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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

this is the second issue of the journal *Oriens Aliter*, which represents a project of the new scientific periodical of the Department of Central European Studies and the Institute of East European Studies, two workplaces of the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, which, in the long term and from different aspects, deal with the study of cultural-historic heritage of the Central and Eastern Europe, in co-operation with Precarpathian National University of Vasyl Stefanyk in Ivano-Frankivsk. The editorial board regards the main aim of the journal *Oriens Aliter* in providing a platform for presentation of results of the most topical culturological and historic research about the Central and Eastern Europe for scientific public and wider reader's community and for confrontation of them within an international scale. Apart from this primary task, the new journal should become a mediator for closer co-operation of institutions, whose distinguished and respected personalities who supported with their authority and shielded with their expertise the creation of the journal.

Title of the journal *Oriens Aliter* refers to the general intent to introduce other inspiring view of the examined and important European region, in other words, to discover new, possibly surprising connections and conjugate interactions between the world of the Central and Eastern Europe. From the hinted general conception of the journal the enhanced focus on areas of mutual contacts results together with diffusion of both large cultural-historic areas (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Baltic States, Belorussia, Ukraine), as well as the historic-geographic area of Russia. Moreover, Central and Eastern Europe will not be explored as isolated periphery of the European Continent but will be regarded in contexts and interactions with the development of the West European civilizing perimeter.

The journal *Oriens Aliter* will be, in reference to its interdisciplinary character, opened to the wide circle of researchers and contributions from various scientific

Marek Příhoda, Stanislav Tumis

fields (history, culturology, literary science, political studies, arts etc.). With respect to the general focus and long-term aims of constituent institutions, the editorial board will prefer studies dealing with the problems of the twentieth century (including their historic connections) and research of momentous social-cultural situation. Equally, the journal does not avoid even the contributions dealing with partial matters of mediaeval and early modern cultural and political history.

The editorial board of the journal *Oriens Aliter* is aware of entering the wide market where a number of different periodicals is published. However, we believe the new journal will find its readers not only in the Czech Republic but also abroad because one of its aims is to mediate mutual discussion among universities and scientific workplaces not only in the Central and Eastern Europe but also in Western Europe and the United States. Intensity of relations between Central and Eastern Europe in political and cultural sphere and even their impact on surrounding world in the last period has again increased. The second issue of the journal *Oriens Aliter* offers also reflection of complex interactions in this region where the readers find four large studies to the various topics confirming the interdisciplinary and international character of the journal.

Marek Příhoda, Stanislav Tumis

STUDIES

Petr Stehlík

BOTH BULWARK AND BRIDGE:
The Symbolic Conceptualization of the Frontier Position
of Croatia in the Original Yugoslavism

For centuries, Croatia was a territory on the frontier of two worlds: Western Christian Europe and the Islamic Orient, i.e., the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire. In the 16th century, this position attained its symbolic expression in the form of an ideologeme about Croatia as the bulwark of Christianity, which played an important role in the self-perception of Croats (first of the Croatian estates and later of the modern Croatian nation). However, in the second half of the 19th century, this ideologeme transformed into a conception of Croatia as a bridge between West and East. This change occurred within the framework of an ideological system that greatly influenced the process of the formation of the modern Croatian nation at the time. I call this ideology the *original Yugoslavism*.¹ In my paper, I intend to follow, describe, and explain the transformation of the symbolic conceptualization of the frontier position of Croatia, which took place within the mentioned Croatian national-integrational ideology. My research is based on the analysis of articles and public speeches by the main creators of the original Yugoslavism: Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905), a Catholic bishop, theologian, and benefactor, and Franjo Rački (1828–1894), a Catholic priest, historian, and publicist. I am going to focus on the following two aspects of the examined subject: 1) the conceptualization of the role of the Croats in the history and the process of solving the Eastern Question, as well as in mediating and spreading Western culture to the Balkans; and 2) the specifics of the Croatian Orientalist discourse, which is implicitly present in such interpretations of the historical and cultural mission of one's own nation.

¹ Cf. Stehlík, P., *Bosna v chorvatských národně-integračních ideologiích 19. století*, Brno 2013; Gross, M., *Vítek i djelovanje Franje Račkoga*, Zagreb 2004.

Rački and Strossmayer were convinced that the Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, and Bulgarians would perish unless they united their still fragmented intellectual forces in order to form a common culture, which would be capable of matching the value and inner diversity of cultures of the more advanced Romance and Germanic nations. In their idea of culturally integrating the South Slavic territory over the long term, they assigned a key role to the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (JAZU) in Zagreb, which was founded with their considerable contribution in 1867. According to the vision of its founders, the Academy was to become a central scientific and national-educational institution of the whole Slavic South that would fundamentally contribute to the cultural refinement and mutuality of the South Slavs. It should be noted that it was conceived to serve not only the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes in the Habsburg Monarchy, but also their “brothers” who were still living under full or partial Ottoman sovereignty. The intended role of the Academy in relation to these Ottoman subjects was to mediate selected achievements of Western culture and knowledge to them, so that they could overcome the alleged “handicap” stemming from their centuries-long separation from the civilizational development of the European West.

In this context, Rački assigned an extraordinary role to Croatian culture, which he deemed as firmly anchored in the Western European cultural and civilizational context, and which, at the same time, was a genuine expression of the Slavic “spirit” of the Croatian nation. Therefore, he considered Croatian culture to be an ideal medium for enlightening the South Slavs inhabiting the lands beyond Croatia’s frontier rivers, the Sava and the Una, because he was convinced that it could mediate the cultural heritage and values of Western civilization to them in a comprehensible manner and language. Strossmayer held similar views as he believed that Croatia, particularly Zagreb, should become the cultural and educational epicenter of the whole Slavic South. In accordance with this vision, he compared his homeland and its capital to Tuscany and Florence, respectively. His idea was that Croatia and Zagreb would eventually take up an exceptional position in the culture of the Balkan Peninsula, analogous to the position held by the mentioned Italian region and its capital in the culture of the Apennine Peninsula. The Academy working in conjunction with the University of Zagreb, which was also conceived as an institution designated for all South Slavs, was supposed to play an essential role in achieving this goal. From the perspective of the adherents of Yugoslavism, the founding of the University in 1874 naturally bolstered the leading status of Zagreb in the cultural revival and “spiritual” unification of the Slavic South, which Strossmayer and Rački considered to be an unavoidable precondition for successful political unification. In their view, this unification was supposed to be realised in a common

federal Yugoslav state, which would be part of a federalized Habsburg Monarchy or fully independently. It goes without saying that an indispensable prerequisite for forming such a South Slavic political unit was freeing Southeast Europe from Ottoman supremacy.

Therefore, it will not come as a surprise that the main ideologues of Yugoslavism paid extraordinary attention to the Eastern Question. In this context, it should be emphasized that an important part of their perspective on the history and the process of solving this complex issue constituted the aforementioned traditional ideologeme about Croatia as the *antemurale christianitatis* (Bulwark of Christianity). Rački and Strossmayer, like many other South Slavic, Albanian, Hungarian or Polish national ideologues, accentuated the reputed sacrifice made by their nation to the benefit of a greater whole, while they perceived this same nation to be an indispensable part and the farthest outpost of such a whole. However, Rački did not credit only the Croats for the centuries-long defense of Europe and its Christian civilization against various Turkic marauders and the expansion of Islam, but he also cited the South Slavs and even to Slavdom as a whole.

On the basis of a comparative analysis of the sources in which the creators of the original Yugoslavism operate with the term *bulwark* (*predziđe* in Croatian) and related motifs, it can be concluded that they date the historical focal point of the given ideologeme to the period when the Croats and other South Slavs held out against the Ottoman Turks. In this context, Rački remarks that “[n]o nation has suffered so much from the Turks” as “the nation of the South Slavs” for whom this arch-enemy has “destroyed all the past and obscured the near future.”² The thing is that, according to him, the Ottomans uprooted the promisingly developing and strengthening Bulgarian, Serbian, and Bosnian states, which meant that these conquered territories could not participate in the epoch-making changes that Western Europe had gone through on the threshold of the Modern Era.³ Although some Croats, unlike their mentioned neighbours, had an opportunity to sample the fruits of the Renaissance and humanism, which Rački calls “a spectacular movement”, he states that it was not until “the idea of the defence of Christendom from the victorious Islam” emerged, that the unification of the Croatian South and North, i.e., Dalmatia (the Littoral) and Pannonia (the Interior) could be accomplished “under one flag.”⁴

² Rački, F., Misli jednoga Hrvata nedržavnika o iztočnom pitanju. *Pozor* (Zagreb) br. 204, 16. 9. 1862.

³ Cf. *ibidem*.

⁴ Rački, F., Svečano slovo predsjednika dra. Fr. Račkoga. *Ljetopis JAZU* (Zagreb) 5 (1890), 91.

At the beginning of the 1860s, when Rački concentrated his efforts on winning the support of the Emperor and the Hungarians for a policy that would correspond to the interests of the South Slavs, he claimed that it was the Habsburgs together with “the nations of Hungary-Croatia” who sacrificed their fortune and blood in the struggle against the Turks.⁵ Moreover, it was exactly these allies who stuck to their guns and took “lead of Christian Europe in order to protect its culture and prosperity”, becoming the “bulwark of Christianity against Mohammedanism” in the process.⁶ Nevertheless, later on, Rački also ascribed the very same role to Slavdom or to its Southern branch, while emphasizing that already since the fifth century “the Slavic nation” had defended Christian civilization against the assaults of “various nations and tribes of the Turkic family”⁷ and that it was Providence itself that placed the Slavs at the frontier of the East and West, so that they could “defend the intellectual work of the more fortunate West for so many centuries”.⁸ It was due to this sacrifice that the Slavs were culturally lagging behind the Romance and Germanic nations. On the other hand, Rački declared their preparedness “to graft an offshoot from the tree of Romance and Germanic knowledge to their young, but well-branched and lush, tree”; and to look after it in the best manner afterwards, so that it could also “bear fruit to the benefit of mankind and the glory of reason”.⁹ Everything explicated about Slavdom allegedly also held true for the South Slavs, who “would have stood on an equal level of education with Western Europe” if their development had not been violently interrupted by the Ottomans.¹⁰ However, South Slavs had instead become “martyrs of Christendom and the defenders of civilization in the centuries-long struggle against Mohammedanism”.¹¹ Although they had barely recuperated from the wounds inflicted during the wars with the Turks, the South Slavs had already realized that it was “only the works of intellect” that “erect imperishable monuments” – an idea which they identified with.¹²

⁵ Rački, F., Misli. *Pozor* (Zagreb) br. 204, 16. 9. 1862.

