RESEARCH ARTICLE

Czech and Slovak Exiles in Francoist Madrid and their Cold War (Im)mobilities

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Abstract: This study deals with the issue of the Czech and Slovak anti-communist exile in Spain during the first two decades of the Cold War. With a focus on the (im)mobility of these exiles and its productive character, it questions the well-known nature of the Iron Curtain. Through an analysis of (infra)structures and fixities already existing and further developed by these émigrés in Madrid (contacts, institutions, communications media), this contribution works with the thesis of Michael David-Fox, who claims that this Cold War divide was rather semi-permeable (selectively permeable), as it maintained various gaps and loopholes on many levels. These led not only to the maintenance of contacts through this East-West barrier but also enabled fruitful activity and eventually (im)mobility to be carried out into, within and outside of Spain.
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In Central and Eastern Europe, the first years after WWII were an era of extensive mobility of the population, including various waves of emigrants, expatriates, prisoners of war and soldiers moving in many directions.[2] Nevertheless, a growing amount of research on the topic of mobility demonstrates that multidimensional mobilities also formed an integral part of the everyday reality of the Cold War in the West, as well as in Eastern Bloc countries.[3] Cross-border transfers and connections were carried out via different measures and

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2 MILAN BÁRTA, Právo azylu. Vznik politické emigrace v Československu po roce 1948, *Paměť a dějiny* 1/2011, pp. 15–22, here p. 15.

3 See, for example: SUNE BECHMANN PEDERSEN, CHRISTIAN NOACK, Crossing the Iron Curtain: An Introduction, in: *Tourism and Travel during the Cold War. Negotiating Tourist Experiences across the Iron Curtain*, eds. S. Bechmann Pedersen, Ch. Noack, London – New York 2019, pp. 1–20; KATHY BURRELL, KATHRIN HÖRSCHELMANN (eds.), *Mobilities in Socialist and Post-Socialist States. Societies on the Move,* London, New York 2014; ERIC BURTON, ANNE DIETRICH, IMMANUEL R. HARISCH, MARCIA C. SCHENCK (eds.), *Navigating Socialist Encounters. Moorings and (Dis)Entanglements between Africa and East Germany during the Cold War,* Berlin – Boston 2021.

directions, nevertheless regularly throughout the forty-year-long conflict, considering that "confrontation does not automatically mean suppression of contacts".[4] Furthermore, migration and transborder mobility were essential aspects of the Cold War reality in Eastern European countries not only within the respective blocs or through the Iron Curtain to the West,[5] but also in relation to the Third World and the West-East direction.[6] Taking into account the numerous and multidimensional transfers of (selected) people, products, ideas and information, as well as the maintenance of contacts through this East--West border throughout this conflict, authors such as Michael David-Fox and György Péteri have questioned the impermeability of the barrier separating the First and the Second World, designating it as "semi-permeable (selectively permeable)" or renaming it the "Nylon Curtain", respectively.[7]

Migration and mobility have been traditionally understood as a rational movement of people from one place to another for political, economic or social reasons, using push and pull factors as the explanation for their displacement, while places were conceptualized as separated from the respective travelers.[8] Only since the end of the 20th century has mobility and its analysis as a process – this "move […] from fixity to motion", come to the center of attention of migration researchers.[9] This "mobility turn" is mainly associated

4 SIMO MIKKONEN, JARI PARKKINEN, GILES SCOTT-SMITH, Exploring Culture in and of the Cold War, in: *Entangled East and West*: *Cultural Diplomacy and Artistic Interaction during the Cold War,* eds. S. Mikkonen, J. Parkkinen, G. Scott-Smith, Berlin – Boston 2018, pp. 1–12, here p. 3.

5 SUSAN L. CARRUTHERS, Between Camps: Eastern Bloc "Escapees" and Cold War Borderlands, *American Quarterly* 3/2005, pp. 911–942.

6 JAN KOURA, "Geneva of the East": Prague as a Centre of International Socialism, in: *Modern Europe: A Transnational History,* eds. J. Koranyi, J. Koura, B. Struck, London 2023 (in print), pp. 1–16.

7 GYÖRGY PÉTERI, Nylon Curtain – Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in the Cultural Life of State-Socialist Russia and East-Central Europe, *Slavonica* 2/2004, pp. 113–123; MICHAEL DAVID-FOX, The Iron Curtain as Semipermeable Membrane. Origins and Demise of the Stalinist Superiority Complex, in: *Cold War Crossings. International Travel and Exchange across the Soviet bloc, 1940s–1960s*, eds. P. Babiracki, K. Zimmer, College Station (Tex.) 2014, pp. 14–39.

8 TIM CRESSWELL, Mobility as Resistance: A Geographical Reading of Kerouac's "On the Road", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 2/1993, pp. 249–262, here p. 259; KEVIN HANNAM, MIMI SHELLER, JOHN URRY, Editorial: Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings, *Mobilities* 1/2006, pp. 1–22, here p. 13.

9 EMMANUEL-PIERRE GUITTET, Unpacking the New Mobilities Paradigm: Lessons for Critical Security Studies?, in: *Security/Mobility: Politics of Movement*, eds. M. Leese, S. Wittendorp, Manchester 2017, pp. 209–216, here p. 212.

with the work of British sociologist John Urry, who in 2000 proposed "turning" the focus of sociological research towards interconnected mobility systems (instead of societies) while claiming that this "sociology of mobilities" should orient towards "movement, mobility and contingent ordering, rather than upon stasis, structure and social order".[10] With a new methodology and a new subject of investigation into mobility, the mobility turn led the way to the new mobilities paradigm, which "challenges the ways in which much social science research has been relatively 'a-mobile' […]."[11] According to Urry et al., mobilities, which are organized in complex mobility systems, include not only mobility but also the "other face of mobility" – immobilities, or "those immobile infrastructures that organize the intermittent flow of people, information and image, as well as the borders or ´gates´ that limit, channel, and regulate movement […]."[12] One form of these immobile infrastructures – moorings, or "topographic grounds and resources for enabling or entraining mobility practices",[13] not only in the sense of activities but also as spaces with structures and fixities (settlements, institutions, organizations, contacts, networks or mass media), play a crucial role within (im)mobilities, as they configure the mobility, but also make it possible.[14] Therefore, the new mobilities paradigm focuses on concrete ways of how (im)mobilities are carried out and experienced and the structures and relations they are interconnected with. Furthermore, mobility theories enable the study of the everydayness in authoritarian regimes in a new way,[15] with an emphasis on the actors of (im)mobility, their "multiple agencies, experiences, lives, sensations and performances […] as well as the infrastructural work entailed in facilitating these movements."[16] Moreover, the

10 JOHN URRY, *Sociology Beyond Societies. Mobilities for the Twenty-First Century*, New York 2000, pp. 9–10, 19–20.

11 K. HANNAM, M. SHELLER, J. URRY, Editorial, p. 5.

12 Ibid., pp. 3, 11; LEOPOLDINA FORTUNATI, SAKARI TAIPALE, Mobilities and the Network of Personal Technologies: Refining the Understanding of Mobility Structure, *Telematics and Informatics* 2/2017, pp. 560–568, here p. 564.

13 PETER MERRIMAN, Mobility and Simplicity, in: *Mobilities and Complexities*, eds. S. Kesselring, O. Jensen, M. Sheller, London – New York 2019, pp. 218–222, here p. 219.

14 TAURI TUVIKENE, Mooring in Socialist Automobility: Garage Areas, in: *Mobilities*, eds. K. Burrell, K. Hörschelmann, London 2014, pp. 105–121, here p. 105–110; M. SHELLER, J. URRY, The New Mobilities Paradigm, *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 2/2006, pp. 207–226, here p. 210.

15 K. BURRELL, K. HÖRSCHELMANN, Introduction: Understanding Mobility in Soviet and East European Socialist and Post-Socialist States, in: *Mobilities,* eds. K. Burrell, K. Hörschelmann, pp. 1–22, here p. 9.

16 P. MERRIMAN, Mobility and Simplicity, p. 221.

analytical approach of the new mobilities paradigm aims to overcome the division between travel and social research, as it understands the relationship between places and people as complex and interconnected.[17]

One of the examples of (im)mobilities through the Iron Curtain were the citizens of the wartime Slovak state and post-war Czechoslovakia that found refuge in Franco's Spain. Considering that (im)mobility inevitably includes encounters, these emigrants were confronted in their host country with the everyday reality of the Francoist dictatorship – a confrontation which often gave place to experiences contrasting with their expectations and leading to frustration, conflicts or eventual departure – mobility outside of the country. This comparative study on Czech(oslovak)[18] and Slovak emigrants, with the use of previously unpublished archival materials from Czech, Slovak and Spanish archives, supplemented by an analysis of memoirs, interviews and publications of these exiles, posits that their Cold War (im)mobilities had a (re)productive character.

