is to promote knowledge of the national historical narrative. There are, however, several differences from the previous chapters. The most important of these is that the past is directly related to citizenship. Pupils – future citizens – are encouraged not only to acquire knowledge about the origins of the nation state and its symbols, but also to take part in historical reconstructions, to care for cultural heritage, etc. The past, on the other hand, is a source of familiarity and belonging.²⁹² The mode of the past as an awareness of change is not absent in the series under review. Here, too, it is often a vague idea evoked by photographs or text. What is striking here is again the symmetry between Czech and Polish textbooks, where the same theme is almost identically incorporated. In the case of the chapters on family life, a pair of family photographs is used. One obviously from the past and one from the present. The accompanying thesis then notes the changes that have affected the family over the last hundred years. The pupils are then asked to discuss these changes, but without having any concrete evidence in the form of, for example, sociological data, or historical ego-documents. Generally speaking, the past is present in all the textbooks examined as a closed sum of facts that students can learn in different ways. None of the materials examined offer insight into how historical knowledge is formed, into the possibilities of multiperspectivity, and the historical sources reprinted in the textbooks serve as illustrations rather than as objects of critical inquiry. Thus, in this area, civic education misses the actual principles of historical education.²⁹³ Thus, if the authors mentioned in the introduction of this text formulate as an ideal the connection of these two educational areas at the level of educational goals, then Czech, Slovak and Polish textbooks do not achieve this. It cannot be overlooked that citizenship remains a predominantly masculine issue in a large part of textbooks. When textbooks refer to specific personalities (either as a whole or in individual chapters) the predominance of male protagonists is clear.²⁹⁴

292 See also chapter *(Post)-National Narratives in the Central European Historical Education: Towards Pluralist or Non-liberal Democracy?*.

293 Stéphane LEVESQUE – Penney CLARK, *Historical thinking: Definitions and Educational Applications*, in: *The Wiley International Handbook of History Teaching and Learning*, New Jersey 2018, pp. 117–148. The whole issue of the magazine *Historie – Otázky – Problémy* was devoted to the topic – cf. *Historie – Otázky – Problémy* 13 (2), 2021.

294 See also chapter *Hidden in History: Reflection of the Female Issue in Selected Slovak and Czech Textbooks*.

The position of textbooks in the preparation of future teachers of (not only) civic education in primary schools is associated with a number of problems and questions. Should future teachers adopt the approaches and content of textbooks to serve as a support in their difficult beginnings? Or should they instead be encouraged to be critical of textbooks so that they can identify and balance their weaknesses? Do teachers' competences include the ability to navigate the market for textbooks and educational aids so that they are not subject to the marketing of projects that have commercial rather than educational interests? In the final part of this text, I will try to answer each of these questions in turn.

It is clear from the preceding text that leading student teachers to simply become familiar with textbooks means accepting even the implicit assumptions that textbooks contain. This is true when it comes to the choice of topics, the relations to minorities, or the way educational objectives are formulated. In this respect, critical work with textbooks seems to be functional. From my point of view, this can consist of simple analyses of both the content and the didactic apparatus of the textbooks. In this way, students will both learn the methods of textbook analysis and deepen their insight into a particular publication.

An example of a content-based analysis might be a simple survey of gender balance in a textbook, or the meanings associated with the term "citizenship" or its visual aspect. In this way, students can distinguish the strengths of the textbook and identify any weaknesses or gaps. The same applies to the didactic apparatus. Students can be invited to evaluate which activities the textbook does not/does not lend itself to. Is the textbook based only on the reproduction of the explanatory text or can it be used as a basis for a lesson involving the students? How wide a range of activities does the textbook offer?

Another option is to lead students to confront the textbook and their experience in practice. What would a textbook lesson look like? What would they change and how would they adapt the textbook? How would they evaluate the students' performance? Reflection on practical experience, whether from listening in the classrooms or from student practice, is one of the preferred methods among teacher education professionals.²⁹⁵ The textbook can serve as a catalyst for sharing best or, conversely, problematic experiences of the students themselves.

Although textbooks have lost their function as the only state-approved source of information for teaching, they are still one of the most influential

²⁹⁵ Fred KORTHAGEN et al., *Linking practice and theory. The pedagogy of realistic teacher education*, Mahwah 2001.

educational media. An analysis of Central European civic education textbooks reveals that, paradoxically, as important as history is in civic education, its role is unreflected in textbooks and educational objectives are not responsive to changes in the field of history education. At the level of the basic functions of the past, then, similarities rather than differences can be seen between the different national versions. In the context of teacher education, textbooks can be seen as a safe playground for educational activities rather than as a binding norm.²⁹⁶ These activities may aim to support teacher education graduates in becoming competent to make informed decisions about whether, and how, to use textbooks.

Words: 6 232
Characters: 32 750

²⁹⁶ In fact, according to the Czech School Inspectorate, textbooks rank third among the materials used by Czech teachers, behind teaching materials that teachers prepare themselves and resources from the Internet.

6 Hidden in History: Reflection of the Female Issue in Selected Slovak and Czech Textbooks

Adriana Kičková

The issue of women's history in broader context had been out of the spotlight of not only Central European historiography for a rather long period of time.²⁹⁷ The significance of the gender issue for knowledge of history was first recognised by the states of Western Europe. Central Europe "discovered" the issue considerably later. Their research was deliberately focused especially on prominent female figures who had overcome the limits of their social status established by the then society. Comparing the historiography of European countries, it is virtually impossible to replace the absence of research of the history of women and gender relationships in Slovakia. When compared with the research in the Czech Republic, or in Poland, Slovakia displays the greatest deficit. There are many reasons that can be found for this. However, unlike in the case the above-mentioned countries, no special workplace(s) that would occupy themselves with scientific research of the history of women and gender studies have ever been established in Slovakia. The Slovak university school system does not offer any special study field, be it within the bachelor's or master's degree curriculum, that would focus on gender studies. We can only mention the Centre of Gender Studies at the Faculty of Arts of the Comenius University in Bratislava, and the Faculty of Arts of the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice.²⁹⁸ The education is provided in combination with another study programme. Surely, we can talk about a separate subject taught at many departments as a part of social-science disciplines within university studies. In the Czech Republic, there is a special Department of Gender Studies at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, or there is also a study programme of gender studies at the Faculty of Social Studies at Masaryk University in

297 During the 1960s, there was the development of the modern feminist movement the purpose of which was to find out more about experience of women in the past. As a consequence, female historians in the USA and Western Europe started to preoccupy themselves with women's history. Later, at the end of the 1970s, the first courses of female studies were offered at universities in America and then in Northern and Western Europe. Women's history is about becoming familiar with the experience of women in the past. One of the first people who pointed out the fact that the history of women is not merely a marginal issue was an American historian, Joan Scott. Gabriela DUDEKOVÁ, *Výskum dejín žien a rodových vzťahov na Slovensku. Nové výsledky a staré problémy*, Československá historická ročenka 2014–2015, pp. 316, 319.

298 Zuzana KICZKOVÁ et al., *Pamäť žien. O skúsenosti sebauvárania v biografických rozhovoroch*, Bratislava 2006; G. DUDEKOVÁ, *Výskum dejín žien*, p. 313.

Brno. Despite what was mentioned above, or perhaps just because of it, these days we can observe the promotion of gender issues in historical research. The issue is getting more attention from both the broader expert as well as the lay publics. Many areas, previously known as “white spots”, are now a subject to innovative scientific research. We can talk about the rise of gender issues, slightly slowed down due to the pandemic situation. It is not the aim of this text to provide a complete list of the published works dedicated to gender issues. I only point out a few essential, the latest included, topics and persons in the field of scientific research. A great source that helped the Slovak academic milieu were the works on the issue published in the Czech Republic, as well as publications that have been created from the 1960s in Hungarian, Polish, German, and Austrian historiography. Works on the history of education of women, emancipation endeavours of women, significant female personalities, etc.²⁹⁹

Beginnings of a long-term research of gender aspects in the Slovak historiography date back to the period after 1989.³⁰⁰ One of the first works on legal status of women that appeared were the works of Tünde Lengyel,³⁰¹ Miriam Laclavíková,³⁰² Adriana Švecová,³⁰³ Dana Dvořáčková, and Daniela Dvořáková.³⁰⁴ Most of the published works dealt with the period of the 19th century. They covered a broader spectrum of topics, beginning with the issue of women’s emancipation, through the approach to education, conditions of the professional realization of women, to life stories of specific women.³⁰⁵

Within the context of what has been mentioned above, we can point out the work of Karol Hollý.³⁰⁶ He describes efforts of personalities such as Terézia Vansová, Elena Maróthy-Šoltéssová, and Hana Gregorová. They were overcoming the traditional concept of self-realization. He also observed the efforts of new forms of realization of the female population through activities of the women’s association Živena. Some partial studies

299 Ibidem.

300 One of the first subject who started focusing on gender issues was a publishing house and association called Aspekt. It was founded in 1993. They also established co-operation with a non-profit organisation Gender Studies in the Czech Republic. They founded an informative-educational portal, too. Ibidem, p. 311.

301 Tünde LENGYELOVÁ, *Žena a právo*, Bratislava 2004; eadem, *Bosorky, strigy, čarodejnice*, Bratislava 2013.

302 Miriam LACLAVÍKOVÁ, *Formovanie úpravy majetkových vzťahov medzi manželmi (od vzniku uhorského štátu do prvej československej kodifikácie rodinného práva)*, Bratislava 2010.

303 Adriana ŠVECOVÁ, *Inštitút manželstva v novoveku na pozadí sporu o rozluku Jána Dubničku versus Alžbety Magyaryovej*, *Historický časopis* 64 (2), 2016, pp. 231–248

304 Dana DVOŘÁČKOVÁ-MALÁ – Jan ZELENKA et al., *Ženy a děti ve dvorské společnosti*, Praha 2015; Daniela DVOŘÁKOVÁ, *Barbora Celjská. Čierna kráľovná*, Budmerice 2014.

305 For a long time, the essential work in Slovakia was the work on association known as Živena. Jarmila TKADLEČKOVÁ-VANTUCHOVÁ, *Živena – spolok slovenských žien*, Bratislava 1969; Štefana VOTRUBOVÁ, *Živena, jej osudy a práca*, Martin 1931; Daniela KODAJOVÁ et al., *Živena 150 rokov spolku slovenských žien*, Bratislava 2019.

306 Karol HOLLÝ, *Ženská emancipácia. Diskurz slovenského národného hnutia na prelome 19.–20. storočia*, Bratislava 2011.

into the issue of girls' and women's education were, for instance, offered by Eva Kowalská.³⁰⁷ A historian, Daniela Kodajová, contributed through an analysis of the conditions of women's education, based on examples of the specific life stories of female teachers.³⁰⁸ Nowadays, there is one specific topic that has been getting special attention and it is the topic of the Slovak State. The monographies of Marína Zavacká,³⁰⁹ Eva Škorvánková,³¹⁰ and Kataríny Hradská³¹¹ may be considered as pioneers in this field. In the Slovak milieu, the political activities of women have gone unnoticed. The visual representation of a socialistic woman, new types of femininity and emancipation in socialism were depicted by Jana Oravcová.³¹² Attention has also been given to the biographies of female pioneers, so-called "first women" in various fields of expertise, that is the female experience of significant or less significant women. Thanks to them a reader can explore the possibilities and limitations of a life of a particular personality. As examples we may take the midwives of Eva Morovicsová,³¹³ the female lawyers of Martina Gajdošová etc.³¹⁴ The Slovak conceptual work, covering various areas of research and historical periods, that has not been overcome yet is the monography written under editorial supervision of Gabriela Dudeková called *On the Way To a Modern Woman: Chapters of History of Gender Relations in Slovakia*. It reveals a process of emancipation, the social status of women, "female professions", or atypical life stories of specific female figures. It also defines and names the main problems of the development of women and men in the context of social changes.³¹⁵ In the Czech milieu a similar synthesis was published one year earlier – *A Woman in the Czech Lands from the Middle Ages to the 20th Century*.³¹⁶

The Czech historiography milieu provides a selection of various publications covering a broad spectrum of topics, historical periods and

307 Eva KOWALSKÁ, *Osvietenské školstvo (1771–1815). Nástroj vzdelania a disciplinizácie*, Bratislava 2014.

308 Daniela KODAJOVÁ et al., *Sláva šľachetným VI. Učiteľ je okno do sveta a života*, Liptovský Mikuláš 2020; eadem, *Odborné vzdelávanie ako predpoklad a prostriedok emancipácie*, in: G. Dudeková (ed.), *Na ceste k modernej žene*, pp. 149–175.

309 Marína ZAVACKÁ, *Ľudácka prevýchova. Mária Janšáková v Ilave roku 1939 a jej Cela číslo 20*, Bratislava 2018.

310 Eva ŠKORVÁNKOVÁ, *Strážkyne rodinných kozubov? Ženy v ideológii a politike Slovenského štátu*, Bratislava 2021.

311 Katarína HRADSKÁ, *Gizi Fleischmannová: Návrat nežiadúci*, Bratislava 2012.

312 Jana ORAVCOVÁ, *Mocné ženy alebo ženy moci?*, Bratislava 2014.

313 Anna FALISOVÁ – Eva MOROVICSOVÁ, *Pôrodné asistentky a ošetrovatelky na Slovensku v rokoch 1918–1938*, Bratislava 2015.

314 Martina GAJDOŠOVÁ – Peter KEREČMAN, *Prvé ženy v slovenskej advokácii*, Bratislava 2015.

315 Gabriela DUDEKOVÁ et al., *Na ceste k modernej žene*, Bratislava 2011; Gabriela DUDEKOVÁ-KOVÁČOVÁ – Juraj BENKO, *S ľudom a pre ľud. Cesty k demokracii na Slovensku za monarchie a proej republiky*, Bratislava 2020.

316 Milena LENDEROVÁ et al., *Žena v českých zemích od středověku do 20. století*, Praha 2010.

personalities. The majority of the works focus on the development in the 19th century, with Milena Lenderová being the most productive author.³¹⁷ Other pioneering works could be those written by Pavla Horská,³¹⁸ Zuzana Čevelová,³¹⁹ and Jana Stániková.³²⁰ They cover a number of day-to-day routines and activities such as hygiene, education, marriage, as well as the topic of women on the periphery of society. The development of feminist thought was analysed in the works of Maria Bahenská and Libuše Hezcková.³²¹ The visual picture of women in the Czechoslovak Republic was introduced by Martina Pachmanová.³²² The topic of the efforts to acquire full rights through associational activities was covered by Jana Malínská,³²³ or Jana Kočišková. Politically active women represent a specific topic that has not escaped attention of researchers. In this perspective it is possible to state that the works of a Czech historian, Dana Musilová, built up the foundation of the research area.³²⁴ Forgotten women, politicians, have been brought back to life in works of many researchers. One of the examples could be the unknown politician, Luisa Landová-Štychová, who was documented by Stanislav Holubec.³²⁵ The latest analysed field of academic research reveals presence of women in the armed forces, for example in

317 Eadem, *Khřichu i modlitbě. Žena v minulém století*, Praha 1999; eadem, *Vše pro dítě*, Praha 2015; eadem, *Dějiny těla*, Praha 2014; eadem et al., *Tělo mezi medicínou a disciplínou. Proměny lékařského obrazu a ideálu lidského těla a tělesnosti v dlouhém 19. století*, Praha 2015; eadem et al., *Eva nejen v ráji, Žena v Čechách od středověku do 19. století*, Praha 2002; eadem, *Spanilost Vaše cizozemcům se líbí. České kuchařské knihy*, Praha 2018; eadem et al., *Krajiny prostřených i prázdných stolů II. Evropská gastronomie v interdisciplinárním přístupu*, Pardubice 2017; eadem et al. *Krajiny prostřených i prázdných stolů I. Evropská gastronomie v proměnách staletí*, Pardubice 2016; eadem, *Ženy s kufříkem a nadějí. Porodní báby a asistentky v českých zemích od poloviny 19. do poloviny 20. století*, Praha 2020; eadem, *Velké dějiny zemí Koruny české: Dětství*, Praha 2021; eadem, *Radostné dětství?*, Praha 2006; eadem, *Chytila patrola aneb prostituce za Rakouska i republiky*, Praha 2002.

318 Pavla HORSKÁ, *Naše prababičky feministky*, Praha 1999.

319 Zuzana ČEVELOVÁ, *Gender, víra a manželství v „dlouhém“ 19. století. Možnosti interpretace katolických normativních pramenů*, Praha 2012.

320 Jana STÁNIKOVÁ, *Výchova a vzdělávání dívek na cestě k moderní občanské společnosti: Genderové a sociální aspekty procesu socializace mládeže v období 1774–1868*, Praha 2013.

321 Marie BAHENSKÁ – Libuše HECZKOVÁ – Dana MUSILOVÁ, *Nezbytná, osvobozující, pomlouvaná. O ženské práci*, České Budějovice 2017; Marie BAHENSKÁ, *Počátky emancipace v Čechách*, Praha 2003; eadem – Dana MUSILOVÁ – Libuše HECZKOVÁ, *Žena na stráž! České feministické myšlení 19. a 20. století*, Praha 2010; Dana MUSILOVÁ – Marie BAHENSKÁ – Libuše HECZKOVÁ, *Iluze spásy. České feministické myšlení 19. a 20. století*, České Budějovice 2011; Marie BAHENSKÁ – Dana MUSILOVÁ – Libuše HECZKOVÁ, *O ženské práci. Dobové (sebe)reflexe a polemiky*, Praha 2015; Marie BAHENSKÁ – Jana MALÍNSKA, *Ženy a politika 1890–1938*, Praha 2014.

322 Martina PACHMANOVÁ, *Civilizovaná žena. Ideál i paradox prvorepublikové vizuální kultury*, Praha 2021.

323 Jana MALÍNSKA, *My byly, jsme a budeme!*, Praha 2013; eadem, *Do politiky prý žena nesmí – proč? Vzdělání a postavení žen v české společnosti v 19. a na počátku 20. století*, Praha 2005.

324 Dana MUSILOVÁ, *Z ženského pohledu. Poslankyně a senátorky Národního shromáždění Československé republiky 1918–1939*, Praha 2007.

325 Stanislav HOLUBEC, *Nešťastná revolucionářka. Myšlenkový svět a každodennost Luisy Landové-Štychové*, Praha 2021.

the works of Alena Flimelová,³²⁶ Karolína Stegurová,³²⁷ or Milan Kopecký.³²⁸ The experience of women in concentration camps, analysed in a work of Pavla Plachá,³²⁹ or unselfish help of some women right after assassination of Heydrich, covered by Jitka Neradová,³³⁰ gave birth to a specific field of research, which has been taboo until quite recently. The personality of an anti-Nazi female fighter, the writer Milena Jesenská, was researched by Alena Wagnerová.³³¹ The image of clothing during the Protectorate was introduced by Miroslava Burianová.³³² Denisa Nečasová documented the formation of a socialistic woman through various organisations.³³³ The biography of Alice Masaryková, the eldest daughter of Tomáš G. Masaryk, written by Radovan Lovčí, is quite unique, and so far unrivalled.³³⁴ The above-mentioned works are merely the tip of the iceberg in terms of areas, personalities and topics that present-day historiography has at its disposal. They observe the status of women in various areas and historical periods from many different angles, through different views. Nevertheless, or perhaps just because of that, the current teaching materials do not provide adequate space for the issues discussed.³³⁵

*Gender Issues, Female Personalities, and History Textbooks*³³⁶

History may be considered as a key-role social studies subject. Through this subject we deliver information to students, make their knowledge of history deeper and larger, we teach them to recognise historical phenomena, events, personalities, we lead them to critical work with sources, interpretations

326 Alena FLIMELOVÁ – Roman ŠTÉR, *Ve stínu mužů. Ženy v československých jednotkách na východní frontě v letech 1942–1945*, Praha 2021.

327 Karolína STEGUROVÁ, *I ženy chtěly bojovat*, Praha 2021.

328 Milan KOPECKÝ – Václav KAMENÍK, *Andělé se samopalem. Výsadbářky 2. čs. samostatné paradesantní brigády v SSSR*, Bratislava 2021.

329 Pavla PLACHÁ, *Zpřetrhané životy. Československé ženy v nacistickém koncentračním táboře Ravensbrück v letech 1939–1945*, Praha 2021.

330 Jitka NERADOVÁ, *Statečnost je ženského rodu...s obrazovou přílohou Jaroslava Čvančary*, Praha 2022.

331 Alena WAGNEROVÁ, *Milena Jesenská*, Praha 2015.

332 Miroslava BURIANOVÁ, *Móda v ulicích protektorátu. Život – Oděv – Lidé*, Praha 2013.

333 Denisa NEČASOVÁ, *Buduj vlast – posílíš mír! Ženské hnutí v českých zemích 1945–1955*, Brno 2012; eadem, *Nový socialistický člověk. Československo 1948–1956*, Brno 2017.

334 Radovan LOVČÍ, *Alice Garrigue Masaryková. Život ve stínu slavného otce*, Praha 2008.

335 G. DUDEKOVÁ, *Výskum*, pp. 309–310.

336 Cf. chapter *History and Civics: A Complicated Relationship. The Case of East-Central European Textbooks*.

etc.³³⁷ The essential tool of education, and that goes not only for history, are textbooks. The most widespread type of historical literature.³³⁸ The topics that are covered in the textbooks reflect the timeframe of the subject determined by the Ministry of Education. Selection of the topic is a key task that should be taken into consideration when looking into curriculum and educational content. Current educational media focus mainly on political, military, and technical history. This happens at the expense of social and everyday life history, hence also at the expense of the history of gender issues. They go unnoticed in the context of the selected history topics. We only find women in short sentences, in all the years of study, as female sovereigns, daughters, and wives. Their experience, skills, and merit are rather neglected. We may find many examples of women in the historical development who ought to be paid attention to. That is not only in order to provide a broader perspective, but also in order to build a national cognisance. It is necessary to complement the educational content, supplement the textbooks with additional materials, historical reading books included. History cannot be just “his” story; it must be “hers” as well. So, what can we find in the educational texts? Using a content analysis of grammar-school history textbooks, I would like to outline the way in which so-called gender topics are covered in the history books in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Which female historical figures and from which spheres are taught about – both iconically and verbally. For the sake of comparison, I chose history textbooks published by Didaktis Publishing House (the Czech Republic) and the textbooks of the State Pedagogical Publishing House (the Slovak Republic).

Despite the fact that the textbook market is free and open, the Slovak textbooks are not complemented by any methodical instructions, worksheets, or reading-books which would be mutually interconnected. Historical events are depicted in a compound form. It consists of the main text, an additional text, a list of sources, maps, timelines, and pictures. An endorsement clause, during which a book is licensed to be used in pedagogical practice, is issued for a period of five years. *The History for the First-Year Students of Secondary Schools* features eight thematic units covering the history of Slovakia beginning with prehistoric times up to the reforms

337 The state curriculum for four-year and five-year grammar schools, study field A Human and Society, school subject History – 2015, pp. 2–7. Currently, the grammar school curriculum provides 6 lessons, which makes 2 lessons a week for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year of 4-year grammar schools. For the A-level students who choose History as their A-level exam subject there is a 2-lesson course in the 4th year of study. For other types of secondary schools, such as vocational secondary schools, History is reduced to 1 lesson in the first year of a 4-year study programme.

338 Zdeněk BENEŠ – Blažena GRACOVÁ – Jan PRŮCHA et al., *Sondy a analýzy. Učebnice dějepisu – teorie a multikulturní aspekty edukačního média*, Praha 2008, p. 9.

of the Enlightenment period.³³⁹ Students become familiar with goddesses of ancient mythology such as Aphrodite, Hera, Pallas Athena, or the Slavic mythology goddesses Vesna and Morena.³⁴⁰ They also come across an Egyptian empress Cleopatra,³⁴¹ or the abduction of the Sabine women.³⁴² Great Moravia and its women are represented by the sentence “*Great Moravian women decorated themselves with sumptuous jewellery.*”³⁴³ The empress Beatrice of Aragon is given a broader space of presentation, especially concerning the period eating habits.³⁴⁴ In the sources we can also find an extract of Queen Elisabeth I’s biography.³⁴⁵ The main female figure of the textbook is Empress Maria Theresa. The textbook offers information on her foreign politics, reformation processes, and partially her personal life.³⁴⁶ The text does not cover a self-standing gender issue. It only provides short references, usually one-word long. The same goes for the iconic material that supplements the text educational material of which is not used. The educational text does not provide information on different statuses of women and men, on its changes, including a vaguely depicted image of a woman, e.g., in the form of Venus. It only refers to “basic” knowledge of the role of a woman in ancient times, yet it ignores the history of everyday life. It does not depict possibilities of education for women. Ancient “women” are depicted with a special focus on political history. Information regarding the history of everyday life, including so-called chivalric culture, is scattered and incomplete. The introduction of various social classes and the role of women within them has not been provided. All focus lies only on the ladies of high society. The lower classes have not made it onto pages of the book. We cannot rely on changes in fashion and clothing either. We cannot find any information on the status of women in a family, marriage or at work. That is in jobs suitable for women, of course. It is virtually impossible to create a real picture of the changing status of women, namely not even from tangential sources or notes. Regarding the area in question, a textbook designed for the second form of grammar schools was supposed to be one level up. *The History for the Second-Year Students of Secondary Schools*, divided into six thematic units, was meant to offer a broader spectrum of gender issues and personalities, due to the period it focuses on. Yet once again, the situation we observed in the previously analysed textbook seems to be the same – limited to marginal, brief notes. We come across Harriet Tubman, an anti-

339 M. BADA – A. BOCKOVÁ – B. KRASNOVSKÝ – J. LUKAČKA – M. TONKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 1. ročník gymnázií a stredných škôl*, p. 30.

340 Ibidem, pp. 39, 41, 53, 122.

341 Ibidem, pp. 65, 67.

342 Ibidem, p. 61

343 Ibidem, p. 123

344 Ibidem, p. 145.

345 Ibidem, p. 193.

346 Ibidem, pp. 246–248, 250–253.

slavery fighter, in the form of an iconic text,³⁴⁷ and Bertha von Suttner, an activist of the pacifistic movement.³⁴⁸ Subsequently, students are offered a crash course in the so-called “female issue”, based on an example of the emancipation of women in the context of the Suffragette Movement under the name “Female Issue”. Yet, we cannot find answers to questions such as: What were the methods of those who fought for the rights of women? What was the way women were portrayed in media? What do these pictures reveal in terms of attitude? The text is supplemented by a work with a historical source in the form of the daily routine of Fanny Mattus,³⁴⁹ a picture of the Empress Elizabeth, known as Sissi.³⁵⁰ The textbook is concluded by general notes on the activities of different kinds of associations in the monarchy lands. There is also a short paragraph on a women’s association Živena.³⁵¹ Changes in society and their impact on the status of women are not reflected in this educational text. There is only vague description of professions women found their self-realization in, despite or perhaps just because of the society’s attitude (female scientists, entrepreneurs, manual workers, etc.).