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ Rački's review of the book *Borba Hrvatah s Mongoli i Tataři* by Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski. *Književnik* 1 (1864), 131.

⁸ Rački, F., Besjeda predsjednikova. *Rad JAZU* (Zagreb) 1 (1867), 45.

⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁰ Ibidem, 47.

¹¹ Ibidem, 46.

¹² Ibidem.

All the motifs related to the concept of bulwark present in the works of Rački can also be detected in Strossmayer's writings.¹³ In contrast to his younger colleague, the bishop uses more exalted rhetoric and associates the customary martyr-centered elements of the ideologeme exclusively with the Croats or the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia, whose boundaries used to be "wider and vaster to all four corners of the world".¹⁴ Strossmayer also underlines more vehemently than Rački the presumed ancient and glorious past of the Croats, as well as their extraordinary heroism, self-sacrifice, and firm faith demonstrated in the wars against the Turks. He is confident that the contemporary residents of the Triune Kingdom have an appropriate reason to be proud of their ancestors and suggests that they should follow their example in the intellectual sphere, which has replaced the battlefield in modern times. As regards the neighbours of the Croatians, Strossmayer expects their gratitude for the exceptional favour that Croats have historically done for "European-Christian civilization", forming its "living bulwark" and shedding their blood "for the holy faith", neighbouring nations, Austria, and Europe in general.¹⁵ In line with this image, he demands that all those who owe their salvation to the Croats should support their cause in return or, more specifically, directly assist in restoring the territorial integrity of the Triune Kingdom, which had been disrupted by Ottoman expansion.

Thus, the ideologeme about the bulwark of Christianity figures in the original ideology of Yugoslavism not only as a source of national pride and moral strength but also as a justification and consolation in confrontation with the factual cultural and economic backwardness of one's own national collective, as well as an argument used in the interest of promoting current national-political goals. One of the highest positions among these objectives occupied the imminent solution to the Eastern Question. It should be noted that Strossmayer and Rački were convinced that it was the Croats with the other South Slavs who were going to play the decisive role in settling this pressing issue. The bishop even states that the Eastern Question could be solved in the interest of "civilization, Christianity, and freedom" only by means of a "strengthened, fresh, and self-aware South Slavdom".¹⁶ It was supposedly a mission to which "our nation" is predestined by God "in order to properly compensate its sacrifices brought to the altar of Christianity and European

¹³ Cf. Strossmayer, J. J., *Izabrani politički i književni spisi*, Zagreb 2005, 89–91, 99–100, 143, 172–173, 188, 229–230.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, 89.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, 89–90.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, 132.

civilization”.¹⁷ In this context, Strossmayer repeatedly expresses his opinion that Europe, Austria, and Hungary should lend their support to South Slavs in their current efforts, because the interests of all the mentioned parties are identical.¹⁸ At the same time, he expresses his solidarity with Christians living on the other side of Sava and Una Rivers, who he considers to be an integral part of “our nation”.¹⁹ The bishop states that for a long time, these people have been pinning their hopes on their fellow nationals in Austria, who have not been able to do much for them so far.²⁰ However, he intended to change this. This is the reason why in his speech in front of the Croatian diet in 1861, he pleaded for the foundation of a university in Zagreb, which could host South Slavic students coming from beyond the borders of the Monarchy. He supported his argument by stating his belief that it would not be long before the South Slavs would be summoned to intervene in the Eastern Question and to solve it “in the interest of Christian-European civilization”.²¹ He adds that in order to achieve victory, the South Slavs cannot depend only on physical condition and “the heroic heart” anymore, as these days “wars are waged and resolved by spiritual rather than physical weapons”.²² Therefore, Strossmayer strives to convince the delegates of the Croatian diet that it is necessary to establish a university in Zagreb by stressing the Croats’ obligation to the whole of Slavdom in the South including “the enslaved brethren” in Turkey,²³ some of whom were purportedly starting to feel the need for higher education themselves.

It was only a step from Strossmayer’s call for turning Zagreb into the educational and scientific centre of the entire Slavic South to the aforementioned conceptualization of the frontier position of Croatia as a bridge between the West and the East. According to the Croatian political scientist and sociolinguist Ivo Žanić, the ancient concept of bulwark gradually transformed into an opposite metaphor of “an inclusive bridge, which has been competing and intertwining with the exclusive bulwark ever since”.²⁴ As I have already noted, it was exactly the creators of the ideology of Yugoslavism who introduced this novelty to the Croatian ideological imagination and political thinking. If one gets back to their views on the role of the Croats and the

¹⁷ Cf. *ibidem*, 90, 101, 143–144, 172–173.

¹⁸ Cf. *ibidem*, 101, 132, 144.

¹⁹ Cf. *ibidem*, 103.

²⁰ Cf. *ibidem*.

²¹ *Ibidem*, 101.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ *Ibidem*, 103.

²⁴ Žanić, I., Simbolični identitet Hrvatske u trokutu Raskrižje – Predziđe – Most, in: *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu*. Prir. H. Kamberović, Sarajevo 2003, 173.

South Slavs in the history and the process of solving the Eastern Question, then it is possible to say that, while before 1878 the concept of bulwark prevailed in their approach to this issue, after the Congress of Berlin and the subsequent Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the opposite concept of bridge became the more frequently used metaphor in their writings.

In line with this observation, already in the autumn of 1878, Rački defines the Academy (JAZU) as a significant cultural mediator between the West and the East, when he claims that this institution should “forge the way for spiritual collectiveness among the Slavic tribes of the Balkan Peninsula and to help them with acquiring and digesting the healthy fruits of Western knowledge”, as well as make it possible for the West “to get acquainted with the language, past, way of thinking, and feelings of these nations”.²⁵ Most likely under the impression of the then colossal defeat of the Ottoman Empire on the European continent, Rački prophesies that the JAZU would reach even better results in the future because he expects the rejuvenation of national consciousness in “the regenerated and transformed East”, thanks to which the Academy will find “a more firm and wider base” there.²⁶

A few years later, Strossmayer publicly presented his aforementioned vision of Croatia as the Tuscany and Zagreb as the Florence of the Balkans.²⁷ It is evident that he had also embraced the concept of bridge in place of the still dominant bulwark metaphor, which is understandable considering the current development of the Eastern Question. While most of the South Slavic territories in the Balkans dwelled under Ottoman supremacy, the creators of the ideology of Yugoslavism exploited the ideologeme about *antemurale christianitatis* in order to support a moral claim of the Croats and the South Slavs on freedom, national territory, and political sovereignty. However, 1878 represents a radical turning point in this respect because most of the Slavic Balkans got rid of Turkish dominance at the time. In light of this, it is hardly surprising that since that time, Strossmayer and Rački began operating with the concept of bridge in their speeches, writings, and correspondence. As I. Žanić observes, the concept of bridge does not abolish the understanding of Croatia as a frontier, but since this moment it was “bidirectional, permeable, belonging to two worlds, and [...] naturally permeated by both of them”.²⁸ On the other hand, it should be stressed that both ideologues consistently continued to advocate the right

²⁵ Rački, F., Besjeda predsjednika dra. Fr. Račkoga, *Rad JAZU* (Zagreb) 45 (1878), 227.

²⁶ Ibidem.

²⁷ Cf. Strossmayer, J. J., *Izabrani politički i književni spisi*, 292–293.

²⁸ *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu*, 174.

of Zagreb to participate in deciding the further course of the Eastern Question or, more precisely, its South Slavic and Bosnian segments.

Their approach to these issues was heavily marked by their extremely negative stance towards Islam. Both Strossmayer and Rački virtually reduced the essence of the Eastern Question, and also of the more general relationship between the East and West, to the clash between Christianity and Islam, which they interpreted as a duel between good and evil, or civilization and barbarism. This simplifying perspective stemmed undoubtedly not only from the fact that they were both Christian clerics, but also from the pan-European and, in particular, domestic cultural tradition of the stereotyped views of Islam, Muslims, and the Ottoman Empire.²⁹ In any case, the regular epithets tied to these interrelated terms in Rački's and Strossmayer's writings are: fanatical, belligerent, barbarian, despotic and the like. They both adhered to the opinion that Christianity and Islam represent two incompatible principles and that states that do not stand on Christian foundations are not viable in the long term. Therefore, they repeatedly emphasized that it was not possible to reform the Ottoman Empire and prophesied its unavoidable downfall because it was not built on the alleged state-building values and principles contained in the Gospel, to which Christian countries owe their stability as well as their achievements in the sciences, arts, economy, and knowledge.³⁰

Needless to say, hostility towards Islam prompted Strossmayer's and Rački's rather reserved attitude towards Slavs of the Muslim faith. Even though they did not exclude them from the South Slavic national collective, in their eyes, the religious affiliation and related cultural characteristics of Bosnian and other Slavic Muslims represented a certain "stain" and an unequivocal handicap in relation to the Christian members of the imagined national community.³¹ In fact, it could be concluded that their perception of Slavic Muslims was truly in the spirit of a popular South Slavic proverb – "*Poturica gori od Turčina*" (The Turkified is worse than the Turk) – which Rački directly mentions on one occasion with regard to "the renegades from the life, endeavours, work, and hope of the South Slavic nation".³² In any case, it is not possible to find even the slightest hint of admiration for the Muslim milieu, habits, or rituals in the works of either ideologue despite the fact that such fondness

²⁹ Cf. Jezernik, B. (ed.), *Imagining 'the Turk'*, Cambridge 2010; Wheatcroft, A., *Infidels: A History of the Conflict between Christendom and Islam*, London 2003.

³⁰ Cf. e.g., Rački, F., Misli. *Pozor* (Zagreb), br. 199, 30. 8. 1862 or Strossmayer, J. J. – Rački, F., *Politički spisi: rasprave, članci, govori, memorandumi*, Zagreb 1971, 144.

³¹ Cf. Stehlík, P., *Bosna*, 119–125.