Via fixities and (infra)structures, mobility could enable and/or lead to another (im)mobility (and vice versa), and one mobility (movement of people) could also carry another mobility (transfer of ideas).[19] Thus, these "Spanish moorings" of Slovak and Czech exiles, both in the sense of anchoring but also as a space that includes fixities and immobile structures (contacts with Spanish authorities, interactions with institutions in Madrid, created anti-communist organizations, established communications media), enabled them to carry out numerous activities in Madrid and also (re)produced mobility into, within and outside of Spain.[20] In this sense, the "life on the move"[21] of these anti-communist Slovak and Czech émigrés, entangled with the (infra)structures

17 M. SHELLER, J. URRY, The New Mobilities, p. 208; K. HANNAM, M. SHELLER, J. URRY, Editorial, p. 13.

18 In this paper I use mainly the term "Czech exile(s)" in Spain, which should include all exiles coming from the Czech lands, who spoke Czech, regardless of their ideology. However, taking into account that Czech pro-Czechoslovak exiles numerically dominated within the Czech exile in Spain (with B. Chudoba being probably the only prominent Czech exile in Spain who rejected the concept of Czechoslovakism), the term "Czech exile(s)" functions in this text as a synonym for the "Czech exile(s) of Czechoslovak orientation" in Spain, unless indicated otherwise. Similarly, the term "Slovak exile(s)" serves as a synonym for "Slovak separatist exile(s)" in Spain.

19 PETER ADEY, *Mobility*, London – New York 2017, p. 209.

20 T. TUVIKENE, Mooring, pp. 106–108.

21 ANTHONY ELLIOTT, From Mobilities to Mobile Lives and Beyond: The World according to John Urry, in: *Mobilities*, eds. S. Kesselring, O. Jensen, M. Sheller, pp. 203–209, here p. 203.

and fixities which played a crucial role in their (im)mobilities, contests the thesis of the impermeable character of the Iron Curtain.

With a pluralist and multilateral approach to Cold War histories,[22] this contribution follows up on the research that has been done on the issue of the Eastern and Central European exiles in Francoist Spain so far, mainly by Spanish researchers.[23] It focuses on the city of Madrid,[24] its role as a refuge for anti-communist exiles after WWII (and thus also "a Cold War city")[25] and a European "capital of Catholic students"[26]. Also, in the example of Slovak and Czech émigrés living at the Santiago Apostol College in Madrid (*Colegio Mayor Santiago Apóstol* – CMSA) it investigates the role of *colegios mayores* in the history of Cold War Madrid and the transnational anti-communist network this concrete residence hall created and actively maintained.[27] Lastly, in its

22 ODD ARNE WESTAD, Exploring the Histories of the Cold War. A Pluralist Approach, in: *Uncertain Empire. American History and the Idea of the Cold War,* eds. J. Isaac, D. Bell, Oxford – New York 2012, pp. 51–59, here pp. 56–58.

23 For example, the works by Matilde Eiroa, José M. Faraldo, Pablo del Hierro and Beáta Katrebová Blehová cited below. Regarding the case of Czechoslovakia, apart from the MA thesis of Filip Vurm (2007), probably the only comparative research on the Slovak and Czech exile in Francoist Spain, with a discourse analysis of their publications, has been carried out by the author of the present study, see: MAROŠ TIMKO, De Gottwald a Franco: El exilio checo y eslovaco en la España franquista, *Acta Hispanica* 25/2020, pp. 153–167.

24 On the (urban) history of Francoist Madrid, see e.g.: FRANCISCO FERNÁNDEZ DE ALBA, *Sex, Drugs, and Fashion in 1970s Madrid*, Toronto 2020; CARLOS SAMBRICIO, On Urbanism in the Early Years of Francoism, in: *Urbanism and Dictatorship. A European Perspective*, eds. H. Bodenschatz, P. Sassi, M. Welch Guerra, Berlin – München – Boston 2015, pp. 117–134, or PIERO SASSI, A New Master Plan for the "Gran Madrid Capital de España" after the Civil War, *History Urbanism Resilience: Planning and Heritage* 4/2016 (Proceedings of the 17th IPHS Conference, Delft 2016), pp. 357–367.

25 The most recent works on the issue of the "Cold War city" include TZE-KI HON (ed.), *Cold War Cities. The Politics of Space in Europe and Asia during the 1950s*, London – New York 2022; RICHARD BROOK, MARTIN DODGE, JONATHAN HOGG (eds.), *Cold War Cities. Politics, Culture and Atomic Urbanism, 1945–1965*, London – New York 2020, or GEORGE ROBERTS, *Revolutionary State-Making in Dar es Salaam. African Liberation and the Global Cold War, 1961–1974*, Cambridge 2022.

26 CAROLINA RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, La Universidad de Madrid como escenario de las relaciones hispano-alemanas en el primer franquismo (1939–1951), *Ayer* 69/2008, pp. 101–128, here p. 127.

27 In this sense, this study follows the investigation on "colegios mayores" and universities during Francoism carried out by C. Rodríguez López and J. M. Varela Olea, see: CAROLINA RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, *La Universidad de Madrid en el primer franquismo. Ruptura y continuidad (1939–1951)*, Madrid 2002; EADEM, Estando muertos todavía hablan. La Universidad de Madrid en el primer franquismo, *Ayer* 101/2016, pp. 105–130; JOSÉ MANUEL VARELA OLEA, Colegios Mayores: Origen, decadencia y restauración, *Aportes* 2/2022, pp. 107–133;

attempt to "bring the small(er) states"[28] into the center of Cold War research and with a focus on the (im)mobilities of these exiles, this study further elaborates the argument that this conflict was based also on (dis)connections and stories of small(er) states/actors on both sides of this only allegedly impenetrable border.[29]

Madrid, a Haven of Eastern and Central European Exiles

Since the second half of the 16th century, when Madrid became the capital of the Spanish Empire, architecture and urban development had played a crucial role in the appearance of the city, as in the national(ist) narratives (disseminated later also by Francoist propaganda), the capital was homologous to and even personified the state.[30] In the early years of Francoism, many constructions in Madrid were built as or converted into a clear representation of the newly established Francoist regime, *Arco de la Victoria* (The Victory Arch) probably being the most emblematic one. The post-war reconstruction of urban zones destroyed in the Civil War (such as, e.g., the University City of Madrid), was linked with the idea of two different types of prosperity – rural zones ought to boost the economy, while urban centers should generate ideology.[31] Thus, and despite the scars of the recently ended conflict visible on the damaged buildings (even in the 1950s), as well as in the minds of the citizens,[32] the streets of Madrid were reconstructed and renamed and new monuments were erected with a clear ideological purpose – this city was to represent Franco, his victory in the war and his rule after it. Just as in any other authoritarian and closed society, the metropolis became a center, through which the state formed its relations with the world, and the culture and patterns from the capital became the culture of the state and an example for other cities. In this sense, Madrid of the 1940s and the 1950s was dominated by an authoritarian

28 BRADLEY REYNOLDS, Bringing the (Smaller) State Back In: State of the Field in "Small State" Research, *H-Diplo* (Essay 338), 2021, pp. 1–13 (on-line), <https://issforum.org/essays/PDF/E338.pdf> [18.10.2023].

29 LAURIEN CRUMP, SUSANNA ERLANDSSON, Introduction. Smaller Powers in Cold War Europe, in: *Margins for Manoeuvre in Cold War Europe. The Influence of Smaller Powers,* eds. L. Crump, S. Erlandsson, London – New York 2020, pp. 1–10, here p. 1.

30 P. SASSI, A New Master Plan, p. 359; KATERINA CLARK, *Moscow, the Fourth Rome. Stalinism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Evolution of Soviet Culture, 1931–1941*, Cambridge 2011, p. 14.