It does not answer the question if girls were enabled and allowed to achieve the same qualification as boys. What type of work was considered a “traditional” woman’s job? What working conditions did women have in this historical period? And naturally, how did industrialization influence the lives of women? Furthermore, there is no literature that would broaden knowledge in this field, either. *The History for the Third Year Students of Secondary Schools*, divided into ten thematic units, is supposed to provide the biggest area for female topics, personalities and the history of everyday life. It is inevitable that I have to state the same as in the case of the two previously analysed textbooks. In terms of information quantity, regarding the topic, it can be seen as rather weak. It is right here where the progress in historical research has been most significantly ignored. After all, the sentence at the beginning of the book already indicates that not even in the third volume will be topic of women more present/specified. Quotation: “For millions of men, conscripted to fight in the war, their duties in industry (mainly in armaments industry) and agriculture had to be taken over by women.”³⁵² The pages of the book feature predominantly iconic materials such as a picture of Empress Zita with her husband,³⁵³ a poster of the actress Greta Garbo as

347 A. BOCKOVÁ – E. KAČÍREK – D. KODAJOVÁ – M. TONKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 2. ročník gymnázií a stredných škôl*, p. 111.

348 *Ibidem*, p. 140.

349 *Ibidem*, pp. 150–151, 153.

350 *Ibidem*, pp. 156, 219.

351 *Ibidem*, p. 173.

352 R. LETZ – A. BOCKOVÁ – M. TONKOVÁ, *Dejepis pre 3. ročník gymnázií a stredných škôl*, p. 13.

353 *Ibidem*, p. 17.

her character in a film,³⁵⁴ appeals asking British women to join the factory labour force,³⁵⁵ posters depicting period female fashion,³⁵⁶ a poster of the Democratic Party aimed at female voters,³⁵⁷ posters of socialistic day-to-day life with a reference to the work of women,³⁵⁸ a photograph of Angela Merkel,³⁵⁹ or a picture of the singer Shakira.³⁶⁰ They did not get noticed in the most recent history. The only exception, which can be found in a self-study part of the book, is a reference to information on a Jewish activist Gisele Fleischmann.³⁶¹ In the political trials there is no mention of Milada Horáková. The rest of the female figures had vanished, that is at least in the Slovak textbooks of history. The lack mentioned does not go only for Slovak women; it also includes foreign female personalities. It simply ignores the whole wide educational potential.

The Czech version of the textbooks for secondary schools present a modern version of didactics applied in practice, and that is meant both metaphorically and literally. It consists of not only an educational text, historical atlas, but also features a reading book, all in one publication. It allows easy orientation in the content. It supplements methodical instruction and a worksheet in an adequate way, focusing on higher cognitive functions of students. Administration of gender issues is limited and focused on selected female personalities. *The Earlier History for Secondary Schools, Vol. I*, offers 36 topics in three thematic units. Among the personalities of the ancient history featured in the book are Deborah,³⁶² Sappho,³⁶³ Empress Theodora,³⁶⁴ Empress Theofano,³⁶⁵ and St. Ludmila.³⁶⁶ *The Earlier History for Secondary Schools, Vol. II* covers 46 topics in four thematic units. It promotes females such as Eleonor of Aquitaine,³⁶⁷ Agnes of Bohemia,³⁶⁸ Kunigunde,³⁶⁹ Elizabeth of Bohemia,³⁷⁰ the Polish queen Jadwiga,³⁷¹ the wives of the

354 Ibidem, p. 78,

355 Ibidem, p. 134.

356 Ibidem, p. 155.

357 Ibidem, p. 207.

358 Ibidem, p. 241.

359 Ibidem, p. 249.

360 Ibidem, p. 260

361 Ibidem, p. 169.

362 J. BEDNAŘÍKOVÁ et al., *Starší dějiny pro střední školy. Část první*, p. 55.

363 Ibidem, p. 59.

364 Ibidem, pp. 104–105.

365 Ibidem, p. 121.

366 Ibidem, p. 130.

367 R. ANTONÍN et al., *Starší dějiny pro střední školy. Část druhá*, p. 31.

368 Ibidem, pp. 34, 39.

369 Ibidem, p. 35

370 Ibidem, p. 36

371 Ibidem, p. 61

King Charles IV,³⁷² Sophia of Bavaria,³⁷³ Anne of Bohemia and Hungary,³⁷⁴ Isabella of Castile,³⁷⁵ Elizabeth I,³⁷⁶ Catherine de Medici,³⁷⁷ Maria Theresa³⁷⁸ or the Russian Empress Catherine II.³⁷⁹ It also does not leave out the French heroine Joan of Arc.³⁸⁰ *The History of the 19th Century* introduces 36 topics in five thematic units. It is the only book that offers an individual thematic probe – The Status of Women and Women’s Movement in the 19th Century.³⁸¹ Covering two A4-size pages it endeavours to depict a complex issue, beginning with definition of the concept of gender and its meaning, through changes of status of women in 19th century society in Europe, the emancipation movement, and concluding with the concept of feminism and three waves of it. The main focus is on the attempt of gaining the right to vote. The limelight figures are the British writer Mary Wollstonecraft, the philosopher John Stuart Mill, the writer George Sand and the political activist Emmeline Pankhurst.

Neither the Czech nor the Slovak milieu were mentioned at all. Among other topics within the explanatory text, we can find short paragraphs regarding the right to vote named “*The First Female Voters*”,³⁸² or “*Political liberalization and the female issue*”.³⁸³ Which female personalities does the textbook introduce? The rulers such as Catherine II,³⁸⁴ Maria Theresa,³⁸⁵ Maria Antoinette,³⁸⁶ or the English queen Victoria.³⁸⁷ The textbook set is concluded by *Modern History* with five thematic units and 51 topics. We will not find here any larger paragraph or thematic study regarding female issues. Only a few female figures or simple word constructions. Namely it is a Czech noble woman called Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg,³⁸⁸ a politician Milada Horáková,³⁸⁹ the British queen Elizabeth II,³⁹⁰ a film director Věra Chytilová,³⁹¹ or the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.³⁹² It is clearly

372 Ibidem, p. 64.

373 Ibidem, p. 68

374 Ibidem, p. 76.

375 Ibidem, pp. 98, 117.

376 Ibidem, pp. 119, 128, 131.

377 Ibidem, p. 129.

378 Ibidem, pp. 152, 168–169.

379 Ibidem, pp. 164–166.

380 Ibidem, p. 52.

381 S. BOLOM-KOTARI et al., *Dějiny 19. století pro střední školy*, pp. 142–143.

382 Ibidem, p. 91.

383 Ibidem, p.140.

384 Ibidem, p. 16.

385 Ibidem, pp. 17–18.

386 Ibidem, p. 27.

387 Ibidem, p. 96.

388 J. ČURDA et al., *Moderní dějiny pro střední školy*, p. 20.

389 Ibidem, p. 122.

390 Ibidem, p. 129.

391 Ibidem, p. 133.

392 Ibidem, pp. 143, 169–170.

the case of making history more political, ignoring the need of pointing out the important role of women in history. The Polish textbooks display the same kind of problems as those in Slovakia and the Czech Republic.³⁹³ The fact we have just stated was reflected by a historian Blažena Gracová through the works of Mariola Hoszowska.³⁹⁴ She proposed a solution in the form of maintaining a role model of a woman, yet together with social groups with a special focus on sources and working with them. In other words, introduce women in different positions within the society's hierarchy.

The content analysis of the selected educational tools in the form of the presentation of women and female issues has revealed a great imbalance. We may conclude that educational materials do not use up the potential female issues provide, or could provide. Beginning with didactic processing, through the presentation of information, teaching-style apparatus, ending with iconic texts. They all have many weak spots in presenting female issues. It is also impossible to notice any ambition to depict the changes of the social role of women, history of everyday life, fight for civic and political rights activities, their role during wartime, etc. Equally absent is also follow-up work with sources, for example the memoirs of significant female personalities and so on. Within the knowledge-acquiring apparatus we fail to find, excluding a few exceptions, titles referring to the analysed issues from the perspective of women. That is contrary to the conception of the didactic text since the central topic is the history of the 19th and 20th centuries. There is no need to transform the textbooks completely. It would suffice merely to add some topics, including specific examples we could use to demonstrate a woman's perspective of the changes that took place in society. It could be done in a simple way – using thematic studies regarding matriarchy, the social status of women in ancient times, images of women, emancipation processes, women at war, etc.³⁹⁵ Overall, it seems educational texts of foreign provenance are advantaged.

Inspiration from Abroad

The way of presentation of female issues in educational materials varies in different European countries. In some of them it is a long-standing part of education on all levels. In some countries they are gradually integrated

393 Mariola HOSZOWSKA, *Kobiety w edukacji historycznej (komentarz do podręczników)*, *Wiadomości Historyczne* 4, 2006, pp. 23–30.

394 Włodzimierz MĘDRZECKI – Robert SZUCHTA, *U źródeł współczesności. Dzieje nowożytne i najnowsze : historia 3. Podręczni*, Warszawa 2009.

395 It is important to point out that especially in the Central European milieu systematic research of textbooks and educational materials is non-existent, unlike in other countries. We can only talk about individual texts by some didactic experts.

in educational materials, and in the rest of the countries they are simply non-existent. Regarding the condition in which we find the research, the teaching materials, outside of the Central European milieu, correspond with the state of the research. Although not even in those countries they do not use up the whole potential, they still pay systematic attention to the field of study – they create didactic materials, educational platforms, and so on. When presenting, they use modern didactic tools be it activation methods, oral history, or work with source materials. Many works on the topic discussed have been published.³⁹⁶ We consider an initiative of the Council of Europe to be quite significant. As a part of the project *The Study and Teaching of European 20th century History* it created a textbook that focuses solely on female issue – *Teaching 20th Century Women's History: A Classroom Approach* by Ruth Tudor. Within five main topics, which she considers essential for teaching women's history, she provides specific activities for handling the issue from different points of view and didactic methods. Namely it consists of the introduction, women's history in 20th century, a course of activities concerning women's history, a study case on women in the Soviet Union and a study case in oral history. Model examples are designed for secondary schools. In German textbook sets, so called *ANNO*, we can find quite a few inspiring examples.³⁹⁷ They use a form of a thematic unit – two pages with a special focus on supplementary source material and practical tasks. Emphasis is laid on information from the 19th and 20th centuries, focusing especially on a confrontation of the living conditions of various social classes. They analyse the area of education, employment, leisure time activities etc. The spotlight is on female factory workers, the issue of forced labour, the different social status of women in East and West Germany and so on. In order to achieve an educational goal, they use various iconic sources, commercial posters, photographs, ego documents, audio-visual works, oral history, timelines, mental maps etc.³⁹⁸ Doing so, the knowledge is systematically strengthened. In this case, we cannot talk about the random application of female issues in texts, as it is clearly done deliberately.³⁹⁹ In Great Britain, teachers have a wide range of educational resources they can choose from, focusing on creative work with pictorial and source materials. All of them support the formation of analytic and critical thinking. As an example, we can mention a text book

396 Audrey OSLER, *Still Hidden from History? The representation of women in recently published history textbooks*, Oxford review of Education 20 (2), 1994, pp. 219–235.

397 *ANNO – Geschichte für Gymnasien 1–4*, Braunschweig 1996.

398 *ANNO 3*, pp. 112–115, 130–132, 150–157.

399 The pedagogue has at his/her disposal several supplementary materials on historical topics, for example the edition *Geschichte Lernen*, <https://www.friedrich-verlag.de/geschichte/geschichte-lernen/>. Brigitte DEHNE, *Gender im Geschichtsunterricht. Das Ende Zyklopen?*, Schwalbach/Ts 2007.

called *Modern World History*.⁴⁰⁰ Seven thematic pages use critical thinking, creativity, communication, and co-operation to consolidate the knowledge learnt. For demonstration, we can use the example of the topic named *How women acquired their right to vote*. A student's task is to argue for or against the right of women to vote and, at the same time, to create a poster supporting or rejecting the attempt for the right to vote. While working on the topic *How women contributed to war efforts* students are supposed to contemplate the way the war influenced the lives of women. Another British textbook, *Modern World History*⁴⁰¹ focuses on the circumstances that led to the transformation of opinions of political representatives of that time in terms of their approach to the right to vote for women. How efficient were the activities of suffragettes and what were their impact on public opinion? Follow-up topics are overcoming prejudice against employing women during the First World War and the impact of the war conflict on the lives of civilians. Special attention is paid to women's work regarding the war efforts, including health and safety hazards, based on authentic testimony of a female employee of a wartime factory. The transition of information does not happen only in a one-way direction. On the contrary, it is done by active participation.

To the Question of Options for the Future

Based on what has been written above, we have to raise a few questions. In what way should female issues be presented in the Slovak and Czech Republics? Can we identify the break points? What dilemmas have they had to face? What images of an "ideal" woman existed in various periods? Which female personalities and social groups should we focus on? What types of sources can we use to learn about lives of women? There is a wide range of questions that come up. Only when we have answered the questions will we know who, what and first of all why and then we can start creating adequate educational texts.⁴⁰² The reason for the unsatisfactory condition is to a large extent the omission of history didactics in Slovakia and the general underestimation of the importance of history teaching. For these reasons, the authors of the learning materials mostly prioritize political history. And for these reasons we need to create a suitable conception. Otherwise, there is a great chance that students may acquire a distorted view that historical processes are solely a men's thing with no female population interference

400 Benn WALSH, *GCSE Modern World History*, London 2001.

401 Kelly NIGEL – Greg LACEY, *Modern World History for OCR Specification 1937*, Oxford 2001.

402 It is not only in Slovakia and the Czech Republic that experts request scope for gender issues. Regarding this, only one didactic work has been published, namely *Žena jako subjekt a objekt* (2010), under the editorial supervision of Josef Märec.

whatsoever. And that is why it is important to pay more attention to the topic in the Slovak and Czech Republics.

Words: 6 163
Characters: 32 855

PART II:
Current Opportunities and Challenges:
Education in the Digitised and Post-Factual
Era after Covid-19

7 Philosophy for Children in the Higher Education System of the Czech Republic and Poland: A General Overview

Petr Matějčík – Michal Rigel

This chapter examines the educational approach known as Philosophy for Children (henceforth P4C) and its implementation in the educational systems of the Czech Republic and Poland. The first part of the chapter introduces the fundamental tenets of P4C, as delineated in the writings of Matthew Lipman. We aim to clarify concepts and principles related to the P4C method such as the Community of Inquiry, the role of the teacher in the P4C system, and the important role of storytelling in inspiring the philosophical investigation. The second section of this chapter is dedicated to the historical evolution of the implementation of P4C in the Czech Republic and Poland. Namely, we examine how P4C courses have been integrated into the education systems of these respective countries, and how P4C has been adapted to their unique cultural and educational contexts. In the conclusion, we come up with several suggestions on how to inflame interest in adopting P4C methods among teachers and how to surmount the challenges of implementing P4C in different contexts.

P4C – What Is It About?

P4C exemplifies a remarkable illustration of the significance of education in humanities for the development of human thinking. As Matthew Lipman – the founding figure of the P4C programme – remarks, the main motivation behind starting this educational innovation was general disillusionment with his own school experience and the form of education he could observe in his time which focused predominantly on the transmission of information, rather than on promotion of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.⁴⁰³ In his eyes, philosophy may have the potential to inspire the desire for knowledge, to get the hang of things. The motivation to bring the joy of thinking back into the classroom is one of the central tenets characterizing the P4C project. P4C comes up with a bold inversion of the widespread conception of philosophy, which is often portrayed as an abstract enterprise that can only be accessed at higher levels of education.⁴⁰⁴ Matthew Lipman and his colleagues have

403 Matthew LIPMAN, *Thinking in Education*, New York 2003, pp. 12–14.

404 Idem, *Philosophy Goes to School*, Philadelphia 2010, pp. 11–15.

turned this idea on its head. Philosophizing, in their view, is a natural method of inquiry that expresses the basic human need to know the world around us, to try to understand it, and to share our knowledge with others regardless of age. P4C seeks to show that reflective and critical thinking is not the culmination of an ontogenetic developmental trajectory that comes later in adolescence,⁴⁰⁵ but that its rudiments are traceable even in the thinking of preschool children. Early youth is not a critical hindrance to philosophical inquiry. On the contrary, with the help of the right pedagogical guidance and pedagogical methods, reflective thinking skills and virtues can be nourished from a very young age. Therefore, Lipman's P4C can be taught to children between the ages of five and seven and continue up to the age of sixteen.⁴⁰⁶

A lot of ink has been spilled on the subject of critical thinking education and its inclusion into the curriculum across individual levels of education in recent years. Philosophy and its history provide a wealth of inspiration for developing educational programmes specializing in teaching thinking skills. When we take a closer look at the Western philosophical tradition, we can find practical examples of reflective thinking methods in its fabric. The most prominent of these is undoubtedly the Socratic questioning method which aims to ignite fruitful dialogue by raising thoughtful questions and thus lead to a reflection of one's own beliefs on the part of the pupils. The Socratic method sheds light on fundamental concepts and assumptions that we use in a rather thoughtless manner in our everyday life. Critical reflection on the way we think, behave, and speak and the cultivation of necessary epistemic virtues such as intellectual courage, honesty, and open-mindedness remains one of the hallmarks of philosophy to this day. To benefit from a method of philosophical inquiry demands – first and foremost – a willingness to step out of one's own comfort zone of prejudices, habits, and traditions.

Lipman argues that the pursuit of betterment of our thinking skills refers to a broader trend that we can witness throughout human history: namely effort to adapt and enhance our methodological and conceptual tools in relation to the changing physical and social environments. Many canonical works of Western philosophy fall in this category. Writings such as Descartes' *Discourse on Method*, Spinoza's *On the Improvement of the Understanding*, or Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* not only aim to establish novel abstract epistemic and ontological theoretical frameworks but also strive for the practical refinement of human reasoning and decision-making.⁴⁰⁷

Thus, philosophy represents a natural partner for teachers interested in teaching thinking skills and critical thinking. It is hard to imagine a discipline with more erudition in teaching how to arrive at true justified beliefs than

405 Jean PIAGET, *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child*, London 1928.

406 M. LIPMAN, *Thinking in Education*, pp. 26–28.

407 *Ibidem*, p. 203.

philosophy. And philosophy has a lot to offer here: rules of logical reasoning, the principles of sound argumentation, or the epistemic virtues that guide our thinking towards desirable ends. Moreover, conceptual analysis might help students better understand educational content and the broader context of the information they encounter during the learning process. In addition, analysis and a better grasp of the methods involved in the definition of technical/vernacular terms might have a positive impact on students' overall motivation and reinforce the sense of the meaningfulness of education in general. The art of dialogue is another concept that is firmly tied to the philosophical tradition. The game for giving and asking for reasons allows us to consider different perspectives and might inspire us to achieve more informed conclusions or decisions. Learning how to reason with peers also helps children to acquire vital social skills and promotes respect for others.⁴⁰⁸ P4C's emphasis on discussion and the social nature of human thinking reveals how deeply is Lipman's philosophical thinking rooted in the tradition of American pragmatism. Especially John Dewey's theory of inquiry leaves its mark on P4C's conception. According to Dewey, human thinking is not a solitary and subjective activity confined to the skull as Cartesians would have it. On the contrary, human cognition is characterized by dynamic social and intersubjective activity and is very much shaped by its natural environment, as well as its cultural milieu. Therefore, knowledge is not a product of reason ontologically detached from its milieu looking for eternal truths, but rather a dynamic process fundamentally embedded in nature which is constantly adapting to changes and synthesizing various informational sources. Dewey's understanding of adaptation does not entail the passive reception of external stimuli. Contrarily, living organisms adapt by active interaction with their environment. And this relationship is not one-way. In order to pursue their interests, organisms enter into complex interactions with their surroundings, proactively change their behaviour relative to the actual context and act as a ferment transforming and co-create their physical and social milieu. Knowledge as such functions as a value tag indicating the adaptive value of individual beliefs to solve various problems and cope with challenges posed by the social and physical environments. Human thinking might be characterized as the process of continuous adjustment and re-adjustment to changes happening in the world. And philosophy may play a vital role in this process. As Dewey puts it: *"If we are willing to conceive education as the process of forming fundamental dispositions, intellectual and emotional, toward nature and fellow-men, philosophy may even be defined as the general theory of education"*.⁴⁰⁹ The strong influence of Dewey's educational conception in P4C is traceable

408 Matthew LIPMAN, *Critical thinking – what can it be?*, Educational Leadership 46 (1), 1988, pp. 38–43.

409 John DEWEY, *Democracy and Education*, Hollywood 2011, p. 338.

also in Matthew Lipman's emphasis on social interaction in the development of human thinking and moral dispositions. The key role of mutual cooperation and discussion among students is not perceived by Lipman only as an effective activating teaching method but is of crucial importance for the acquisition of social skills, intellectual and moral virtues such as open-mindedness, respect for others or responsibility towards society and the community. As Martin Palecek demonstrates in his chapter (*Misinformation Proclivity as a Product of Cultural Evolution: Why Restrictions Cannot Work*), building a strong social fabric is crucial prerequisite for creating epistemic resistance against the threat of disinformation and fake news in society. Moreover, social interactions with peers scaffold the process of learning. As Dewey points out: "*the best and deepest moral training is precisely that which one gets through having to enter into proper relations with others in a unity of work and thought.*"⁴¹⁰ The prime position of discussion in the P4C education method toolbar is closely linked to the concept of Community of Inquiry (henceforth CoI).⁴¹¹ CoI refers to a collaborative learning environment, in which a group of individuals seeks to analyse and solve jointly a problem or situation in a structured manner. The term of CoI was originally coined by C.S. Peirce and John Dewey as an antithesis of rationalist theories of human knowledge construction. CoI emphasizes the social dimension of the emergence of human knowledge via social acts such as argumentation, joint empirical observation, conceptual analysis, evaluation, and justification.

A model example of CoI is a scientific community that purposefully builds up a platform of peer-reviewed scientific journals, conferences, and symposia around itself to facilitate and regulate the exchange of ideas among scientists. The dynamics of CoI lay the foundation for the emergence of theoretical paradigms that have withstood critical scrutiny by the scientific community. Their form is constantly subject to transformation due to new empirical data, instrumental and methodological innovations, or novel conceptual analyses. Nonetheless, what is deemed as proper knowledge is not determined in the Cartesian fashion – in the mind of individual observers –, but rather in the realm of intersubjective interactions.⁴¹²

Lipman deliberately takes the concept of CoI – just like John Dewey – out of the narrow scope of scientific practice and adapts its principles for educational purposes. According to Lipman, CoI might help to simulate a research environment in the classroom in which students, like academics, propose their hypotheses, persuade each other, evaluate arguments, and discuss solutions to particular research questions initially proposed by the teacher.⁴¹³

410 Idem, *My Pedagogic Creed*, *The School Journal* 54 (3), 1897, pp. 77–80.

411 M. LIPMAN, *Thinking in Education*, p. 20.

412 Michael PARDALES – Mark GIROD, *Community of Inquiry: Its past and present future*, *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 38, 2013, pp. 299–309.

413 M. LIPMAN, *Thinking in Education*, pp. 83–105

Mathew Lipman introduced the concept of P4C in the late 1960s and transformed this innovative method into a practical form during the 1970s with the establishment of The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) at Montclair State University in New Jersey. Lipman puts an emphasis on the importance of dialogue as a natural and effective educational tool best suitable for the needs of P4C. He and his colleagues started publishing educational materials in the form of short novels that aim to introduce traditional philosophical topics in a captivating and approachable fashion to students and help teachers to spark discussions about them in the classroom.⁴¹⁴

An illustrative example of such a methodological instrument represents Lipman's very first book in the tradition of P4C entitled *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery* which was published in 1970 and further revised in 1974.⁴¹⁵ This book is intended for children around ten years of age. It tells the story of a young boy named Harry who is mind-wandering during science class. Suddenly, he is brought out of his thoughts and asked the following question by the teacher: "What is it that has a long tail, and revolves about the sun once every 77 years?" Harry swiftly recalls the rule they learned in the last lesson that planets orbit the sun. Instead of correctly answering that it's Halley's Comet, he replies that it must be a planet. Classmates immediately burst into laughter and at that moment the bell starts ringing, marking the end of the lesson. This incident triggers a sequence of events in which Harry tries to find out where he went wrong. A moment of inattention and subsequent curiosity leads Harry and his friends to come across philosophical concepts such as truth, logic, causation, sufficient and necessary conditions, etc.

Emphasis is placed here on children's ability to think autonomously and their capacity to solve problems, thereby increasing children's sense of self-efficacy. As following excerpt from the text shows that Harry attempts to figure out why his answer wasn't correct all by himself by logical analysis and only then consults his results with others:

"So, there are things that revolve around the sun that aren't planets," Harry said to himself. 'All planets revolve around the sun, but not everything that revolves around the sun is a planet!' And then Harry had an idea. A sentence can't be reversed. If you put the last part of a sentence first, it'll no longer be true. For example, take the sentence 'All oaks are trees.' If you turn it around, it becomes 'All trees are oaks'. But that's false. Now, it's true that 'all planets revolve around the sun'. But if you turn

414 Idem, 1974, *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*, Montclair 1974; idem, *Lisa*, Montclair 1976; idem, *Suki*, Montclair 1978; idem, *Kio and Gus*, Montclair 1978; idem, *Mark*, Montclair 1980; idem, *Elfie*, Montclair 1987; idem, *Pixie*, Montclair 1981; idem, *Nous*, Montclair 1996.