³² Strossmayer, J. J. – Rački, F., *Politički spisi*, 353.

constituted an integral part of the writings of other proponents of South Slavic mutuality: Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski, Luka Botić, and the like. Whereas, for instance Kukuljević in his Bosnian travelogue admires the beauty and impressiveness of the Muslim call for prayer (*adhan*),³³ Rački labels it as “the muffled voice of the fanatical *muezzin*”.³⁴

This means that the main ideologues of the original Yugoslavism were immune to exoticism, elements of which could be traced in the works of some of their predecessors, which reached its peak in the idealization of Bosnian Muslims and the situation in Turkey by their political opponent and the creator of the rival (exclusively Croatian) national-integrational ideology, Ante Starčević. In spite of this lack of exoticism in their writings I consider the attitude of Rački and Strossmayer towards the world of Islam to be Orientalist in the sense of the groundbreaking conception of Orientalism by the literary theorist and comparatist Edward W. Said.³⁵ I find it evident that these ideologues are actually acting in line with the West European tradition analysed by Said, consisting of the portrayal and construction of the Orient as the mirror, and essentially inferior opposite, of an allegedly more developed, civilized, and cultured Europe, as well as the West in general. Strossmayer and Rački attribute the Islamic East with characteristics such as cruelty, lawlessness, irrationality, sinful sensuality, and *a priori* postulated constancy, on the basis of which they demagogically deny any potential for regeneration, democratization, and progress to Muslim states and societies. They are both convinced that these entities are not capable of independently developing towards a greater plane of enlightenment, freedom, or justice because these values are only immanent in states and societies based on Christian foundations.³⁶

As Rački states in his speech delivered to the members of the JAZU in November 1878,³⁷ i.e., immediately after the end of the Great Eastern Crisis and the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia: “While the East has remained practically stagnant under the dominance of Islam, living solely off the legacy of earlier achievements and the juice of folk traditions, the West has ceaselessly endeavoured to collect great reserves of diverse knowledge and skills, while it has organized its public affairs in line with the new principles.” Therefore, the author endows the

³³ Cf. Kukuljević Sakcinski, I., Putovanje po Bosni, in: *Izabrana djela*. Prir. I. Kukuljević Sakcinski, Zagreb 1997, 337.

³⁴ Rački, F., Misli. *Pozor* (Zagreb), br. 198, 29. 8. 1862.

³⁵ Cf. Said, E. W., *Orientalism*, New York 1978.

³⁶ Cf. Stehlík, P., *Bosna*, 119–125.

³⁷ Cf. Rački, F., Besjeda predsjednika dra. Fr. Račkoga, *Rad JAZU* (Zagreb) 45 (1878), 224–227. All citations in the following paragraph are quoted from this source.

more advanced West with the role of “the resurrector of the East” and highlights the case of the Balkan nations, which serves him as proof of the West’s successful mission. He considers that these nations started readily and beneficially to draw from the well of Western knowledge once they “managed to free themselves from the supremacy of Islam”. However, Rački warns the West that the “nations of the East” are only going to accept its “spiritual treasure” if it is offered without selfish intentions that would lead to the conquest of the East “under the cloak of culture”. In short, the West must not repeat the mistake it had made at the time of the Crusades, when it “embarked on conquering the East and inflicting its own social and political system on it”. Rački expresses hope that the West would learn a lesson from this historical experience and that “our enlightened century will slowly eliminate any seed of a new conflict between the progressive West and the newly awakened East, so that culture will cease to be a stumbling block, but rather a bond between the nations”. In this way, cultural relations between the West and the East would gradually become more balanced, and the equilibrium between Western and Eastern knowledge that allegedly existed in the Middle Ages would be restored. Nevertheless, such an outcome would require the victory of Christianity over Islam, which Rački actually predicts. He does so under the impression of current events, which he finds to be a source of joy for “any sincere humanitarian” for they are proof of “the indestructible power of the ideas to which the West owes its greatness and glory, and the East its salvation and resurrection”.

As one has seen, in accordance with his Christian and Eurocentric worldview, Rački authoritatively defends the civilizational superiority of the “advanced” West over the “backward” East, while denying the East any capability for progress unless it is freed from the supremacy of Islam and accepts the achievements of Western culture. On the other hand, he stands up against the political hegemony of the West over the East. This stance defies Said’s definition of Orientalism as means and a tool of colonialism and imperial expansion. I consider it to be one of the specific displays of the Croatian Orientalist discourse, whose distinction stems primarily from the fact that Croats, for obvious reasons, lacked imperial ambitions cultivated in the countries that are focused on in Said’s analysis (the UK, France, the US). However, if one takes into account the aforementioned belief of Rački and Strossmayer in the exceptional role of the Croats and Zagreb in spreading Western culture and knowledge to the Balkans, then it becomes apparent that even in the Croatian context, it is possible to detect a conviction about one’s own nation being predestined for a civilizing mission for the benefit of a less advanced part of mankind, which in this case embody the South Slavs living beyond the borders of the Habsburg Monarchy.

Even though the creators of the ideology of Yugoslavism consider these people to be an integral part or close relatives of their own nation – so there is no direct parallel to the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized – Strossmayer and Rački implicitly appropriate the right to speak in the name of these “brethren” of theirs and to determine what is beneficial for them – be it resistance to Ottoman power, acceptance of the Christian faith and values, acquiring of Western culture, or an ecclesiastical union.³⁸ In fact, they usually perceived the South Slavs living under Ottoman supremacy either as poor victims of Turkish despotism who yearningly fix their eyes on their fellow nationals in Austria (Christians), or as corrupt and untrustworthy renegades (Muslims).³⁹ In my opinion, such paternalistic and stereotypical attitudes can be marked as essentially Orientalist although they differ in certain aspects from the image of the Orient construed in the West European and North American context, which was analysed by Said. The Croatian Orientalist discourse of the 19th century basically stems from an entirely different historical tradition and experience, which, together with period factors such as the small size, limited significance, and politically dependent status of the Croatian nation, shaped its numerous specifics.

Croatia belongs to a group of European countries, which – due to their frontier position – have been in direct centuries-long contact with the Muslim world. However, in contrast to the other South Slavic states, Croatia has never been fully integrated into it. This is a historical experience that Croats share to a certain extent with a number of other European nations such as the Slovenes, Austrians, Russians, and Spaniards. Austrian anthropologist Andre Gingrich has shown that this historical experience has brought forth “a relatively coherent set of metaphors and myths”⁴⁰ which constituted an integral part of both the folk and elite cultures of these ethnic collectives even before their transformation into modern nations.⁴¹ In this context, Gingrich speaks of a *frontier Orientalism* that differs from the classical colonial Orientalism defined by Said, e.g., with its mentioned simultaneous embeddedness in both elite and folk cultures; by portraying the Oriental not only as the subdued and incompetent other, but also as a lethal threat (the Turk); or by the fact that it ascribes a timeless mission to the given country and its population which

³⁸ Cf. Stehlík, P., *Bosna v ideologii jihoslovanství Franja Račkého a Josipa Juraje Strossmayera. Slovanské historické studie* 37 (2012), 411–464.

³⁹ Cf. *ibidem*.

⁴⁰ Cf. Gingrich, A., *Frontier Myths of Orientalism: The Muslim World in Public and Popular Cultures of Central Europe*, in: *Mediterranean Ethnological Summer School, Vol. II*. Eds. B. Baskar – B. Brumen, Ljubljana 1998, 119.

⁴¹ Cf. *Ibidem*, 99–127.

consists in defending Christianity and civilization against their enemies. The mentioned metaphors and myths, including the central bulwark ideologeme, are deeply rooted in the collective consciousness, and as such, they practically offered themselves up to be utilized by the national ideologues of the 19th century. As evidenced in the dual conceptualization of the frontier position of Croatia in the ideology of Yugoslavism, the Croatian national movement was no exception in this regard.

ABSTRACT

Both Bulwark and Bridge: The Symbolic Conceptualization of the Frontier Position of Croatia in the Original Yugoslavism

Petr Stehlík

The paper examines the symbolic conceptualization of the frontier position of Croatia in the original form of the Croatian national-integrational ideology of Yugoslavism formulated at the beginning of the 1860s by Josip Juraj Strossmayer and Franjo Rački. For centuries, Croatia was a territory on the border of two worlds: Western Christian Europe and the Islamic Orient, i.e., the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire. This position attained its symbolic dimension in the form of an ideologeme about Croatia as the bulwark of Christianity, which played an important role in the self-perception of the Croats. However, in the second half of the 19th century this ideologeme transformed into a conception of Croatia as a bridge between West and East. This change was initiated by the aforementioned ideologues of the original Yugoslavism in their articles and public speeches after the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Hercegovina (1878). On the basis of an analysis of their texts, the author strives to follow, describe, and explain the transformation of the symbolic conceptualization of the frontier position of Croatia. He pays particular attention to two aspects of the researched subject: 1) the conceptualization of the role of the Croats in the history and the process of solving the Eastern Question as well as in mediating and spreading Western culture to the Balkans, and 2) the specifics of the Croatian Orientalist discourse which is implicitly present in such interpretations of the historical and cultural mission of one's own nation.

Key words: Croatia, Eastern Question, *antemurale christianitatis*, Yugoslavism, Strossmayer, Rački, frontier Orientalism

АННОТАЦИЯ

Мост и бастион: символическая концептуализация пограничного положения Хорватии в раннем югославизме

Петр Стеглик

В статье исследуется символическая концептуализация пограничного положения Хорватии в ранней фазе хорватской национально-интеграционной идеологии югославизма, сформулированной в начале 60-х гг. XIX в. Йосипом Юраем Штроссмайером и Франьо Рачки. Веками Хорватия находилась на границе двух миров: Западной христианской Европы и исламского Востока, т.е. между монархией Габсбургов и Османской империей. Символическая реализация данного расположения оформилась в идеологеме Хорватии как бастиона христианства. Данная идеологема, сыгравшая существенную роль в формировании самосознания хорватов, во второй половине XIX в. трансформировалась в концепцию, согласно которой Хорватия служит мостом между Востоком и Западом. Импульс данным изменениям был дан вышеуказанными идеологами раннего югославизма в статьях и публичных выступлениях после оккупации Боснии и Герцеговины Австро-Венгрией (1878). На основании анализа данных текстов автор пытается проследить, описать и объяснить трансформации, произошедшие в символической концептуализации пограничного положения Хорватии. Особое внимание автор обращает на два аспекта рассматриваемой темы: 1) концептуализация роли хорватов в истории и процессе решения Восточного вопроса, а также в распространении и утверждении западной культуры на Балканах; 2) специфика хорватского ориентального дискурса, который имплицитно проявляется в интерпретациях исторической и культурной миссии народа.