31 C. SAMBRICIO, On Urbanism, pp. 118, 121.

32 KAROL BELÁK, *Madrid. Zastávka a križovatka slovenského študenta (1951–1960)*, Nitra 1999, pp. 22, 149, 249–250.

structure of a city, while symbolically (and just as was the case with Stalinist Moscow) the capital (Madrid) represented a place identical to the place where the leader (Franco) was situated.[33]

After the outbreak of the Cold War in the late 1940s, Madrid started to turn into one of the Cold War focal points. Nevertheless, the Spanish capital had begun to change into a center and a meeting point for anti-communist, Catholic and ultra-right emigrants already during the last years of WWII, while these Eastern and Central Europeans created from this city, with their presence and activities, a safe urban space in alternation to post-war Western liberalism.[34] Thus, after WWII, there were around 2,000 émigrés from countries such as Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and Czechoslovakia as well as from the Baltic states and Ukraine, living in Franco's Spain.[35] Its metropolis, connected (to a greater or lesser extent) to other Cold War centers, therefore became a proper "Cold War city" – a "site(s) of inclusion and exclusion, coercion and oppression, transition and transgression in a divided world [and a] liminal space(s) where local, national, regional and international forces converged to cope with, or to undermine, the bipolar system."[36] Just like another "Cold War capital", the Tanzanian Dar es Salaam, "a concrete site of revolutionary encounters," Madrid during the Cold War was also a city of rumors, espionage, socializing and propaganda, which took place at receptions, hotels, cafés and universities.[37] Gossip in bars and cafés and "political discussions" in the barber shops of Madrid in the mid-1950s, although often critical towards the ruling regime, were an allowed "safety pin" which ought to have reduced social tensions, unlike the brutally suppressed communist or anarchist activity.[38] Also, from the 1950s, the University of Madrid played an important role as a center of anti-regime protests (as those of 1956) and as a place of global intellectual

33 K. CLARK, *Moscow,* pp. 14–15, 94.

34 PABLO DEL HIERRO, The Neofascist Network and Madrid, 1945–1953: From City of Refuge to Transnational Hub and Centre of Operations, *Contemporary European History* 31/2022, pp. 171–194, here pp. 171–172, 193.

35 JOSÉ M. FARALDO, Dreams of a Better Past: Central European Exiles in Franco's Spain and the Projects of the Interwar Period, in: *Reconsidering a Lost Intellectual Project. Exiles' Reflections on Cultural Differences*, eds. C. Rodríguez López, J. M. Faraldo, Newcastle 2012, pp. 89–113, here p. 96.

36 T. HON, Introduction. The Cold War from a Socio-Geographical Perspective, in: *Cold War Cities*, ed. Idem, pp. 1–6, here p. 5.

37 G. ROBERTS, *Revolutionary*, pp. 27, 53–55.

38 BORIS GAŠPAR, *Z ostravských baní do austrálskeho veľkomesta*, Martin 2017, p. 212.

exchange.[39] Even though Madrid of the 1940s and 1950s could hardly be described as cosmopolitan, the existing organizations, contacts and institutions enabled the conversion of post-WWII Madrid into a hub and a node within the transnational neofascist network, a reference point and an operational center for many European conservatives and far-rightists,[40] as well as a site of transit and a focal point for anticommunists of various nationalities.

These Central and Eastern European exiles arrived in Spain from the mid-1940s in two waves. The first one (until the end of WWII) consisted mostly of members of ultra-rightist or even fascist organizations and political parties (the Hungarian Arrow Cross Party, the Romanian Iron Guard and the Croatian *Ustaše*), amounting to around 700 émigrés. The second wave, which was socially more heterogeneous (aristocrats, diplomats and students), dates between the years 1946–56 and the common denominator of its members was their anti-communism, whereas many of them were forced to escape through the Iron Curtain.[41] Numerically speaking, from the end of WWII until 1956, there were 425 emigrants from Hungary as well as from Romania, 110 from Yugoslavia and 60 from Bulgaria; on the other hand, Czechs, Slovaks, as well as Poles, were numerically very limited until 1955, when the number of refugees from Poland increased (in total up to 150 until 1990).[42] Other exile groups finding asylum in Spain included Ukrainians, Albanians, Belarusians, Slovenes, Serbs, Georgians, Croats, citizens of the Baltic states and even anti-communist Chinese from Taiwan; however, all these nationalities were numerically underrepresented.[43] Interestingly, all these exiles settled down almost exclusively in the Spanish capital (and to a lesser extent in Barcelona), while other cities such as Valencia or Sevilla, distant from the metropolis – the administrative and cultural hub and the center of political power – were not nearly as popular.[44]

39 On the University of Madrid and its role as a centre of anti-Francoist opposition, see: ROBERTO MESA, *Jaraneros y alborotadores. Documentos sobre los sucesos estudiantiles de febrero de 1956 en la Universidad Complutense de Madrid*, Madrid 1982.

40 P. DEL HIERRO, The Neofascist, pp. 171–173.

41 MATILDE EIROA, España, refugio para los aliados del Eje y destino de anticomunistas (1939–1956), *Ayer* 67/2007, pp. 21–48, here pp. 24–25, 27–28.

42 J. M. FARALDO, Dreams, p. 96; MATILDE EIROA, Una mirada desde España: mensajes y medios de comunicación de los refugiados de Europa del Este, *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico* 2/2011, pp. 479–497, here p. 482.

43 WOLODYMYR JARYMOWYCZ, ALEXANDER BILYK, MYKOLA WOLYNSKYJ, *Breve historia de la organización estudiantil y de la colonia ucraniana en España, 1946–1996*, Madrid – Philadelphia 1997, pp. 185–186.

44 MATILDE EIROA, From The Iron Curtain to Franco's Spain: Right-Wing Central Europeans in Exile, *Central Europe* 1/2018, pp. 1–16, here pp. 3, 6.

Spanish historian Matilde Eiroa further distinguishes two categories of these Eastern and Central European exiles: the Romanian, Polish and Czechoslovak exiles, which were numerically lower and with "less mutual instrumentalization", formed the first one. Then, the second one (larger and more profitable for the Spanish regime) included Hungarians – a socially and politically heterogeneous group, which after the events in Hungary in 1956 increased in numbers; Bulgarians (numerically lower after 1946) and Catholic youth and students supported by the Catholic and peace-promoting organization *Pax Romana*, living at the Santiago Apostol College in Madrid.[45]

On the one hand, the coexistence of all these exile groups, concentrated mostly in the capital, was often problematic and conflicts between nationalities or within diasporas were frequent.[46] On the other, these Spanish moorings of often numerically limited collectives of exiles, both in the sense of anchoring, as well as spaces that include fixities and (relatively) immobile structures (contacts, institutions, communications media),[47] enabled them to carry out a fruitful social, cultural and even consular activity and (re)produced mobility both into, within and outside of Spain.[48] Nevertheless, in centralized authoritarian regimes (such as Franco's Spain) it was the state authorities who determined the ambiguous distinguishing line between wanted/desired and unwanted/undesired mobility, between "good" vs. "bad movers".[49] This thesis is proven by the examples of those Czech and Slovak émigrés who did not receive entry visas or were not allowed to join the exile groups in Spain due to their ideological clashes with the leaders of exile collectives, who maintained good relations with Francoist executives.[50]

45 M. EIROA, España, pp. 29–37.

46 FILIP VURM, *Československo-španělské vztahy v letech 1945–1975*, MA thesis, Charles University, Prague 2007, p. 55; MATILDE EIROA, Las relaciones de Checoslovaquia y España tras la Segunda Guerra Mundial en el contexto de las relaciones de España con la Europa oriental, in: *Las relaciones checo-españolas* (=Ibero-Americana Pragensia, Supplementum 20), ed. J. Opatrný, Prague 2007, pp. 307–319, here pp. 311–312.

47 T. TUVIKENE, Mooring, pp. 106–108.

48 J. M. FARALDO, Dreams, pp. 95–100; M. EIROA, Una mirada, pp. 483–493.

49 KATHARINA MANDERSCHEID, Critical mobilities – mobilities as critique?, in: *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications for Mobilities,* eds. M. Büscher, M. Freudendal-Pedersen, S. Kesselring, N. Grauslund Kristensen, Cheltenham – Northampton 2020, pp. 365–373, here p. 368.

50 As was, for example, the case of the Slovak student in Spain Ján Šároši, expelled from the CMSA allegedly due to his Czechoslovak orientation, in: Archivo General de la Administración, Madrid (hereinafter AGA), f. Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (hereinafter MAE), c. 82/11623, l. R.4435/21, no. 301/54. Z. Formánek to Daniel Castel Marco, 8 June 1954. Annex: Antonín Blaha to José M. Otero Navascués, 14 May 1954.

The reasons why the above-mentioned Eastern and Central European emigrants sought asylum in Spain were ideological connections (anti-communism, nationalism, Catholicism), but also the possibility of a relatively safe place to live, study, work or hide.[51] In this sense, it should be mentioned that Spain was often not their final destination, but merely a "transit station" before leaving for America, Australia or other Western countries.[52] With the outbreak of the Cold War, Francoist Spain decided, in order to end its international isolation and secure the survival of the regime, to capitalize on the presence of these emigrants and their common anti-communism and Catholicism. This relationship was mutually beneficial – Eastern European exiles, whose numbers eventually increased after 1956 to approximately 10,000,[53] found refuge in National-Catholic Spain; meanwhile, Franco opened the door to these émigrés as proof of the anti-communism, tolerance and openness of the Spanish regime in the nascent Cold War.[54] The Spanish dictator thus ensured tolerance of the existence of his regime by Western powers and presented himself as the "watchman of the West" and an executor of Truman's doctrine of containment through his "anti-communist crusade".[55] Apart from their above-mentioned anti-communism, other common denominators of these exiles were their gender (males), age (most of them in their twenties or thirties) as well as their civil status (unmarried), all directly linked to their problematic integration into Spanish society, overcome often through relationships with Spanish women.[56]

The already mentioned organization *Pax Romana* became in the late 1940s another tool used by the Francoist regime in order to end Spanish interna-

51 P. DEL HIERRO, The Neofascist, p. 193; J. M. FARALDO, Patronizing anticommunism. Polish émigrés in Franco's Spain (1939–1969), in: *Exile and Patronage. Cross-cultural Negotiations Beyond the Third Reich*, eds. A. Chandler, K. Stokłosa, J. Vinzent, Berlin 2006, pp. 189–200, here pp. 191–193.