415 Idem, *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*, Montclair 1974.

*the sentence around and say that 'all things that revolve around the sun are planets', then it's no longer true – it's false!"*⁴¹⁶

The story can act as a reservoir of ideas and situations that can be analysed together with students and offers plenty of material for classroom discussion. Dialogues in the book might serve as examples of how to raise meaningful questions, how to cultivate intellectual and moral virtues, reason correctly and engage in respectful dialogue with peers:

*"... they spent a long time maybe half an hour discussing where babies came from. 'Well, you didn't just think they came out of nowhere, did you?' Tony demanded. 'You can't get something out of nothing, you know!' 'Wait a minute,' objected Mickey. 'Since you're so smart, tell me where the world came from!' 'It was made by God,' Luther said. 'in the Bible, it says that in the beginning God made heaven and earth.' Harry was puzzled. 'If that's how it was made' he paused to search for words, 'then it really wasn't the beginning, was it?' Tony said, 'I once asked my father who made God, and he told me not to be such a smart aleck.' 'That's because God wasn't made, he was always there,' Bill put in. 'Mr. Bradley said the earth and the other planets were once part of the sun,' said Mickey. 'But that's the earth,' Harry answered, 'not the universe. What we're talking about is, how did the universe begin?' 'How do we know it began?' Tony asked. 'How do we know it wasn't always there?' 'How could anything always be there? Everything has to have a beginning' Luther insisted."*⁴¹⁷

Philosophical concepts mentioned in the novel are carefully linked to children's experiences and situations they might know from their everyday life. Philosophy – here primarily in the form of rules of formal and informal logic and conceptual analysis – is presented as a tool that may help students to solve and navigate their everyday problems:

*"I can't seem to express it,' said Fran. 'But you know, here I am, sitting in the back of the room, and you're up there at the front of the room. And what do you see? You see faces. And what do I see? I see the backs of people's heads.' 'And I'm sitting on the side of the room,' exclaimed Anne, 'and I see everyone from the side. I see their faces in profile.' 'Well, that's what I mean,' said Fran. 'We're looking at exactly the same people in exactly the same room, and yet what we actually see is altogether different.' 'So what you're saying' said Anne, 'is that each of us is in the same world, yet we see things altogether differently. Oh, I know that's so true, because when Laura and I go to art class together, and even when we choose exactly the same still life to do, her paintings come out altogether different from mine.'"*⁴¹⁸

In addition to original study texts, P4C authors also publish corresponding instruction manuals for teachers. This supporting material contains information about the main tenets of the P4C programme, guidelines on how to promote classroom discussions and tips on how to create an inclusive and

416 Ibidem, p. 2.

417 Ibidem, p. 65.

418 Ibidem, pp. 93–94.

welcoming classroom culture. Instruction manuals may also include detailed lesson plans, dialogue topics, or classroom activities.

Teacher as a Fellow: P4C and the Role of a Teacher

Imagine a game of tennis.⁴¹⁹ There are two players on both sides, the umpire (referee) is observing the game from the chair, coaches are instructing their players, line judges are focusing their minds on offside lines, ball boys and girls are patiently waiting for the ball to end up out of the court so they can pick it up and return it to the players. To whom on the court would you compare a schoolteacher teaching a P4C class? It might be tempting to liken the teacher to the umpire whose job is to control the course of the game: she awards points and gives a warning in case of violation of the rules and sportsmanship. But nothing could be further from the P4C principles. Teachers adhering to the P4C educational method should abstain from the authoritative position which is prevalent in traditional educational systems of CEE countries. P4C substantially transforms the role of the teacher: she is not to be a prime source of information lecturing an uneducated mass of students, but rather a more experienced member of the classroom collective who is first and foremost responsible for facilitating classroom discussions and proper functioning of the community of inquiry.⁴²⁰ A second option is to liken the teacher to a coach who instructs her disciple which tactic to choose to win the match. In the case of P4C class, the teacher might instruct students on which arguments or narrative tropes to use in order to persuade others. Obviously, this behaviour would be against the core values of P4C. Matthew Lipman – inspired by John Dewey’s educational conception – imbued the entire program with social values and skills such as active citizenship education, promotion of cooperative skills, respect for others or responsibility towards society and the community. Rather than giving tips on how to vanquish others, teachers should encourage their students to share their knowledge and skills with classmates in the first place. Perhaps surprisingly, the role of ball boys and girls during a tennis match seems closest to that of a teacher in a P4C lesson. This position corresponds to the non-authoritative approach of P4C, in which the teacher is another – more experienced – member of the community of inquiry, who may bring topics like balls into the community, but does not know in advance exactly how the game will develop and how it will end. When the discussion reaches an impasse, the teacher helps to set the chain of philosophical inquiry back in motion. The role of the teacher could be also likened to a line judge whose job is to call offside if a ball landed out

419 We would like to express our gratitude to Jason Buckley for this insightful metaphor.

420 Matthew LIPMAN, *Philosophy Goes to School*, Philadelphia 2010, pp. 151–160.

of the court. In the same way, one can think of a teacher as a line judge who is responsible to call a violation of the fundamental classroom rules, which are communicated in advance to all students. These violations include disrespect towards others, harassment, intimidation, and other infractions that may have a detrimental impact on the inclusive and respectful classroom climate and overall performance of CoI.⁴²¹

The characteristics of the teacher's role in P4C could be summarised in the following three points:

1. Introduction of topics and ideas: The teacher is responsible for introducing students to philosophical topics and concepts via various educational methods and mediums such as philosophical novels, stories, examples, songs, images, videos etc. The teacher should strive to present philosophical concepts and topics in an accessible way that is appropriate to the level of knowledge and experience of the students.⁴²²
2. Facilitating discussions: The teacher is supposed to follow the course of the discussion and – if need be – complement it with new impulses, insights, and context, help students express their opinions and support them in argumentation.⁴²³
3. Promoting critical, creative, and caring thinking: The teacher encourages a reflective type of thinking in students. She analyses with students the correctness, soundness or persuasiveness of arguments or conclusions used in dialogues. The teacher prepares and moderates the lesson in such a way as to allow the pupils ample space for their own expression and experimentation that will lead to the development of their creative abilities. Teachers should also promote respectful behaviour in their students, which is a crucial prerequisite for an effective praxis of dialogue and CoI.⁴²⁴

The Development of the Philosophy for Children in the Czech Republic

Compared with the USA and other Western countries, the history of promoting P4C in Central Europe is much shorter. The first mutual contact can be traced back to the turn of the 1980s and 1990s when the change in political conditions made it possible to obtain information about teaching trends from foreign sources and freely discuss the educational system's reform. Although the social mood of the 1990s generally favoured

421 Idem, *Thinking in Education*, pp. 111–116.

422 Ibidem, pp. 162–166.

423 Ibidem, p. 98.

424 Ibidem, pp. 197–203.

attempts to introduce innovative and alternative pedagogical methods, the first tangible results of the introduction of P4C into practice took place only after 2002. This is the year when the first courses and seminars were held at the Faculty of Theology of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (hereinafter FoT USB). It was prof. Michel Sasseville from Laval University, Québec, Canada who helped to introduce the method and lead the first seminars. Since 2004, elective courses dealing with P4C have become part of the curricula of individual study programmes (*Teaching and Educational Guidance*). In the same year, Petr Bauman from the Department of Pedagogy of the University of South Bohemia became the coordinator of the implementation of P4C, and the Faculty of Education of the University of South Bohemia (hereinafter FoE USB) also contributed to the development of the project. In the following years, there has been a boom of activities, including workshops, colloquia, conferences, philosophy cafés, and single-day or long-term intensive educational seminars for university students, teachers, and the wider public. In 2010, the *Centre for Philosophy for Children* was founded and immediately started cooperation with foreign institutions working with the method of P4C. The Centre aims to organize a wide range of activities and to spread awareness of this educational approach in the Czech Republic.⁴²⁵

For the analysis of the extent to which the Philosophy for Children has developed in higher education, it is essential to know that since 2005 there has been a comprehensive module of courses offered at the FoT and the FoE USB. It includes, among others, the following courses: the more theoretically oriented *Philosophy in Education* and *Philosophy for Children: Issues in Educational Research*,⁴²⁶ the more practically oriented *Philosophy for Children in Theory and Practice* and *Philosophy for Children: Practical Training*,⁴²⁷ or those requiring students to experience teaching practice outside of the university – *Philosophy*

425 As a part of the Centre's project a documentary film directed by Lucie Králová was created. It was broadcast on national television – Czech Television – and at festivals (Academia film Olomouc in 2013).

426 A look at the syllabus makes it clear that courses introduce the basic principles of P4C along with its fundamental theoretical and pedagogical-philosophical foundations (J. Dewey, M. Lipman). Simultaneously, it gives students the opportunity to understand issues in the field that are currently being addressed internationally.

427 According to the available syllabi, these courses aim to combine the theoretical background of the P4C with practical skills. Group simulations of activities applicable in practice are designed to prepare students for real teaching situations. It also teaches the students to effectively transfer the P4C principles into the classroom. The courses systematically develop the ability of facilitating philosophical dialogue and the ability to intervene in an appropriate (deepening, not manipulative) manner.

for Children: Teaching Practice.⁴²⁸ The courses mentioned above are part of various programmes and specializations in full-time and combined study forms at both undergraduate and graduate levels. It gives them the potential to influence a wide range of students from various fields of study (for example *Free Time Education, Introductory Teacher Training Course in Social Sciences, Nursery School Teaching, Philosophy and Religious Studies, or Theology*, etc.). Students of all specializations at the University of South Bohemia have been writing their bachelor's, master's, and even dissertation⁴²⁹ theses on P4C for many years. However, a look at the database of university qualification theses shows that the topics of P4C have become widespread at other higher education institutions in the Czech Republic too.⁴³⁰ The effort to establish P4C in the academic milieu of the Czech Republic after 2000 is also evidenced by a growing number of thematically relevant monographs,⁴³¹ edited volumes,⁴³² and conference papers. However, the demand for more review studies or research texts in this field remains, as the number of articles in peer-reviewed pedagogy, psychology, or philosophy journals is low.⁴³³ Since the end of 2007, the website (www.p4c.cz) was launched thanks to the efforts of people around the USB. It serves, among other things, as a source of didactic materials. A list of tips is available, comprising several dozen texts in various world languages (including the ones translated into Czech, published between 2010–2012 through the *Centre for Philosophy for Children*). Methodological manuals, good practice guides, and P4C stories archive prove that the whole project of teaching P4C at the USB

428 The internship serves as a space for the application of previously acquired knowledge and skills. Students can check whether they have mastered the principles of P4C to the point where the quality of their performance does not suffer even in a potentially stressful situation. Entering the classroom will let them see if they can present a topic to children in an attractive manner, to facilitate discussion etc. The syllabi for all the above courses are available at https://wstag.jcu.cz/portal/studium/prohlizeni.html?pc_pagenavigationalstate=AAAAAQAGMjMxNDE1EwEAAAABAahzdGF0ZUtleQA-AAAEAFc05MjIzMzcyMDM2ODU0NzcxOTU4AAAAA**#prohlizeniSearchResult.

429 Richard MACKŮ, *Rozvoj kompetence k řešení problémů na kurzech Filozofie pro děti a Výchovy zážitkem*, Dissertation Thesis, Brno 2014.

430 Database of university qualification theses in the Czech Republic: <https://theses.cz/>.

431 Petr BAUMAN, *Filozofický dialog jako cesta k prevenci násilí*, České Budějovice 2013

432 Idem, *Cíle základního vzdělávání a možnosti jejich naplnění prostřednictvím výuky filosofie na prvním a druhém stupni ZŠ*, in: Renata Jandová (ed.), *Příprava učitelů a aktuální proměny v základním vzdělávání*, České Budějovice 2005, pp. 46–52; Petr BAUMAN, *Filosofické otázky v kurikulu základní školy*, in: Josef Maňák – Tomáš Janík (eds.), *Problémy kurikula základní školy*, Brno 2006, pp. 52–64; Petr BAUMAN – Radek CVACH, *Filozofie pro děti. Výukový dialog trochu jinak*, in: Renata Jandová – Ludmila Prokešová et al., *Šedesát let vzdělávání pedagogů na jihu Čech v reflexi současné reformy školství*, České Budějovice 2008, pp. 131–145; Richard MACKŮ – Iva ŽLÁBKOVÁ, *Filosofie pro děti – animace k osobní reflexi v „hledajícím společenství“*, in: Jan Činčera – Michal Kaplánek – Jan Sýkora (eds.), *Tři cesty k pedagogice volného času*, Liberec 2009, pp. 107–111; Petr BAUMAN (ed.), *Kritické a tvořivé myšlení: není to málo? Rozvoj myšlení ve filozofických, teologických, psychologických a pedagogických souvislostech*, České Budějovice 2013; idem, *Filozofický dialog jako prostředek orchestrace komponent kritického myšlení*, in: Ján Kaliský (ed.), *Kritické myslenie a filozofická reflexia v edukácii*, Banská Bystrica 2020, pp. 9–28.

433 Lukáš MAREŠ – Václav PELTAN – Eliška HAVLOVÁ, *Filosofická praxe v České republice*, *Filosofie dnes* 12 (2), 2020, pp. 41–61.

is strongly influenced by the founders of the *Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children*, Matthew Lipman and Ann Margaret Sharp, and by the pedagogical ideas of American pragmatism, combined with Christian religious values. The site also includes a discussion forum for teachers involved with P4C at various levels of the educational system. Yet the activity on the once vibrant forum and regularly updated website is now less (and the social media platforms are also updated irregularly).

Within the two decades of P4C 's development in the Czech Republic, it is possible to find hundreds of teachers from pre-primary to tertiary education who have attempted to put the method into practice. Their efforts have often been isolated though. Nowadays, new projects exist that systematically take care of further development and popularization of P4C. The *pinkbox* platform can be highlighted, offering educational and philosophical workshops for children and adults. Its founder, Jiří Bartoník, introduces books by the Parisian publishing house "Les petits Platon," offering dozens of titles for children about prominent figures in the history of philosophy. The volumes are compact, presenting the main idea of specific philosophical figures from history on no more than twenty pages and with attractive illustrations.⁴³⁴ Another worth mentioning institution from the non-profit and civil society sector is the human rights organization Člověk v tísní (henceforth *People in Need*), specifically its educational program *Varianty*. The P4C method has been used here since 2014 through the approach of the UK lecturer Jason Buckley. His extensive database of materials, some of which have been translated into Czech,⁴³⁵ serves as a significant source of inspiration in educational seminars or webinars, intensive courses, and long-term training offered by *People in Need*. Over the last few years, several hundred teachers in the Czech Republic have been trained in the method⁴³⁶ and provided with supportive mentoring by the *People in Need's* lecturers. As a result of the long-term cooperation with the teachers, a new handbook with teaching materials was created in 2022⁴³⁷. Some of the university teachers and students continue to collaborate

434 For the updated list of books that have been published, cf. <https://www.pinkbox.org/knihy>.

435 Jason BUCKLEY, *Pocket P4C – Getting Started with Philosophy for Children*, Chelmsford 2012, in Czech as idem, *P4C do kapsy: začínáme s filozofií pro děti*, Praha 2015; idem, *Thinkers' Games: Making Thinking Physical*, Chelmsford 2012, in Czech as idem, *Myšlení hrou: filozofie v pohybu*, Praha 2015; idem, *How to Embed P4C in Your Curriculum*, Chelmsford 2016 in Czech as idem, *P4C ve výuce: jak začlenit filozofii pro děti do kurikula*, Praha 2018.

436 One of the authors of this article, Michal Rigel, was an active participant in a two-year project designed to comprehensively prepare participants to acquire competencies in P4C. This subsequently led to the creation of the P4C course at his home institution. It is taught in the winter semester of the academic year 2021/2022 for students of the undergraduate programme in Social Sciences with a focus on Education and the graduate programme in Teaching at Upper Primary Schools – Specialization in Civics.

437 For a methodological handbook with detailed lesson plans, cf. Veronika ENDRŠTOVÁ – Petra SKALICKÁ (eds.), *Filozofie pro děti: praktická příručka s lekcemi do hodin*, Praha 2022, https://www.peopleinneed.net/media/publications/1933/file/cvt_filozofie_pro_deti_prirucka_2022_final.pdf

on the development of the method even further. The most recent notable achievement is a publication of an evaluation report from a project carried out by *People in Need* between 2020–2022. The project's main task was to introduce the P4C method into teaching in several primary schools across the Czech Republic. As a part of the project activities, the team of Klára Šeďová from the Institute of Educational Sciences at Masaryk University in Brno carried out a comprehensive data collection (video recordings of lessons, interviews with project participants, etc.). Through long-term monitoring, they attempted to capture, among other things, the impact of teaching inspired by the principles of P4C on pupils' social skills and abilities to engage in dialogue, as well as the development of communication between pupils or between pupils and teachers.⁴³⁸

The Development of the Philosophy for Children in Poland

In Poland, P4C was introduced to teachers at the beginning of the 1990s, largely thanks to the initiative of Robert Piłat (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw). Those interested in this innovative pedagogical method experienced it in a complex manner for the first time in 1993 at a practically oriented seminar organized by the *Fundacja Edukacja dla Demokracji* (hereinafter *Education for Democracy Foundation*) in cooperation with the Department of Philosophy of the Social Sciences Centre of the Warsaw University of Technology. The workshops were conducted together by Robert Piłat and Berrie Heesen (<https://kinderfilosofie.nl/>), a Dutch philosopher and a prominent populariser of P4C at the European level.

Thus, the beginning period is similar, but when compared to the Czech Republic, things are moving considerably faster, and the method has found its followers sooner. As early as 1993, the *Podyplomowe Studium dla Nauczycieli "Filozofia w Szkole"* (Postgraduate Studies for Teachers of "Philosophy in School") was founded, operating at the *Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences*. This study programme produced a new generation of young enthusiasts who have been systematically developing P4C in Poland

438 Klára ŠEĎOVÁ – Ivo ROZMAHEL – Jakub VLČEK, *Závěrečná evaluační zpráva: ACP4C – Být občánem*, Brno 2022, <https://www.phil.muni.cz/vyzkum/publikace/prehled/2224760> (for a video capturing the presentation where the evaluation team comments on the main findings, see <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=979248066040376&ref=sharing>). This is the first research of the kind in the Czech Republic (quite extensive elaborated studies measuring the impact of the use of P4C on pupils already exist abroad, see e.g. Education Endowment Foundation (UK) – Durham University, 2015, *Philosophy for Children: Evaluation Report and Executive Summary*, https://dera.ioe.ac.uk//32011/1/EEF_Project_Report_PhilosophyForChildren.pdf).

since then.⁴³⁹ Matthew Lipman, the founding father of the P4C, is a determining force for the development of the P4C movement in Poland. This is evident in Robert Piłat's pioneering paper,⁴⁴⁰ drawing on Lipman's work, but it is also apparent from the shape of the educational programme, developed during the 1990s.⁴⁴¹ The translation of Matthew Lipman's foundational book in 1996⁴⁴² further indicates the direct influence of his original version of P4C on the formation of its Polish equivalent.

One of the pioneering and still prominent figures of P4C movement in Polish academia is Aldona Pobjewska (University of Łódź), who encountered the method for the first time at the above-mentioned Postgraduate School in the first half of the 1990s. She started to like the method and published dozens of texts in the following decades.⁴⁴³ She takes Lipman's position as her starting point but modifies it and works with different age groups from primary school to the University of the Third Age (including teachers and students of teaching). Currently, she is also active through *Stowarzyszenie Edukacji Filozoficznej "Phronesis"* (Society for Philosophical Education "Phronesis", hereinafter *Phronesis*), which took over the implementation of the programme from the *Education for Democracy Foundation* in 2002. *Phronesis* generally aims to popularize and implement the P4C method in schools. *Phronesis* has maintained the continuity of the original approach in organizing workshops, conferences, seminars, training, exhibitions, etc. It also plays a vital role in the Polish context by translating or creating methodological materials and lesson proposals.⁴⁴⁴ The continuity with the activities of the 1990s is also

439 It includes the organisation of trainings, workshops, educational courses, or publication activities. This started from the very beginning of the 1990s, particularly through short popularisation articles, bulletins, and newsletters with translated material (but also with the Polish authors' own work). The following works are noteworthy: Beata ELWICH – Anna ŁAGODZKA – Robert PIŁAT (eds.), *Filozofia dla Dzieci: Informacja o programie*, Warszawa 1996; Hanna DIDUSZKO – Beata ELWICH – Anna ŁAGODZKA – Robert PIŁAT – Grażyna TWORKIEWICZ-BIENIAŚ (eds.), *Filozofia dla Dzieci w Polsce*, Warszawa 1996; Beata ELWICH – Anna ŁAGODZKA (eds.), *Filozofia dla Dzieci. Wybór artykułów*, Warszawa 1996. A detailed list of approximately a hundred works in the field of P4C: <http://phronesis.org.pl/literatura-przedmiotu/publikacje-teoretyczne/>.

440 Robert PIŁAT, *Filozofowanie z dziećmi M. Lipmana Jako Program Etyki Dla szkół Podstawowych*, Etyka 26, 1993, pp. 135–143.

441 Beata ELWICH – Anna ŁAGODZKA – Brygida PYTKOWSKA-KAPULKIN, *Filozoficzne dociekania z dziećmi i młodzieżą*, Opis programu edukacyjnego. Program dopuszczony do użytku szkolnego DKW-4014-28/99, 1999, <http://phronesis.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/program.pdf>.

442 Matthew LIPMAN – Fredericks OSCANYAN – Ann SHARP, *Filozofia w szkole*, Warszawa 1996.

443 For one of her last major works, see Aldona POBOJEWSKA, *Edukacja do samodzielności Warsztaty z dociekań filozoficznych. Teoria i metodyka*, Łódź 2019.

444 *Phronesis. 30 nagrodzonych konspektów wprowadzających zapisy Modelu MKM w rzeczywistość zajęć szkolnych*, 2013, <http://phronesis.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/6-KONSPEKTY-WPROWADZAJ%20C4%84CE-ZAPISY-MODELU-MKM-W-RZECZYWISTO%20C5%9A%20C4%86-ZAJ%20C4%98%20C4%86-SZKOLNYCH.pdf>. The role of the association lies not only in popularization activities or practical hints for teachers, but also in analyses and research studies, see for example the one dealing with "thinking" competences among pupils of primary schools. *Phronesis. Model Minimum Kompetencji Myślowych*, 2013, <http://phronesis.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Model-Minimum-Kompetencji-My%20C5%9Blowych.pdf>.

reflected in the publishing of the journal *Filozofik*, which builds on the idea of the international philosophical journal 100, prepared directly at the turn of the year 2000 by primary school children in nine European countries, including Poland.⁴⁴⁵ Regarding the market for magazines and books, it seems to be substantially larger than the Czech market, especially after 2003, when the first publishing attempts of Polish authors appeared.⁴⁴⁶ In addition, there are numerous translated books available: between 2010 and 2016, books by Oscar Brenifier from France with the sub-title *Children Philosophize* were published by Zakamarki Publishing House, and even before that, a series of books for the youngest readers “*Philosophical Fairy Tales*” by another French author Michel Piquemal appeared in Poland. P4C is a method that can also be used for working with teenage children, and the Polish book market offers several titles for them too.⁴⁴⁷

P4C is equally widespread in academia and the non-governmental and non-profit sectors in Poland.⁴⁴⁸ Alongside the coryphaei mentioned above of P4C in Poland, Robert Piłat and Aldona Pobjewska, other figures dealing with the issue can be found in Polish academia. For example, Anna Malitowska from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań organized philosophy lessons with other collaborators with kindergarten children for an entire year.⁴⁴⁹ The preschool was coincidentally located outside the town where Anna Malitowska

445 Joeri FOLMAN – Berrie HEESEN, *Children Waiting Philosophy for «100»: The aims and developments of journal «100»: The European Journal for Children Doing Philosophy*, *The Community of Inquiry Journal* 19 (2), 2000, pp. 115–123. For information about the journal *Filozofik*, see the *Phronesis* website: <http://phronesis.org.pl/gazeta-filozoficzna/>.

446 Marcin FABJAŃSKI, *Wędrowki filozoficzne*, Warszawa 2003; Maria SZCZEPKA-PUSTKOWSKA, *Tropami dziecięcych pytań filozoficznych*, in: Dorota KLUS-STANISKA (ed.), *Światy dziecięcych znaczeń*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 202–232; Maciej WOJTYSZKO, *Bromba i filozofia*, Warszawa 2004. The youngest generation of authors is represented for instance by Łukasz KRZYWOŃ, *Filozofuj z dziećmi. Poradnik do prowadzenia filozoficznych dociekań z dziećmi i młodzieżą*, Lublin 2019; idem (ed.), *Filozofuj z dziećmi 2. 100 pomysłów na dociekania filozoficzne z dziećmi*, Lublin 2021.

447 Stephen LAW, *Wycieczki filozoficzne*, Warszawa 2007. A large number of visually attractive and child-friendly books to arouse interest in philosophy among children of different ages is also collected by the *Phronesis* website: <http://phronesis.org.pl/materialy-dydaktyczne/ksiazka-dla-dzieci-i-mlodziezy/>. A “philosophy corner” for parents and children, containing information about new books in the field as well as reviews of forthcoming books, is also offered by another Polish popular and educational magazine, *Filozofuj!* – <https://filozofuj.eu/filozoficzny-kacik-rodzica/>. Finally, for an updated list of philosophy books for children, see <https://www.zakamarki.pl/tag-produktu/filozoficzna/>.

448 The civic sector offers a variety of creative activities, including competitions, games, workshops, and more traditional educational courses organised by the following associations: *Aqueduct*, *Generator Myśli Humanistycznej*, *Pracownia Filozoficzna Eureka*, *Akademia Młodego Filozofa* etc. A particularly noteworthy and original project is the LEGO-LOGOS programme by Jarosław Spychała, or philosophising through LEGO bricks, for more details, see Paweł WALCZAK, *Build What You Think: Philosophical Education Using the LEGO-LOGOS Method*, *Analiza i Egzystencja* 58, 2022, pp. 93–110.

449 Anna MALITOWSKA – Karolina BUDZIŃSKA, *Przedszkolaki filozofują*, *Filozofia publiczna i Edukacja Demokratyczna* 1 (2), 2012, pp. 213–214; eosdem, *Filozofowanie z dziećmi: Co czyni rzecz zwyczajną nadzwyczajną?*, *Filozofia Publiczna i Edukacja Demokratyczna* 1 (1), 2011, pp. 162–164.

works, precisely in nearby Zielona Góra. P4C is also represented at the local university by Paweł Walczak, who has been popularising the method for a long time, both in practice, e.g. by organising the Socrates Cafe, etc., and in theory through a series of academic texts.⁴⁵⁰ The work of Jadwiga Guerrero van der Meijden (Jagiellonian University in Kraków) also deserves attention as she used the method during several years of primary school practice and now, after moving into the academic world, has elaborated her experience into a comprehensive book.⁴⁵¹ The P4C can also be found in other universities of major cities in Poland – Szczecin, Łódź, Wrocław or Gdańsk, etc. – as a tool for answering the general question “how to actually conceptualize the process of education in the field of philosophy.”⁴⁵²

Conclusion

In Poland and the Czech Republic, P4C was introduced to professional teachers in the early 1990s. Although the initial period overlaps, it is easier in Poland to find enthusiastic followers and develop the method already in the decade’s first half. It was only after 2002 when P4C took root in the Czech Republic. In the early years of development, Matthew Lipman’s original approach was a determining force in Poland and also in the Czech Republic

450 Paweł WALCZAK, *Analysis of the State of Research on the Effectiveness of the Philosophical Inquiry Method*, Przegląd Badań Edukacyjnych 32, 2021, pp. 215–228; idem, *Dziecko i filozofia. Spór o filozofowanie dzieci*, Analiza i Egzystencja 38, 2017, pp. 5–19; idem, *Wpływ dociekań filozoficznych na rozwój intelektualny dzieci*, Analiza wyników badań, Kultura i edukacja 117 (3), 2017, pp. 128–142; idem, *Filozofia dla dzieci (P4C) jako trening aretologiczny*, in: Iwona Jazukiewicz – Ewa Rojewska (eds.), *Sprawności moralne jako przedmiot refleksji wychowawczej*, Szczecin 2018, pp. 115–132; idem, *Why Piaget Does Not Philosophize? Critical Discussion of Gareth B. Mathews with the Piagetan Concept of Cognitive Development*, Childhood & Philosophy 15, 2019, pp. 1–25; idem, *Importance of Teaching Philosophy and Ethics in the Light of the Challenges of Future Education*, Future Human Image 14, 2020, pp. 102–107.