Ключевые слова: Хорватия, Восточный вопрос, *antemurale christianitatis*, югославизм, Штроссмайер, Рачки, пограничный Ориентализм

Jan Květina

THE POLISH QUESTION AS A POLITICAL ISSUE
WITHIN PHILOSOPHICAL DISPUTE:
Leszczyński versus Rousseau

The term “Polish question” has been traditionally widely used for the explanation of great and serious impacts stemming from ongoing weakening of the inner political structure which later resulted in the ultimate failure of the Polish state. Actually, one should distinguish at least two dimensions of this question, which also represent two different approaches clarifying the so called Partitions of Poland as a result. One can be either concerned about the internal maladies of Polish political system or one can emphasize a complex international approach explaining the failure of the Polish state as a consequence of great powers’ diplomacy and fundamental changes of the European international system during the 18th century, as well. This explanatory dilemma has been present in the Polish environment since the act of Partitions because there have always been at least two sides: one seeing the loss of independency as a result of Polish mistakes and the other blaming the neighbouring states for greed and unfair behaviour.

It is necessary to mention this explanatory model of early modern Polish politics because it reveals important differences between the inner lasting conflicts raging around Polish self-perception on the one hand, and the homogenous stereotype that was ascribed to the Polish identity in Western European countries on the other hand. Contrary to the permanent and antagonistic interpretation of their political ideas by Poles themselves, there had been almost no theoretical interest in Polish political matters in Western political philosophy until the Partitions. Needless to say, this trend often persists even among contemporary thinkers because the Polish ancient system is frequently omitted from the types of early-modern constitutions. There are, for example, only rare occasions when the Polish ancient system is

mentioned as a fully-fledged exemplar of European Republican heritage next to the Netherlands, Italian city-states and English revolutionary movements.¹

However, turning one's attention back to the age before the end of the Polish state, one should take into account that there have always been some exceptions among Western observers who were able to understand Polish development as a part of the European context and sometimes even assess it as a possible model for the rest of Europe. The most famous foreign observer who wrote about Polish constitution with passion and admiration was probably Jean Jacques Rousseau. His *Considerations on the Government in Poland* still attracts attention because it is not clear why he wrote about something he did not really understand well and which can be read as a refutation of all his previous work. However, one can set aside the quandary whether he simply changed his mind or tried to express the same ideas within a different context because it has been examined thoroughly many times with various results.² Moreover, there is one not so frequent question which needs to be clarified to follow the aforementioned issue of Western European attitudes towards Polish matters. If the Polish political problems were usually completely overlooked there, it is necessary to ask why it was just Rousseau to depart from this trend and decided to become involved in them. The most direct explanation of Rousseau's motivation claims that his work was in fact ordered from Poland and that he had not been interested in this issue before that.³ Although it explains only the question of initiation and not motivation, it is traditionally supposed that Rousseau heard thoroughly about Polish matters for the first time from the members of the Bar Confederation who tried to persuade him about the necessity of reforms. This conviction can be supported by Rousseau himself who was very grateful to Polish Count Michał Wielhorski claiming that he knew "no one

¹ Republican grounds of Polish early-modern regime have been fully analysed in the collective monograph edited by Quentin Skinner and Martin van Gelderen. On the contrary, another classic of the research of republicanism, J. G. A. Pocock mentions Polish unique principles just occasionally, see van Gelderen, M. – Skinner, Q. (eds.), *Republicanism. A Shared European Heritage*. Vol. I, II., Cambridge 2002; Pocock, J. G. A., *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, Princeton 1975.

² The main possible interpretations are explained by Willmoore Kendall in his introduction to the English translation of Rousseau's *Considerations*, Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, Indianapolis 1985, ix–xxxix.

³ The list of recommendations was ordered by the Polish Count Michał Wielhorski who acted as an envoy of the Bar Confederation in Paris. This indicates that the Polish nobles, who revolted against royal reform group and cooperation with Russians, tried to find some philosophical and theoretical support for saving their independent state.

better qualified to elaborate such a plan for reforming the government of Poland than Count Wielhorski”⁴ and later admitted that he “devoted six months ... first to studying the constitution of an unhappy nation”⁵

However, the acknowledged assumption that Rousseau’s answer to Wielhorski’s request was his first touch with Polish environment ignores Rousseau’s earlier confrontation with Count Stanisław Leszczyński⁶ who was still a nominal Polish-Lithuanian king at the time of their polemic in 1751. This contest that started as a Leszczyński’s response to Rousseau’s *Discourse on the Arts and Science* and later went on with Rousseau’s final answer, was focused on the various questions of human nature and dealt mainly with the purpose of knowledge. The prevailing philosophical spirit of the whole debate is probably the main reason why the Leszczyński’s comments have always been published as a part of other contributions to Rousseau’s *Discourse* and not as an example of unique contact of Jean-Jacques with the Polish way of Enlightenment thought.⁷ This means that there have been two distinct approaches to Rousseau’s “Polish matters” so far: either one was concerned with Rousseau’s *Considerations* as a part of his doctrine or one tried to explain the philosophical nuances between Leszczyński’s criticism and response of Rousseau.

⁴ Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, 1.

⁵ Rousseau, J. J., *Oeuvres complètes de J. J. Rousseau*, vol. IV, Paris 1835, 82; see Kendall’s introduction to the English translation of Rousseau’s *Considerations*: Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, ix.

⁶ Stanisław Leszczyński was a member of one of the wealthiest and most powerful Lithuanian noble families who was enthroned as the Polish king by Charles XII of Sweden in 1705, although he was nominally elected. However, his political career was full of turning points as he lost his throne due to the intervention of Russians who supported Augustus II the Strong from Saxony. Leszczyński managed to gain his throne back in 1733, but finally abdicated in 1736 and was compensated by receiving a title of Duke of Lorraine. There he wrote his most famous political work *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający* about the best way how to reform the Polish system. He was also successful in family diplomacy as his daughter married Louis XV of France and thus became a queen of France, See for example Cieślak, E., *Stanisław Leszczyński*, Wrocław 1994; Topolski, J., Stanisław Leszczyński – ideologia polityczna i działanie, in: *Stanisław Leszczyński, król, polityk, pisarz, mecenas. Materiały z europejskiej konferencji naukowej zorganizowanej w 300-lecie urodzin króla Stanisława Leszczyńskiego*. Ed. A. Konio, Leszno 2001.

⁷ This is the case of publications about Rousseau, when his reaction to Leszczyński was published in a collection of his other writings, which means that Leszczyński is considered just as one of many critics in this context. On the contrary, in the Polish environment, Leszczyński is read as one of the most influential and important adherents of the Enlightenment – his response to Rousseau was for example subsumed as a part of the anthology about the Polish thought in the 18th century. See Gourevitch, V. (ed.), *Rousseau. “The Discourses” and Other Early Political Writings. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought*, Cambridge 1997; Skrzypek, M., *Filozofia i myśl społeczna w latach 1700–1830*, Tom I. Okres saski 1700–1763, Warszawa 2000.

Therefore, it is apparent that some overarching view is still missing and to find it requires taking Leszczyński's later writing into account. If one looks at works of Rousseau and Leszczyński thoroughly, one has to notice that there were more similar issues than just a question of human knowledge that both thinkers tried to solve, although this was the only issue they confronted directly against each other. One should not forget that Leszczyński's probably most famous piece *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający* was written as a sum of proposals concerning necessary reforms that should save the Polish state before its breakdown. That is why, one can see the contest between Leszczyński and Rousseau as a more complex issue which could be divided into two debates. The first debate, which dealt with the question of arts and science, really took place between both philosophers, whilst the second was just nominal, because each of them wrote his work on his own, irrespective of the opponent's attitudes. Nevertheless, they both wrote about the same problem with the same mission as they tried to formulate the ideal principles of political order and used the example of Poland to demonstrate them. Thus, it is fully legitimate and desirable to analyse their concepts by double comparative approach which will reveal if it is possible to identify some antagonistic aspects in their political thought resulting from their different understanding of human nature and knowledge.⁸ Therefore, this comparison should also clarify to what extent there is a real dichotomy between the both political theories, which can be classified as a tension within the thought of the Enlightenment.

First Debate on Human Nature: Leszczyński as an Opponent of Discourses

If one wants to respect the chronological order of both questions, it is necessary to start with Leszczyński's objections to *Discourses* that provoked Rousseau to response. Their mutual exchange of views on human knowledge was taken quite quickly at

⁸ That is why, one should not be criticized for creating mythologies according to famous thesis of Quentin Skinner as this is not the case of artificial association of unrelated theories. Both thinkers knew each other and even exchanged their views on the same question, which means that it is fully proper to compare their concepts regarding the similar problems, although they did not understand it as a real continuation of their previous clash. On the theory of mythologies see Skinner, Q., Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas. *History and Theory* 8 (1969), No. 1, 3–53.

that time⁹ and can be considered as their only explicit confrontation which is very decisive for the comparison of their later views. The very first remarkable thing which one should take as an important distinction between both sides is a different style of writing that can be recognized especially from phrases used by both authors to address the opponent. Although Leszczyński respects the neutral marking of Rousseau for many times when he writes about him as a “citizen of Geneva”, there are some places in his work where he denies not only theses and arguments of Rousseau, but also his personal qualities. Thus, for example, he wonders how the Dijon academy could have rewarded him for his piece of work;¹⁰ writes about him as about “a nameless laureate”¹¹ and later even offends him by claiming that he “speaks as a speechifier and not a philosopher”,¹² because it is obvious that “he does not believe in everything that he tried to persuade us about”.¹³ Even when Leszczyński tries to persuade Rousseau that he wants to help him by reconciliation of sciences and virtue,¹⁴ there is no doubt that his rhetoric is mainly aggressive, ironic and its main aim is to deny the Rousseau’s conclusions at all.

Contrary to Leszczyński’s original intention, which can be read as a creation of strong dichotomy without any space for compromise, Rousseau answers to his comments in much more gentle way. The first difference consists in absence of any pejorative expressions because Rousseau addresses his answer to the Anonymous Writer or simply Writer and does not use any phrase resembling the satirical tone of his opponent. Although Rousseau’s way of addressing could have been influenced

⁹ The Answer of Leszczyński was published in a journal *Mercure de France* in September 1751 as “Réponse au discours de Mr Rousseau, qui a remporté le prix de Académie de Dijon, sur cette question: si le rétablissement des sciences et des arts a contribué à épurer les mœurs”, while *Discourses* by Rousseau won the prize in July 1750 and were published in the autumn that year. The final reaction of Rousseau was then issued not later than in November 1751. See Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa, I., *Leszczyński contra Rousseau. Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 23/1, 1978, 55, 61.

¹⁰ “Rozprawa obywatela genewskiego budzi niejaki zdziwienie, jak niemniej może je wzbudzić fakt, że sławna Akademia ją nagrodziła”. Leszczyński, S., Odpowiedź króla polskiego na rozprawę Jana Jakuba Rousseau nagrodzoną przez Akademię w Dijon, in: Skrzypek, M., *Filozofia i myśl społeczna w latach 1700–1830*, 635.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, 635.