52 EMIL VONTORČÍK, *Za krajanmi do Madridu alebo Vojna o Španielsko. Výbor cestopisných a historických esejí*, Nitra 2013, pp. 9–10.

53 After the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the number of Hungarian exiles in Spain increased to 5,000–7,000, in: M. EIROA, From The Iron, p. 5.

54 Ibid., p. 3.

55 J. M. FARALDO, Patronizing, p. 191; MATILDE EIROA, Pax Romana y los estudiantes católicos del Este de Europa. Solidaridad y perspectivas de futuro, in: *La Internacional Católica. "Pax Romana" en la política europea de posguerra*, ed. G. Sánchez Recio, Madrid 2005, pp. 257–301, here pp. 264–265.

56 For example, many Slovaks who remigrated to Australia or the US, travelled to their new destinations with their Spanish wives, in: VLADIMÍR REPKA, *Rozhovory z diaľky*, Martin 2000, p. 245.

tional ostracization (by changing the public appearance of the regime).[57] The measures adopted by the Madrid government vis-à-vis this situation, arising with the East-West rivalry, included "[C]atholicism, the consequent strengthening of relations with the Vatican and the propagandistic deployment of its anticommunism, in the end, a shift from National-Syndicalism to National-Catholicism."[58] Therefore, the cooperation between Franco's regime and this Catholic organization was a calculated step, eventually resulting in the creation of the Catholic Association of Student Aid (*Obra Católica de Asistencia Universitaria* – OCAU) in 1946, while a crucial role in the establishment of the OCAU was played by the president of *Pax Romana* and Spanish Minister of Education (1951–56), Joaquín Ruiz-Giménez. The Spanish help, which in this sense consisted of offering 150 scholarships to students fleeing from Eastern Europe,[59] eventually culminated with the foundation of the residence hall for foreign students at the University of Madrid (today Complutense University) in December 1946, managed by the OCAU and denominated the Santiago Apostol College, whose functioning began in May 1947.[60]

According to the Spanish University Planning Act (*Ley de Ordenación de la Universidad Española*) of July 1943, each Spanish university had to dispose of at least one *colegio mayor* and all university students in Spain had to belong to one of them – either as a resident or at least as an affiliate.[61] Through these educational and formative institutes, Francoist universities were facilitating the professional preparation and moral formation of their students, as well as showing them the principles of a corporative religious life. The directors of these colleges were "primarily responsible for the strict supervision of the daily life of the students,"[62] while at the CMSA, this position was occupied by a former diplomatic representative of the Slovak state to Madrid, Jozef Cieker.

57 GLICERIO SÁNCHEZ RECIO, Pax Romana como vehículo de las relaciones exteriores del Gobierno español, 1945–1952, in: *La Internacional,* ed. G. Sánchez Recio, pp. 213–256, here p. 252.

58 M. EIROA, Pax Romana, p. 262.

59 W. JARYMOWYCZ, A. BILYK, M. WOLYNSKYJ, *Breve historia,* pp. 185–186. However, it must be mentioned that as early as summer 1945, the Spanish government offered scholarships to 10 students from Eastern Europe to attend university language courses, in: BEÁTA KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Združenie slovenského katolíckeho študentstva v zahraničí v kontexte povojnového kresťanského hnutia v Európe, *Slovenský časopis historický* 1–2/2021, pp. 48–81, here p. 60.

60 J. M. FARALDO, Patronizing, p. 193; F. VURM, *Československo-španělské vztahy*, pp. 56–57.

61 C. RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, *La Universidad de Madrid en el primer*, pp. 124–125.

62 Ibid., pp. 109, 130.

In the CMSA, this "university embassy of students from Eastern Europe,"[63] throughout its existence lived around 800 students of 16 nationalities (its internal self-administration was based on national, instead of state principle),[64] whose countries were being ruled by a communist regime. Its residents maintained a busy social and cultural life – within the CMSA functioned a cultural section, which organized various educational courses, lectures, theatre pieces and debates, maintained a library and once a month published its bulletin, *Nosotros* (in 150 copies). Collaborations in these free time activities (which also included a dance ensemble and choir) were carried out not only between the international students from the college but also in cooperation with Spanish catholic students and intellectuals.[65] For example, frequent visitors were J. Ruiz-Giménez and the Spanish writer, diplomat and one of the founding figures of Spanish fascism, Ernesto Giménez Caballero.

The major obstacle for the newly coming exiles in the CMSA was, as in any other exile community, the foreign language, as proficiency in Spanish was crucial in gaining a higher social status, better job or (political) contacts;[66] however, the lack of knowledge of Spanish was to be quickly resolved by attending intensive language courses. Nevertheless, the main problem of the CMSA (and one of the causes of its eventual closure) was not so easy to overcome – its insufficient funding and permanent debts led to situations when its administrator (OCAU) had to seek help from ecclesiastic hierarchies, through collections or private donations from various Spanish and foreign figures, organizations and state bodies. The economic problems were reflected also in insufficient food portions in the residence hall and a lack of clothing for the students supported by the OCAU.[67] Considering the general poverty and backwardness of Spain in the 1940s and the 1950s, as well as the high unemployment in the country, leading to the exodus of 1.5 million workers from Spain between 1960 and 1972 alone,[68] for the majority of students in the CMSA, Madrid became only a transit station. Despite the sympathies towards Spain,

63 J. M. VARELA OLEA, Colegios, p. 124.

64 V. REPKA, *Rozhovory,* p. 305.

65 Ibid., p. 306; K. BELÁK, *Madrid*, pp. 68–69, 83–84.

66 MICHAEL GOEBEL, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis. Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism*, Cambridge 2015, p. 87.

67 W. JARYMOWYCZ, A. BILYK, M. WOLYNSKYJ, *Breve historia,* pp. 185–186; K. BELÁK, *Madrid*, pp. 74–75.

68 NIGEL TOWNSON, "Spain is Different"? The Franco Dictatorship, in: *Is Spain Different? A Comparative Look at the 19th and the 20th Centuries,* ed. N. Townson, Eastbourne 2015, pp. 135–158, here p. 141.

due to the poor economic situation as well as the lack of job opportunities for college graduates (and even for blue-collar workers),[69] most of the students of the CMSA decided to leave the country once they had finished their studies.

"From the beginning, it seemed to me that everything was different in Spain."[70]

With these words, one of the Slovak students in the CMSA, Boris Gašpar, who came to Madrid in the mid-1950s, described his first experience in Spain, adding that the country seemed to him as being stuck in another century.[71] Despite the fact that the first students supported by the OCAU (25 Polish and 17 various other nationalities) arrived in Spain as early as November 1946, followed by another two groups consisting of Polish and Ukrainians the following month,[72] the first Slovaks (E. Moščovič, V. Koňa, F. Chajma and J. Kolmajer) left for Spain from Genoa only at the end of December 1947.[73] During the spring of 1947, the Slovak students exiled in Rome were informed that in Madrid the CMSA had been opened and that scholarships were being offered to four of them. These first four Slovak students were after their arrival in the Spanish capital accommodated in the CMSA, whose director became Jozef Cieker in February 1948.[74] As Slovak historian Beáta Katrebová Blehová mentions, apart from his contacts at Spanish ministries and his managerial skills, his Catholicism, patriotism and anti-communism – all crucial in Francoist Spain, contributed to his selection as the director. Although Cieker lived his first years after WWII in Madrid in financial hardship, fearing for the destiny of his family and thinking about emigrating to America or Argentina, with the

69 Remembering Boris Gaspar – Spomíname na Borisa Gašpara, *Slovenčina*, 16:01–16:11, https://www.sbs.com.au/language/slovak/sk/podcast-episode/remembering-boris-gaspar/5ndw9l489 [15.06.2023].

70 B. GAŠPAR, *Z ostravských baní*, p. 163.

71 V. REPKA, *Rozhovory,* p. 182.

72 M. EIROA, Pax Romana, pp. 269–270.

73 Archiv bezpečnostních složek, Prague (hereinafter ABS), f. Studijní ústav MV – Odbor politického zpravodajství MV – 2M (hereinafter SÚ MV/2M), sign. 2M: 12824, l. 168, no. 03214/48. Group III/Ab to Group III/Aa. Issue: Slovenská emigrace – zprávy, 14 Jan. 1948.