451 Jadwiga GUERRERO VAN DER MEIJDEN, *Jak psuć dzieci Platonem i Boecjuszem*, Kraków 2021.

452 In 2015, the conference titled *Child and philosophy in the context of early education* took place in Szczecin where Katarzyna Ciarcińska, for example, is partly focused on the topic. Two years later, in 2017, the series *How to Teach Philosophy and Ethics at School?* started in Gdańsk (where Maria Szczep-ska-Pustkowska may serve as a personalisation of the effort). At the University of Łódź, P4C is also popular due to the influential figure of Aldona Pobjewska. Hence the optional course *Philosophizing with Children* is an integral part of the study plans (teacher Anna Buła has also been active in this field for a long time, see Anna, BUŁA, *Rozwijanie wiedzy społeczno moralnej uczniów klas początkowych przez filozofowanie*, Łódź 2006, for the course syllabus, cf. <https://usosweb.uni.lodz.pl/kontroler.php?action=katalog2/przedmioty/pokazPrzedmiot&kod=0700-AD0027>). Students at the University of Zielona Góra also have the opportunity to choose the *Philosophizing with Children* course (Paweł Walczak as a teacher, cf. <https://webapps.uz.zgora.pl/syl/index.php?/course/showCourseDetails /1167699>). This option is available in Głogów (*Philosophizing with children workshops* – https://pwsz.glogow.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/P4a_Warsztaty_filozofowanie_dzieci.pdf). Discussions on theoretical and practical questions of the P4C method are also taking place in Wrocław <http://www.nauczaniefilozofii.uni.wroc.pl/>. Finally postgraduate studies dealing with topic are also run at the Faculty of Administration and Social Sciences at Warsaw University of Technology or the Institute of Applied Social Science, Warsaw University.

(even though none of his major works were translated into Czech – unlike the Polish case). Nowadays, there are multiple inspirational sources, and P4C seems to be more diverse. It is also due to the NGO's contribution to the popularisation of the method (*Člověk v tísni* – *People in Need* is playing a central role in the Czech Republic whereas *Stowarzyszenie Edukacji Filozoficznej "Phronesis"* – *Society for Philosophical Education "Phronesis"* in Poland). The former started to promote P4C later and takes it as one of many activities; the latter has been dealing with P4C exclusively and for a longer time.

P4C appears to be equally widespread in academia and the non-governmental sector of the Czech Republic and Poland. However, while the centre of activity in academia is evenly distributed in Poland, the University of South Bohemia primarily secured P4C in the Czech Republic. Implementing P4C training into the study plans of university programmes is limited in both countries. Still, the establishment of the P4C comprehensive module of courses at the University of South Bohemia speaks in favour of the Czech Republic. On the other hand, the number of scholarly papers in Poland surpasses the Czech ones significantly. All information mentioned above indicates that P4C is relatively well known to the community of teachers and the general public in Poland and the Czech Republic. In none of the countries is it an integral part of the practice in state-organised primary schools however (for instance, in 2015, fewer than ten Polish schools included regular teaching of philosophy courses).⁴⁵³

The inclusion of the P4C method in the courses offered by the faculties of education is essential for the further development of the P4C method. In particular, targeting the next generation of teachers can effectively increase the number of teachers aware of P4C principles and the benefits of P4C implementation in the classroom. Putting this into practice does not necessarily mean dedicating a specific subject to the teaching of P4C. It also means adopting Socratic questioning, creating a supportive environment for dialogue, and fostering the value of collaboration and mutual respect.

One of the strategies for inflating the popularity of the P4C among educators may be its connection with the topic of critical thinking, which is often presented as a key competence for the 21st century. As some studies show, the teaching of P4C may positively affect the development of students' reasoning skills and critical thinking across age categories.⁴⁵⁴ Including P4C courses among the faculties of education at Czech and Polish universities can be justified precisely as a method of acquiring critical thinking skills. The introduction of P4C as one of the tools for reasoning, argumentative,

453 Instytut badań edukacyjnych. 2015. *Badanie nauczania filozofii w gimnazjach i szkołach ponadgimnazjalnych*, <http://eduentuzjasci.pl/images/stories/publikacje/IBE-raport-nauczanie-filozofii-zal4.pdf>.

454 *Philosophy for Children: Evaluation Report and Executive Summary*, Education Endowment Foundation (UK) – Durham University: 2015, p. 39, https://dera.ioe.ac.uk//32011/1/EEF_Project_Report_PhilosophyForChildren.pdf.

and critical thinking competencies among the next generation of teachers is an essential prerequisite for a greater spread of P4C teaching. Graduates of pedagogical faculties can then include P4C elements in “traditional” teaching methods, familiarize their colleagues with critical thinking and P4C method, initiate the implementation of P4C methods in the curriculum etc.

Words: 7 843

Characters: 44 236

8 Digitisation of Cultural Heritage and its Interpretation through Augmented Reality on the Example of the Baroque Complex Kuks

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This article deals with the digitisation of cultural heritage and its interpretation through augmented reality in the example of the Baroque complex Kuks. The first part of the text deals with the building activities of Count Franz Anton von Sporck, who built a spa, a hospital and a space for the guests' entertainment as a theatre, a racetrack and also places of the spiritual dimension in Kuks. Part of the buildings was rich sculptural decoration.⁴⁵⁵ The second part examines the basic need for digitalising cultural heritage and its interpretation using augmented reality. Digital technology, such as laser scanning and photogrammetry, is used to digitise cultural sites, including large-scale areas, as seen in the example of the digitisation of the Kuks area. The text also explains the concept of augmented reality and how to use it to protect historical places covering the physical environment with digital content and enabling a consuming user's experience. And finally, the article examines how to combine 3D scanning and augmented reality to capture precisely the monuments and buildings' details and enable future generations to communicate with the past innovatively.

Even in the present technical time, when pupils and students have incredible possibilities and can use any technologies, classic paper textbooks are still integral part of teaching. These are not always very attractive and it is necessary to use what the youngest generation is intimately familiar with, i.e., mobile phones, tablets, it means devices they use daily and that they know so well. Children usually remember an interactive experience better. Available technology can make the different historical periods more familiar, now we can use augmented reality for the baroque complex Kuks but also for prehistoric archaeological park Všeřtary or medieval castle Potštejn in East Bohemia or the Czechoslovak military fortress Hanička from the period of the First Czechoslovak Republic. We can also mention the majestic and mysterious castle Trosky or to set off for a virtual tour through the Broumov monastery that is a national cultural monument and a monumental example of Czech baroque architecture. It is even possible to set off to the Polish border area and explore the underground city called Osówka.

⁴⁵⁵ D. Ž. BOR [own name Vladislav Zadrobílek], *František Antonín hrabě Špork. Významný mecenáš barokní kultury v Čechách*, Praha 1999, p. 8.

In the past, education was oriented especially on the teacher's presentation with use of a textbook and respective images or photos, which nowadays in the world of modern technologies can be completed with another element, especially interactivity. Modern technologies enter school classes and thus can help make history more familiar for the youngest generation.

In the Hradec Králové region we have developed a mobile application Visit. More that uses augmented reality to present historical monuments. It can be activated with a smartphone or tablet. The very first monument transferred to the mobile phone screens was the baroque complex Kuks. Thanks to the mobile application everybody can easily travel back in time and view not only the hospital but also its surroundings, as well as the surrounding landscape including the long non-existent castle on the left bank of the River Elbe, which was transferred to the application.

Since 2019, pupils, students, and visitors of the complex Kuks can make use of augmented reality and then with the use of a mobile phone screen they can move some centuries back in time. The idea of using modern technology is applicable for the development of tourism and can also be used in schools, because an experience within augmented reality is easier to remember for pupils and students. Development of the Visit. More application was ordered by the Hradec Králové region and via a mobile device it displays the place as it would have been perceived by the 18th-century visitor. The user can enjoy a unique view of the past including a professional explanation. In 2009 the Hradec Králové region was the very first region of the Czech Republic that realized a project of sightseeing tours with the use of augmented reality.

Creator of the Baroque Complex Kuks, Count Franz Anton von Sporck

The presence of the Sporck family in the Czech lands is set by the war events of the 17th century. General Jan Sporck was born in Westerloh in Westfalen, probably in 1595 and thanks to his excellent strategic thinking and military foresight he moved up from the position of a common soldier to the position of a general. On 12th October 1647 he was promoted by Emperor Ferdinand III to the position of an imperial baron and obtained the crown estate of Lysá nad Labem. His war experience and foresight helped General Jan Sporck succeed in battles against the Turks in 1663–1664. In 1666, Emperor Leopold I made him a hereditary count and thus finished the establishment of the family founder in the highest circles in the Czech lands. Besides social recognition, although his competitors reminded others of the family's rural origin that Sporck was not ashamed of, the newly appointed count presented himself as a skilful businessman and householder when he gained several Czech manors and castles. His financial background enabled his son Franz Anton von Sporck to

dedicate himself to extensive patronage and building activities.⁴⁵⁶

The history of the baroque complex in Kuks indirectly started in 1662 when Count Franz Anton von Sporck was born in Lysá nad Labem. Consequently, he was educated in his father's castle in Heřmanův Městec where he attended the local town school, since he was eight years old, he had been educated by Jesuits in Kutná Hora and since he was thirteen, he had attended lectures at the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Law in Prague. In 1679, General Count Jan Sporck died in Heřmanův Městec and his son Franz Anton von Sporck gained considerable family property, including Lysá nad Labem, Malešov, Konojedy and Choustníkovo Hradiště, a family palace in Prague and a large sum of money. After completing the grand tour in 1680–1681, during which he was staying in Rome, he travelled to Madrid through Torino and southern France and after that he stayed in Paris, then visited London, The Hague and travelled back from Brussels to Czechia. He travelled to France again at the end of spring of 1682 when he visited Paris and was highly impressed by the court of Louis XIV and this experience determined his further activities.⁴⁵⁷ After being declared of full age, he started to administer his inheritance of the estate of Lysá nad Labem, Choustníkovo Hradiště, Malešov and Konojedy.

Part of his estate of Choustníkovo Hradiště was the municipality of Kuks. This place with springs with healing waters greatly attracted Franz Anton von Sporck and he decided to construct a spa on the banks of the River Elbe that would become centre of the spa and social life. The prestige of the spa was essential for Sporck and he engaged top specialists not only in the area of balneology but naturally also from the area of construction. The attempt to construct a world-renowned spa was probably related not only with what he has seen abroad during his travels, but also the fact that the spa in Kuks could become means of admiration and recognition of the count's founding activities and could add more glamour to the recently obtained county.

At the same time, besides the social prestige, the spa was a meeting place of the social elite of that period, a fact that Sporck was most certainly aware of. With this intention in mind, he started to create generous construction plans to build this new social centre. Besides the construction activities in Kuks, in 1705 he founded a monastery of Annunciates in nearby Choustníkovo Hradiště. Later, Sporck's elder daughter, the highly educated Marie Eleonora Franziska became the abbess of the monastery. Besides the extensive construction plans of the Kuks spa, Sporck did not forget the balneological aspects either; he contacted the top specialists of that period among others also Jan Frantisek Low from Erlsfeld (1648–1725), a doctor, lawyer and multiple rector at the Prague

456 Ibidem.

457 Jiří KAŠE – Petr KOTLÍK, *Braunův Betlém. Drama krajiny a umění v proměnách času*, Praha – Litomyšl 1999, p. 11.

university and also repeatedly elected dean of its Faculty of Medicine.⁴⁵⁸

In 1696 a committee consisting of four doctors studied the sources and issued a certificate that later in the same year was summarized in a printed publication by a member of the committee Karel Valentin Kirchmayer from Reichwitz. It can be supposed that the original spa operated in Kuks in the summer of 1695 and the initial construction works were finalized in 1697. It must be said that the construction works had not yet been finished also because in 1697 Kuks was struck by a flood that destroyed the newly constructed bridge and kennel. It is obvious that the construction of the spa in Kuks was really a long-time project that lasted approximately from 1694 for the following 30 years until 1724. In 1697 a new central chapel of the Assumption of Our Lady was finished above the healing spring in place of the previous wooden building and on the right a Pub of the Golden Sun was opened that contributed to the guests' comfort.⁴⁵⁹ After 1700 the area was decorated by fountains and a swimming pool under the staircase of the spa was filled with water led by tubes. Accommodation facilities were constructed for the comfort of the guests and spa procedures were carried out in several places. For the amusement of the spa guests, a summer residence and a pigeon house were finished in 1700 on the right bank of the River Elbe. Of course, the area was decorated by statues. In 1701 a windmill was built and one year later also a wooden theatre next to the Pub of the Golden Sun.⁴⁶⁰ The fact that Franz Anton von Sporck perceived the newly constructed spa as a centre of social life of national importance is evident by the construction of the wooden theatre where groups of comedians acted in their plays, but that at the time of its greatest popularity it also hosted opera companies. The first reference of a theatre performance was made in relation with consecration of the chapel of the Assumption of Our Lady on 15th August 1701. Other amusement facilities that Sporck had built constantly were tree stands, caves, game reserves, fountains, and sculptural decoration.⁴⁶¹ From 1703 Sporck constructed racecourses and a year later the temporary wooden spa building was replaced by a brick building and ten new guesthouses were constructed.

Franz Anton von Sporck saw the improvement of Kuks complex as an essential and prestigious matter and part of his family's presentation and thus on 12th March 1707 he concluded a contract for the project of the construction of a hospital of Merciful Brethren and the Church of the Holy Trinity with the

458 Jan František Löw from Erlsfeld became famous especially thanks to his work *Theatrum medico-juridicum* (1725), the first work of forensic medicine in Central Europe. He dealt with research in the area of balneology too publishing his work called *Hydriatria* (1721). It is obvious that Franz Anton von Sporck wanted to achieve his goal by contacting the prominent specialists of that time.

459 Pavel PREISS, *František Antonín Šporck a barokní kultura v Čechách*, Praha – Litomyšl 2003, p. 228.

460 Emanuel POCHE, et al., *Umělecké památky Čech 2*, Praha 1978, p. 171.

461 Pavel PREISS, *František Antonín Šporck a barokní kultura v Čechách*, Praha – Litomyšl 2003, p. 232.

Sporck family tomb. These religious buildings were constructed on the right bank of the River Elbe in contrast with secular part of the buildings on the left bank – the spa and castle. Sporck hired the significant Prague architect Giovanni Battista Alliprandi (1655–1720), the constructor Pietro Netolla (1672–1731) and the stonecutter Giovanni Pietro della Torre (1660–1711). Both construction units on the river banks were completed by gardens with fountains and sculptures that were connected by a cascade staircase, the river was bridged over and the complex was surrounded by a wall. The architectonic complex was constructed on the axis of the castle and hospital building. The castle was finished in 1710, the hospital six years later and in 1720–1722 a new spa house, laundry, a philosophers' house with library was constructed and in 1724 a new office building, the so-called *Amsthaus* and a new pub. Water not only made Kuks famous but water from the River Elbe also did harm and so in 1740 the flood destroyed the summerhouse, racecourse and the pigeon house.

The buildings initiated by Franz Anton von Sporck were always completed by rich sculptural decoration. Sporck intervened in the expression of individual statues so that the sculptures presented his spiritual and philosophical views. In 1712 the statue decoration was in the hands of the already famous Mathias Bernard Braun (1684–1738) who was in that time in charge of a large sculpture workshop. In 1713 Sporck agreed on the decoration of the racecourse that is enriched by a group of 40 Callot dwarfs and statues of Truth and Justice situated on two triangular obelisks were set in the centre of the racecourse. Between 1712 and 1713, Braun presented the models of the statues of Beatitudes meant for decoration of a terrace in front of the hospital church, he provided eight of these statues by 1715. Before 1718 Mathias Bernard Braun and the members of his workshop finalized a pair of statues Glorious and Miserable Death, a Statue of Religion and in 1719 a group of twelve statues of Virtues and twelve statues of Vices that were situated in the northern façade of the hospital. In 1720–1721, a larger-than-life-size statue of Herkoman-Zvykomil was erected in front of the Pub of Golden Sun, the patron of dishonest lawyers to commemorate a lawsuit that Sporck lost. Later when Sporck was accused of heresy, he was forced to change Herkoman into Goliath and the statue of David was added in 1729. And in 1731–1732 two statues of the so-called Christian soldiers were created; a large *Miles Christianus* was situated at the end of the alley leading to Bethlehem, i.e., on the border of the estate of Žíreč Jesuits and a little *Miles Christianus* was situated in the so-called New Forest, to the west of Kuks. In 1746 the two statues were transferred to the monastery garden. Franz Anton von Sporck also initiated buildings of hermitages that were located in the surroundings of Kuks. These small buildings were also completed by wall paintings and statue decorations.⁴⁶² Part of the phenomenon of Sporck's founding efforts and Mathias Bernard Braun's sculptural arts is a work that is currently known as Braun's Bethlehem.

⁴⁶² E. POCHE, et al., *Umělecké památky Čech 2*, p. 172.

The activities in the so-called New Forest date back to 1717 when Franz Anton von Sporck bought it from the town Dvůr Králové and thus extended his estate with this area with sandstone rocks that became a place of baroque sculpture mastery. Braun's sculpture workshop was working there with some interruptions until 1732 and created a place of admiration of not only the contemporary spa guests.

Kuks in the 20th Century

The period of the biggest popularity of the Kuks Hospital was followed by a period when the Hospital was influenced by the terrors of contemporary events and periods of boom alternated with periods of decline.

Only the buildings of the hospital, church and plastic decoration and cascade staircase of the castle that was demolished in 1901 have been preserved in their original form and area. The house next to the staircase was reconstructed just like both pubs and the office building Amsthaus.⁴⁶³

In the second half of the 20th century there were new ideas of what to do with the dilapidated complex of the Kuks Hospital. In 1972 the Czech Pharmaceutical Museum was moved to part of the opened area which became its permanent headquarters. Later, the use of the remaining area was discussed. It was thought that a museum of clothing, restoration workshops, a school in the nature or a training centre of pharmaceutical companies could be situated there. In 1968 there was an idea that there could be a hotel for foreigners who could shoot redundant animals from the ZOO in Dvůr Králové for a certain fee. In 2006 it was planned to build a hunting museum and to change the area of hospital into a hotel oriented on rich clients from Asia. These discussions stimulated the administrator of the area of hospital, i.e., National Heritage Institute and since the beginning of 2008 the possibilities of the complete renovation of the baroque complex have been dealt with. It has resulted in cooperation between the National Heritage Office of the Hradec Králové region, Charles University in Prague, the Kuks municipality and the Bishopric of Hradec Kralove. This cooperation resulted in gaining financial support from the Integration Operation Programme (IOP) of the European Fund for Regional Development of the priority axis supporting the renovation and use of the most significant parts of the immovable monument fonds of the Czech Republic. The intention to renovate the hospital did not include only the building reconstruction but also the overall revival of the building. Financial means were directed to return the Hospital Kuks to the awareness of the visitors who started to visit the baroque architectonical masterpiece.⁴⁶⁴

463 Ibidem, pp. 171–172.

464 Jindřich KOLDA, *Kuks – granátové jablko*, Praha 2015, pp. 21–22.

On 21st May 2010 the minister of culture of the Czech Republic Václav Riedlbauch signed a decision about the allocation of financial support from the European funds for the project Kuks – pomegranate. The baroque monument thus received 440 million Czech crowns from the Integrated Operation Programme of the European Union and gradually transformed into another significant sight of the Hradec Králové region. The project of the renovation of the baroque complex was not limited only to the right bank of the River Elbe, where the Hospital area is but also the left bank where the public benefit company Revitalization Kuks founded by the Hradec Králové region and the municipality Kuks is. Part of the revitalization plan of the Kuks municipality on the left bank of the Elbe was the renewal of the spa houses and dominant staircase, reconstruction of the paths and bridge over the Elbe and also the creation of the tourist information centre.⁴⁶⁵

In order to be able to admire the current architectural state of the baroque complex of the Kuks Hospital and reconstructed buildings on the left bank of the Elbe it was necessary to undertake a sensitive reconstruction of the whole complex on the basis of the current principles of historic preservation keeping in mind that the reconstructed complex should not be changed into an open-air museum, but into a living space for the needs of the current society. Furthermore, in the preparatory phase of the project, a series of documents was created that were important for the next realization phase, i.e., civil engineering and historical research that summarized all the current knowledge about the hospital building and complex. Among other essential documents, the restoration plan that set the renovation procedures of the monument must be mentioned.

The realization phase of the reconstruction of the Kuks Hospital was initiated in 2010, when a grant was allocated for the project. Part of the revitalization on both banks of the Elbe was the implementation of the following projects that were financed thanks to EU support. They were projects saving the historic legacy or increasing the potential of tourism in Kuks – repairs of the spa building to serve for refreshment and the organization of social events, project of marketing and coordination activities within the promotion of the Kuks complex, construction of a copy of the almost demolished spa house for the needs of the museum of printing, and repairs of roads and paths in the historical centre of the Kuks municipality.⁴⁶⁶

Reconstruction works on the baroque monument of the Kuks Hospital were finalized after twenty months and the public had the first chance to see the result of the reconstruction on the 28th March 2015. The festive ribbon-cutting

465 Ibidem.

466 Ibidem, p. 87–88. Part of the project activities with aim of making Kuks and its surroundings more attractive for tourists was an activity focused on reconstruction of the primate house in the ZOO in Dvůr Králové nad Labem. These projects were realized in 2012–2015 and cost CZK 130 million in total.

ceremony with participation of the prime minister Bohuslav Sobotka, minister of culture Daniel Herman and other officials took place in 2015.⁴⁶⁷ Part of the revitalization were the repaired baroque houses, paved roads and repaired historic staircases and fountains with spa springs. In one of the spa houses, the Rentz Museum of Baroque Printing and a tourist information centre with apartments for tourists was created.

The current state, as we can see the whole complex of the Kuks Hospital on the right bank of the Elbe and renovation of the baroque spa on the left bank of the Elbe, is essential for the experience that we can live through the use of augmented reality in the Visit.More application.



Fig. 14: *Visit.More application.*

Use of the Augmented Reality for Interpretation of Cultural Heritage

Augmented reality (AR) has become a popular technology in recent years. Its use has been applied to various fields, particularly gaming, education, and leisure. In this chapter, we discuss how this technology can be used to help preserve historical locations and cultural heritage. We explore the potential of AR to help create virtual tours, historical re-enactment, and the preservation

⁴⁶⁷ *Change of Kuks: Hundreds of millions of Czech crowns were invested in the municipality and the hospital thanks to the EU grants*, Press release of the Královéhradecký region, 23. 3. 2015, <https://www.kr-kralovehradecky.cz/cz/kraj-volene-organy/tiskove-centrum/aktuality1/promena-kuksu:-do-obce-i-hospitalu-se-diky-dotacim-investovaly-stamiliony-korun-77795/>. The reconstruction of Kuks was perceived as one of the projects of successful cooperation between different institutions and organisers and also a combination of different financial sources.

of cultural heritage, as well as its capabilities for community engagement. In order to understand how AR can be utilized, it is essential first to clarify the definition of the technology. Augmented reality is blending digital content with physical environments that exist in the real world. A user typically achieves immersion through a device like a smartphone or a headset, which uses sensors and cameras to detect and interact with objects in the environment. In addition, developers must create dedicated software to augment the objects with digital content, such as text, audio, images, 3D graphic and videos.

Why is it essential to preserve cultural heritage with digital technologies? In recent years, digital technologies have become increasingly important in many areas, from commerce to communication. The same revolution has taken place in the field of cultural heritage preservation. Thanks to digital technologies, cultural heritage can now be preserved and made accessible to new generations in ways that were previously thought to be impossible. In this chapter, it will be shown that digital technology is essential for preserving cultural heritage across the world.

Due to the sheer amount of data related to cultural artefacts, traditional manual methods of cataloguing and curation are no longer sufficient. Digital technology provides a convenient way to store and organise this data, making it much easier to access, modify, and update. Digital databases can be shared with a wide range of organisations worldwide, ensuring that all relevant information is available and can be used to inform preservation and conservation efforts. Furthermore, digital technologies allow for more efficient assessments of cultural heritage sites. By utilising aerial photography and satellite imagery, archaeologists can get better insights into site layout and structure than possible with manual methods. This improved information can be used to develop conservation plans that are far more effective.

Digital technology also has the potential to engage broader audiences with cultural heritage. Organisations such as the Smithsonian in the US, or the UK government's Historic England, have taken advantage of advances in digital communication to share their collections with the public. This can be done through websites, creating interactive experiences, and engaging users with some of history's most valuable artefacts. Digitally-created reproductions can also be made of fragile artefacts that may be too delicate to display. This allows members of the public to access these pieces of cultural heritage in a safe way. This greater accessibility is an essential part of the preservation process, as it helps to generate interest and enthusiasm for heritage sites and collections.

In conclusion, it is clear that digital technology is essential for preserving cultural heritage. It provides a way for data about cultural artefacts to be managed efficiently, and it can also help to engage the public in ways that

were not previously possible. Without digital technology, our shared cultural heritage would be lost forever. Therefore, we must take advantage of the tools available to us and continue to use them to ensure that our cultural heritages are preserved.