¹² *Ibidem*, 642.

¹³ *Ibidem*, 636.

¹⁴ “Autor znajdzie we mnie przeciwnika bezstronnego. Atakując go, chciałbym mu się nawet przysłużyć; wszystkie moje wysiłki w tej walce do tego jedynie zmierzają, by umysł jego pogodzić z sercem i móc się uradować widokiem zgodnie w jego duszy złączonych nauk, które ja tak podziwiam, i cnót, które on umiłował.” *Ibidem*, 636.

by the fact that Leszczyński had published his comment anonymously, one should not ignore the fact that Rousseau maintained his manners even after he had recognized his philosophical adversary and acknowledged him as the Polish king and duke of Lorraine.¹⁵ His levity is admirable even more if one takes into account his suspicion that one part of Leszczyński's work had not been written by him, but by a Jesuit priest Joseph de Menoux.¹⁶ Even in this case Rousseau was able to distinguish between the gentle reaction to the Polish king and severe comments towards the priest: "I knew a Jesuit, Father de Menou, had been concerned in it... and falling without mercy upon all the jesuitical phrases, I remarked, as I went along, an anachronism which I thought could come from nobody but the priest."¹⁷

However, much more important than the style of addressing is surely Rousseau's conciliatory approach to most of objections that were raised by his critic. If Leszczyński tries to refute all Rousseau's fundamental principles because of his misled considerations, Rousseau is very convincing in accepting his opponent as someone who has been qualified enough to advise him. He supports this view by many statements such as "I owe thanks rather than a reply to the Anonymous Writer who has just honoured my Discourse with an Answer", which he later highlights as the discourse that "is full of very true and very well-proved things".¹⁸ Rousseau appreciated the work of Leszczyński even after many years in his *Confessions*, where he emphasized his respect to the author again,¹⁹ however, none of these flattering comments should mislead us since if one focuses not on formal but on substantial things, one must notice that in the end, Rousseau denied the

¹⁵ The original title of Rousseau's response was called „Réponse de Jean-Jacques Rousseau au roi de Pologne, duc de Lorraine, sur la Réfutation faite par ce prince de son Discours“. The fact that Rousseau had initially wanted to respect anonymity of his opponent and decided to state his identity not before his own confession is supported by the statement of I. Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa: "Wobec tego, że rzecz króla polskiego była najpierw bezimienna i że autor jeszcze jej wówczas nie był uznał za swoją, byłem obowiązany pozostawić jego incognito; lecz monarcha ten, później się do niej publicznie przyznał, zwolnił mnie od dalszego przemilczania wyświadczonego mi zaszczytu". Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa, I., *Leszczyński contra Rousseau*, 61.

¹⁶ For the details of this suspicion see *ibidem*, 60–62.

¹⁷ Rousseau, J. J., *Confessions*, London 1903, 232.

¹⁸ Rousseau, J. J., Observations by Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Geneva. On the Answer made to his Discourse, in: Ed. V. Gourevitch, *Rousseau. "The Discourses" and Other Early Political Writings*, 32.

¹⁹ "The second was King Stanislaus, himself, who did not disdain to enter the lists with me. The honour he did me, obliged me to change my manner in combating his opinions". Rousseau, J. J., *Confessions*, 232.

main sense of Leszczyński's work, so as Leszczyński had done before with *Discourses*.²⁰ Thus, one can conclude that Rousseau accepted the challenge and their mutual antagonism of enlightened thought had been established.

This dichotomy had been certainly established by Leszczyński because he was the one who selected arbitrary parts from *Discourses* and "demarcated the area" which Rousseau could later use as the arguments for his apology. That is why, it is not so crucial what Rousseau had truly in mind when he was writing his *Discourses*; and it is more important to ask in which way his ideas were interpreted by Leszczyński and then clarified by Rousseau again. Their debate can be therefore divided into a few parts representing distinct issues that Leszczyński had highlighted as the main mistakes and that Rousseau later tried to defend.

The most serious argument raised by Leszczyński against *Discourses* is probably his rejection of interdependency between the rise of sciences and fine arts on the one hand, and the existence of abundance and idleness in human society on the other hand. According to him, Rousseau is wrong if he claims that one should understand both these activities as a consequence of leisure and comfort since this would mean that only those who have nothing to do can be occupied either with science or arts, which is obviously nonsense. Leszczyński denies this misled causality between wealthy and knowledge using an example of philosophers who usually were not rich, but very poor, which means that they have always been able to deal with science not because of luxury but with the lack of it: "For every Plato who is wealthy, for every Aristippus who is respected at Court, how many Philosophers are reduced to beggary, wrapped in their own virtue and ignored in their solitude?"²¹ Moreover, similar historical examples are used by Leszczyński to deepen his criticism as he rejects not only the aforementioned causality, but mainly Rousseau's conclusion that sciences are dangerous as they arise from laziness and further support it, which leads people to the decay of morality and social effeminacy.²² Also in this case he contradicts Rousseau's judgment about artists and scientists who have been labelled as the main culprits of moral decay as he reminds us that in all ancient states such as Egypt, Greece, Rome or China which were highlighted by Rousseau

²⁰ "I made use of a graver style, but not less nervous; and without failing in respect to the author, I completely refuted his work." Rousseau, J. J., *Confessions*, 232. This opinion about Leszczyński's conclusions held Rousseau even after many years, although at the same time, he admitted in his *Confessions* that the composition of his *Discourses* "full of force and fire, absolutely wants logic and order; of all the works I ever wrote, this is the weakest in reasoning, and the most devoid of number and harmony". Rousseau, J. J., *Confessions*, 224.

²¹ Leszczyński, S., *Odpowiedź króla polskiego*, 641.

²² Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa, I., *Leszczyński contra Rousseau*, 59.

himself, philosophers and legislators did not spoil the manners, but maintained and in some cases even established them.²³

All these arguments are directed to prove the fundamental true; that people are reasonable creatures who can be distinguished from other animals just by their reason. This enables them to recognize what is right or wrong, to face perceptual tricks of their senses, to use fruits of nature and thus finally justifies one's use of science as a suitable tool to understand the world. Although Leszczyński admits that science can spoil individuals in some cases, it is negligible as compared to its advantages and profit. Even if Rousseau was right and scientific progress would cause a moral decay, it would be easy to advocate it by quantifying all the benefits which has generated so far, because the more a society supports science, the better life can be led there.²⁴

Now it is a good time to let Rousseau speak for the first time, as it is intriguing to analyse how he can deny all the mentioned objections without losing his levity, sense for compromise and respect to his opponent. Primarily, he strictly denies Leszczyński's statement that he promoted a causal connection between science and abundance because the only thing he wanted to prove regarding artificiality and depravity of those societies which are based on a scientific obsession as a consequence of inequality: "Nor had I said that luxury was born of the Sciences, I had said, rather, that both were born together and that one hardly ever goes without the other... the first source of evil is inequality, from inequality arose riches ... from riches are born luxury and idleness, from luxury arose the fine Arts and from idleness the Sciences."²⁵ Therefore, his argumentation is not about whether one or another scientist is rich or poor, but it reveals that for maintaining a class of scientists, there are some inequalities necessary, which means that those who deal with knowledge become dependent on the rich: "This is precisely why the evil is even greater – the rich and the learned only corrupt one another."²⁶

This quotation is really important, because Rousseau repeats there one of his few political arguments from *Discourses* and tries to advocate his relationship to science by highlighting its connection with a principle of unjust society. When he claims in *Discourses* that "the arts, literature and the sciences, less despotic though

²³ Leszczyński, S., *Odpowiedź króla polskiego*, 640.

²⁴ "Któż jednak zdoła wyliczyć nieprzebrane ich dobrodziejstwa i to wszystko, co za ich sprawą przyjemnia i upiększa nam życie? Im bardziej się je w jakimś państwie uprawia, w tym świetniejszym jest ono rozkwicie; bez nich wszystko by marniało i więdło." Ibidem, 637.

²⁵ Rousseau, J. J., *Observations by Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Geneva*, 45.

²⁶ Ibidem, 45.

perhaps more powerful, fling garlands of flowers over the chains which weigh them down” and that “necessity raised up thrones; the arts and sciences have made them strong”,²⁷ Leszczyński is completely deaf to his complaints. One can say that political context as one of the most fundamental levels of Rousseau’s argumentation in *Discourses* was fully ignored by the Polish critique, and Rousseau tried to emphasize it again, because he wanted to explain that his thoughts had been misrepresented. Rousseau’s statement that scientists and artists are merely servants of ruling class and they are not rich, since if they were, they would not serve their masters so willingly, is very challenging and controversial. The question is why Leszczyński felt no need to comment on it. Naturally, he should have reacted *a fortiori* because he could have understood it as a frontal attack against his social status – as the Polish king and Duke of Lorraine he was the pure agent of those in power. However, he did not respond to it at all, which could be read as a strong effort to maintain the whole debate in a strict philosophical direction without any political connotations even against original intentions of Rousseau. That is why, it is all the more important not to study just their exchange of views, but to compare their political concepts regarding Polish system as well, which could clarify to what extent they were opponents or allies.

Whether one accepts this hypothesis about Leszczyński’s hard-headed ignorance or not, it is, nevertheless, obvious that it was almost impossible to oppose Rousseau without taking political opinions into account. This is apparent, for example, when Rousseau responds to Leszczyński’s argument that society is able to benefit from science under all circumstances. At one point they seem to be in agreement on this issue: “In this sense I praised knowledge, and this is the sense in which my Adversary praises it ... we are thus perfectly agreed on this point,”²⁸ since Rousseau emphasizes that he shares the same view regarding the good essence of science: “Science in itself is very good, that is obvious, and one would have to have taken leave of good sense to maintain the contrary.”²⁹ But as his argumentation goes on, it becomes clear that their attitudes differ greatly, especially in political matters, because Rousseau is convinced that society is not so well organized to be able to prevent itself from harm: “Science, however beautiful, however sublime, is not made for man, that his mind is too limited to make much progress in it, and his heart too full of passions to

²⁷ Rousseau, J. J., Discourse, in: Ed. V. Gourevitch, *Rousseau. “The Discourses” and Other Early Political Writings*, 6.