74 JOZEF M. KOLMAJER, Vznik a poslanie Združenia slovenských katolíckych študentov v zahraničí, in: *Slovenský povojnový exil. Zborník materiálov zo seminára Dejiny slovenského exilu po roku 1945 v Matici slovenskej v Martine 27.–28. júna 1996,* eds. J. Chovan-Rehák, G. Grácová, P. Maruniak, Martin 1998, pp. 279–294, here pp. 285–286.

outbreak of the Cold War and his appointment in the CMSA his situation in Spain improved.[75]

With Cieker, a former Minister Plenipotentiary of the wartime Slovak state in Spain, who decided after WWII not to return to the restored Czechoslovak Republic but remain in Madrid,[76] is also associated the founding of the Slovak exile group in Spain. It must be mentioned that the Slovak anti-communist exile in Spain was an urban phenomenon, linked exclusively with Madrid (apart from summer, when the students spent their holidays in villages by the seaside attending language courses or in the summer camps of the Spanish University Union – *Sindicato Español Universitario*)[77] and with the activity of Santiago Apostol College. Nevertheless, these Slovak anti-communist exiles were not always unconditional supporters of Franco's regime – one of the students, Karol Belák, in his memoirs criticizes for example the suppression of student strikes in Madrid in 1953, as well as the ever-present propaganda, represented by Potemkin villages instead of functional buildings in the centre of Madrid.[78]

Apart from this collective, consisting almost exclusively of Slovak alumni (studying law, medicine or history) of separatist orientation, many of them fleeing Czechoslovakia as early as 1945 (often because of their activities during WWII), stood the Czech exile group. This was headed by the former Czechoslovak *chargé d'affaires* and during WWII an unofficial representative of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile in Spain, Zdeněk Formánek, who returned to Madrid after the communist coup d'état of February 1948.[79] This Czech(oslovak) group, a result of the communist persecution in Czechoslovakia, was formed mostly of emigrants from the Czech lands, of pro-Czecho-

75 BEÁTA KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Zahraničné vysielanie na Slovensko v období nástupu komunistickej totality. Jozef Cieker a počiatky slovenského vysielania Španielskeho štátneho rozhlasu, *Pamäť národa* 3/2020, pp. 20–41, here pp. 26, 28.

76 F. VURM, *Československo-španělské vztahy,* pp. 19–20. Cieker was eventually sentenced in Czechoslovakia *in absentia* to imprisonment for four years, his crimes being national treason and collaborationism, in: Archiv Ministerstva zahraničních věcí České republiky, Prague, f. Osobní spisy, file: Dr. Cieker Jozef, no. Tk 391/48. Ľudový súd v Bratislave, dr. Jozef Cieker: Sentence, 28 May 1948.

77 K. BELÁK, *Madrid*, pp. 25, 61–62.

78 Ibid., pp. 124–125, 143, 188.

79 Formánek was allowed to carry out various activities in Madrid during WWII, such as, for example, the protection of Czechoslovak citizens in Spain. This was possible thanks to the credit he gained during the Spanish Civil War, when he offered asylum at the Czechoslovak embassy in Madrid to several Spanish anti-republicans, in: VLADIMÍR NÁLEVKA, Las relaciones checoslovaco-españolas durante los años de la guerra civil, in: *Las relaciones,* ed. J. Opatrný, pp. 245–248, here p. 246.

slovak and anti-communist orientation, peaking at 147 Czechoslovak citizens living in Spain by 1952.[80]

The fact that the position of director of the college was held by Cieker had a positive influence on the number of Slovak students living at the CMSA. Their number increased from 7 in the 1949/50 academic year to 12 Slovaks in the year 1954/55,[81] and the total number of Slovak students in the CMSA until its closure reached 18.[82] On the contrary, the number of Czech students gradually fell until there were no Czechs supported by the OCAU in the year 1954/55.[83] Most probably the main reasons for this decrease were the ideological convictions and activities of the director of the CMSA, Jozef Cieker, criticized on many occasions for his separatism and his preference for Slovak students.[84] The relationship between Cieker and Formánek was also one of conflicts – although both were members of various anti-communist organizations, the latter claimed that Cieker had in the past been designated as an "agent of Nazi Germany".[85] Nevertheless, in the memoirs of Slovak students of the CMSA, Cieker was unsurprisingly described in a totally positive way, while his activities in favor of Slovak students and Slovak independence were praised.[86]

Therefore, despite the anti-communism of these two diplomats, relations between them were far from cordial – apart from personal antipathy, they both represented a state which had not been recognized by the other.[87] Interestingly, Cieker, although initially representing a Nazi satellite and an inexistent state after the war, was better integrated into the exile diaspora and had a higher public profile in Madrid than Formánek.[88] Even though Cieker's connections at Spanish ministries and ecclesiastic circles in Madrid went

80 AGA, f. MAE, c. 82/11623, l. R.4435/21, no. 301/54. Z. Formánek to Daniel Castel Marco. Annex: Exiliados y residentes checoslovacos en España (Czechoslovak exiles and residents in Spain), 8 June 1954.

81 M. EIROA, Pax Romana, p. 279.

82 E. VONTORČÍK, *Za krajanmi*, p. 27.

83 M. EIROA, Pax Romana, p. 279.

84 Ibid., p. 293.

85 AGA, f. MAE, c. 82/9309, l. R.3358/18. Extranjeros en España – Vigilancia – Checoslovaquia (Foreigners in Spain – Surveillance – Czechoslovakia). Z. Formánek to Mariano de Iturralde, 16 March 1953.

86 See: K. BELÁK, *Madrid*, p. 10, or JOZEF M. KOLMAJER, Slovenské vysielanie štátneho rozhlasu Radio Nacional de España, in: *Slovenský povojnový exil*, eds. J. Chovan-Rehák, G. Grácová, P. Maruniak, pp. 352–356, here pp. 354–356.

87 F. VURM, *Československo-španělské vztahy*, pp. 53–54.

88 M. EIROA, From The Iron, p. 8.

higher, including the Apostolic Nuncio to Spain and future cardinal Gaetano Cicognani, the already mentioned J. Ruiz-Giménez, as well as future Spanish Minister of Information and Tourism, Manuel Fraga (who even considered Cieker a friend),[89] both diplomats maintained contacts with senior executives of the Francoist regime. These included Mariano de Iturralde, Director-General of Foreign Politics and even Fernando María Castiella – Minister of Foreign Affairs (1957–69).

Still, unlike the Czech exile group, Slovak emigrants could, despite their limited number and mostly thanks to Cieker's political contacts, develop remarkable activity in Madrid. They organized and attended the annual commemoration of the day of independence of the Slovak state (March 14), visits by prominent figures of the Slovak exile from the US and Canada to Spain, the annual demonstrations in favor of the Church of Silence and the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.[90] Furthermore, in 1950, a branch of the Association of Slovak Catholic Students Abroad (*Združenie slovenských katolíckych študentov v zahraničí* – ZSKŠvZ) was founded in Madrid – an organization created in Austria in 1947, whose headquarters from 1952 were in Madrid (within the CMSA) as well.[91] This organization soon became a member of *Pax Romana*, while its activities included publishing periodical journals and circular letters (its bulletin *Rozvoj* was issued monthly from 1949); collaborating with other Catholic student organizations; establishing contacts with ecclesiastical authorities; organizing lectures and spiritual exercises and broadening its organization by creating new branches of the ZSKŠvZ abroad.[92] The first half of the 1950s (already its "Madrid years") was its most active period, while at that time, the Association maintained a broad network of Slovak students (almost 700 members) living abroad in various European countries, as well as in the US, Canada, Australia and Argentina. The Spanish capital also hosted the V, VI, VII and VIII General Assembly of ZSKŠvZ (1953–56).[93]

89 Slovenský národný archív, Bratislava (hereinafter SNA), f. Osobný fond J. Cieker, c. 1, l. 72. Telegram from Minister of Information and Tourism, 21 Jan. 1969; B. KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Zahraničné vysielanie, p. 25.

90 FRANTIŠEK CHAJMA, Slovenský post v Madride, in: *Slovenský povojnový exil*, eds. J. Chovan-Rehák, G. Grácová, P. Maruniak, pp. 143–147, here p. 145; JURAJ CHOVAN-REHÁK, Duchovná orientácia dr. Jozefa Ciekra a jej odraz v živote slovenského katolíckeho exilu, in: *Dr. Jozef Cieker. Seminár pri príležitosti nedožitých 90. narodenín Jozefa Ciekra v Tvrdošíne 20. júna 1997,* ed. J. Chovan-Rehák, Martin 2000, pp. 41–47, here pp. 45–46; V. REPKA, *Rozhovory,* pp. 257–258.