Laser Scanning and Photogrammetry⁴⁶⁸ in the Digitisation of Cultural Heritage

In the context of the digital preservation of cultural heritage, advances in 3D data acquisition technologies have enabled the efficiency and accuracy of digitising cultural artefacts. Two of the most used methods currently are laser scanning and photogrammetry. Integrating these two different photogrammetric and laser scanning technologies allows for improved accuracy and accessibility when digitising cultural heritage. This chapter will provide an overview of the two technologies and the potential benefits of their integration.

Laser scanning is a 3D data acquisition technique that uses a laser to measure the geometry of an object's surface. The laser is emitted from a scanner and focused onto the object's surface, reflecting the laser's light. The scanner detects the reflected light and calculates the distance between the scanner and the object. This process allows for gathering millions of 3D points or measurements with very high accuracy, making it a prevalent method for digitising cultural heritage objects.

Photogrammetry is a 3D data acquisition technique that uses images to measure the geometry of an object's surface. This technique typically utilises two or more photographs of the object taken from different angles. The photographs are then processed with specialized software, such as Structure From Motion (SFM), to create accurate 3D models of the object. Photogrammetry is typically used for larger objects, and unlike laser scanning, it can gather 3D data without needing contact with the object.

Integrating laser scanning and photogrammetry offers several advantages over using either technique alone. Integrating these technologies allows for creating accurate digital models using as little data as possible. Laser scanning provides accurate measurements, while photogrammetry provides a comprehensive 3D model of the object. Integrating these techniques also allows for the effective digitisation of significant artefacts or areas that would be impossible with either technique alone.

⁴⁶⁸ Konrad SCHINDLER – Wolfgang FÖRSTNER, *Photogrammetry*, in: Katsushi Ikeuchi (ed.), *Computer Vision*, Cham 2021, pp. 968–970.

Various processes and techniques are available for the 3D digitisation of large areas such as cities, terrain, and small monuments. In most cases, the process begins with image capture using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and ground-based sensors such as LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging).⁴⁶⁹ UAVs are commonly used for 3D mapping, as they offer an efficient, cost-effective, and rapid way to capture images over broad areas.

Once images have been acquired, the next step is to reconstruct the 3D scene from the images. Depending on the desired accuracy, the reconstruction may be done by a direct photogrammetric process or by blending the output of photogrammetric and LiDAR-based approaches. Direct photogrammetric methods process the raw images directly, while the hybrid methods use the information gathered by LiDAR and rely on the photogrammetric methods to finalize the 3D product.

The process may involve 3D scanning followed by image processing algorithms and 3D modelling for the digitisation of small monuments and other built environment features. 3D scanning technologies such as time of flight (TOF) and structured light sensors are used to capture the geometry of an object. The point cloud data produced by the 3D scanning systems are then processed using image processing algorithms to refine the data points. Point Cloud to Mesh (PCM) algorithms can convert the 3D point cloud data into a more accurate and detailed three-dimensional mesh model.

Despite rapid developments in 3D digitisation, some of the most common limitations are the data's accuracy and the processing cost. Photogrammetry-based methods tend to be accurate but relatively slow and computationally expensive. LiDAR is generally more accurate; however, it is expensive to deploy due to the costs of the scanners and the need to hire professionals to operate them. 3D scanning of small monuments is accurate and much faster. However, it can produce noisy and low-accuracy results in certain conditions, such as when the object is highly reflective or has a complex geometry.

3D digitisation of large areas has a range of potential applications, including virtual tourism and entertainment, urban planning and engineering, architecture and construction, and others. 3D models of urban and rural environments could enrich the user experience of virtual tours and digitally share cultural monuments. They could also provide valuable information for urban planners, civil engineers, and architects.

The digitisation of small monuments and other objects could be used for digital preservation, virtual reconstruction, and simulation. For example, 3D models can be used to study and reconstruct damaged monuments and historic buildings and digitally preserve critical cultural artefacts. They also

⁴⁶⁹ Inki KIM – Renato Juliano MARTINS – Jaehyuck JANG et al., *Nanophotonics for light detection and ranging technology*, *Nature Nanotechnology* 16, 2021, pp. 508–524.

provide a convenient medium for interactive AR and VR applications such as educational simulations and virtual museums.

The accuracy of the data is a key factor that limits the application of 3D digitisation and 3D models, depending on the accuracy requirements. Despite this, the potential applications of this technology are considerable, ranging from virtual tourism and entertainment to digital preservation and interactive educational simulations.

How Can Augmented Reality Help Preserve Historical Locations and Cultural Heritage?

One of the primary ways that AR can be used to preserve historical locations is through the creation of virtual tours. AR provides an immersive way to explore a location and learn about its history. By providing digital content associated with the physical environment, such as text, audio, and video, visitors can engage with the history and culture of the location in a more meaningful way. In addition, AR provides the opportunity to include interactive features, such as quizzes and games, that can make the experience more engaging.



Fig. 15a: Current view of the village of Kuks, on the left bank of the River Elbe.



Fig. 15b: A view of the village of Kuks using augmented reality. The left bank of the River Elbe in 1724.

Another possible way that AR can be used to preserve historical locations and cultural heritage is through historical re-enactments. This is done using AR technology to create exhibitions featuring historically accurate locations, objects, and characters. These presentations can provide a more immersive experience than traditional forms of historical re-enactment, as visitors can interact with the environment around them uniquely and engagingly.

AR can also be used to preserve cultural heritage by providing digital access to historical artefacts. Digital content can be associated with objects, such as photographs, documents, and audio recordings, that can bring visitors closer to the culture while allowing them to explore it in a more interactive way. In addition, AR can be used to create interactive experiences where visitors can learn about the history and culture of a location through interactive games.

Finally, AR can be used to facilitate community engagement with historical and cultural sites. By providing an immersive experience that is also interactive, AR can help engage the local community with their history and culture while also allowing them to share their knowledge with others. This can help foster a sense of pride in the local community and enable them to become more involved in preserving and protecting their historical locations and cultural heritage. As AR technology continues to develop, it will undoubtedly open new opportunities for preserving and protecting our historical locations and cultural heritage.

Digitisation Example of the Hospital Kuks

We can divide the project into several phases from a project management perspective. This section aims not to provide a detailed project plan but a clear and concise summary.

The project usually begins with data collection from historical sources and photographs. In cooperation with historians and stakeholders, the team collected all relevant information about the cultural heritage of the Kuks Hospital, such as books, articles, photos, drawings, and other documents.

Analysing publication, private, and public databases of information are crucial, as it often reveals interesting details and locations of additional sources or people to target further in the project. Another source of information is available 3D maps, aerial images, and satellite data.

Analysing collected historical sources is lengthy and demanding and can often precede the digitisation project. The output is the most relevant element for the digitisation project. Identifying patterns, stories, and other significant features that could be included in an augmented reality project is essential. These may consist of exciting places, things, people, and stories related to the site. These elements form the main supporting themes for communication with the target group.

It is a good idea to determine the accuracy and reliability of sources, including examining historical biases and conflicting evidence where appropriate and to share these findings regularly with all project team stakeholders. The aim of digitisation is not necessarily archaeological or historical. In the case of the Kuks Hospital, the project did not aim to replace the research of historians and archaeologists but to provide visitors with a tool, in some ways an attraction, that draws visitors into the story and awakens their interest in the history of the site. In the preparation of the content of the application and interpreting historical sources, we have set the goals that the communication should achieve. Why go into interpretation? What can it bring or solve compared to a regular text from experts? We defined the target group as children and their parents. They are the intended audience, and the outcomes should meet their needs and expectations. But especially the tone of voice and the difficulty with which the copywriter writes the resulting texts and information.

As part of the process, all stakeholders need to be consulted on the choice of digitisation method. We start with defining the scope of the site to be digitised. Depending on the content selected, we can then evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches. For example, using laser scanning for ruins is not necessarily necessary; we can make do with photogrammetry alone. In the case of Kuks, it was required to accurately capture the current reconstructed area, as this data can serve as an accurate record of the site in the future. Depending on the scope and expected outputs, we decided on data acquisition using LiDAR scanning and photogrammetry. The data collection usually takes several days, so it is necessary to plan the whole data collection process in detail. For example, the areas of drone flight that need to be communicated with the Civil Aviation Authority are defined. For the actual scanning, the drone operator then plans the individual flight paths for each day.

It is necessary to train the personnel who photograph the site for photogrammetry how to photograph the individual sites. Since the team that collects data through LiDAR scanning does not need to have random passers-by and other team members scanned, the individual teams need to work independently. The lead manager makes sure it runs smoothly, solving operational problems as they arise. Their goal is to ensure that the individual teams collect data according to a defined plan and that no one disrupts the process.

Data processing for a large site such as Kuks Hospital can take several months. First, the data needs to be sorted and archived. Afterward, the data is processed in special software for photogrammetry. We can see the first output in the form of a detailed 3D model of the site, which represents the current state.

Then follows the process of optimizing the model to a level of detail suitable for display on a defined range of mobile phone performance. If the goal is for the app to work on older and less powerful phones, the stakeholders are

denying themselves the latest augmented reality features. At the same time, the 3D models need to be optimized more carefully.

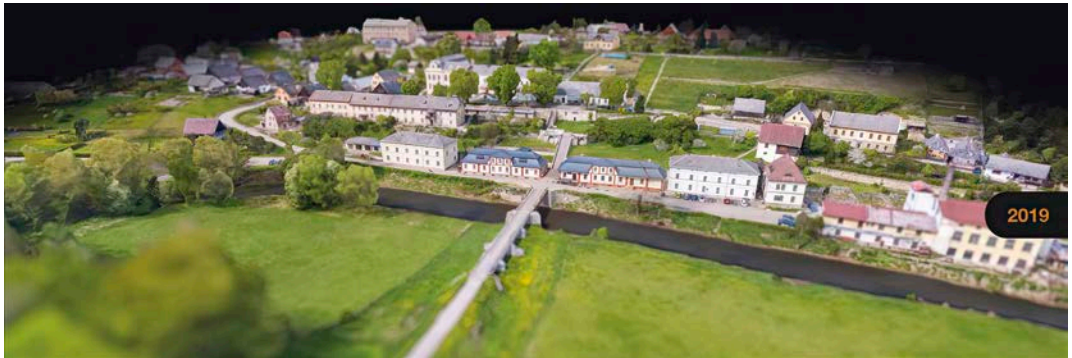


Fig. 16a: A detailed view of the village of Kuks, left bank of the River Elbe in 2019.

The 3D data of the current state serves as a basis for 3D artists who, according to the collected historical sources and defined goals, can proceed to create a historical version of the 3D site.



Fig. 16b: A detailed view of the village of Kuks using augmented reality. The left bank of the River Elbe in 1724.

While post-production and 3D data processing are taking place, finishing the application concept and fixing the creative phase is advisable. Testing prototypes with potential users and assessing needs and expectations is a good idea if the project allows it.

Until then, the creative concept could be modified and tested. A suitable technical solution is selected, and the technical specification for the software development itself is written out.

We highly recommend agile development to create an augmented reality application. It is an iterative methodology for managing software development that emphasises collaboration, speed, and efficiency.

By leveraging the short development cycles inherent in agile development,

developers can quickly deliver individual iterations of an application and improve it as development progresses. This process can help ensure that the mobile app is suitable for use by the target audience and encourage collaboration with stakeholders and users. This allows developers to respond quickly and effectively to user feedback and adjust the app accordingly.

In the case of Visit.More, the team chose the Unity game engine as the basis for the technology solution. There are several reasons why you might consider using the Unity 3D engine when developing a mobile app:

1. Cross-platform support: Unity supports app development for various platforms, including iOS and Android. This means you can develop an app once and deploy it to multiple platforms, saving time and effort.
2. Powerful graphics engine: Unity has a powerful graphics engine that lets you create high-quality, visually stunning apps. It also supports a wide range of graphical interfaces, including OpenGL and Metal, making optimizing your app for different devices easy.
3. Ease of use: designed to be user-friendly, Unity offers a comprehensive set of tools and features that make it easy to build and deploy mobile apps. It also has a large and active developer community, which means you can find helpful resources and support when you need it.
4. Large asset library: Unity has an extensive 3D asset library with a wide range of pre-made tools you can use to speed up development and add features to your application.
5. Strong support for virtual and augmented reality: Unity has strong support for virtual and augmented reality, making it a good choice for building applications that use these technologies.

Overall, Unity is a powerful and popular choice for mobile app development and offers a number of benefits that make it an attractive option for many developers. Using Unity for mobile app development has several potential drawbacks, especially compared to native development:

1. Performance: native apps are generally faster and more agile than apps built with Unity because they are compiled directly for the target platform. This can be especially important for applications that require high performance.
2. Size: Unity applications can be larger than native applications because they include the Unity environment, code, and resources. This can be a problem for users with limited device storage space.
3. Compatibility: In some cases, the Unity app may not be fully compatible with all devices, especially older or less powerful devices. This can limit the potential audience for your app.
4. Learning curve: especially for developers who are not familiar with game development or 3D graphics, Unity can have a steep learning curve. It

can take some time to become comfortable with the tools and features of the engine.

While Unity offers many advantages for mobile app development, it is essential to weigh these potential drawbacks and decide if it is the right choice for your project. In some cases, native development may be better, depending on your specific needs and goals. It is also possible to combine these approaches.

The actual deployment of the AR app is preceded by planning its promotion. The app operator must consider educating visitors and actively highlighting the possibility of downloading the app. If the visitor does not have a device that allows the app to run, it is advisable to consider renting a device.

Augmented reality makes it possible to present a distant period attractively. Especially for the youngest generation, the use of modern technologies is an entirely natural part of life – augmented reality throughout the Visit. More application will transport visitors to the beginning of the 18th century when Count Franz Anton von Sporck created his large projects in Kuks. The experience is one of the decisive moments that improve the ability to remember a given event and to remember it for a long time.

Words: 6 952
Characters: 36 682

9 Misinformation Proclivity as a Product of Cultural Evolution: Why Restrictions Cannot Work

Martin Palecek

Recently, I received an e-mail from my cousin, who was upset with the political U-turn made by the Czech president Miloš Zeman towards Russia following the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The theory she used to explain the Czech President's changing attitudes intrigued me more than her political views. To my astonishment, she believed that the president had been assassinated by the CIA and replaced with a double. This notion caught my attention, and I found myself unable to convince her that such an assassination was highly implausible. Not only did I fail in my efforts, but I later discovered that she continued to spread this theory to everyone she knew. Furthermore, she quickly moved on to other fabricated stories, never ceasing to share them. This raises a pressing question that troubles many of us today: How can a seemingly reasonable person believe in such absurd theories? Scholars and educators are increasingly concerned about this growing susceptibility to conspiracy theories and misinformation, with some even labelling the current situation an "infodemic." They argue that misinformation is proliferating, and conspiracy theories are especially enticing, leading them to propose restrictive policies to curb the spread of misinformation.

In response to this concern, the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) have come under increasing pressure to address the supposed surge in misinformation. Governments, alarmed by the potential impact of misinformation on society, often assume that it is a novel phenomenon, that its prevalence is on the rise, and that restrictive measures are the most effective strategy for combatting it. Consequently, researchers and educators are expected not only to study and understand the roots of misinformation and conspiracy theories but also to develop strategies to counteract their spread.

However, it is essential to challenge these assumptions and consider alternative perspectives, such as examining the adaptive social roots of misinformation and the potential ineffectiveness of restrictive policies, in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and identify more effective solutions.

The ongoing debate surrounding misinformation and conspiracy theories is rapidly evolving, with the prevailing perspective attributing a pathological origin to these phenomena. Misinformation and conspiracy theories are often seen as a degenerate aspect of our innate tendency to make sense of the world,

a result of lower analytical abilities, or a by-product of a pathological mindset.⁴⁷⁰ Experts generally concur that misinformation possesses an epistemic nature, meaning that it can be accepted as fact. This understanding is central to leading proposals aimed at reducing susceptibility to misinformation through education. Consequently, educational experts often view misinformation as a consequence of poor influences or misleading information, advocating for the implementation of boundaries and fact-checking techniques as a solution.⁴⁷¹ While the insights provided by these analyses are undoubtedly valuable, the pathological hypothesis does not hold up under closer examination.⁴⁷² Studies reveal the widespread prevalence of conspiracy proclivity among ordinary, non-pathological individuals.⁴⁷³ This finding suggests that the assumption of a pathological nature of misinformation is flawed, casting doubt on the effectiveness of the proposed restrictive solutions.

In this chapter, I approach the issue of conspiracy theories and misinformation from a cultural evolution perspective. To develop more effective educational strategies, it is crucial to comprehend the evolved adaptive mechanisms that underlie our susceptibility to misinformation and contribute to their

470 Eleni KAPANTAI et al., *A Systematic Literature Review on Disinformation: Toward a Unified Taxonomical Framework*, *New Media & Society* 23 (5), 2021, pp. 1301–1326; Edson C. TANDOC – Zheng WEI LIM – Richard LING, *Defining ‘Fake News’*, *Digital Journalism* 6 (2), 2018, pp. 137–153; Dylan DE BEER – Machdel MATTHEE, *Approaches to Identify Fake News: A Systematic Literature Review*, in: *Integrated Science in Digital Age 2020. Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems*, ed. Tatiana Antipova, Cham 2021, pp. 13–22; Magda OSMAN et al., *(Why) Is Misinformation a Problem?*, *PsyArXiv* 2022; Michael A. PETERS, *On the Epistemology of Conspiracy*, *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 53 (14), 2021, pp. 1413–1417; Alison MACKENZIE – Ibrar BHATT, *Lies, Bullshit and Fake News*, *Postdigital Science and Education* 2 (1), 2020, pp. 1–8; Karen M. DOUGLAS – Robbie M. SUTTON – Aleksandra CICHOCKA, *The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories*, *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 26 (6), 2017, pp. 538–542; Karen M. DOUGLAS et al., *Understanding Conspiracy Theories*, *Political Psychology* 40 (1), 2019, pp. 3–35; Jan Willem VAN PROOIJEN – Karen M. DOUGLAS, *Conspiracy Theories as Part of History: The Role of Societal Crisis Situations*, *Memory Studies* 10 (3), 2017, pp. 323–333.

471 Isabelle FREILING et al., *Believing and Sharing Misinformation, Fact-Checks, and Accurate Information on Social Media: The Role of Anxiety during COVID-19*, *New Media & Society*, 2021, Art. Nr. 14614448211011451; Ben LYONS et al., *How Politics Shape Views Toward Fact-Checking: Evidence from Six European Countries*, *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 25 (3), 2020, pp. 469–492.

472 Antoine MARIE – Michael Bang PETERSEN, *Political Conspiracy Theories as Tools for Mobilization and Signalling*, *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 2022, Art. Nr. 101440; idem, *The Evolutionary Psychology of Mass Mobilization: How Disinformation and Demagogues Coordinate Rather than Manipulate*, *Current Opinion in Psychology* 35, 2020, pp. 71–75; Alberto ACERBI, *Cultural Evolution in the Digital Age*, Oxford 2019, p. 272, https://books.google.cz/books?id=b1S_DwAAQBAJ; Sacha ALTAY – Manon BERRICHE – Alberto ACERBI, *Misinformation on Misinformation: Conceptual and Methodological Challenges*, in print.

473 Roland IMHOFF et al., *Conspiracy Mentality and Political Orientation across 26 Countries*, *Nature Human Behaviour* 6 (3), 2022, pp. 392–403; Roland IMHOFF – Lea DIETERLE – Pia LAMBERTY, *Resolving the Puzzle of Conspiracy Worldview and Political Activism: Belief in Secret Plots Decreases Normative but Increases Nonnormative Political Engagement*, *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 12 (1), 2021, pp. 71–79; Gregory EADY et al., *How Many People Live in Political Bubbles on Social Media? Evidence From Linked Survey and Twitter Data*, *SAGE Open* 9 (1), 2019, Art. Nr. 2158244019832705; Jan Willem VAN PROOIJEN – Mark VAN VUGT, *Conspiracy Theories: Evolved Functions and Psychological Mechanisms*, *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 13 (6), 2018, p. 777; Neil LEVY, *Due Deference to Denialism: Explaining Ordinary People’s Rejection of Established Scientific Findings*, *Synthese* 196 (1), 2019, pp. 313–327.

appeal. By examining misinformation's historical and cultural context, we can observe a consistent pattern of characteristics and repetition associated with these phenomena. This set of features further supports the notion that conspiracy theories captivate our cognition due to their socially adaptive, rather than epistemic, nature. I argue that we should view our proclivity for misinformation as an adaptive strategy exemplifying an evolutionary mismatch. This phenomenon represents a formerly adaptive strategy that has become maladaptive under current conditions.⁴⁷⁴

The allure of misinformation and conspiracy theories primarily stems from our cognitive system's threat-detection abilities. It is reasonable to assume that our survival in hostile environments depends on our capacity to be sensitive to potential threats, such as resource competition, predation, and enemy coalition. Moreover, this heightened awareness likely played a critical role in the survival of our ancestors. Our threat-related sensitivity combines with an ability to signal a commitment to cooperation in the face of real threats, as well as with error management, where the cost of overlooking potential danger outweighs that of a false alarm. While this may have been crucial for small groups of hunter-gatherers, it has become maladaptive in modern global societies.⁴⁷⁵

The causal link between an inclination for conspiracy theories and behavioural motivation is not directly evident, as the chain of causation remains obscure.⁴⁷⁶ Propagandists primarily capitalise on pre-existing elements in the misinformation landscape to mobilise individuals for specific actions.⁴⁷⁷ If our predisposition to conspiracy theories and misinformation stems from evolutionary roots, then relying solely on restrictions and fact-checking

474 Pascal WAGNER-EGGER, *The Noises of Conspiracy*, OSF Preprints, 2022; Alberto ACERBI, *Cognitive Attraction and Online Misinformation*, *Palgrave Communications* 5 (1), 2019, pp. 1–7; David BORUKHSON – Philipp LORENZ-SPREEN – Marco RAGNI, *When Does an Individual Accept Misinformation? An Extended Investigation Through Cognitive Modelling*, *Computational Brain & Behavior* 5 (2), 2022, pp. 244–260; Timothy BLAINE – Pascal BOYER, *Origins of Sinister Rumors: A Preference for Threat-Related Material in the Supply and Demand of Information*, *Evolution and Human Behavior* 39 (1), 2018, pp. 67–75; Joseph E. USCINSKI – Joseph M. PARENT, *American Conspiracy Theories*, Oxford 2014, p. 221; Daniel WILLIAMS, *Socially Adaptive Belief*, *Mind & Language* 36 (3), 2021, pp. 333–354; Stewart STEWART-WILLIAMS, *The Ape That Understood the Universe*, Cambridge 2018, p. 368.

475 P. BOYER, *Deriving Features*, pp. 557–581; J. W. VAN PROOIJEN – M. VAN VUGT, *Conspiracy Theories*, pp. 770–788; J. E. USCINSKI – J. M. PARENT, *American Conspiracy Theories*, p. 221; Mathilde MUS – Alexander BOR – Michael BANG PETERSEN, *Do Conspiracy Theories Efficiently Signal Coalition Membership? An Experimental Test Using the 'Who Said What?' Design*, *Plos One* 17 (3), 2022, Art. Nr. e0265211; Eric FUNKHOUSER, *A Tribal Mind: Beliefs That Signal Group Identity or Commitment*, *Mind & Language* 37 (3), 2020, pp. 444–464.

476 M. B. PETERSEN, *The Evolutionary Psychology*, pp. 71–75; Daniel WILLIAMS, *The Marketplace of Rationalizations*, *Economics & Philosophy*, 2022, pp. 1–25; Hugo MERCIER, *Not Born Yesterday*, Princeton 2020, p. 384.

477 A. ACERBI, *Cognitive Attraction*, pp. 1–7; idem, *Cultural Evolution*; A. MARIE – M. B. PETERSEN, *Political Conspiracy Theories*, Art. Nr. 101440; Timothy R. TANGHERLINI et al., *An Automated Pipeline for the Discovery of Conspiracy and Conspiracy Theory Narrative Frameworks: Bridgegate, Pizzagate and Storytelling on the Web*, *Plos One* 15 (6), 2020, Art. Nr. e0233879.

will not effectively eradicate misinformation. Such measures might actually heighten suspicions and ultimately backfire.⁴⁷⁸

In Central Europe, with its unique history and relatively low trust in institutions, restrictive policies can indeed be counterproductive. The region's past experiences with censorship and government control, as emphasized by Róbert Arpás's chapter, may make people more resistant to information restrictions and more sceptical of official narratives. Consequently, implementing restrictive policies to counter misinformation in this context could inadvertently fuel conspiracy theories and exacerbate mistrust, further undermining the credibility of institutions. As Jan Květina highlighted in his chapter, this underlines the need for alternative strategies that prioritize fostering trust and strengthening democratic institutions, rather than implementing restrictions on information.⁴⁷⁹

This article is structured as follows: (1) I begin by defining conspiracy theories, misinformation, and disinformation. (2) I propose an alternative model for understanding misinformation. I argue that our susceptibility to conspiracy theories and threat-related misinformation is deeply rooted in our cognitive mechanisms – our receptivity to threat-related information and error management, amplified by cultural anxiety. As a result, we should perceive misinformation as socially rational rather than epistemically rational. I support my argument with examples of characteristics that make misinformation typical. Lastly, (3) I conclude that our inclination towards misinformation has adaptive origins. I also assert that fostering trust in our institutions, rather than imposing restrictions, is a more effective strategy for reducing sensitivity to conspiracy theories and misinformation.

To provide a solid foundation for the analysis and arguments presented in this chapter, I outline the methodology employed. This methodology consisted of examining both primary and secondary literature sources, including published papers on cognitive and psychological experiments. Drawing upon the disciplines of philosophy and cognitive anthropology, I analysed the material to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Furthermore, I employed methods and theories from Cultural Evolutionary Science to strengthen the arguments and provide a well-rounded perspective on the phenomenon of misinformation and conspiracy theories. This comprehensive approach allowed me to explore the topic from multiple angles and develop a more robust and nuanced understanding of the issues at hand.

478 Alberto ACERBI – Sacha ALTAY – Hugo MERCIER, *Research Note: Fighting Misinformation or Fighting for Information?*, Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review 3 (1), 2022; A. MONYPENNY, *Between Vulnerability and Resilience*, pp. 358–370; Evita MARCH – Jordan SPRINGER, *Belief in Conspiracy Theories: The Predictive Role of Schizotypy, Machiavellianism, and Primary Psychopathy*, ed. Peter Karl Jonason, Plos One 14 (12), 2019, Art. Nr. e0225964.

479 M. B. PETERSEN, *The Evolutionary Psychology*, pp. 71–75; J. M. PIERRE, *Mistrust and Misinformation*, pp. 617–641; S. ALTAY – M. BERRICHE – A. ACERBI, *Misinformation on Misinformation*, in print; Frederik JØRGENSEN et al., *Pandemic Fatigue Fuelled Political Discontent during the COVID-19 Pandemic*, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 119 (48), 2022, Art. Nr. e2201266119.