²⁸ Rousseau, J. J., *Observations by Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Geneva*, 33.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, 33.

keep him from putting it to bad use.”³⁰ So if Leszczyński reproaches Rousseau for not admitting that virtue and science can exist in mutual harmony, he misses the point, because the question is not whether someone is able to be both virtuous and learned, but that too much knowledge means danger for a society as a whole. A very important difference between individual and collective understanding of human behaviour appears in here. Rousseau is actually willing to admit there have always been some great men combining science with virtue, such as Bacon, Newton or Descartes,³¹ but he does not put any emphasis on it for he sees them as exceptions which cannot influence a general moral decay: “The cultivation of the Sciences corrupts a nation’s morals, this is what I dared to maintain ... one can therefore not conclude from my principles that a man cannot be both learned and virtuous.”³²

In that spirit Rousseau also refutes a sophism used by Leszczyński to confute him from paradox: how was Jean-Jacques able to write his essay by a gentle and intelligent language and at the same time criticize education for spoiling virtues?³³ The answer is simple, even if Rousseau does not use it explicitly, if virtue and knowledge can coexist in an individual, one can suppose that Rousseau is an example of their harmony. However, this rather mordacious comment from Leszczyński reveals another important distinction which consists in assumptions concerning human equality of abilities. It might be surprising that when Rousseau criticizes Leszczyński for his conviction about the equal capacity of all humans to use their reason properly, he actually advocates a very elitist approach with regard to his other works. Thus it seems that Leszczyński is far more democratic on this issue as he believes that knowledge should be spread without restraint, whereas Rousseau reserves the right of using science and education just for the chosen ones: “I leave it not to the Public, but to the small number of true Philosophers, to decide which of these two conclusions ought to be preferred ... only in a very few men of genius does insight into their own ignorance grow as they learn ... almost as soon as small minds have learned something, they believe they know everything.”³⁴

The dispute over utility and capacities of human reason should be seen as a part of wider argument between both thinkers, which Leszczyński initiated by questioning the Rousseau’s concept of a natural state. He emphasizes that diversity between people is caused mainly by the differences in “climate, temper...political constitutions,

³⁰ Ibidem, 33.

³¹ Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa, I., *Leszczyński contra Rousseau*, 63.

³² Rousseau, J. J., *Observations by Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Geneva*, 35.

³³ Leszczyński, S., *Odpowiedź króla polskiego*, 636.

³⁴ Rousseau, J. J., *Observations by Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Geneva*, 34, 38.

habits, rights and from all other reasons, but not by science”³⁵ and tries to denunciate Rousseau’s visions of innocent and good primitive savage as a nonsense and myth: “To remind constantly the original simplicity... and present it as a proof of social innocence... is nothing more than to draw just an ideal portrait that one can delude oneself with.”³⁶ It means that according to Leszczyński, evil and badness are inherent to human nature without any social influence, and that a man is able to commit a crime even when he does not know he is just doing it: “Where and when has anybody seen people without vices, lust and passions... if there were some times, if there are any places on Earth, where nobody knows what the crime is, other evils must be spread there... that they have no greed for gold or no ambitions, it does not mean they do not know pride and injustice.”³⁷

However, if people can be vicious just by nature, there must be some tool which enables them to improve themselves and to live in keeping with moral rules. That is why, Leszczyński is ready to use a strong argument as an explanation by reversing Rousseau logic upside down – if people were angels by nature, they would not need to get better and any progress would be useless; but because they can be evil they must use reasoning for getting along. The desire for knowledge and curiosity are therefore necessary parts of human nature, because “the more one knows, the more one feels that he must find out even more”³⁸ and “the more easily he can make aesthetical, moral and customary judgments”.³⁹ Without reasoning one loses his humanity and can be mistaken for a simple animal.⁴⁰ This is particularly evident when Leszczyński closes his considerations about the relationship between vice and virtue by Heraclitian exclamation that one must overcome evil to do well.

³⁵ Leszczyński, S., *Odpowiedź króla polskiego*, 639.

³⁶ “Przypominać bezustannie tę pierwotną prostotę, którą się tak bez miary wychwala, przedstawiać ją zawsze jako nieodłączną towarzyszkę niewinności, cóż to jest innego niż kreślić portret czysto myślowy, by móc się nim ludzić?” Ibidem, 639.

³⁷ “Gdzie i kiedy widział kto ludzi bez wad, bez pożądań, bez namiętności? Czy zadatków na wszystkie występki nie nosimy w nas samych? Jeśli były czasy, jeśli dziś jeszcze istnieją kraje na ziemi, które pewnych zbrodni nie znają, czyż nie szerzą się tam inne zdrożności? A jeszcze potworniejsze u owych ludów, które tak się chwali za ich tępotę? Że chciwości ich złoto nie kuszi, że ambicji ich nie nęca zaszczyty, czy wystarcza to, by im były nie znane pycha i niesprawiedliwość?” Ibidem, 639.

³⁸ Ibidem, 638.

³⁹ Golka, M., Stanisław Leszczyński jako polemista Jana Jakuba Rousseau, *Dialogi o kulturze i edukacji*, Nr. 1, (1) 2012, 66.

⁴⁰ “Bez oświecającego nas i naszymi krokami kierującego rozumu, zmieszani ze zwierzętami, podlegli władzy instynktu, czyż nie stalibyśmy się wkrótce równie do nich podobni z postępowania, jak jesteśmy już z potrzeb?” Leszczyński, S., *Odpowiedź króla polskiego*, 637.

Actually, this good can be revealed just by science; botanist can recognize a poisonous plant by research⁴¹ and only an educated man can distinguish duty and virtue from crime. The ignorance cannot be virtuous, because only the one who has to choose between good and evil and knowingly struggles for the first is a truly moral person.

All these conclusions are, nevertheless, strongly questioned by Rousseau, who, at first denies the aforementioned visions of human nature by highlighting his basic principles of a natural state and later criticizes the idea of virtue as a result of experience with evil: "It is not certain that in order to learn to do well, one has to know how many ways there are of doing evil... we have a guide within... which never forsakes us when we are in need... it would suffice us to guide us in innocence."⁴² If statements of his opponents were right, it would mean that only those who are able to use their reason properly and intellectually could live a virtuous life: "Is this that all men are ordered to be Philosophers or that only Philosophers are ordered to believe in God?"⁴³ Rousseau strictly refutes that for perceiving the greatness and goodness of God for example, the study of Physics should be necessary,⁴⁴ because one is able to reveal His presence everywhere in nature just by one's intuition. Rousseau mentions an appropriate allegory of the Philosopher and the Plowman in this respect, for whereas a philosopher is convinced that he has already revealed the eternal wisdom and thus he dares to criticize and create his own laws of nature, a plowman is just happy that the sun and rain fertilize his lands without necessity of asking why does it happen.⁴⁵ It illustrates how the reason can mistake people, because when a philosopher loses his time by useless questioning the natural order and by arrogance of his own self-importance, a plowman is ready for a proper work which is useful for his natural humanity.

This way of consideration is later emphasized again, when Rousseau writes about the decay of Christianity due to those Christians who started to think about

⁴¹ "Doświadczony botanik umie rozpoznać, które ziele trujące, które lecznicze, gdy tymczasem ogół, nie znając ani mocy zbawiennej jednych, ani jadowitości drugich, depce po nich nie rozróżniając albo bez wyboru je zrywa." Ibidem, 638.

⁴² Rousseau, J. J., *Observations by Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Geneva*, 38.

⁴³ Ibidem, 37.

⁴⁴ Ibidem, 37.

⁴⁵ "The Philosopher, flattering himself that he fathorns God's secrets, dares to liken his supposed wisdom to eternal wisdom, he approves, he blames, he corrects, he prescribes laws to nature and limits to the Divinity, and while he is busy with his vain systems, and takes endless pains to arrange the machine of the world, the Plowman, who sees the rain and the sun by turns fertilize his field, admires, praises and blesses the hand from which he receives these graces, without troubling himself about how they come to him." Ibidem, 37.

it instead of just believing⁴⁶ or when he denies the statement of Leszczyński that people should behave along gentle manners and mask their vices to integrate the weaker ones and to improve a society.⁴⁷ By contrast, Rousseau holds the view that a man must have a right to refuse hypocrisy and to live according to his original qualities as what is artificial, cannot be virtuous: “No, to cover one’s wickedness with the dangerous mantle of hypocrisy is not to honour virtue, it is to offend it by profaning its standards.”⁴⁸

To sum it up, we can claim that the question whether an original human nature should be maintained or whether one should improve oneself by the directives of reason is an essential dilemma between Leszczyński and Rousseau because these two antagonist assumptions result in discrepancies in other related issues.

The Polish Question as the “Second Debate”: How to Save Poland?

However, if one wants to qualify the differences between both approaches as a strict dichotomy within the Enlightenment thought, one must take also other levels of human life into account. As we have already highlighted, the “first debate” between Leszczyński and Rousseau was led primarily on the philosophical matters, which means that the Polish king attacked his opponent with a strong effort not to conclude any important outcomes concerning political issues. However, the relationship between philosophical and political questions is really crucial in this case, as the fact that one philosopher espouses some ontological assumptions about being and meaning of life does not determine his political beliefs automatically, which is emphasized, for example, by Charles Taylor in his famous distinction between

⁴⁶ “Soon they ceased to be satisfied with the simplicity of the Gospel and the faith of the Apostles, they constantly wanted to prove themselves cleverer than their predecessors... everyone wants to teach how to act well, and no one wants to learn it, we have all become Doctors, and have ceased to be Christians.” *Ibidem*, 42, 44.

⁴⁷ “Czy nie przynosi to społeczeństwu mimo wszystko pewnej korzyści, że człowiek występny nie śmie mu się pokazywać takim, jakim jest rzeczywiście, i musi, że tak powiem, stroić się w barwy skromności i obyczajności? Powiedziano kiedyś, i to jest prawda: jakkolwiek odrażająca sama w sobie, jest jednak obłuda hołdem, który występki składa cnocie; chroni ona przynajmniej dusze słabe od zarażenia się złym przykładem.” Leszczyński, S., *Odpowiedź króla polskiego*, 641.

⁴⁸ Rousseau, J. J., *Observations by Jean-Jacques Rousseau of Geneva*, 47.

ontological and advocacy issues.⁴⁹ That is why, further analysis concerning political observations of both authors is required.

Of course, one can doubt whether it is proper to compare political beliefs of Leszczyński and Rousseau, if they did not confront each other directly about these matters. But there is a strong argument to advocate this comparison because, as we have already mentioned, both thinkers devoted a single book to the Polish question. Moreover, one must stress that both these works are similar at least in two specifics: the structure of their works on the one hand, and universal conclusions exceeding the Polish experience on the other hand. As for the structure, it means they both resulted from the same assumptions that there was something wrong with Polish society which should have been improved by reforming the political system. Regarding a similarity of general conclusions, one can notice that both Rousseau and Leszczyński did not write their works just as instructions with limited scope, but they tried to express their understanding of political matters with universal connotations. That is why, one should not hesitate to interpret and compare them because it enables more thorough analysis of their philosophical dichotomy that was established before.