91 J. M. KOLMAJER, Vznik, pp. 284–286.

92 V. REPKA, *Rozhovory,* p. 254; B. KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Združenie, pp. 63, 66.

93 J. M. KOLMAJER, Vznik, pp. 284–288; B. KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Združenie, pp. 70–76.

Slovak students in Madrid were also influenced by the conflicts within the Slovak separatist exile and its split into two main groups – one was represented by Ferdinand Ďurčanský, former Minister of the Interior and Foreign Affairs of the Slovak state, after the war cofounder of the Slovak Action Committee (from 1949 the Slovak Liberation Committee) and chairman of the international anti-communist organization Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations.[94] The other one was led by Karol Sidor (Minister of the Slovak state to the Holy See), cofounder of the Slovak National Council Abroad (*Slovenská národná rada v zahraničí* – SNRvZ) in 1948. Also within the Slovak community in the CMSA were sympathizers of both groups; however, the role of Cieker as a supporter of Sidor and a leading member of the SNRvZ was influential and many students (Chajma, Kolmajer, Šiky, Gašpar, Ďuriš, Glejdura) also became members of this organization.[95] For this reason, the SNRvZ, which unlike the Slovak Liberation Committee under Ďurčanský, was more open to compromise on the issue of the future form of the Slovak statehood,[96] played a more prominent role as a leading Slovak separatist exile organization in Francoist Spain. Furthermore, the Slovak and Czechoslovak exile organizations (SNRvZ, the Council of Free Czechoslovakia and the Czech National Committee) regularly contacted Madrid with proposals to promote their agenda on the floor of international organizations (for example, the UN), thus trying to change the direction of Madrid's foreign policy. Nonetheless, the support they received was very limited and Spain did not consult these two diplomats (Cieker, Formánek) within the creation of its policy towards Czechoslovakia – the Spanish representatives committed themselves only to the expressions of "best wishes" for the Czech and Slovak people.[97]

It should also be mentioned that the activities of the Slovak exile group in Spain were a source of concern in Czechoslovakia – based on information from

94 The Slovak Liberation Committee was also one of the members of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations. For more on this anti-communist umbrella organization and coordinating centre, see: STEFANIE BIRKHOLZ, *„Die stärksten Verbündeten des Westens". Der Antibolschewistische Block der Nationen 1946–1996. Geschichte, Organisation und Arbeitsweise eines Netzwerks zur Zerschlagung der Sowjetunion,* Hamburg 2017.

95 V. REPKA, *Rozhovory,* p. 305; K. BELÁK, *Madrid*, pp. 116–117, 170.

96 ANTON HRUBOŇ, Poznámky k politickým aktivitám slovenského exilu v prvej polovici 50. rokov z pohľadu agendy Zahraničného úradu Nemeckej spolkovej republiky, in: *Slovensko v rokoch neslobody 1938–1989*, III*: Menšiny,* eds. A. Hruboň, J. Jankech, K. Ristveyová, Banská Bystrica 2014, pp. 234–246, here pp. 235, 244.

97 AGA, f. MAE, c. 82/15017, l. R.5962/22. Refugiados políticos eslovacos en España (Slovak political refugees in Spain). Fernando María Castiella to J. Cieker, 9 Jan. 1960.

the Czechoslovak Embassy in Paris, sent to Prague, the CMSA functioned as "the headquarters for the preparation of anti-revolutionary agents, spies and saboteurs who were to work in the service of the US secret service in the countries of people's democracies". Cieker figured in this intelligence report as the head of this base, which included 70 agents of various nationalities who were recruited by the OCAU.[98] During the 1960s, Czechoslovak State Security (*Státní bezpečnost* – StB) even sent to Madrid two secret collaborators, who met with Cieker in order to gain information from him about the Slovak exile in Spain. During these talks, the situation in Slovakia, as well as the possibility of a visit by Cieker's wife to Slovakia were discussed – all the obtained intelligence formed part of agency reports later submitted to the StB.[99]

One of the main cultural and propagandist activities of the Slovak, as well as other anti-communist exile groups living in Spain, were radio broadcasts in their native languages on Spanish National Radio (*Radio Nacional de España* – RNE). The Slovak broadcast, which was organized and directed by Cieker, epitomized the conflicting relationship between Slovak and Czech exiles in Spain. Broadcasting in foreign languages on the RNE began in January 1949 (with the first broadcast in Russian), with the propagandistic and anti-communist aim in the countries of the Eastern Bloc.[100] The proposal for broadcasts in foreign languages came from the Polish general Władysław Anders, as well as from Otto von Habsburg (who personally raised the issue of broadcasting in Slovak at a meeting with Spanish ministers) during their respective interviews with Franco.[101] These broadcasts were to function as a way of fighting communism, while financial support for the radio came from the Spanish state and Eastern European exile groups and organizations abroad (Canada, US).[102]

The Slovak broadcast started in October 1949, at first as 15-minute programs 3 days per week, later becoming a daily broadcast of 30 minutes (in the evening), with two Slovak employees (Cieker and Jozef Kolmajer, another student at the CMSA), and lasted until December 1975.[103] Two years after the Slovak broadcast, the Czech one started, at first with Slovak students from the

98 ABS, f. Hlavní správa rozvědky – I. správa (Main Foreign Intelligence Directorate – Directorate I), Objektové svazky I. Správy SNB (Object Files Group of the Directorate I of the SNB), reg. no. 12227, arch. no. AS-3604. The MFA to the MOI, no. 146.860/A-III-2. Issue: Info about Spain, 4.11.1949.

99 B. KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Zahraničné vysielanie, pp. 40–41.

100 M. EIROA, From The Iron Curtain, pp. 9–10.

101 B. KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Zahraničné vysielanie, pp. 29–30.

102 M. EIROA, From The Iron Curtain, pp. 10–11.

103 J. M. KOLMAJER, Slovenské vysielanie, pp. 352–356.

CMSA as announcers. Needless to say, this broadcast was run by the Czech National Committee (Český národní výbor),[104] a rival exile organization of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia (*Rada svobodného Československa*) represented in Spain by Formánek, who as leader of Czech émigrés did not recognize the legitimacy of this new Czech broadcast on the RNE,[105] thus underlining the conflict between Slovak and Czech exiles in Spain. Generally speaking, editors and announcers of foreign broadcasts at the RNE were intellectuals and in many cases (former) students of the CMSA, and the programs of these broadcasts (not subordinated to Francoist censorship) included interviews with other exiles, political, cultural or sports topics, while maintaining strong anticommunist and Christian lines.[106] In the first year of its existence, topics of the Slovak broadcast included information about the activities of Slovak exile and Slovak organizations abroad (focusing more on the SNRvZ than on Ďurčanský); information about the situation in Slovakia and the communist persecution, as well as the international situation or topics from Slovak history and its protagonists (with a strict anti-Czechoslovak line).[107] Throughout the two decades of this broadcast, the program and its content did not change a lot – at the end of the 1960s, the topics included anti-communism (in Spain, Slovakia, as well as around the world); Francisco Franco; life in Slovakia and its position within Czechoslovakia; the current international situation; the internal situation in Spain; activities of the Czechoslovak government in Spain; issues of the Catholic Church or figures of Slovak history and the Slovak separatist movement.[108] The presenters of the broadcasts in foreign languages at the RNE praised Francoist Spain as a Christian anti-communist country and tried to incite an anti-regime revolt in their home countries, meanwhile these broadcasts had respectable acceptance not only by exiles in Spain and Western Europe but according to some personal observers, also by listeners behind the "impenetrable" Iron Curtain.[109]

At the beginning of the 1960s, the RNE moved to the new complex of buildings at Prado del Rey. At this time the Slovak broadcast was extended by a half-hour slot also in the morning.[110] According to memories of Kolmajer,

104 Ibid., p. 354.
105 F. VURM, *Československo-španělské vztahy*, p. 56.
106 M. EIROA, Una mirada, pp. 489–491.
107 B. KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Zahraničné vysielanie, pp. 32–38.
108 SNA, f. Osobný fond J. Cieker, c. 1, file: Backup articles – Sr. D. José Cieker (1997).
109 M. EIROA, Una mirada, pp. 489–491; E. VONTORČÍK, *Za krajanmi,* pp. 70–72.
110 J. M. KOLMAJER, Slovenské vysielanie, p. 352.

the editors of this broadcast received letters from listeners not only from Slovakia but also from Romania, Poland, Germany and Yugoslavia.[111] Nevertheless, these letters arrived mostly in the first months of the transmission and due to the absence of statistics regarding listeners of broadcasts hostile to the communist regime (including the Slovak broadcast of the RNE), organized by Prague only in later years, it is impossible to determine the number of listeners, the influence of this broadcast in Slovakia or the measures taken against it by the Czechoslovak communist regime.[112]