Given that scholars have only recently started studying the phenomena of misinformation and conspiracy theories, the field is relatively young, and taxonomies vary across different studies.⁴⁸⁰ Therefore, it is crucial to clarify concepts such as misinformation, conspiracy theory, disinformation, and fake news, as their usage may negatively impact the evaluation of the problem. For instance, the term “conspiracy theory” is often used dismissively against political opponents without adhering to formal or epistemic standards.⁴⁸¹ I propose using “misinformation” as an umbrella concept.⁴⁸² Misinformation encompasses the spontaneous production, receptiveness, and dissemination of incorrect or false information. Although misinformation can be isolated in principle, both isolated and successful misinformation is extremely rare. If misinformation succeeds, it typically stabilizes into a simulated worldview narrative, such as a conspiracy theory.⁴⁸³ Consequently, I claim there is no principal distinction between misinformation and conspiracy theories. In principle, there is a difference between deliberately producing false information and genuinely being receptive to it. However, determining intentionality is notoriously difficult. For example, it would be challenging to ascertain whether Guillaume de Machaut, author of the poem *Jugement du Roy de Navarre* (“Judgment of the King of Navarre”), was merely perpetuating the rumour that Jews were responsible for spreading the plague or if he genuinely believed it. Therefore, I strictly reserve the term “disinformation” for the intentional and verifiable spreading of false information. However, these cases are relatively limited.⁴⁸⁴

480 R. GREEN et al., *Making an Impression*, Art. Nr. 104398; K. M. DOUGLAS et al., *Understanding Conspiracy Theories*, pp. 3–35; Joseph E. USCINSKI – Adam M. ENDERS, *What Is a Conspiracy Theory and Why Does It Matter?*, *Critical Review*, 2022, pp. 1–22; E. KAPANTAI et al., *A Systematic Literature Review on Disinformation*, pp. 1301–1326.

481 S. ALTAY – M. BERRICHE – A. ACERBI, *Misinformation on Misinformation*; J. E. USCINSKI – A. M. ENDERS, *What Is a Conspiracy Theory and Why Does It Matter?*, pp. 1–22.

482 Dylan DE BEER – Machdel MATTHEE, *Approaches to Identify Fake News: A Systematic Literature Review*, in: *Integrated Science in Digital Age 2020*, ed. Tatiana Antipova, New York 2021, pp. 13–22; Edson C. TANDOC – Zheng Wei LIM – Richard LING, *Defining ‘Fake News*, *Digital Journalism* 6 (2), 2018, pp. 137–153; Sander VAN DER LINDEN, *Misinformation: Susceptibility, Spread, and Interventions to Immunize the Public*, *Nature Medicine* 28 (3), 2022, pp. 460–467.

483 J.W. VAN PROOIJEN – K. M. DOUGLAS, *Conspiracy Theories as Part of History*, p. 330; Jonathan GOTTSCHALL, *The Story Paradox: How Our Love of Storytelling Builds Societies and Tears Them Down*, New York 2021, p. 272; Alex ROSENBERG, *How History Gets Things Wrong: The Neuroscience of Our Addiction to Stories*, Cambridge 2019, p. 296.

484 Guillaume DE MACHAUT, *Le Jugement Dou Roy de Navarre*, in: Guillaume de Machaut, *The Complete Poetry and Music 1. The Debate Poems. Le Jugement dou Roy de Behaigne, Le Jugement dou Roy de Navarre, Le Lay de Plour*, trans. Barton R. Palmer, Kalamazoo 2016, p. 620; Jean DELUMEAU, *La Peur en Occident: Une cité assiégée*, Paris 2014, p. 485; Theresa FINLEY – Mark KOYAMA, *Plague, Politics, and Pogroms: The Black Death, the Rule of Law, and the Persecution of Jews in the Holy Roman Empire*, *The Journal of Law and Economics* 61 (2), 2018, pp. 253–277; J. E. USCINSKI – A. M. ENDERS, *What Is a Conspiracy Theory*, pp. 1–22; Ilya LEVIN – Dan MAMLOK, *Culture and Society in the Digital Age*, *Information* 12 (2), 2021, p. 68.

Disinformation can be isolated or part of a cluster of targeted disinformation. I use the term “propaganda” for such clusters of disinformation. I also reserve the concept of “fake news” for deliberately and verifiably false information propagated through modern social media. I argue that disinformation, propaganda, and “fake news” are possible due to the general cognitive appeal of misinformation.⁴⁸⁵

Take, for example, the AIDS/HIV conspiracy theory. A significant number of African Americans falsely believe that the US government created AIDS to reduce their population. In this case, we can trace the origin of the conspiracy theory to the KGB and Stasi disinformation campaign code-named Operation Denver.⁴⁸⁶ However, the campaign’s relative success was possible due to the general proclivity of our cognition to find this disinformation attractive. In other words, propagandists deliberately or unconsciously tap into a prepared field. Thus, evolved proclivities to misinformation makes disinformation possible, as propagandists—intentionally or unconsciously—use evolved patterns to make their stories seem plausible.

An Alternative Model for Analysing Misinformation: Conspiracy Theories’ Proclivity Results from the Evolutionary Mismatch

In this section, I argue that the proclivity to misinformation functions as a social warning mechanism, with its purpose rooted in social rationality, which aims to navigate us in the social world rather than to gather accurate information about the state of the world. Conspiracy theories’ proclivity increases with social instability, designed to signal preparedness for cooperation and build defensive alliances in case a threat becomes real. The conundrum of misinformation proclivity dissipates when we shift from a propositional understanding of misinformation to viewing it as an evolved pro-social attitude. I will illustrate my claim with a set of peculiarities that are typical for misinformation.⁴⁸⁷

The prevalent view among researchers attributes the human proclivity to misinformation to pathological origins. This perspective is based on the assumption that our cognition’s ultimate goal is to fixate true beliefs, and

485 M. B. PETERSEN, *The Evolutionary Psychology*, pp. 71–75; Andreas JUNGHERR – Ralph SCHROEDER, *Disinformation and the Structural Transformations of the Public Arena: Addressing the Actual Challenges to Democracy*, *Social Media + Society* 7 (1), 2021, Art. Nr. 2056305121988928; Andy NORMAN, *Mental Immunity: Infectious Ideas, Mind-Parasites, and the Search for a Better Way to Think*, New York 2021, p. 416; Hunt ALLCOTT – Matthew GENTZKOW, *Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election*, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31 (2), 2017, pp. 211–236; A. ACERBI, *Cognitive Attraction*, pp. 1–7; idem, *Cultural Evolution*, p. 272; R. GREEN et al., *Making an Impression*, Art. Nr. 104398.

486 Jan Willem VAN PROOIJEN – Karen M. DOUGLAS, *Belief in Conspiracy Theories: Basic Principles of an Emerging Research Domain*, *European Journal of Social Psychology* 48 (7), 2018, pp. 897–908; Douglas SELVAGE – Christopher NEHRING, *Operation ‘Denver’: KGB and Stasi Disinformation Regarding AIDS*, Wilson Center (blog), July 2019, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/operation-denver-kgb-and-stasi-disinformation-regarding-aids>.

487 D. WILLIAMS, *Socially Adaptive Belief*, pp. 333–354.

therefore, any deviation from this purpose is considered pathological. These experts understand misinformation and conspiracy theories' proclivity as a decadent tendency to make sense of the world, a result of lower analytical ability, or a by-product of a pathological mindset.⁴⁸⁸ In other words, they accept the presupposition that misinformation and conspiracy theories have an epistemic nature, intending to inform us about the state of the world, albeit in a corrupted way.⁴⁸⁹

However, if it were true that misinformation is merely a result of decadent instrumental rationality combined with individual psychological factors, we would expect to see random variations in the characteristics of conspiracy theories over time. One might assume that features of conspiracy theories, shaped by corrupted cognition, would be arbitrary, given that cultural and individual conditions change over time. Contrary to this expectation, historical and cultural research reveals that misinformation is a relatively stable cultural trait, consistently propagating within the cultural milieu.⁴⁹⁰

When analysing contemporary conspiracy theories and comparing them to historical ones, we can identify several key features that are typical for them.⁴⁹¹ The presence of these recurring features suggests that the proclivity for misinformation likely has an evolutionary origin, rather than being a mere by-product of flawed cognitive processes or individual psychological factors.⁴⁹²

What is Typical for Misinformation?

1. There is no distinct boundary between a psychologically healthy mindset that is completely immune to misinformation and a pathological predisposition to be

488 M. FRITTS – F. CABRERA, *Online Misinformation and 'Phantom Patterns'*, pp. 57–87; M. A. PEETERS, *On the Epistemology of Conspiracy*, pp. 1413–1417; A. MONYPENNY, *Between Vulnerability and Resilience*, pp. 358–370; M. MEYER – M. ALFANO – B. DE BRUIN, *Epistemic Vice Predicts Acceptance of Covid-19 Misinformation*, pp. 1–22; Jerry A. FODOR, *The Mind Doesn't Work That Way*, Cambridge 2001, p. 68; K. M. DOUGLAS – R. M. SUTTON – A. CICHOCKA, *The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories*, pp. 61–76; K. M. DOUGLAS et al., *Understanding Conspiracy Theories*, pp. 3–35; J. W. VAN PROOIJEN – K. M. DOUGLAS, *Conspiracy Theories as Part of History*, pp. 323–333.

489 A. NORMAN, *Mental Immunity*, p. 416; Stephan LEWANDOWSKY – Sander VAN DER LINDEN, *Countering Misinformation and Fake News Through Inoculation and Prebunking*, *European Review of Social Psychology* 32 (2), 2021, pp. 348–384; J. E. USCINSKI – A. M. ENDERS, *What Is a Conspiracy Theory*, pp. 1–22.

490 J. DELUMEAU, *La Peur en Occident*, p. 485; J. W. VAN PROOIJEN – K. M. DOUGLAS, *Conspiracy Theories as Part of History*, pp. 323–333; David FRANKFURTER – Evil INCARNATE, *Rumors of Demonic Conspiracy and Satanic Abuse in History. Evil Incarnate*, Princeton 2018.

491 Alessandro MIANI – Thomas HILLS – Adrian BANGERTER, *LOCO: The 88-Million-Word Language of Conspiracy Corpus*, *Behavior Research Methods* 54 (4), 2022, pp. 1794–1817; Joseph E. USCINSKI – Joseph PARENT – Bethany TORRES, *Conspiracy Theories Are for Losers*, in: SSRN Scholarly Paper, Rochester 2011.

492 D. WILLIAMS, *Socially Adaptive Belief*, pp. 333–354; N. LEVY, *Due Deference to Denialism*, pp. 313–327; Dan M. KAHAN, *Misconceptions, Misinformation, and the Logic of Identity-Protective Cognition*, in: SSRN Scholarly Paper, Rochester 2017, preprint.

drawn to conspiracy theories. Instead, studies reveal a spectrum of conspiracy susceptibility present among ordinary, non-pathological individuals.⁴⁹³

2. There is a striking resemblance between a substantial portion of our entertainment and conspiracy theories. Storylines involving conspiracies, whether by individuals or groups, constitute a significant part of the entertainment industry,⁴⁹⁴ indicating our strong affinity for conspiratorial narratives. For example, plots revolving around individual or group threats—spanning various levels of conspiracy and organized crime fiction—account for approximately 40 % of all book sales, while around 20 % of all films are explicitly crime films. Roughly 50 % of all film productions feature significant crime content, with over 800 horror films and nearly 1 million Facebook likes.⁴⁹⁵ Of course, horror and crime films do not fully capture the entertaining nature of conspiracy theories. For instance, movies like *The Truman Show* and *The Matrix* do not neatly fit into the crime fiction category. However, both films exemplify existential conspiracies.⁴⁹⁶

3. Conspiracies can sometimes be genuine, as evidenced by incidents such as the Watergate scandal or the Iran-Contra affair.⁴⁹⁷ Intriguingly, it is often challenging to differentiate real conspiracies from conspiracy theories and entertainment. For instance, consider the following three stories, and try to determine which one is based on an actual event, a conspiracy theory, or purely entertainment:

- (a) A conspiracy involving Bohemian noblemen planning a coup in favour of Protestants, beginning with the meticulously orchestrated murder of three state officials.
- (b) A tale about devil worshippers and cannibalistic child abusers who conspire with the US administration.
- (c) A narrative about a clandestine group within a Swedish security agency that conceals sex trafficking crimes and multiple murders.

493 R. IMHOFF et al., *Conspiracy Mentality*, pp. 392–403; R. IMHOFF – L. DIETERLE – P. LAMBERTY, *Resolving the Puzzle*, pp. 71–79; G. EADY et al., *How Many People Live in Political Bubbles*, Art. Nr. 2158244019832705; A. ACERBI, *Cultural Evolution in the Digital Age*, p. 272; J. W. VAN PROOIJEN – M. VAN VUGT, *Conspiracy Theories*, p. 777; Michael SHERMER, *Conspiracy: Why the Rational Believe the Irrational*, Charles Village 2022, p. 376; D. WILLIAMS, *Socially Adaptive Belief*, pp. 333–354; J. E. USCINSKI – A. M. ENDERS, *What Is a Conspiracy Theory*, pp. 1–22.

494 Dahlia SCHWEITZER, *Going Viral: Zombies, Viruses, and the End of the World*, None edition, New Brunswick 2018, p. 256; J. GOTTSCHALL, *The Story Paradox*, p. 272; Jan Willem VAN PROOIJEN, *The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories*, London 2018, p. 126; idem et al., *The Entertainment Value of Conspiracy Theories*, *British Journal of Psychology* 113 (1), 2022, pp. 25–48; Michael BUTTER, *Conspiracy Theories in Films and Television Shows*, in: *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, ed. Michael Butter – Peter Knight, London 2020, pp. 457–468.

495 Chris GREER – Robert REINER, *Mediated Mayhem: Media, Crime and Criminal Justice*, in: *Oxford Handbook of Criminology*, ed. Mike Maguire – Rod Morgan – Robert Reiner, Oxford 2012, pp. 245–278; Gideon NAVE – Jason RENTFROW – Sudeep BHATIA, *We Are What We Watch: Movie Plots Predict the Personalities of Their Fans*, PsyArXiv preprint, 2020.

496 J. W. VAN PROOIJEN et al., *The Entertainment Value*, pp. 25–48; idem, *The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories*, p. 19.

497 Ibidem.

The first story occurred in Prague in 1618 and is known as the “Third Defenestration of Prague”. The second story is the infamous QAnon conspiracy theory. Lastly, the third story is the plot of one of the most successful crime trilogies of our time: The Millennium Trilogy.⁴⁹⁸ Without additional information, it appears virtually impossible to distinguish a conspiracy theory from an actual event or a piece of entertainment.

4. Misinformation may appear to resemble strategic information, but it is not the same. Suppose I were to provide you with strategic information about stock market developments, such as a brief window of opportunity to buy Apple company shares. In this case, it is likely that you would only share this information with a select group of people you typically cooperate with to gain an advantage. It would be highly implausible for you to begin persuading as many people as possible about the actual value of this information. However, this directly contradicts the behaviour of those who propagate misinformation or conspiracy theories. Though misinformation and conspiracy theories often masquerade as strategic information, their proponents tend to proselytize instead, attempting to gain as many new supporters as possible.⁴⁹⁹

5. The proclivity for conspiracy theories and misinformation exhibits a nomadic character, meaning that a predisposition to misinformation positively correlates with the intentional pursuit of other conspiracy theories. In other words, those spreading conspiracy theories are not merely passive victims of disinformation campaigns. On the contrary, sharing one conspiracy theory is a strong indicator of an increased likelihood to embrace another. Furthermore, recent research demonstrates that propagators of misinformation actively seek out additional conspiracy theories on the internet.⁵⁰⁰

6. Conspiracy theories often arise even in the presence of a genuine conspiracy. When an event is the result of a real conspiracy, alternative conspiracy theories frequently emerge from the misinformation landscape. For instance, although the 9/11 terrorist attacks were indeed the result of an Islamist

498 Peter H. WILSON, *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy*, Cambridge, Massachusetts 2011, p. 1024; Adam ENDERS et al., *Who Supports QAnon? A Case Study in Political Extremism*, *The Journal of Politics* 84 (3), 2021, pp. 1844–1849; Stieg LARSSON, *The Millennium Trilogy*, Hachette 2016, p. 1983.

499 Joseph HENRICH, *The WEIRDest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous*, New York 2020, p. 704; Pascal BOYER, *Minds Make Societies*, New Haven – London 2018, p. 376.

500 Matt N. WILLIAMS et al., *Why Are Beliefs in Different Conspiracy Theories Positively Correlated across Individuals? Testing Monological Network versus Unidimensional Factor Model Explanations*, *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 2022; Alberto ACERBI, *From Storytelling to Facebook*, *Human Nature*, 2022, pp. 1–13; Matthew MOTTA – Juwon HWANG – Dominik STECULA, *What Goes Down Must Come Up? Misinformation Search Behavior During an Unplanned Facebook Outage*, SocArXiv preprint, 2022; Sofia BRATU, *The Fake News Sociology of COVID-19 Pandemic Fear: Dangerously Inaccurate Beliefs, Emotional Contagion, and Conspiracy Ideation*, *Linguistic and Philosophical Investigations* 19, 2020, pp. 128–134; Sacha ALTAY – Anne-Sophie HACQUIN – Hugo MERCIER, *Why Do so Few People Share Fake News? It Hurts Their Reputation*, *New Media & Society* 24 (6), 2020, pp. 1303–1324.

conspiracy, an alternative conspiracy theory claims that the attack was an inside job orchestrated by President Bush's administration.⁵⁰¹

7. Conspiracy theories often exhibit recurring themes, making them similar enough to be considered tropes. Common motifs include (a) stories of intentionally spreading diseases; (b) stories about hidden enemies threatening society from within; (c) stories about external enemy groups posing threats to the larger society; and (d) apocalyptic narratives, which involve the impending ultimate destruction of society. Additionally, the most captivating misinformation tends to focus on potential threats to our most valued resources, such as women, children, and information.⁵⁰²

The persistence of shared characteristics in misinformation is perplexing, as they do not offer valuable information about the world or provide useful behavioural guidance. This phenomenon appears puzzling, even from an evolutionary perspective. While relying on accurate information undoubtedly holds survival value,⁵⁰³ if the proclivity towards conspiracy theories were maladaptive, those propagating misinformation would quickly become outcasts. This would reduce their mating prospects and result in fewer offspring, ultimately causing the inclination towards misinformation to vanish from culture.

However, we observe something different. Although the number of cross-cultural studies remains limited, the predisposition towards misinformation appears to be a well-established trait. Furthermore, some research indicates that a significant portion of the population is prone to misinformation; for instance, over 60 % of Americans believe in some conspiracy theory. How is this possible?

The issue lies in the fact that we typically assess the effectiveness of misinformation in the context of modern society. However, our current cultural milieu differs significantly from the one in which the inclination towards misinformation evolved. Consequently, if the proclivity for misinformation has an evolutionary origin, it must be evaluated concerning the conditions under which the human mind evolved.⁵⁰⁴

501 J. W. VAN PROOIJEN – M. VAN VUGT, *Conspiracy Theories*, pp. 770–788.

502 A. MIANI – T. HILLS – A. BANGERTER, *LOCO*, pp. 1794–1817; J. DELUMEAU, DELUMEAU, *La Peur en Occident*, p. 485; Axel BRUNS – Edward HURCOMBE – Stephen HARRINGTON, *Covering Conspiracy: Approaches to Reporting the COVID/5G Conspiracy Theory*, *Digital Journalism*, 2021, pp. 1–22; Sophia MOSKALENKO – Clark MCCAULEY, *QAnon: Radical Opinion versus Radical Action*, *Perspectives on Terrorism* 15 (2), 2021, pp. 142–146; Mattias EKMAN, *The Great Replacement: Strategic Mainstreaming of Far-Right Conspiracy Claims*, *Convergence* 28 (4), 2022, pp. 1127–1143.

503 S. WILLIAMS, *The Ape That Understood the Universe*, p. 378.

504 I dwell from Boyer's Informal Religious Activities analytical model Pascal BOYER, *Informal Religious Activity Outside Hegemonic Religions: Wild Traditions and Their Relevance to Evolutionary Models*, *Religion, Brain & Behavior* 10 (4), 2020, pp. 459–472; idem, *Why Divination? Evolved Psychology and Strategic Interaction in the Production of Truth*, *Current Anthropology* 60 (6), 2020, pp. 1–24. I believe that this model is highly relevant for analysing misinformation. Unfortunately, the limited space of this article does not allow to me to elaborate this relevance further.

Psychological Mechanisms that Underpin Proclivity to Misinformation

The first mechanism crucial for understanding the proclivity towards conspiracy theories is (1) threat-related detection. Like other complex organisms, humans evolved a set of abilities to respond to and take precautionary action against actual and potential dangers present in the environment.⁵⁰⁵ Archaeological and anthropological research sheds light on these particularly harsh conditions, revealing evidence of recurring threats such as accidents, assaults, violence, and illness.⁵⁰⁶ It is reasonable to assume that the human mind evolved to cope with such challenges.⁵⁰⁷

The second significant psychological mechanism essential for understanding the inclination towards misinformation is (2) error management. When we compare the costs of a false alarm to the consequences of overlooking a genuine threat, we find that a strategy to warn against a potential danger is preferable. If the alarm is false, the cost is low; however, if the threat materializes, the group is already prepared for defence. Comparative research from foraging societies demonstrates that the likelihood of falling victim to a sudden attack from another human group or being exploited by a competitive inner-circle group is relatively high.⁵⁰⁸ Under these circumstances, threat detection combined with error management proves highly beneficial.

Environmental Circumstances that Influence Proclivity to Misinformation

Two main factors significantly influence the proclivity towards misinformation: human cooperation and cultural stability. It can be argued that humans' most

505 Idem – Pierre LIÉNARD, *Why Ritualized Behavior? Precaution Systems and Action Parsing in Developmental, Pathological and Cultural Rituals*, *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 29, 2006, pp. 595–613, cf. discussion 613–650; eoddem, *Precaution Systems and Ritualized Behavior*, *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 29 (6), 2006, pp. 635–650; P. BOYER, *Deriving Features*, pp. 557–581.

506 Napoleon CHAGNON, *Noble Savages*, New York 2013, p. 531; Pascal BOYER, *Why We Blame Victims, Accuse Witches, Invent Taboos, and Invoke Spirits: A Model of Strategic Responses to Misfortune*, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 2022; Dan SPERBER, *Explaining Culture*, Oxford 1996; Steven PINKER, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*, London 2011, p. 1026.

507 John TOOBY – Leda COSMIDES, *The Psychological Foundations of Culture*, in: *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture*, ed. Jerome H. Barkow – Leda Cosmides – John Tooby, Oxford 1992, pp. 19–136; P. BOYER, *Minds Make Societies*, p. 376; A. ACERBI, *Cultural Evolution in the Digital Age*, p. 272.

508 Martine G. HASELTON – David M. BUSS, *Error Management Theory and the Evolution of Misbeliefs*, *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 32 (6), 2009, pp. 522–523; Y.-L. NG, *An Error Management Approach*, pp. 1–12; N. CHAGNON, *Noble Savages*, p. 531; idem, *Yanomamö: The Fierce People*, *Natural History* 76, 1983, p. 142; Lawrence H. KEELEY, *War Before Civilization*, Oxford 1997, p. 332; Samuel BOWLES, *Did Warfare Among Ancestral Hunter-Gatherers Affect the Evolution of Human Social Behaviors?*, *Science* 324 (5932), 2009, pp. 1293–1298; Steven A. LEBLANC – Katherine E. REGISTER, *Constant Battles: Why We Fight*, New York 2004, p. 292; Azar GAT, *War in Human Civilization*, Oxford 2006, p. 854; S. PINKER, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, p. 1026.

critical task was (1) cooperating with others to avoid or minimize potential threats. Human cooperation has two conditions: First, members of society are motivated to cooperate while avoiding exploitation by others. Second, because help from others is scarce, it becomes an object of inner-group competition. Social support is a zero-sum game: the more support anyone gets, the less is available for others.

Group members are then motivated to employ strategies that lead them to be recognized as valuable members. Individuals can maintain their reputation by being recognized as valuable and sensitive to potential threats and exploitation of essential resources.⁵⁰⁹ In other words, they must be seen as someone who can warn others in time. Humans have evolved to be highly sensitive and aware of possible dangers due to harsh conditions and the nature of human cooperation.⁵¹⁰

As members of society strive to cooperate with each other while avoiding exploitation, it is crucial for them to be recognized as valuable and reliable sources within the group. To achieve this recognition, individuals must demonstrate their ability to detect potential threats ahead of time, allowing them ample opportunity to take action to protect themselves and others from harm. This heightened sensitivity to potential danger has been a critical aspect of our evolution as humans, equipping us with the skills needed for survival in an ever-changing world.

Furthermore, recent studies suggest that the context dependence of misinformation proclivity is significant. This leads us to the second critical factor that plays a role in the increasing susceptibility to misinformation: (2) cultural stability.⁵¹¹ In a challenging environment, where external and internal threats exert relatively stable pressure, it is a sensible strategy to interpret even the slightest instability as a sign of increased threat potential. When the environment becomes unstable, our psychology assesses the situation as potentially dangerous, implying that negative outcomes are more likely to occur.⁵¹² This heightened awareness means we are prepared to face possible danger if the threat becomes real.

The impact of this process can be illustrated through studies examining the dynamics of a work environment. Research shows that when the climate of

509 P. BOYER, *Minds Make Societies*; idem, *Why We Blame Victims*; idem, *Deriving Features of Religions in the Wild*, pp. 557–581; T. BLAINE – P. BOYER, *Origins of Sinister Rumors*, pp. 67–75.

510 P. BOYER – P. LIÉNARD, *Why Ritualized Behavior? Precaution Systems and Action Parsing in Developmental, Pathological and Cultural Rituals*, pp. 595–613; eosdem, *Precaution Systems and Ritualized Behavior*, pp. 635–650.

511 R. GREEN et al., *Making an Impression*, Art. Nr. 104398; Sacha ALTAY et al., *Conspiracy Believers Underuse Social Information (Like Everyone Else)*, PsyArXiv preprint, 2022; Georges LEFEBVRE, *The Great Fear of 1789: Rural Panic in Revolutionary France*, Princeton – New Jersey 2014, p. 250; Ronald HUTTON, *The Witch: A History of Fear, from Ancient Times to the Present, Illustrated edition*, New Haven 2018, p. 376.

