

SUMMARY

Czech orthodox Church in the years 1942–1945

Martin Jindra

The study looks into the developments in the Czech Orthodox Church in the pivotal years 1942-1945 which were fundamentally affected by the realization of the military operation Anthropoid and the subsequent dissolution of the church. Readers are introduced to the story at the beginning of the year 1942 when a number of restrictive measures had been taken aimed at churches in the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia. A decisive turning point for the Orthodox Church and its believers came after 27 May 1942. After the successful assassination of the Acting Reich-Protector Reinhard Heydrich, the “magnificent seven” Czechoslovak soldiers including Josef Gabčík and Jan Kubiš found shelter in the vaults of the Orthodox church of Ss. Cyril and Methodius. After they had been located, Prague priests and officials of the Orthodox Church were arrested. On 3 September 1942, a martial court sentenced chaplain Vladimír Petřek, chairman of the board of elders of the Prague church congregation Jan Sonnevend, pastor Alois Václav Číkl and bishop Gorazd to death. More orthodox families were arrested whose members would later meet their death in the underground bunker in Mathausen. On the eve of St. Wenceslas holiday on 27 September 1942, the daily press informed about Kurt Daluege’s order by which the Czech Orthodox Church was dissolved, all its activities banned and its property confiscated. The study describes the course of the liquidation of Orthodox Church congregations, arrests of clergymen and layman officials and their future destinies as forced labourers. It is innovative in that it studies in more details a part of the history of the Orthodox Church, which has been until now neglected by historiographers. The presented text is concluded by a chapter dedicated to the reconstruction of the Orthodox Church, which has been affected not only by an array of objective hardships (e.g. the absence of the bishop, lack of priests, damaged churches and church property) but also by the temporary revolutionary takeover of the administration of the Orthodox Church by a Prague assistant clergyman Alois Václav Červín and a desk officer at a Church department Vsevolod Kolomacký.

Gestapo versus the Catholic Church. Action against Augustinian Abbey in Staré Brno and the subsequent litigation

Vladimír Černý

The study deals with persecution of the Catholic Church in the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia using the example the Nazi secret state police (Gestapo) action against the Augustinian monastery in Staré Brno in 1943. In the introduction the author briefly describes the position of Catholics in Nazi Germany and the occupied countries. Next he introduces the Augustinian order and their activities in Brno from the Middle Ages to WWII. The core of the study is dedicated to the circumstances of the

Gestapo action, it introduces the individual people involved, including their role in the whole case. The author drew primarily on sources from the collections of the Moravian Land Archive in Brno and the history department of the Moravian Museum in Brno. The reason why the Nazi security organs were interested in the monastery was a series of denunciatory letters which had been sent to the Gestapo in the course of 1943. The letters accused the friars and the layman employees of the monastery of hiding armaments and of forbidden listening to foreign radio stations. After the content of the letters had been assessed, a total of 16 persons were arrested who were consequently interrogated for many months. The arrested persons were tried by the Extraordinary Court at the German Land Court in Brno and the author studies the genesis of this Nazi judicial institution which operated in the years 1939-1945. The case was concluded by two death sentences and their execution, the persons in question being the janitor of the monastery Martin Lukáš and friar Otakar Zdražil (Father Alfons). Another 10 persons were sentenced to imprisonment of a total of 19 years and 1 month. The sentence was unusual in that apart from hiding of armaments and listening to foreign radio stations, homosexual orientation of some of the persons was part of its argumentation. The conclusion of the study deals with post-war court trials before the Extraordinary People's Court in Brno in the years 1945-1948 with informers and Gestapo members who were involved in the investigation of the case.

Once upon a time in Volyn. Dilemmas and deeds of Ukrainian nationalists under the German occupation 1941-1943

David Svoboda

The study is a loose continuation of a text by the same author published – under the name “A long way through the woods. Political developments in Ukrainian integral nationalism and the presumptions of the Ukrainian Resistance Army” – in No. 22/2013 of this journal. After Germans did not approve of a unilateral declaration of the Ukrainian state by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists – OUN(b), the so called Bandera's groups had to look for new approaches. After a lengthy state of hesitation, some kind of hibernation in illegality followed accompanied with an unclear relationship to the Nazi occupation power. Lively discussions were underway in the organization concerning the future steps; however, echoes of dissatisfaction coming from the lowest levels – in the wake of the intensified occupational terror – forced the organization's die-hard core to adopt significantly harder attitude toward Germans than would be appropriate to their strategic aim of concentration of forces for the future grand uprising, which was supposed to come after the German Empire had been weakened by the fight against Stalin. The Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), which was a fruit of this initiative, was not, despite its later nimbus, the first liberation partisan formation. It had been preceded by Taras Borovec, who was a leader of an eponymous armed force, though considerably more volatile when it came to tac-

tics, and without a similarly strong appeal for the local population. Moreover, Soviet partisan formations began to appear in the area of Volyn and Polesie in 1942, which made the OUN(b) hurry the armed insurgency. At the beginning of 1943, the UPA undertook a massive anti-Polish action with the civilians in Volyn being its victims.