Publish Or Perish (in Madrid)

The publishing and academic sphere was another form of support from the Francoist regime for exiles from countries ruled by communist parties. In this respect it should be mentioned that during the first years of the Cold War and in need of breaking out of its international ostracism, from the end of the 1940s Spain allowed the diplomatic offices of former governments of Eastern and Central European countries now under communist rule (e.g., Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia) to be set up in Madrid. Needless to say, also represented in Madrid were the wartime puppet states, such as Croatia and Slovakia, while all of these diplomatic missions were headed by Ministers Plenipotentiaries – former representatives of the above-mentioned countries in Spain, nonetheless still enjoying full diplomatic privileges.[113] These legations carried out consular and PR activities, while in June 1949 their leaders formed the Committee of Nations Oppressed by Communism (*Comité de las Naciones Oprimidas por el Comunismo*), with its own agenda within the political, social and propagandistic field.[114] Subsequently, this committee started to publish a journal entitled *Boletín Informativo de las Naciones Oprimidas por el Comunismo* (changed in 1953 to *Europa Oprimida*), which comprised contributions written by members of this committee dedicated to nations under the communist yoke and topics from national history or the current (inter) national situation, as well as about leaders and organizations in exile or the communist persecution of the Church.[115]

111 V. REPKA, *Rozhovory,* p. 258.
112 B. KATREBOVÁ BLEHOVÁ, Zahraničné vysielanie, pp. 38–39.
113 M. EIROA, Una mirada, p. 483; F. VURM, *Československo-španělské vztahy,* p. 53.
114 M. EIROA, From The Iron, pp. 7–9.
115 J. M. FARALDO, Dreams, p. 96; F. VURM, *Československo-španělské vztahy,* pp. 54–55.

From the beginning of the 1950s, the Spanish capital saw not only the publication of academic journals, such as *Oriente* (*Europeo*) or *Re-Unión*, but also attempts to promote Eastern European studies through the *Centro de Estudios Orientales* and *Centro Superior de Investigaciones Científicas* as well as at the University of Madrid. All of the cited journals contained articles dedicated to and critical of the communist regimes, written almost exclusively by the respective exiles.[116] Other publications of Central and Eastern European émigrés included, apart from the afore-cited *Boletín*, for example *Polonia. Revista Ilustrada, Libertatea* and *Noticiero eslovaco*. However, all these publications struggled with a lack of funds and distribution, and their influence remained limited and often did not transcend Spain.[117]

As has already been mentioned, in Madrid lived not only Slovak but also Czech anti-communist exiles. Apart from Z. Formánek, another prominent representative of the Czech exile in Franco's Spain was the Czech historian and politician Bohdan Chudoba. As an associate of the Czech National Committee, responsible for the Czech broadcast of the RNE, Chudoba visited Cieker in Madrid in 1955 and agreed to Slovak broadcasters in the Czech broadcast of the RNE, as he had no confidence in Czech students in the CMSA.[118] Nevertheless, unlike Formánek, Chudoba rejected the concept of Czechoslovakism and the ideas of the Czechoslovak First Republic.[119] From the mid-1950s until 1965, Chudoba collaborated with the foreign broadcast of the RNE – in his many contributions, he criticized for example modernization trends in the Catholic Church and also acted as a defender of the Francoist regime.[120] Generally speaking, the Czech broadcast of the RNE, under the direction of the Czech National Committee from London, criticized communism in the USSR and the rest of the world, as well as Czechoslovak President Beneš and other Czechoslovak politicians, but it also focused on topics such as the history and the current situation in Czechoslovakia, Europe and in the Czech exile, or even

116 M. EIROA, From The Iron, pp. 11, 14; J. M. FARALDO, Dreams, p. 99.

117 F. VURM, *Československo-španělské vztahy*, pp. 54–55; M. EIROA, Una mirada, pp. 481, 491–493.

118 B. GAŠPAR, *Z ostravských baní*, pp. 193–194.

119 JIŘÍ HANUŠ, Bohdan Chudoba: the Tragic Story of a Talented Man, *Prague Economic and Social History Papers* 1/2014, pp. 77–86, here pp. 78–79.

120 PABLO BLANCO SARTO, Bohdan Chudoba (1909–1982). Teologické pojetí dějin, in: Bohdan Chudoba, *Člověk nad dějinami*, Praha 2018, pp. 608–622, here p. 609; MILAN DRÁPALA (ed.), *Na ztracené vartě Západu. Antologie české nesocialistické publicistiky z let 1945–1948*, Praha 2000, p. 423.

on the issue of the Czech women's movement and the defense of Franco's regime.[121]

During his long-term exile, Bohdan Chudoba wrote various monographs and articles in the Spanish language, some of them even published in Spain.[122] His works were dedicated to Spanish and Eastern European history from a conservative and Catholic point of view, while in his texts, one could see anti-communist, anti-fascist and anti-modernist elements, the influence of philosopher Unamuno and instead of Catholicism, due to his orthodoxy, Christianity was emphasized.[123] Although his relationship to the Francoist regime was not unconditionally positive, he did not consider Franco to be fascist and even though he admitted his mistakes, he justified them and interpreted them as an attempt to save traditional European values.[124] Also, "it is possible to interpret Chudoba's support of Franco's National-Catholic state as the realization of his dreams", although in his most representative publications he never explicitly mentioned "Francoist Spain".[125] Furthermore, his criticism of Czechoslovak politicians and the concept of Czechoslovakism, his conflicts with other members of the Czech exile, as well as his Christian, traditionalist and anti-liberal orientation, were most probably the ideological connections which made the coexistence between Chudoba and Slovak separatists (in contrast to the majority of Czech exiles headed by Formánek) possible in Madrid.[126]

What is more, Jozef Cieker also wrote various essays and historical studies published in Spain – some of them in the official bulletin of the CMSA, *Nosotros*, as well as in the above-mentioned journals such as *Oriente* (*Europeo*) and *Re-Unión*, others in the magazines of the Slovak exile or pronounced in the Slovak broadcast of the RNE.[127] Taking into account Cieker's political and

121 See: *Sborník Madrid. Výběr madridského nedělního vysílání londýnskou redakcí Českého národního výboru*, No. 1, London 1957; *Sborník Madrid. Výběr madridského nedělního vysílání londýnskou redakcí Českého národního výboru*, No. 2, London 1957; *Sborník Madrid. Výběr madridského nedělního vysílání londýnskou redakcí Českého národního výboru*, No. 3, London 1957.

122 For example BOHDAN CHUDOBA, El pasado histórico y su sentido, *Atlantida* 7/1964, pp. 29–40; IDEM, El tiempo como antecedente de la historia, *Atlantida* 47/1970, pp. 557–562; IDEM, *España y el Imperio (1519–1643)*, Madrid 1963; IDEM, *Los tiempos antiguos y la venida de Cristo*, Madrid 1965.

123 J. M. FARALDO, Dreams, pp. 98–99.

124 M. DRÁPALA (ed.), *Na ztracené vartě*, pp. 424–25, 430.

125 J. M. FARALDO, Dreams, p. 99.

126 P. BLANCO SARTO, Bohdan Chudoba, pp. 608–609.

127 See for example: JOZEF CIEKER, Al margen de un aniversario, *Nosotros: Boletín del Colegio Mayor Santiago Apóstol* 4–5/1950, pp. 71–73; IDEM, El análisis de un mito: Ficciones y realida-

ideological orientation, his interwar activities within the organization of the Slovak Catholic youth, as well as the character of his diplomatic accreditation, the presence in his works of criticism of Czechoslovakism and Czechoslovak political and diplomatic representatives (Formánek being one of them), the defense of the legitimacy of the Slovak state and the Christian faith, are all understandable.[128] Furthermore, his studies published in Spain were characterized by his nationalism and anti-communism, which, together with Catholicism and anti-Orientalism, he used as a tool in his search for Spanish support for the independence of Slovakia – a traditionally Christian country with a Western orientation in the Cold War. In Cieker's studies were also visible his emphasis on Catholicism, criticism of modernity, interpretation of national history as an anti-communist mission and even the idea of the unity of Catholicism and the fatherland. The main reason for his positive stance towards Franco was most probably his gratitude for granting asylum to Slovak emigrants, while Cieker in his works rather opportunistically praised Spain and its *Caudillo* and highlighted the role of Spain, able to fulfill its national and universal mission and to defeat communism. Moreover, the topics selected in his works were supposed to demonstrate the closeness between Spain and Slovakia which – according to Cieker, albeit a Catholic and anti-communist country, was still a victim of global communism.[129]

Štefan Glejdura, who arrived at the CMSA from Belgium in 1954, was one of Cieker's most active disciples and followers in Madrid. Despite being a war invalid, he managed to flee Czechoslovakia in November 1949 together with another student at the CMSA, K. Belák. The reason for their departure was their dissatisfaction with the situation at the Faculty of Law in Bratislava, as well as the political and social changes in Czechoslovakia after the "Victorious February" of 1948.[130] After finishing his studies in Madrid, at the beginning of the 1960s Glejdura started to work at the Ministry of Information and Tourism and became a professor at the University of Madrid.[131] The selected topics and

des del estado checo-eslovaco, *Oriente Europeo* 13/1963, pp. 113–133; IDEM, El legado perenne de los santos Cirilo y Metodio (863–1963), *Re-Unión* 36/1963, pp. 217–222; IDEM, La causa común cristiana (I), *Oriente Europeo* 1–2/1960, pp. 77–88; IDEM, La entrada de los eslovacos en la comunidad cristiana, *Oriente* 2/1951, pp. 61–74.