Both political considerations on Polish matters deal with three essential tasks: 1) to diagnose Polish maladies, i.e. the most malignant principles of political system, which explain the causes of decline of Polish society; 2) to define which features are so unique and worthy enough that they must be maintained for preserving Polish identity; 3) to propose a list of fundamental reforms which are necessary to save the independent Polish state. Thus every analysis aspiring to compare Rousseau's *Considerations* with Leszczyński's *Głos* properly should take all these levels into account and thus answer these questions: Is there a strong interdependency between the promoted understanding of human nature and ideal political concepts according to Rousseau and Leszczyński? Is one allowed to see their treatments of Polish question as strict contradictions and thus to extend the dichotomy of their philosophical ideas to political sphere?

When one speaks about dichotomy, it is interesting to notice that Leszczyński wrote his list of hints in the very similar spirit as he had responded to Rousseau's *Discourses*. He starts his opening chapter with the statement that there have always been two sides in Polish society which can be named as progressivists and reactionaries. He also distinguishes these parties when he dedicates his work to those who love their country and are willing to devote something to its remedy. At

⁴⁹ Taylor, C., *Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate*, in: Taylor, C., *Philosophical Arguments*, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1995, 181.

the same time, he expects that his work will be defamed by those who want to prevent their fatherland from any changes and see the Polish future in a disorder.⁵⁰ Therefore, it is obvious that he strongly criticizes conservative attitudes in the Polish context, as he blames their proponents for stubbornness and cowardice. To do so, Leszczyński uses three allegories which are interesting not only because they reveal clarity of his approach very plainly, but because they can be read as a continuation of his beliefs expressed in the response to *Discourses* of Rousseau. Firstly, he compares traditionalist Poles to those who are seriously ill and deny cure because they hate the desirable drugs and rely just on fate and nature; then he continues with an example of heretics who “want to die with the same faith they were born with”⁵¹ even when they have found out that they have been mistaken; and finally he flouts a landowner who does not want to repair his eroding house because he “wants to live as his father and grandfather did without any changes.”⁵² It is not difficult to notice that two of these examples actually just evolve the arguments of both sides from Leszczyński’s debate with Rousseau. When the Polish king uses the allegory of a dying man, he undermines Rousseau’s opinion that society can do well in accord with nature and without scientific knowledge. And secondly, when he mentions the case of stubborn heretic, he actually states the argument against his former opponent again because Rousseau claimed that Christianity is not something which should be taken into question or even changed.

However, there is another allegory proving that Leszczyński applied his former arguments from his response to Rousseau to political matters concerning Poland. In this regard, he highlights two professions whose skills are necessary for saving the Polish political system and independency: knowledge of a carver and art of a painter. The former must know how to cut off wood not to destroy it but to create something better, the latter must sense how to apply colours to paint a perfect masterpiece.⁵³ That is why one can say that reformers of Poland need two essential tools to establish a perfect constitution according to Leszczyński: professional knowledge and arts.

⁵⁰ “... bez żadnej pasyi i interesu prywatnego tąż miłością ojczyzny tknięty roztrząsać będzie tę pracę moje ... nie ujdę nagany od tych, którzy ją radzi widzą w nierządzie albo którzy rozumieją, że inaczej leczyć nie można jej dolegliwości, tylko w zamieszaniu.” Leszczyński, S., *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający przez Stanisława Leszczyńskiego, króla polskiego, wielkiego księcia litewskiego I księcia Lotaryngii I Baru*, Kraków 1858, 5.

⁵¹ Ibidem, 6.

⁵² Ibidem, 6.

⁵³ “...snycerz nie dokazałby swojej sztuki, gdyby nie odcinał co zbytniego, malarz zaś niepotrafiłby swego kunsztu doskonale, tylko przydając co należy do doskonałości.” Ibidem, 7.

If we turn our attention to Rousseau's determination of Polish problems and defects, we can notice that he starts his *Considerations* very similarly to Leszczyński as he wonders "how a state so strangely constituted has been able to survive so long".⁵⁴ Thus his observations seem to argue against conservative approaches as well, which is obvious when he qualifies Poland and its legislation as "a large body made up of a large number of dead members, and of a small number of disunited members whose movements ... are so far from being directed to a common end"⁵⁵ and which could be read as a criticism of taking dead traditions into account. That is why, it is quite surprising that Rousseau is ready to make a virtue of necessity a few lines below, when he admires the Polish resistance: "While Poland, a depopulated, devastated and oppressed region, defenceless against her aggressors and at the height of her misfortunes and anarchy, still shows all the fire of youth."⁵⁶ It means, Rousseau in fact does not denounce Poles for their living in a strange political system, but quite the contrary, he is convinced they should be praised for it as they have always been able to survive in a distinct order even when they have had to face all the mentioned enemies and problems.

Later he expresses his relationship to the difference of Poles quite openly when he warns them before any serious changes: "Think twice, brave Poles! Never forget, as you dream of what you wish to gain what you might lose."⁵⁷ This ultraconservative attitude could be astonishing of Rousseau, however, it becomes clearer when he explains his concept of national distinctiveness as an essence of human virtue. In this regard, he strongly criticizes all the modern European nations, because "they all have the same tastes, passions and customs"⁵⁸ and there are no differences among them. Hence Rousseau states that all European nations blather on about how unselfish they are and how they think about the public good, but in fact, they all think only of themselves. This lack of virtue in their national identities is a reason why Rousseau refuses to consider them nations, because "their fatherland is any country where there is money to steal and women for them to seduce".⁵⁹

The only exception which Rousseau states and extols is naturally Polish nation and thus, one can finally understand the logic of his argumentation: if all the western nations are civilised and thus artificial and spoiled, the Polish nation must

⁵⁴ Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, 2.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, 2.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, 2.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, 2.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, 11.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, 12.

be kept as it has always been, because it is the only one which can preserve virtue of natural humanity. The first important difference between Leszczyński and Rousseau in this respect can be therefore summed up as follows: where the former sees the causes of decay in traditionalism or unwillingness to change anything and to accept modern Western patterns of behaviour,⁶⁰ the latter denies to see nature of Poles as a cause of decay at all and warns them not to change their habits on the model of Western Europeans.⁶¹

Moreover, their antagonism is later evolved when both thinkers try to describe some fundamental features of Polish national character. Although they seem to be in agreement on this issue at first sight, one must realize that they result from different assumptions. Hence, when Leszczyński states that “if the Commonwealth resigned to be what it had been, we would not be the same anymore”⁶² and Rousseau exclaims to Poles “not to think poorly of their constitution”, because “it has made you what you are”⁶³, they do not have the same in mind. If one looks at both quotations carefully, one should conclude there is a reverse logical order. Leszczyński is convinced that Poles are “pious, reasonable, brave and magnificent by nature”⁶⁴ and for preserving these qualities they must keep their republic strong, which is unthinkable if they do not reform the most serious defects. On the contrary, Rousseau argues that Poles are so perfect just because of excellence of their political system, which means that there is a different order of causality in his case. According to Leszczyński, Polish system could be great due to Poles who are like that, whereas

⁶⁰ He recommends this solution especially in warfare, which was really outdated according to him: “Mówimy, że szable nasze rozprzestrzeniały granice, prawda, ale wtenczas, kiedy insze narody tąż bronią i temi sposobami, co i my, wojowały... „zostawmy ten sposób wojowania Tatarom, Wołochom, Kozakom... naśladowmy godniejsze w przykładach narody... dla czego nasze zwyczaje nam się zdadzą dobre? Bośmy tak w nich utopieni, że się o insze i nie pitamy.... Dość że te zwyczaje są cudzoziemskie, żeby się nam zdały cudowne.” Leszczyński, S., *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający*, 11, 13.

⁶¹ That is why, Poles have to wear distinctively Polish clothing and not the French fashion, why they have to play their own national public games like bullfights in Spain, and why they should prohibit all foreign celebrations, comedies, operas and instead create their own Polish ones. Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, 14.

⁶² „Jeżeli rzplta przestanie być tem, czem jest, i my przestać będziemy musieli być tem, czem jesteśmy.” Leszczyński, S., *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający*, 9.

⁶³ Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, 2.

⁶⁴ “Naród nasz, bez pochlebstw sądząc, ma wszystkie z przyrodzenia przymioty... pobożność, rozum, odwaga, wspaniałość, wszystkie te cnoty są naturalne...” Leszczyński, S., *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający*, 15.

in Rousseau's view Poles could be great because they live under such a proper constitution. So, which came first, "the chicken or the egg?"

Actually, this could be read as a play on words of both philosophers, if it did not have serious impacts on coherence of their preceding way of thinking. Perhaps, it is necessary to remind that they both advocated different positions in their "first debate". There Leszczyński described human nature as quite imperfect that must be improved by the emancipation of reason and knowledge and Rousseau denies it by claiming that people are best just as they are by nature without any social interventions. How is it, therefore, possible that now they have shifted their positions when Leszczyński promotes the natural influence and Rousseau the social one?

The possible answer to this confusion consists maybe in the different concepts of natural state, which they both mention in their works about Polish matters and which they use for further conclusions regarding the issues of human freedom and equality. Although Leszczyński criticized his opponent for idealized and artificial visions of human nature before, he is doing nearly the same when he determines the inherent qualities of Polish citizens. He emphasizes the idea of natural equality and freedom of all Polish citizens in absence of social bonds where "everyone can live independently *ab omni societate* like in original ages *sub lege naturae* when each inhabitant was a master of himself";⁶⁵ and highlights that under these conditions "without the authority of the republic which would protects its members ... everyone who was born free is also free enough to ensure his security by his own means".⁶⁶ His Hobbesian understanding of natural state is interesting not only as it clashes with Rousseau's concept of non-violent humanity, but also because it reveals that Leszczyński did not limit a range of citizenship just to a noble class. When he writes about the Polish serfs, he advocates the dialectical principle that nobles can be noble just because there is someone who is understood as non-noble.⁶⁷ Moreover, he points out that noblemen are in fact fully dependent on working class because serfs feed them, mine treasures for them, pay taxes or become soldiers, which

⁶⁵ "Żeby każdy mógł w niej żyć *independeter ab omni societate*, jak pierwszych wieków *sub lege naturae* kiedy każdy obywatel był sobie panem." Ibidem, 59.