512 F. JØRGENSEN et al., *Pandemic Fatigue*, Art. Nr. e2201266119.

a workplace deteriorates and instability increases due to an unpredictable manager or situation, employees' behaviour changes in notable ways. They begin to perceive otherwise innocuous situations as potential bad omens or threats to their position. The perception of coincidental events diminishes significantly, and group members tend to interpret every situation as someone's deliberate intent. They are also more inclined to view various situations as signs of potential threats or conspiracies against them. Some employees start spreading these conspiracy theories to signal that they are valuable collaborators who can recognize threats. Additionally, they closely observe the reactions of others. In other words, increasing instability in the work environment is correlated with a higher susceptibility to misinformation.⁵¹³

The threat-detection psychological mechanism and error management activate our intuition (gut feeling) that anything could potentially be dangerous. The belief in existing threats serves as a correctness criterion for all sets of facts and information. Consequently, all information is assessed for reliability based on this belief. As a result, people search for possible support and form defensive alliances. Those who exhibit a proclivity for conspiracy theories are then recognized as members of a loose, protective coalition. This ability to perceive everything as a signal of potential threats has evolutionary value. It assists in competing with others for social support and ensures readiness if a threat materializes. Furthermore, it signals our willingness to participate, if necessary, as part of a defensive coalition.

In summary, the proclivity for misinformation was selected as an efficient adaptive behaviour to recognize potential threats. We can see that this inclination towards misinformation is based on psychological mechanisms that evolved throughout human history under specific and harsh environmental conditions. Research supports the view that our mind consists of (1) threat-related detection, (2) intergroup competition for support, and (3) signalling readiness for cooperation in case a threat turns into real danger. In unstable situations, we are motivated to compete for support from others and be recognized as valuable members of a group capable of identifying potential threats.

Although the proclivity for misinformation has its evolutionary roots, it has become obsolete in modern society due to an evolutionary mismatch. Our minds did not develop specifically for misinformation; instead, they evolved to be sensitive to the critical features that conspiracy theories comprise. Our

513 Esther HITCHEN, *The Affective Life of Austerity: Uncanny Atmospheres and Paranoid Temporalities*, *Social & Cultural Geography* 22 (3), 2021, pp. 295–318; Barbara C. LOPES – Caroline KAMAU – Rusi JASPAL, *Coping With Perceived Abusive Supervision: The Role of Paranoia*, *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 26 (2), 2019, pp. 237–255; Cong LIU – Jun YANG – Xixi GU, *Antecedents of Workplace Ostracism*, in: *Workplace Ostracism: Its Nature, Antecedents, and Consequences*, eds. Cong Liu – Jie Ma, Cham 2021, pp. 65–99.

brains have evolved to recognize subtle signs of instability and uncertainty as indicators of potential danger.⁵¹⁴ Whenever our minds detect such signs in a given situation, they begin to evaluate the environment for any other cues pointing toward a possible threat. However, what was once a useful strategy for hunter-gatherers to survive and thrive in their environment has become more of a hindrance than an asset in today's global societies, where science plays the primary role in determining what is factual and true. The increasing inclination toward misinformation can be attributed to the mismatch between our evolved cognitive processes and the current social milieu.

Conclusion: Why Restriction Does Not Effectively Eliminate Misinformation

Our inclination towards misinformation can be traced back to our evolutionary origins. This propensity emerged as an adaptive mechanism under specific environmental conditions, where humans had to be attuned to subtle indicators of danger in order to survive and thrive. This ability enabled us to rapidly identify potential threats and take appropriate defensive actions before they materialized into genuine hazards. In contemporary society, where science plays a crucial role in determining what is factual, this ability is not as beneficial as it once was. Nevertheless, our minds remain hardwired with these psychological mechanisms, predisposing us to believe in conspiracy theories or other forms of misinformation.

The relative success of disinformation is attributable to the general tendency of our cognition to find such information appealing. Our minds are easily swayed by stories and narratives that cater to our innate propensity for pattern recognition.⁵¹⁵ This inclination ensures that disinformation can be effectively disseminated and accepted as truth, even in the face of facts and scientific evidence that contradict it. A significant number of education experts mistakenly believe that our proclivity for misinformation has an epistemic character, implying that it stems from our ability to discern between true and false information. This flawed assumption overlooks the fact that the cognitive mechanisms behind this predisposition evolved as a means of coping with hostile environments. In essence, the capacity to swiftly recognize and respond to potential threats offered a survival advantage to our ancestors.

⁵¹⁴ P. BOYER, *Why We Blame Victims*; idem, *Deriving Features*; S. WILLIAMS, *The Ape That Understood the Universe*.

⁵¹⁵ Stephen K. REED, *Pattern Recognition and Categorization*, *Cognitive Psychology* 3 (3), 1972, pp. 382–407.

Furthermore, many experts tend to overlook the distinction between social and epistemic rationality when examining why people are susceptible to believing in conspiracy theories or other forms of misinformation. Social rationality pertains to how individuals interact and cooperate with others, while epistemic rationality concentrates on our ability to differentiate between true and false information.⁵¹⁶ Our evolutionary past has moulded us to be more socially rational than epistemically rational, causing us to prioritize seeking support from others over obtaining accurate knowledge. This predisposition directs us toward accepting misinformation as truth because it offers a comforting narrative that resonates with our desire for belonging within a group.

Misinformation can be viewed as a social alarm system designed to alert others about potential threats. This evolutionary adaptation has been passed down through generations and remains active in our minds today. This psychological mechanism enables us to swiftly identify potential hazards in our surroundings, even if they are not immediately obvious. When our minds perceive such indicators in a particular situation, they begin assessing the environment for any additional cues that could point to an impending threat.

Imposing restrictions on information is counterproductive, as it serves as a signal of potential threat, activating our psychological mechanisms to evaluate the environment for any possible dangers.⁵¹⁷ When information is limited, it reinforces the notion that there could be a concealed conspiracy behind the decision, leading people to be more inclined to believe in baseless theories and distrust the authorities who enforce such censorship. This kind of censorship may exacerbate divisions within society, hindering efforts to bridge ideological gaps.⁵¹⁸ Moreover, when facts are suppressed or dismissed due to censorship, individuals become more likely to accept misinformation as truth. This could result in dire consequences, such as the propagation of harmful misinformation and the adoption of false beliefs about crucial subjects that significantly impact our lives. Restricting information also fosters an environment in which people are less inclined to scrutinize what they hear and accept it without verifying its validity.

Fact-checking, while seemingly a useful tool against misinformation, often falls short in practice, as it is frequently perceived as part of the conspiracy by those disseminating it. Many people believe that fact-checkers are biased and driven by political or financial agendas, leading them to manipulate facts to fit their preferred narrative. This scepticism results in a refusal to trust fact-

516 D. WILLIAMS, *Socially Adaptive Belief*.

517 A. ACERBI – S. ALTAY – H. MERCIER, *Research Note*.

518 Sungkyu PARK et al., *An Experimental Study to Understand User Experience and Perception Bias Occurred by Fact-Checking Messages*, in: *Proceedings of the Web Conference 2021, WWW '21*, New York 2021, pp. 2769–2780.

checkers, regardless of their credibility. Moreover, conspiracy theorists often feel targeted by fact-checking efforts, which further solidifies their beliefs and makes them resistant to counterarguments or debate.

Relying on fact-checking also encounters the challenge of confirmation bias: the tendency for individuals to accept statements that align with their beliefs while dismissing those that contradict them. Consequently, even if someone were to consult credible sources to verify or refute a piece of information, they would likely focus on those that reinforce their existing beliefs and dismiss any that challenge them. In this context, fact-checking efforts ultimately become ineffective, as they are disregarded by those who choose not to believe in their findings.⁵¹⁹

As previously discussed, an increased tendency to spread misinformation is more a symptom of decreased social stability rather than its cause. When cultural instability rises, so does the inclination to propagate misinformation. This occurs because, in times of social upheaval and uncertainty, people tend to prioritize social rationality (seeking support from others) over epistemic rationality (acquiring accurate knowledge). Additionally, restrictions on information act as cues of potential threats, activating our psychological mechanisms to assess our surroundings for danger. As a result, we become more likely to accept misinformation as truth, as it offers a comforting narrative that aligns with our desire to belong to a group. Therefore, it is reasonable to anticipate that as cultural instability increases, so will the prevalence of misinformation.

Research has shown that increasing social stability can effectively reduce the spread of misinformation.⁵²⁰ When people feel secure and supported in their environment, they are more likely to focus on acquiring accurate knowledge rather than relying on support from others for validation. This means that when there is a sense of trust between members of society, people become more epistemically rational, prioritizing the pursuit of truth over group belonging. Additionally, when information is freely available and accessible without restriction or censorship, it becomes easier for individuals to verify the accuracy of claims made by officials or other sources. Consequently, higher levels of social stability can lead to greater levels of critical thinking, reducing the proclivity towards misinformation.

It is important to note the limitations of this chapter, which primarily focused on evolutionary, social anthropological, and cognitive perspectives. Further research could examine cross-cultural and psychological evidence to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to

519 Edda HUMPRECHT, *How Do They Debunk 'Fake News'? A Cross-National Comparison of Transparency in Fact Checks*, *Digital Journalism* 8 (3), 2020, pp. 310–327; Jesper STRÖMBÄCK – Asa WIKFORSS (eds.), *Knowledge Resistance in High-Choice Information Environments*, London 2022, p. 328.

520 S. ALTAY – M. BERRICHE – A. ACERBI, *Misinformation on Misinformation*; Sacha ALTAY – Alberto ACERBI, *Misinformation Is a Threat Because (Other) People Are Gullible*, PsyArXiv preprint, 2022.

misinformation. By broadening the scope of inquiry, researchers may uncover additional insights into the dynamics of misinformation and its relationship with social stability. This, in turn, could inform more effective strategies for mitigating the spread of false information in various cultural contexts.

Words: 7 915
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10 Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia

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The coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 (which causes the COVID-19) pandemic has been the cause of profound changes in all aspects of social, economic, political, cultural, and educational life. In 2020 and 2021, the everyday reality of schools across Europe was strongly affected by the pandemic, which led to school closures in many countries and periods of distance or blended learning (combining online and classroom-based learning) for many students. Many schools were ill-prepared for this unprecedented situation.⁵²¹ Education in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia has taken the form of distance education day by day. Distance learning has typically been defined as the delivery of real time, live instruction from one distant site to another, or to multiple sites, using audio and/or video technologies which also allow the teacher and students at different sites to interact with each other. Distance education programmes can be either time and/or distance insensitive. Students and their distance learning teacher are separated by distance, but are meeting together via telecommunications all at the same time (synchronous programmes). Under ideal conditions, students at one site are not only provided direct contact with their instructor but are able to communicate directly with students at other remote sites during the instructional process. Asynchronous programs are both time and distance insensitive.⁵²² We use the term distance learning with the understanding that it was not a planned form of teaching but rather an emergency remote teaching. It is a set of technologically mediated solutions applied to face-to-face teaching courses. The idea behind their application was that teaching would return to classroom-based form once the crisis is over.⁵²³

Central and Eastern European countries have experienced a general lack of adequate knowledge and experience to develop a robust management

521 EURYDICE (European Education and Culture Executive Agency), *Teaching and Learning in Schools in Europe during the COVID-19 Pandemic*, Luxembourg 2022, p. 3.

522 Bruce O. BARKER – Michael W. DICKSON, *Distance Learning Technologies in K-12 schools: Past, Present, and Future Practice*, *Techtrends* 41, 1996, pp. 19–22.

523 Charles HODGES – Stephanie MOORE – Barb LOCKEE – Torrey TRUST – Aaron BOND, *The Difference Between Emergency Remote Teaching and Online Learning*, 2020, <https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-online-learning>; Taras PAN-SKYI – Ewa KORZENIEWSKA – Małgorzata SERWACH – Krzysztof GRUDZIEN, *New Realities for Polish Primary School Informatics Education Affected by COVID-19*, *Education and Information Technologies* 27, 2021 (2022), pp. 1–28; Zuheir N. KHLAIF – Soheil SALHA – Bochra KOURAICHI, *Emergency Remote Learning during COVID-19 Crisis: Students' Engagement*, *Education and Information Technologies* 26, 2021, pp. 7033–7055.

strategy and evidence-based policymaking in the face of a pandemic.⁵²⁴ Unfortunately, primary and secondary schools in Eastern and Central Europe have never considered distance learning a valuable alternative to school education, so they have not had the software, hardware, and staff prepared for such a situation. Moreover, students' expectations and dilemmas regarding e-learning have not been previously analysed in the context of compulsory subject education.⁵²⁵

Education during the Pandemic in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia

In Poland, the Education System has the following educational stages.⁵²⁶

Children's education includes:

- institutions for children aged 0–3 years: crèche or kids' club;
- institutions for children aged 3–6 years: nursery school or preschool class in a primary school, preschool unit, preschool centre;
- primary education for students aged 7–15 years;
- secondary education: general secondary school (for students aged 15–19 years), technical secondary school (for students aged 15–20 years), or Stage I sectoral vocational school (for students aged 15–18 years), and 2-year Stage II sectoral vocational school (for students aged 18–20 years).

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, distance education was uncommon or non-existent in Poland.⁵²⁷ Therefore, changing teaching communication from face-to-face contact to technology-mediated-communication was a substantial challenge for Polish teachers.⁵²⁸ On 12 March 2020 the activities of educational units were temporarily suspended, while the implementation of the tasks of educational units using distance learning methods began on 25 March 2020. During the COVID-19 pandemic, preschool and first-form

524 Daniel KLIMOVSKÝ – Juraj NEMEC, *The Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Responses from Various Policy Actors in the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 2020. An Introduction to a Special Issue*, SciPap 29(1), 2021, p. 1255.

525 Mária BABINČÁKOVÁ – Paweł BERNARD, *Online Experimentation during COVID-19 Secondary School Closures: Teaching Methods and Student Perceptions*, *Journal of Chemical Education* 97 (9), 2020, pp. 3295–3300.

526 EURYDICE, *Teaching and Learning*, p. 26.

527 Karina CICHA – Paulina RUTECKA – Mariia RIZUN – Artur STRZELECKI, *Digital and Media Literacies in the Polish Education System – Pre- and Post-COVID-19 Perspective*, *Education Sciences* 11 (9), 2021, p. 532.

528 Sylwia JASKULSKA – Barbara JANKOWIAK, *Postawy nauczycielek i nauczycieli wobec kształcenia na odległość w czasie pandemii COVID-19*, *Studia Edukacyjne* 57, 2021, pp. 47–65; Barbara JANKOWIAK – Sylwia JASKULSKA – Anna RYBIŃSKA, *Postawy nauczycielek i nauczycieli wychowania przedszkolnego wobec kształcenia na odległość w czasie pandemii covid-19*, *Rocznik Pedagogiczny* 43 (1), 2020, pp. 95–116; Sylwia JASKULSKA – Barbara JANKOWIAK – Emilia SOROKO, *Social Capital Resources in Coping with Distance Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Content Analysis of the Statements of Teachers Working in Poland at Different Educational Stages*, *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19 (7), 2020, p. 3905.

children had the shortest distance learning intervals. Older students spent most of their time performing their school obligation online from March 2020 to June 2021.⁵²⁹ In practice, this involved various forms of synchronous and asynchronous online work. Typically, students and teachers attended the meetings through various enabling platforms. Class assignments and student work were uploaded using different communication channels.⁵³⁰ In the first place, the focus has been on performing the didactic function of school, whereas fulfilling care and upbringing obligations has become a significant challenge for teachers. The same applies to maintaining the digital hygiene of students and teachers.⁵³¹

In Slovakia, the following educational stages are present.⁵³²

Children's education includes:

- institutions for children aged 0–3 years: crèche or kids' club;
- institutions for children aged 3–6 years: nursery school;
- primary education for students aged 6–10 (Stage I) and 10–15 (Stage II);
- secondary general education: gymnasium for students aged 11–19;
- secondary vocational education: secondary vocational school for students aged 15–20, secondary sports school for students aged 15–20, or Conservatory for students aged 11–19.

In Slovakia, despite the presence of distance and online courses before the pandemic, their use was marginal compared to full-time courses.⁵³³ However, during a pandemic – following the official statement of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter the Ministry of Education) – all schools in the country were closed from 16 March 2020, and face-to-face education was substituted with distance education. From 26 March 2020, a dedicated web portal for official communication during the state of emergency was established in cooperation with several non-governmental organisations and the Ministry of Education. They provided an overview of the possibilities for distance education, recommendations, and guidelines for schools, teachers, professionals, and parents.⁵³⁴

529 Summary of the school year 2019/2020 of the Polish ministry – cf. <https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja-i-nauka/podsumowanie-roku-szkolnego-20192020>.

530 Anna BUCHNER – Magdalena SZENIAWSKA – Maria WIERZBICKA, *Badanie edukacji zdalnej w czasie pandemii*, <https://centrumcyfrowe.pl/edukacja-zdalna>.

531 Grzegorz PTASZEK – Grzegorz D. STUNŻA – Jacek PYŻALSKI – Maciej DĘBSKI – Magdalena BIGAJ, *Edukacja zdalna: co stało się z uczniami, ich rodzicami i nauczycielami?*, Gdańsk 2020, pp. 75–111.

532 EURYDICE, *Teaching and Learning*, p. 28.

533 Maria HLINKOVA – Miroslav GARAJ – Martina ZELENÁKOVÁ, *Current State in Educational System during Covid-19 Pandemic Situation – Case Study: Slovakia*, *Annals of the University of Craiova. Geography* 23, 2022, pp. 88–100.

534 Eva BALLOVÁ MIKUŠKOVÁ – Marcela VEREŠOVÁ, *Distance Education during Covid-19: The Perspective of Slovak Teachers*, *Problems of Education in the 21st Century* 78 (6), 2020, pp. 884–906.

In Czechia, there are the following educational stages.⁵³⁵

Children's education includes:

- institutions for children aged 0–3 years: crèche or kids' club;
- institutions for children aged 2–6 years: nursery school;
- primary education for students aged 6–11 (Stage I) and 11–15 (Stage II);
- secondary general education for students aged 11–19: "Všeobecné obory" (11–15), "Odborné obory" (15–19), and "Nástavbové studium" (18–20).

In the Czech Republic, the government declared the closure of all primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions on 10 March 2020. Professional schools' closure followed the day after.⁵³⁶

Implementing distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in Czechia has been challenging as it required a rapid shift to online platforms and tools that were not previously in widespread use. According to a survey conducted by the Czech Ministry of Education in April 2020, about 70 % of schools in the Czech Republic had implemented distance learning, with varying levels of success. The survey found that most schools (97 %) used online platforms and tools to facilitate distance learning. In contrast, a smaller percentage used traditional methods such as printed materials or radio broadcasts. The report, titled *Distance learning in basic and upper secondary schools in the Czech Republic*, also stressed that: "*The vast majority of pupils at basic and upper secondary schools were involved in distance education. However, there were certain differences in their scope and manner of involvement. Only 11 % of pupils in basic schools with primary level and 16 % of pupils in basic schools with primary and lower secondary levels were not involved in online communication with their school.*"⁵³⁷ Several challenges were reported in the implementation of distance learning in the Czech Republic. One of the main challenges was the lack of access to technology and the Internet, as not all students had access to the necessary devices or a stable Internet connection. Another challenge was the lack of teacher training in using online platforms and tools, as many teachers were unfamiliar with these technologies. In addition, there were concerns about the lack of individual attention and personal support offered to students, as well as the lack of a clear framework for distance learning at the national level.

Student Well-being during the Pandemic

The changes brought by the pandemic fit well into the criteria of traumatogenic changes, further defined as rapid, profound, broad in scope, and affecting

535 EURYDICE, *Teaching and Learning*, p. 16.

536 Education Policy Outlook by OECD: Czech Republic, 2020 – cf. <https://www.oecd.org/education/policy-outlook/country-profile-Czech-Republic-2020.pdf>, p. 4.

537 Tomáš PAVLAS et al., *Distance Learning in Basic and Upper Secondary Schools in the Czech Republic*. Thematic Report. Czech School Inspectorate 2020, p. 5, <https://www.oecd.org/education/Czech-republic-distance-learning-in-secondary-schools.pdf>.

core values and life patterns;⁵³⁸ Kaufmann⁵³⁹ describes such changes as “bolts from the blue”. What happened is the unique configuration of the health crisis, social isolation, and economic recession that together negatively impacted the mental health of many children and young people.⁵⁴⁰ The pandemic came unexpectedly, and it instantly installed in people a fundamental fear of the unknown and deadly disease. It was particularly daunting during the first year of the pandemic when vaccines were not yet available. Health issues aside, the anxiety related to the material basis of everyday life also started to dominate, especially when the economic consequences of enforcing lockdowns became apparent.⁵⁴¹ The pandemic destabilised people’s daily routines, leaving individuals without a much-needed sense of predictability and safety,⁵⁴² disrupting the way we experience time in everyday life.⁵⁴³ Various studies suggest that since the beginning of the pandemic, an increase in negative and a decrease in positive emotions have been observed globally.⁵⁴⁴ The most common pattern of emotions experienced by individuals became an oscillation between fear and anger (sometimes of great intensity).⁵⁴⁵ This oscillation, coupled with experiences of intense frustration and impatience – that can lead to impulsive behaviours and various forms of aggression – is described as pandemic rage.⁵⁴⁶ The name refers to previously known phenomena of road rage or computer rage⁵⁴⁷ and points to nonspecific responses of emotional tension in reaction to the loss of sense of life balance

538 Piotr SZTOMPKA, *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*, Kraków 2002, pp. 454–470; Jeffrey C. ALEXANDER, *Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma*, in: Jeffrey C. Alexander – Ron Eyerman – Bernhard Giesen – Neil J. Smelser – Piotr Sztompka (eds.), *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, Berkeley 2004, pp. 1–31; Mariusz BARANOWSKI – Anna ODRÓWĄŻ-COATES, *Attempting to register changes: the educational dimension of contemporary societies*, *Society Register* 2 (2), 2018, pp. 7–10.

539 Jean-Claude KAUFMANN, *Kiedy „Ja” jest innym. Dlaczego i jak coś się w nas zmienia*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 21–30.

540 Ezra GOLBERSTEIN – Hefei WEN – Benjamin F. MILLER, *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and Mental Health for Children and Adolescents*, *JAMA Pediatrics* 174 (9), 2020, pp. 819–820; Shaul KIMHI – Marciano HADAS – Eshel YOHANAN – Adini BRURIA, *Resilience and Demographic Characteristics Predicting Distress during the COVID-19 Crisis*, *Social Science & Medicine* 265, 2020, Art. Nr. 113389.

541 *Obawy Polaków w czasach pandemii*. Komunikat z badań nr 155/2020, https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2020/K_155_20.PDF.

542 Monika FRĄCKOWIAK-SOCHAŃSKA, *Mental Health in the Pandemic Times*, *Society Register* 4 (3), 2020, pp. 67–78.

543 Rob COVER, *Identity in the Disrupted Time of COVID-19: Performativity, Crisis, Mobility, and Ethics*, *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 4 (1), 2021, Art. Nr. 100175.

544 Ke WANG et al., *A Global Test of Brief Reappraisal Interventions on Emotions during the COVID-19 Pandemic*, *Nature Human Behaviour* 5, 2020, pp. 1089–1110.

545 May Oo LWIN – Lu JIAHUI – Anita SHELDENKAR – Peter Johannes SCHULZ – Wonsun SHIN – Raj GUPTA – Yinping YANG, *Global Sentiments Surrounding the COVID-19 Pandemic on Twitter: Analysis of Twitter Trends*, *JMIR Public Health Surveillance* 6 (2), 2020, Art. Nr. e19447.

546 Małgorzata KUBACKA – Piotr LUCZYS – Ariel MODRZYK – Agnieszka STAMM, *Pandemic Rage: Everyday Frustrations in Times of the COVID-19 Crisis*, *Current Sociology* 2021, pp. 1–18.

547 Bonnie BERRY, *Social Rage: Emotion and Cultural Conflict*, New York 1999, pp. 9–36; Maria L. GARASE, *Road Rage*, New York 2006, pp. 5–15.

and agentic control. The research by IPSOS,⁵⁴⁸ conducted in 28 countries, found that at the end of December 2020, anxiety related to employment insecurity and instability of daily routines was experienced by more than half of the respondents.⁵⁴⁹ According to WHO,⁵⁵⁰ during the first year of the pandemic, there was a 25 % increase in the frequency of anxiety disorder and depression cases observed globally. The list of factors primarily contributing to the individual stress load, based on a research study titled *COVID-STRES. Emotional changes during the first and second phases of the SARS CoV-2 pandemic in 2020*, includes: feeling of isolation/decline in social contacts, threats to personal and family members' health, deterioration of one's economic-financial situation, health-threatening work conditions (work involving contact with other people), domestic conflicts, problems with obtaining necessary medical care and information on COVID-19 among relatives or friends.⁵⁵¹ The pandemic situation implicates long-term experiences of stress. As found in research on how social stress impacts the physical condition of individuals, chronic stress transforms into fear, and long-experienced fear/anxiety evolves into depression.⁵⁵²

The research on the dynamics of depression and anxiety responses during the first year of the pandemic indicated the highest intensity of depression and generalised anxiety symptoms in May and December and the lowest in July 2020.⁵⁵³ Towards the end of 2020, 29 % of women and 24 % of men were at risk of exacerbation of depression symptoms meeting the clinical diagnostic criteria. It was also then when the highest levels of depression and generalised anxiety symptoms were exhibited by people aged 35–44. Moreover, in December 2020, an increase in depression symptoms was observed among parents of children under 18 years of age (in comparison with people not having children of that age). According to research authors, depression and generalised anxiety symptoms were most strongly linked to

548 IPSOS, *The COVID-19 Pandemic's Impact on Workers' Lives. 28-Country IPSOS Survey for The World Economic Forum*, 2020, <https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2020-12/impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-workers-lives-report.pdf>.

549 IPSOS, *The COVID-19 Pandemic's Impact*.

550 World Health Organization (WHO), *COVID-19 Pandemic Triggers 25% Increase in Prevalence of Anxiety and Depression Worldwide*, 2022, <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-03-2022-covid-19-pandemic-triggers-25-increase-in-prevalence-of-anxiety-and-depression-worldwide>.

551 Bogdan ZAWADZKI et al., *COVID-STRES Raport nr 15 z badania przeprowadzonego na Wydziale Psychologii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego we współpracy z Uniwersytetem SWPS podczas epidemii COVID-19 w 2020 r.*, 2021, https://covid.psych.uw.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/50/2021/03/Raport_Covid_Stres.pdf.