Gottwald's Czechoslovakia as a fascist state Notes on the nature of ideological regimes with regard to post-war developments in Czechoslovakia – part II.

Petr Placák

The study is a loose continuation of a text by the same author published – under the name “Fascism as a radical people’s revolution. Notes on the nature of ideological regimes with regard to post-war developments in Czechoslovakia, part I” – in No. 22/2013 of this journal. The text draws attention to the unsustainable dominant mainstream interpretation of the political system of the so called Third Czechoslovak Republic (May 1945 – February 1948), including ignoring of its fascist character by both communist and current post-communist Czech historiography. The author declares that this period of the 20th century Czech history did not aim at restoration of the inter-war parliamentary or liberal democracy since the so called “National front” regime under the control of the Communist Party was deliberately aiming at revolutionary establishment of a “society of a totally new quality” in which the existing (i.e. pre-war) political, economic, civil and cultural values were gradually eliminated. Among the main reasons of this process and of the communist leading position in it, which was by no means based on reality taking the traditional electoral potential of the communists (10%) into account, are listed: 1) Shock caused by the German Nazism and a sense of social danger; 2) Liberation of the Czech lands from the East by the Red Army; 3) Suicidal policy of the Czech government in exile in London led by E. Beneš, which promoted international cooperation with the Soviet Union as the best safety guarantee of the renewed state. The sub-chapters give evidence and provide analysis of propagandistic tools applied by the National Front, or the communists, which were used as a camouflage of the real aims and justification for a far-reaching social change – the use of the terms fascism and anti-fascism, anti-Semitism, national treason and national purge – as well as stigmatizing of members of non-Slavic nationalities, i.e. Germans and Hungarians living in Czechoslovakia as collectively guilty of the tragic war happenings. The Czechoslovak regime of the National Front “legitimized” and established itself in a similar way like the Italian fascist movement after WWI – it profited from the preceding political and social crisis, defined itself against the inter-war liberal democracy but in fact was a continuation of the Nazi protectorate (which is now considered a taboo in historiography). The ideological backbone of the fascism of the National Front, or the communists, is evidenced by the analysis of the so called *Košice Government Programme* of April 1945, which was created in Moscow and de facto replaced the Czechoslovak (paradoxically still effec-

tive) constitution. However, the aims of radical or even extremist policies in the third Czechoslovak republic were different for the non-communist and the communist part of the ruling National Front – while non-communists were trying to justify both factual and alleged flaws of the inter-war regime and protect/strengthen their power positions, the only thing that the communists aimed at was to conquer all power and establish a totalitarian political regime of the Soviet type.

Agency central of the State Security and its head Erich Mach Notes on the work of the network of secret collaborators in the years 1948–1950

Libor Bílek

The study looks into the activities of the network of secret collaborators of the Czechoslovak secret political police – the State Security in the first years of the regime controlled by the communist party (1948-1950). The topic is narrated through a “story” of the so called agency central – a department which existed at the Prague headquarters of the State Security. The agency central was established in February 1948 upon the initiative of Štěpán Plaček, the head of the home intelligence. Its task was to provide assistance for other counter-intelligence departments (to carry out shadowing, detection and arrests), to control their activities and carry out extraordinary intelligence tasks. But before the agency central fully undertook its activities, its tasks had been divided due to a mass reorganization of security organs at the end of 1948. The task of the new agency central was to keep a registry of secret collaborators, assess reports obtained, submit reports on the state and development of the agency network and participate in its improvement and control. Erich Mach (1910-1991), an ambitious and active member of the State Security, was appointed its head. He tried in vain to improve the unsatisfactorily state of the agency network – there were too few collaborators, their selection was not according to the new requirements (they were mostly active supporters of the regime who were not able to provide information about its adversaries) and the intelligence workers were not able to control them in the corresponding way due to lack of experience and clear instructions. At the beginning of 1950, the employees of the intelligence were assigned a task to make a list of important “objects” (social groups, organizations, factories, etc.) which were supposed to become sources of information. Next, they were to identify key parts through which the “objects” could be controlled and find a secret collaborator – an informer – inside. If the informer’s reports revealed that “hostile activities” were carried out in the “object”, a collaborator – agent was to be recruited, with the help of whom the hostile activity was to be revealed and eliminated. However, this system proved administratively demanding and complicated and was consequently dismissed in August 1950 even though some of its features were preserved (selection of objects and the necessity to plan penetration into the objects). In October 1950, the agency central itself was dissolved – it did not correspond to the recommenda-

tions of the Soviet advisors. A few months later (February 1951), the central registry of secret collaborators was destroyed (for fears of deconspiracy), which caused enormous problems to intelligence workers which were only done away with after it was re-established in 1954. Owing to its extent, the study is divided into two parts; the second part will be published in the next issue of this journal.