128 J. CHOVAN-REHÁK, Duchovná, pp. 41–46.

129 For an analysis of Cieker's publishing activities in Spain, see: M. TIMKO, De Gottwald, pp. 156–159, 164–165.

130 K. BELÁK, *Madrid,* p. 114.

131 Ibid, pp. 113–115; FRANTIŠEK VNUK, Politológ a historik Štefan Glejdura (1925–1988), *Historický zborník* 2/2000, pp. 216–218, here p. 216.

ideological orientation of Glejdura's articles published in Spain resulted from the fact that their author was a former student of Cieker and later a leading figure of the Slovak exile in Madrid.[132] Thus, in his studies was visible his nationalism, as was his critical view of the concept of Czechoslovakism and Czechoslovak politicians, while Glejdura focused in them on Czecho-Slovak relations (while underlining the nationalist and separatist character of Slovaks). However, Glejdura also focused in his articles on events such as the federalization of Czechoslovakia, the Warsaw Pact invasion in 1968 and the situation in Czechoslovakia after the occupation, interpreting the crisis of 1968/69 as not only an attempt at democratization of the society and a crisis of communism, but also as a problem of Czecho-Slovak relations and the federalization of the state. Moreover, in his publications, the absence of the Catholic element was also visible, while his anti-communism was oriented almost exclusively against Czech and Soviet communists. Also, it can be argued that Glejdura's perception of the wartime Slovak state was positive, while the designation of this state as fascist was, according to him, the result of Czech propaganda.[133] Nonetheless, at the time of the publication of Glejdura's above-mentioned studies, Madrid's foreign policy started to take a new turn as a direct result of the change in international relations and the emergence of *détente*.

Already from the late 1950s, after being left outside of the EEC, Spain decided, in its search for new markets and in order to improve its position in negotiations with the EEC and the US, to strengthen its relations with the Eastern Bloc. This process began at the end of the 1950s with the signing of interbank agreements (with Czechoslovakia in January 1958) then, from 1964 with the opening of commercial representations and from the end of the 1960s with the establishment of consular delegations of Eastern European countries in Ma-

132 See: ŠTEFAN GLEJDURA, Aniversarios olvidados: treinta años del "Levantamiento Nacional Eslovaco", de 1944, y el "Levantamiento Antiinvasión!, de 1968, *Revista de Política Internacional* 135/1974, pp. 235–244; IDEM, Checoslovaquia: cinco años después, *Revista de Política Internacional* 127/1973, pp. 95–110; IDEM, Eslovaquia, en erupción revolucionaria (1945–1975), *Revista de Política Internacional* 143/1976, pp. 115–137; IDEM, La Ley constitucional sobre la Federación checo-eslovaca, *Revista de Política Internacional* 111/1970, pp. 179–185; IDEM, Los grandes problemas del Este europeo: Eslovaquia, *Revista de Política Internacional* 97/1968, pp. 9–56.

133 For more on Glejdura's articles published in Spain, see: M. TIMKO, De Gottwald, pp. 160–162, 164–65.

drid.[134] Thus, the presence and support of anti-communist Eastern and Central European exiles became in this respect more of a burden for Madrid. Also, in the mid-1950s, many Slovak students came to the conclusion that their exile would be long-term and that the fall of the communist regime in their homeland was not a question of the next months or even years.[135] Moreover, the still economically and technologically backward Spain of the 1950s could not offer them favorable prospects and the possibility to effectively assert themselves. For this reason, Madrid for these exiles was only a "transit station", however, a station which offered them a university education and knowledge of a language spoken all over the world.[136] Thus, from the second half of the 1950s, the majority of Slovak students left Spain after finishing their studies for the US, Australia or Latin America, using for their remigration the existing network of Slovak exile, whose roots date back to the end of the 19th century. Simultaneously, with the death of the last high-ranking Slovak diplomat (Cieker) in 1969, the position of the representative of Slovak interests in Spain, as well as many other functions occupied by this Slovak émigré, were left vacant. Despite the fact that after Cieker's death Glejdura became the director of the Slovak broadcast of RNE and also the leader of the Slovak exile in Madrid, his activities were limited only to the propagational and academic sphere.[137]

Conclusion

Even though the above-mentioned mass media, legations in Madrid and the CMSA gradually stopped their activities after 1969 (due to the change in the geopolitical situation and the international position of Spain),[138] for two decades, they enabled the active and fruitful presence of anti-communist exiles in Madrid. These (infra)structures and fixities (contacts, organizations, radio broadcasts in foreign languages and the publications of exiles in Francoist Spain) served a double purpose: for the exile groups, they had the function of "cohesion of the group, interaction and cultural instrumentation", while for Spain they functioned as a propaganda tool – both as anti-communist

134 RICARDO MARTÍN DE LA GUARDIA, GUILLERMO PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, Bajo la influencia de Mercurio: España y la Europa del Este en los últimos años del franquismo, *Historia del presente* 6/2005, pp. 43–60, here pp. 44–47.

135 K. BELÁK, *Madrid,* p. 91.

136 E. VONTORČÍK, *Za krajanmi*, p. 64.

137 F. CHAJMA, Slovenský post, p. 143.

138 M. EIROA, Una mirada, pp. 494–495.

criticism and defense of the regime, even though published information was frequently tendentious.[139] Therefore, the Spanish moorings of Slovak and Czech anti-communist exiles were used by the Francoist regime as proof of its help for the "enslaved Europe"; on the other hand, these refugees agreed to be used, considering that it was Franco who gave them the means to fight communism.[140] Furthermore, many of these émigrés were able to capitalize on contacts acquired in Spain (through Spanish officials or the respective exile organizations), to gain a university degree or experience in radio broadcasts or academic journals, notwithstanding the possibilities facilitated by the network of Eastern European exiles living in Madrid – all these structures and fixities enabled and (re)produced further (im)mobilities outside or within Spain.

The example of Czech and Slovak exiles in Madrid shows how in the first two decades of the Cold War, the Iron Curtain was neither static nor impervious, as this conflict proved to be an era full of global interconnections and the transfer of people, ideas, products and information took place even in a Europe separated by the Iron Curtain,[141] although not always in huge amounts (and often with limited impact on developments in the respective blocs). The above-analyzed transnational (infra)structures and fixities of Eastern and Central European exiles, as well as the networks existing in Madrid, but often transcending this Cold War divide, confirm the thesis of Michael David-Fox about the semi-permeability of the Iron Curtain. Therefore, I argue that this divide should be interpreted rather as a symbolic and permeable barrier dividing two competing systems and world visions, which were, nevertheless, interconnected, interdependent and often served as mutual referential points – for example, state socialist countries (such as Czechoslovakia) measured their economic efficiency not in comparison with other Eastern Bloc countries, but with the capitalist West.[142]

The fact that the Slovak exile in Madrid consisted almost exclusively of university students limited the creation of a permanent and broader exile center, as almost all of the Slovaks left Spain once they had finished their studies.[143] The Czech and Slovak anti-communist exile groups, as well as other collec-

139 M. EIROA, Una mirada, pp. 493–494. M. EIROA, From The Iron, p. 14.

140 J. M. FARALDO, Patronizing, p. 191.

141 S. BECHMANN PEDERSEN, CH. NOACK, Crossing, pp. 3–4.

142 PAULINA BREN, Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall… Is the West the Fairest of Them All? Czechoslovak Normalization and Its (Dis)Contents, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 4/2008, pp. 831–854, here p. 834.

143 V. REPKA, *Rozhovory,* pp. 259–260.

tives of emigrants in Spain, thus over time disintegrated – some of these emigrants died, others married and integrated into Spanish society. Nevertheless, for many of them, their Spanish moorings had indeed a (re)productive character, as these (im)mobilities kick-started another mobility – activities carried out, experiences gained and structures and nodes existing and further developed in Spain, enabled them to emigrate to other, more promising countries, such as Australia, Canada or the US.

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