552 Sławomir MURAWIEC – Piotr WIERZBIŃSKI, *Depresja 2016*, Gdańsk 2016, pp. 45–60; Agnieszka NIEWIŃSKA-LEWICKA, *Naukowcy podsumowali samopoczucie uczniów po roku zdalnej nauki*, 2021, <https://naukawpolsce.pl/aktualnosci/news%2C89516%2Cnaukowcy-podsumowali-samopoczucie-uczniow-po-roku-zdalnej-nauki.html>.

553 Małgorzata GAMBIN et al., *Generalized Anxiety and Depressive Symptoms in Various Age Groups during the COVID-19 Lockdown in Poland. Specific Predictors and Differences in Symptoms Severity*, *Comprehensive Psychiatry* 105, 2021, Art. Nr. 152222; B. ZAWADZKI et al., *COVID-STRES Raport*.

difficulties experienced at home (complex relations with family members, perceived lack of privacy, feeling overburdened with duties) as well as fear and uncertainty because of the spread of the epidemic. What was essential was also feeling anxious about one's work and financial situation.⁵⁵⁴ In this regard, it is necessary to stress that lingering symptoms of depression in parents negatively influence the emotional functioning of children and the family in general.

Moreover, restrictions introduced in many countries to reduce the effects of the spread of SARS-CoV-2, which causes the COVID-19 disease, have changed the organisation of everyday life and the structure of fundamental areas of individual activities (e.g., work, education, and free time). The strategies behind these restrictions were mainly aimed at hygiene behaviour (wearing face masks, disinfecting hands) and minimising viral emissions by limiting social contact. The temporary limiting of freedom of movement, gatherings, and meetings and restricted access to public spaces, including traditional entertainment facilities (e.g., sports or cultural), have changed how children and adolescents, as well as adults, spend their free time, including their physical activity. The modifications in habits forced on them by the pandemic indicate an increase in time spent at home, a focus on entertainment mediated by social media (games, streaming, TV), and the growing importance of individually undertaken outdoor activities.⁵⁵⁵ Changes in the habits of children and adolescents observed during the pandemic contribute to modifications in the level of well-being.⁵⁵⁶ Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, students in Poland, Czechia, and Slovakia participated in remote education. The pandemic thus influenced the hitherto known school functioning, impacting

554 M. GAMBIN et al., *Generalized Anxiety*, p. 152222; B. ZAWADZKI et al., *COVID-STRES Report*.

555 Dana Rose GARFIN – Roxane Cohen SILVER – E Alison HOLMAN, *The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-2019) Outbreak: Amplification of Public Health Consequences by Media Exposure*, *Health Psychology* 39, 2020, pp. 355–357; Paola PANARESE – Vittoria AZZARITA, *The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Lifestyle: How Young People have Adapted Their Leisure and Routine during Lockdown in Italy*, *YOUNG* 29, 2021, pp. 35–64.

556 WHO, #HealthyAtHome – *Mental Health: Looking After Our Mental Health*, <https://www.who.int/campaigns/connecting-the-world-to-combat-coronavirus/healthyathome/healthyathome---mental-health>; Hongfeng LIU – Wentong LIU – Vignesh YOGANATHAN – Victoria-Sophie OSBURG, *COVID-19 information overload and generation Z's social media discontinuance intention during the pandemic lockdown*, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 166, 2021, Art. Nr. 120600; Aprile D. BENNER – Rashmita S. MISTRY, *Child development during the COVID-19 pandemic through a life course theory lens*, *Child Development Perspectives* 14, 2020, pp. 236–243.

the well-being of both students and teachers.⁵⁵⁷

The research results indicate that even young people who generally scored low on scales of fear/anxiety, depression, and emotional dysregulation before the pandemic, could be subjected to an increase in these psychopathological symptoms during its course. Studies conducted in Poland found that almost one-third of students declared that they often or constantly felt sad (28,9 %), lonely (27,4 %), and depressed (28,4 %).⁵⁵⁸ Following the Report on students' mental health, as many as 38 % of Polish students declared that during the periods of remote education their well-being had deteriorated.⁵⁵⁹ Problems with remote education accompanied the ongoing decline in young people's health. 7 % of students indicated that their health is worse now than before, and one in five mentioned experiencing worse physical well-being. The decreased vision became a problem for 16 % of students, whereas for 18 % it was being overweight. Physical fitness deterioration was observed by 30 % of young people, and 26 % experienced a general worsening of daily functioning. 20 % of students showed symptoms of depression, and 15 % lacked satisfaction with life. One in every five students declared that they would like to receive help from a school pedagogue or psychologist.⁵⁶⁰

Following another Polish study, with nearly two thousand Polish elementary or junior high school students between the ages of 9 and 20 participating, 45 % of students thought their physical well-being during the COVID-19 outbreak worsened compared to pre-pandemic times. Boys declared they felt better in their physical well-being than girls. Most students noticed changes in the quality of their leisure time activities; boys were happier than girls with their free time during the outbreak. Learners' ages also differentiated the assessment of their physical well-being and leisure time. The youngest students more often assessed their experiences in the investigated areas as

557 Marzena BUCHNAT – Sylwia JASKULSKA – Barbara JANKOWIAK, *Kształcenie na odległość uczniów i uczennic z lekką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w czasie pandemii COVID-19 w opiniach nauczycieli i nauczycielek*, Rocznik Pedagogiczny 44, 2021, pp. 107–121; Anna BUCHNER – Maria WIERZBICKA, *Edukacja zdalna w czasie pandemii*, Warszawa 2020, https://centrumcyfrowe.pl/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2020/11/Raport_Edukacja-zdalna-w-czasie-pandemii.-Edycja-II.pdf; B. JANKOWIAK – S. JASKULSKA – A. RYBIŃSKA, *Postawy nauczycielek i nauczycieli*, pp. 95–116; Barbara JANKOWIAK – Sylwia JASKULSKA, *Dobrostan nauczycielek i nauczycieli wychowania przedszkolnego a ich postawy wobec kształcenia na odległość w czasie pandemii COVID-19*, Horyzonty Wychowania 20 (53), 2021, pp. 25–37; S. JASKULSKA – B. JANKOWIAK, *Postawy nauczycielek i nauczycieli*, pp. 47–65; Wiesław POLESZAK – Jacek PYŻAŁSKI, *Psychologiczna sytuacja dzieci i młodzieży w czasie epidemii*, in: Jacek Pyżalski (ed.), *Edukacja w czasach pandemii wirusa COVID-19. Z dystansem o tym, co robimy obecnie jako nauczyciele*, Warszawa 2020, pp. 7–15; G. PTASZEK – G. D. STUNŻA – J. PYŻAŁSKI – M. DEBESKI – M. BIGAJ, *Edukacja zdalna*, pp. 75–111.

558 Ibidem, p. 10.

559 *Szkola 2.0. Raport o Stanie Zdrowia Psychicznego Uczennic i Uczniów. Ocena zmian w wyniku pandemii COVID-19*, 2021, <https://www.szkoła20.com/raport-o-stanie-zdrowia-psychicznego>.

560 A. NIEWIŃSKA-LEWICKA, *Naukowcy podsumowali samopoczucie uczniów*.

good or increased, while the older groups more often noticed a decrease.⁵⁶¹ In Poland, after nearly a year of remote education, 20 % of students exhibited symptoms of depression, and 65 % stated that online lessons were of lower quality than lessons taught at school.⁵⁶² The pandemic and shift towards remote education resulted in an overall deterioration of young people's psychical and physical health. After almost 18 months of the break from traditional, classroom-based teaching, students were well-aware of possible educational shortcomings and backlogs resulting from reliance on online education. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that 40 % of students feared teachers' demands in the near future, and one in three was anxious about the nuisances of getting up early and going to school. The same percentage of respondents experienced reduced motivation to study. In contrast, for 29 % of surveyed young people, the change of previously established daily rhythm and adapting to school requirements posed a problem. Every fourth student was aware of the low quality of knowledge obtained during online classes.

Further research on remote education enabled building a catalogue of problems experienced by children, which comprises difficulties in remaining focused during online classes, troubles in differentiating between school time and leisure time, lack of contact with peers, loneliness, and decrease in social skills, as well as accumulated tension resulting from the inability to discharge the excess of energy outdoors.⁵⁶³ Unequal access to technology, which prevented equal participation of all students in school activities, was also a significant problem.⁵⁶⁴

According to a study of parents from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, their school-age children showed signs of being overworked, lacking motivation, experiencing stress, and in many cases, a sense of loss of social interaction during remote education.⁵⁶⁵

According to a survey conducted by Kwok Ng et al.⁵⁶⁶ in the spring of 2020 in the Czech Republic, *“one in five adolescents (19.3 %) indicated their families experienced economic disruptions during the lockdown. Significantly more girls than boys (37 % vs. 26 %) reported psycho-social disruptions to their family life,*

561 Sylwia JASKULSKA – Barbara JANKOWIAK – Mateusz MARCINIAK – Michal KLICHOWSKI, *Assessment of Physical Well-Being and Leisure Time of Polish Students during the COVID-19 Outbreak*, *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, 2022, p. 8358.

562 A. NIEWIŃSKA-LEWICKA, *Naukowcy podsumowali samopoczucie uczniów*.

563 Anzhela POPYK, *Home as a mixture of spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic: the case of migrant families in Poland*, *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 3, 2021, pp. 27–45.

564 Dania V. FRANCIS – Christian E. WELLER, *Economic Inequality, the Digital Divide, and Remote Learning During COVID-19*, *The Review of Black Political Economy* 49 (1), 2022, pp. 41–60.

565 Gabriela ŠARNÍKOVÁ, *Parents' Approaches to Their Children's Education and Related Issues During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Slovak and the Czech Republic*, *Journal of Family Issues Online First*, 2022, n.p.

566 Kwok NG – Alina COSMA – Karel SVACINA – Meyran BONIEL-NISSIM – Petr BADURA, *Czech adolescents' remote school and health experiences during the spring 2020 COVID-19 lockdown*, *Preventive Medicine Reports* 22, 2021, Art. Nr. 101386.

and this increased by age only for girls.”⁵⁶⁷ On the other hand, despite “these negative aspects, opportunities for positive interactions within the family or space to learn new things were also commonly reported (79 %), although this declined with increasing age”.⁵⁶⁸ These results show, that although remote learning was introduced in the Czech Republic without preparation as an emergent response to the spreading coronavirus pandemic, it was not unequivocally negatively evaluated by students. A more detailed explanation of this situation would require additional research (e.g., in terms of students’ school workload), but this is not the purpose of this paper. When considering the results of survey research, it is crucial not to forget the differences between students based on gender and age. For example: “girls and older adolescents reported the poorest levels of social and mental well-being. Changes in respondents’ perceived health behaviours varied by reported behaviour frequencies and gender.”⁵⁶⁹ In particular, the issues of psychological tensions experienced by young people faced with isolation forced by the coronavirus pandemic, require further detailed research.⁵⁷⁰ For almost all families with children at school age, remote education became a challenge,⁵⁷¹ complicating the already complicated relationship between the work and the family life – with the home simultaneously serving as space for children’s learning, parents’ work and ongoing undercurrent family life (full of its specific tensions). Children’s remote education and parents’ vocational work from home posed significant problems with sharing limited space and equipment resources.⁵⁷² Additionally, it all intensified the discomfoting imbalance between work and private life and created specific “agenda chaos” resulting, for example, from shifts in parents’ working hours as they waited for the kids to finish classes to use a shared computer.⁵⁷³

Results from previous research indicate that pandemic-related experiences were not unambiguously negative, or rather not equally harmful for everyone.

567 Ibidem, p. 3.

568 Ibidem.

569 Ibidem, p. 1.

570 Gordana STANKOVSKA – Imran MEMEDI – Dimitar DIMITROVSKI, *Coronavirus Covid-19 Disease, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support*, Society Register 4 (2), 2020, pp. 33–48.

571 Urszula MARKOWSKA-MANISTA – Dominika ZAKRZEWSKA-OLĘDZKA, *Family with Children in Times of Pandemic – What, Where, How? Dilemmas of Adult-Imposed Prohibitions and Orders*, Society Register 4 (3), 2020, pp. 89–110; Filip NALASKOWSKI, *Indoor Education in Poland during the Covid-19*, Dialogo 6 (2), 2020, pp. 57–62; Teresa PARCZEWSKA, *Difficult Situations and Ways of Coping with them in the Experiences of Parents Homeschooling their Children during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Poland*, Education 3-13. International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education 49 (7), 2020, pp. 889–900; A. POPYK, *Home*, pp. 27–45.

572 Rafał DROZDOWSKI – Maciej FRĄCKOWIAK – Marek KRAJEWSKI – Małgorzata KUBACKA – Piotr LUCZYS – Ariel MODRZYK – Łukasz ROGOWSKI – Przemysław RURA – Agnieszka STAMM, *Życie codzienne w czasach pandemii. Raport z drugiego etapu badań wersja pełna*, Poznań 2021, http://sociojologia.amu.edu.pl/images/pliki/Zycie_coddzienne_w_czasach_pandemii__Raport_z_drugiego_eta pu_badan_wersja_pe% C5% 82na.pdf; A. POPYK, *Home*, pp. 27–45.

573 Ibidem.

For example: among positive aspects of life during the pandemic, more than half of participants in the *Everyday life in times of the pandemic* study mentioned having more time for themselves and their relatives during lockdowns, more time for pursuing one's hobbies (47 %), and learning new things (37 %).⁵⁷⁴ Other positive sides of the pandemic indicated in the study were the increase of amount and quality of time with the close ones, limiting consumption, and re-evaluation of life priorities. Yet simultaneously, individuals whose experiences were predominantly negative (fatigue, lack of time for oneself, and impossibility of meeting one's important needs), could suffer from enhanced frustration and overwhelming emotions due to social comparisons and the resulting impression of contrast.⁵⁷⁵

Students' Evaluation of Distance Education during the Pandemic

According to data obtained from a representative sample of Polish students (N=4958) aged 9 to 20, the evaluation of remote education is ambiguous. A similar percentage of students like this form of education and would instead continue online lessons than attend school in person (27.80 %), like it but prefer to go to school (31.71 %), and do not like it and prefer to go back to school (28.97 %). Remote education is preferred by boys rather than girls and by urban residents more than rural ones. On the other hand, direct contact is chosen by younger students more often than by their older colleagues. Among students' opinions, the dominating view is that remote education is not difficult, alongside their trust in mastering the know-how of digital tools. Such beliefs appear especially in the opinions of boys and students from large cities.⁵⁷⁶

In contrast, problems with equipment use seem to concern mainly the youngest age group. Students generally did not perceive remote education as difficult or challenging for their teachers. During online classes, students in Poland most often undertook such activities as reading materials sent by the teacher, watching materials recommended by the teacher on the Internet, searching for information on the Internet, and talking to the teacher and/or colleagues over the Internet. Activities that were infrequently present during lessons included: playing computer games recommended by the teacher, meeting with interesting people via the Internet, virtual tours, but also completing tasks from e-books together with the teacher via the Internet. Activities and ways of teaching and learning typically based on the transmission and reception of information appeared to dominate remote teaching strategies.⁵⁷⁷

574 R. DROZDOWSKI et al., *Życie codzienne*, p. 200.

575 M. KUBACKA – P. LUCZYS – A. MODRZYK – A. STAMM, *Pandemic Rage*, pp. 1–18.

576 Sylwia JASKULSKA – Barbara JANKOWIAK – Joanna SIKORSKA – Michał KLICHOWSKI – Hanna KRAUZE-SIKORSKA, *Proces uczenia się przed, w trakcie i po pandemii Covid-19*, Poznań 2021.

577 Ibidem.

Research conducted in Slovakia shows that secondary school and university students consider classroom teaching more effective than distance learning.⁵⁷⁸ For example, school courses such as physical education⁵⁷⁹ and chemistry⁵⁸⁰ were particularly challenging in an online form.

Social relations are essential to the school's functioning and significant capital. Social relationships are meaningful at every stage of life. Their quality is related to an individual's well-being and happiness,⁵⁸¹ self-esteem,⁵⁸² and fulfillment of various needs. We refer to high relationship quality when a person has a sense of subjective satisfaction from involvement in interpersonal relationships.⁵⁸³ At the time of the pandemic, the epidemiological situation forced governments worldwide to introduce new rules for citizens and communities, influencing the nature of social relationships. Regulations were formulated in the language of preventive health behaviours and mostly related to contact with others: maintaining social distance and avoiding large concentrations of people.⁵⁸⁴ Many social activities took a remote form, including interpersonal relationships with classmates and teachers. Surveys conducted in Poland show that students are optimistic about their relationships with their class teacher and other teachers, referring to both relationships before and during the pandemic. Respondents indicate their relationships with classmates as key areas affected by negative changes. However, most people declare that these relationships have not changed and are still good; as many as one-quarter of young people have experienced changes for the worse.⁵⁸⁵ In another Polish study, as many as half of the students surveyed indicated that their relationships with their classmates before the pandemic were much or somewhat better. When it comes to assessing the quality of relationships with the educator, most people reported no change compared to the period before the transition of

578 M. HLINKOVA – M. GARAJ – M. ZELENÁKOVÁ, *Current State*, pp. 88–100.

579 Lenka TLUČÁKOVÁ – Beáta RUŽBARSKÁ – Radmila HAJDÚKOVÁ, *Original Article Forms and Methods of Online Physical Education Instruction in Slovakia from the Perspective of Elementary School Students*, *Journal of Physical Education and Sport* 21, 2021, pp. 2028–2035.

580 M. BABINČÁKOVÁ – P. BERNARD, *Online Experimentation*, p. 3295–3300

581 Ed DIENER – Martin E. P. SELIGMAN, *Very Happy People*, *Psychological Science* 13 (1), 2002, pp. 81–84.

582 Michelle A. HARRIS – Ulrich ORTH, *The Link Between Self-Esteem and Social Relationships: A Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Studies*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 119 (6), 2020, pp. 1459–1477.

583 Sylwia JASKULSKA – Barbara JANKOWIAK – Mateusz MARCINIAK – Michał KLICHOWSKI, *Edukacja zdalna w czasie pandemii COVID-19 w doświadczeniach uczniów i uczennic: ocena relacji szkolnych i jej uwarunkowania*, *Wychowanie w rodzinie* 24, 2021, pp. 133–146.

584 Ilan FISCHER et al., *The Behavioural Challenge of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Indirect Measurements and Personalized Attitude Changing Treatments (IMPACT)*, *Royal Society Open Science* 7 (8), 2020, pp. 1–19.

585 S. JASKULSKA – B. JANKOWIAK – M. MARCINIAK – M. KLICHOWSKI, *Edukacja zdalna*, p. 133–146.

schools to distance learning mode.⁵⁸⁶ There are differences in the evaluation of school relationships between boys and girls. Girls were more likely than boys to notice a deterioration in their peer relationships. In contrast, boys felt that their already good relationships have even bettered during distance learning.⁵⁸⁷ It provides yet another data indicating that the pandemic situation may pose more challenges for girls, who need additional support during online classes to experience satisfaction with social relationships. For example, research by Anna Bieganowska-Skóra and Dorota Pankowska⁵⁸⁸ shows that girls were more likely to experience hate in peer relationships during online education and were generally more likely to perceive a deterioration in social relationships during the pandemic. Students living and/or studying in rural areas were more likely than their peers living in urban areas to feel the deterioration of peer relationships during distance education. In contrast, those living in large cities and studying there tended to feel an improvement.⁵⁸⁹ Other Polish studies also show differences in pandemic school experiences among students attending rural and urban schools. These are due, for example, to the IT infrastructure and the level of their and their parents' digital competence – the experience of urban students was better in this respect.⁵⁹⁰ They can also translate into the quality of peer relationships if these have largely shifted to the Internet. In Slovakia, when learning remotely, students encountered problems with motivation to study and felt a lack of interest from teachers.⁵⁹¹ The few results of surveys of Slovak students indicate that educational solutions introduced in some schools during the pandemic were evaluated positively, and the quality of remote education in these schools was high according to the students.⁵⁹² It is difficult to provide a comprehensive evaluation of distance learning from the perspective of students in the Czech Republic during the COVID-19 pandemic, as different students may have had different experiences and perceptions of distance learning. However, several studies have collected data on students' views of distance learning in the Czech Republic during that time.

586 Jacek PYŻALSKI, *Ważne relacje uczniów i nauczycieli w czasie edukacji zdalnej*, in: G. Ptaszek – G. D. Stunża – J. Pyżalski – M. Dębski – M. Bigaj (eds.), *Edukacja zdalna*, pp. 112–123.

587 S. JASKULSKA – B. JANKOWIAK – M. MARCINIAK – M. KLICHOWSKI, *Edukacja zdalna*, pp. 133–146.

588 Anna BIEGANOWSKA-SKÓRA – Dorota PANKOWSKA, *Moje samopoczucie w e-szkol*, Lublin 2020, p. 28, <https://phavi.umcs.pl/at/attachments/2020/1126/112228-moje-samopoczucie-w-e-szkole-raport-z-badan.pdf>.

589 S. JASKULSKA – B. JANKOWIAK – M. MARCINIAK – M. KLICHOWSKI, *Edukacja zdalna*, pp. 133–146.

590 Sylwia MICHALSKA, *Szkoła wiejska w czasie pandemii*, *Więś i Rolnictwo* 3 (188), 2020, pp. 119–139.

591 M. HLINKOVA – M. GARAJ – M. ZELENÁKOVÁ, *Current State*, pp. 88–100.

592 Silvia BARNOVÁ – Slávka KRÁSNA – Gabriela GABRHELOVÁ, *The Impact of COVID-19 Pandemics on Schools – Challenges and New Opportunities for a Woman-Owned Organization*, *Journal of Women's Entrepreneurship and Education* 3-4, 2020, pp. 41–58.

One survey conducted by the Czech School Inspectorate in June 2020 also found that students' views of distance learning were mixed. The survey found that about half of students felt that distance learning was worse than in-person schooling, while about a third felt that it was the same, and only 12 % felt that it was better.⁵⁹³

It is important to note that these surveys were conducted during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic when distance learning was still relatively new, and there were likely many challenges and uncertainties to face. Thus, students' views of distance learning may have changed over time as schools and teachers have become more experienced with online platforms and tools and the pandemic continued.

The question can be asked whether the pandemic-induced remote education changed students' expectations of education at large. According to data obtained in Poland, students' visions of the school in the future and their educational preferences are different from what they experienced at school before the pandemic. The level of school technologization during the pandemic somehow translated to student expectations for future education. Students who participated in poorly technologized distance learning during the pandemic prefer to learn in a traditional classroom-based way. On the other hand, those students who have become familiar with technologically advanced forms of distance learning prefer hybrid learning after the pandemic. Post-pandemic students, therefore, expect a technology-rich school where the educational process is hybrid. That is especially true for technologically privileged groups like urban residents, boys, and older students.⁵⁹⁴

In Slovakia, despite of disadvantages related to online education in the pandemic period (e.g., no contact with some students, limited opportunities for motivation and support), the majority of teachers reported willingness for partial changes in their teaching style (88.1 % of primary school teachers and 84.5 % of upper-secondary school teachers) and implement some experience with distance education gathered during the pandemic period.⁵⁹⁵

The COVID-19 crisis has destabilised education at all levels around the world. Current questions range from "how countries coped during the pandemic" to "what will be the medium and long-term consequences for education"? And whether this crisis can become an opportunity for the development of education, not only because of the development of

593 Damian LISZKA – Paweł WALEWANDER, *How to Research Educational Inequalities Arising from Remote Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic?*, Research in Countries of the Visegrad Group (V4). Youth in Central and Eastern Europe 8 (12), 2021, pp. 14–23.

594 S. JASKULSKA – B. JANKOWIAK – J. SIKORSKA – M. KLICHOWSKI – H. KRAUZE-SIKORSKA, *Proces uczenia*, pp. 108–125; S. JASKULSKA – B. JANKOWIAK – M. MARCINIAK – M. KLICHOWSKI, *Edukacja zdalna*, pp. 151–163.

595 E. BALLOVÁ MIKUŠKOVÁ – M. VEREŠOVÁ, *Distance Education*, pp. 884–906.

digital literacy among students and teachers, but also – given the global nature of the crisis and the need for international solutions – to draw the attention of education administrators to the importance of strengthening “internationalisation at home”⁵⁹⁶.

Conclusions

Overall, we can conclude that the implementation of distance learning in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland during the COVID-19 pandemic has been a mixed success (as in other countries in the region), with some schools and students adapting well to the new mode of education, while others struggling with its challenges and limitations. The results of studies conducted in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia indicate that students experienced moderate participation of technology in school teaching and their learning process during distance learning. Remote education has changed students’ attitudes toward a vision of a hybrid, technology-saturated school, and it was especially voiced by those students who can be categorized as technologically privileged (urban residents, boys, older students) and those who experienced a highly technologized school environment during the pandemic.⁵⁹⁷ The impact of distance learning on student learning outcomes, achievements, and expectations for education will probably become even clearer in the coming months and years. The crisis has also highlighted the importance of supporting “internationalization at home”⁵⁹⁸ as a process beyond the pandemic situation. Moreover, it is worth noting the specifics of institutional support for the implementation of distance learning. Schools provided software to connect remotely. At the same time, the duty to provide the appropriate technological infrastructure – computers, tablets, high-speed Internet – fell on the students’ families. In this way, distance learning became a factor that not only affected individual attitudes but also highlighted social inequalities associated with the educational system.

The potential consequences in terms of mental health and social relations should also be considered. Their deterioration affecting key developmental stages is likely to have a long-term impact – relevant to well-being, learning outcomes, social support or, ultimately, professional development. In subsequent years and forms, students are likely to require varied and greater

596 Hans DE WIT – Philip G. ALTBACH, *The Impact of COVID-19 on the Internationalisation of Higher Education, Revolutionary or not?*, in: C. Raj Kumar – Mousumi Mukherjee – Tatiana Belousova – Nisha Nair (eds.), *Global Higher Education During and Beyond COVID-19*, Singapore 2022, pp. 219–231.

597 S. JASKULSKA – B. JANKOWIAK – J. SIKORSKA – M. KLICHOWSKI – H. KRAUZE-SIKORSKA, *Proces uczenia*, pp. 108–122.

598 H. DE WIT – P. G. ALTBACH, *The Impact of COVID-19*, pp. 219–231.

support than older cohorts, unaffected by the pandemic's disruption of normal functioning for two years. An important post-pandemic challenge is therefore to prepare schools at all levels, as well as counselling agencies, parents, and NGOs, and perhaps employers, for this.

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