⁶⁶ "Przy naszym nierządzie rzplta nie będąc *in statu* ani siebie ani nikogo z swoich poddanych protegere, nie dziw, że każdy prospicit swemu bezpieczeństwu ... urodziwszy się wolnym, rozumie że mu wolno uczynić się wielowładnym ... fortecę buduje, wojskowych ludzi trzyma, sam sobie sprawiedliwość czyni..." Ibidem, 118.

⁶⁷ "Gdyżbym nie był szlachcicem, gdyby chłop ni był chłopem, bo co zacność urodzenia mego czyni, jeżeli nie dystynkcyja, której gdyby nie było między chłopem i szlachcicem, wszyscybyśmy byli równi..." Ibidem, 101.

Leszczyński concludes as “if there were no serfs we would have to become peasants ... thus, a master emerges from a serf”⁶⁸

However, one must take into account that this radical attitude to equality is promoted by Leszczyński only in matters concerning possessive relations and human dignity, because he admits that any natural state is not sustainable and as “diamonds must be polished to be bright”,⁶⁹ people must cooperate by exchange of experience and education. Thus, he is willing to criticize the nobles for treating their subjects as animals or even urges society to be responsible for the standard of living of its members where social justice means to contribute according to own wealth and not to let the poor to pay for the rich.⁷⁰ However, in political questions Leszczyński holds a strict elitist view, which is apparent especially when he defines nobles as those who “gained all the virtues and talents originally from nature”⁷¹ and ascribes to them a status of the “chosen ones ... most precious men of the whole nation ... who hold their offices just from *bene emeritus*”.⁷² The idea that noblemen should not exclude the other classes from the Polish nation, but should preserve their domination in politics, can be traced even in his proposals on necessary changes of the political system. In this regard, he advocates reforms such as weighting of votes in favour of senators or excluding the service nobility and those without property from decision-making, because those who have nothing to lose can easily sacrifice the common good for their own private interests.⁷³

There is an important aforementioned difference between the understandings of natural state by Leszczyński and Rousseau. If Leszczyński does not deduce any political connotations from equal dignity and necessity of all humans, Rousseau sees it otherwise. The Polish nation is composed of three classes according to him: “Nobles, who count for everything, middle class who count for nothing and the peasants who count for less than nothing.”⁷⁴ The point is, that he is not reconciled

⁶⁸ “Gdyby chłopstwa nie było, musielibyśmy się stać rolnikami, i jeżeli kogo wynosząc mówimy: pan z panów, słuszniejby mówić: pan z chłopów.” Ibidem, 101.

⁶⁹ Ibidem, 59.

⁷⁰ “Nie powinniśmy cierpieć ich mizeryi, w którejeśmy się sami porodzić mogli ... każdy w królestwie żyjący powinien *concurrere* do konserwacyi jego przez sprawiedliwą repartycyą, aby ubogi nie płacił za bogatego.” Ibidem, 102, 122.

⁷¹ “Bo bez pochlebstwa mówie, że wszystkie cnoty i talenta są nam z przyrodzenia naturalne.” Ibidem, 58.

⁷² “Jest to wybór najzaczniejszy całego narodu, jeżeli sędzić można, jakby być powinno, że nikt w nim nie zasiada, tylko *bene emeritus*.” Ibidem, 49.

⁷³ “Bo jak taki dbać może o ojczyznę, który w niej nie mając co stracić, snadno mu ją sakryfikować interesowi swemu partykularnemu.” Ibidem, 73.

⁷⁴ Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, 27.

with that state and claims that Polish laws should strive to remove inequality in power and wealth, even when he warns that it will be a long run because the lower classes should not be included before the time comes. His famous exclamation “nobles of Poland, be more than nobles, be men, only when you are men will you be happy and free”⁷⁵ can be read as a demand how to unify the nation and not to distinguish between classes, which Rousseau underlines by his disgust against property qualifications in politics: “Is a man really the less noble – or the less free – because he owns only a tiny patch of land or no land at all? Is his poverty really so grave a crime as to cost him his rights as a citizen?”⁷⁶

Now, it is finally possible to clarify the previous confusion regarding the coherence of approaches which were defended by both thinkers in the debate on *Discourses* and the considerations on the Polish question. If Leszczyński promotes natural equality and freedom, it is understandable he could be convinced that Polish national qualities are a product of nature, however, at the same time he emphasizes, that for maintaining them, it is necessary to be led by those who are experienced and have knowledge. Thus the proper systemic reforms were inevitable for him. On the contrary, Rousseau did not betray his concept of a perfect natural man in *Considerations*, because he still promoted an ideal of not only theoretical, but real social and political equality. This must be nevertheless preserved by appropriate political principles and order. If humans without social bonds were perfect due to nature, Poles can be perfect because of their contractual social state, which means, because of Poland.

There are undoubtedly many distinct and subtle similarities and differences between both considerations about the proper development of Poland. Their authors for example agree that individual negative liberty could be dangerous for republics⁷⁷ and both appeal to its collective positive counterpart. Similarly, they call for reducing royal privileges or want to preserve *liberum veto* as a unique and indispensable part of consensual governing as well, however, they are not able to agree for instance in questions whether Poland should be strongly centralized or transformed into federation⁷⁸ or how its soldiers should be recruited. All these issues are just details

⁷⁵ Ibidem, 29.

⁷⁶ Ibidem, 65.

⁷⁷ Leszczyński claimed that individual freedom was frequently misused in Poland because an individual opinion could prevail the meaning of the whole republic; Rousseau was convinced that “liberty is a food that is good to taste but hard to digest and only for good strong stomachs”. Leszczyński, S., *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający*, 9; Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, 29.

⁷⁸ In this respect, Rousseau is exclaiming: “I wish you to have as many Polands as you now have of palatinates!” Rousseau, J. J., *The Government of Poland*, 26.

which can be important for a simple analysis of those two different Polish reformatory projects. They are, nevertheless, not so relevant to answer the main question of this study regarding the determination of a relationship between philosophical and political approaches of Leszczyński and Rousseau. Taking all the fundamental questions highlighted by both thinkers into account, one should conclude that despite some incoherencies and apparent paradoxes, there is a strong connection between both “debates”. It means that both authors formulated their comments on Poland with respect to their original assumptions and grounds. If Leszczyński represented a great adversary in questions of human nature and knowledge for Rousseau, one can claim that he maintained his position even in case of Poland. Hence, one should differ at least two distinct ways of the Enlightenment thought, which can be distinguished not only by different attitudes in universal philosophical issues, but also by the particular questions, such as why and how one should save the Polish state.

ABSTRACT

The Polish Question as a Political Issue within Philosophical Dispute: Leszczyński versus Rousseau

Jan Květina

The main focus of this paper is to put the so called Polish question into the broader context of the Enlightenment thought by providing evidence that the considerations about the proper way of political reforms issued from deeper levels of philosophical assumptions about human nature. To achieve this objective, the study analyses two distinct approaches to the Polish matters, i.e. the observations made by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Stanisław Leszczyński, whose comparison should be seen as legitimate and appropriate since their former philosophical conclusions represent two distinct and even antagonistic positions. Although Leszczyński and Rousseau clashed over the ontological and epistemological questions concerning human being and later similarly drew attention to the Polish political system as well, these works dealing with Poland have been researched and interpreted only separately so far. On the contrary, this study strive for double comparative approach, which tries to clarify whether there is some strong causal dependency between the attitudes of both authors in their debate about human nature and their conclusions regarding the Polish political issues. Moreover, this enables us to determine to what extent one

can understand the Polish question as a political part of philosophical dichotomy of the Enlightenment.

Key words: the Enlightenment, Poland, human nature, J. J. Rousseau, S. Leszczyński

АННОТАЦИЯ

Польский вопрос как политическая проблема в рамках философского диспута С. Лещинского и Ж.-Ж. Руссо

Ян Кветина

Основной задачей данного исследования является рассмотрение польского вопроса в более широком философском контексте эпохи Просвещения посредством обоснования идеи о том, что в основу размышлений о надлежащем способе проведения политических реформ положены глубинные философские представления о сути человеческой природы. Для достижения данной цели в статье проводится анализ двух различных точек зрения на польскую проблематику, а именно позиций Жан-Жака Руссо и Станислава Лещинского, сравнение которых кажется нам правомерным и обоснованным ввиду полярности философских заключений данных мыслителей. Несмотря на полемику Лещинского и Руссо по вопросам онтологии и эпистемологии человеческого бытия, а также на привлечение ими внимания к проблеме польской политической системы, их работы, касающиеся Польши, до настоящего времени изучались и интерпретировались вне зависимости друг от друга. Данное исследование, напротив, исходит из двойного компаративного подхода, при помощи которого автор попытается выяснить, существует ли какая-либо существенная каузальная связь между позициями двух мыслителей в их диспуте о человеческой природе и заключениях по польской политической проблематике. Помимо этого, указанный подход позволяет определить, в какой мере польский вопрос может рассматриваться как политическая составляющая философской дихотомии эпохи Просвещения.

Ключевые слова: Эпоха Просвещения, Польша, природа и сущность человека, Ж.-Ж. Руссо, С. Лещинский

Matěj Bílý

ROMANIA IN THE POLITICAL STRUCTURES
OF THE WARSAW TREATY ORGANIZATION
AT THE TURN OF THE 1960S AND THE 1970S

A complicated relationship with Romania was one of the key inside challenges to the Warsaw Treaty Organization after the military suppression of the Prague Spring. Romanian attitude was an important factor which affected alliance cooperation in the 1970s. However, the most significant features of it were formed at the turn of the previous decade. This process has not been explained in detail yet. Scholars usually put forward a variety of general conclusions which are not based on comprehensive research of archival sources. This paper, therefore, aims to analyse the development of relations between Romania and the rest of the Warsaw Treaty Organization at the turn of the 60's and the 70's. As this issue is very complex, the following analysis focuses on the political framework of the Pact only. After all, since 1969, political and military structures of the alliance worked, in principle, separately.

Disputes between Romania and the Warsaw Pact were hardly new. The issue hailed back to the first half of the 60's, when Romanian leadership on the background of the Sino-Soviet split pragmatically decided to reconsider its approach toward the USSR and the Eastern Bloc in general. In April 1964, the Romanian Worker's Party Central Committee (CC) plenum defined "Romanian national and specific route to socialism". This relatively risky attempt aimed to expand the space in which a Soviet satellite can operate more independently. The so-called April Declaration appealed to the USSR to respect international standards in relation to other communist countries. Those tendencies were augmented after March 1965 when Nicolae Ceaușescu became a head of the Romanian party. Romanian communists gradually created their own dogmatism: a unique nationalist and Marxist doctrine which became the basis for the personal power of Ceaușescu. Despite the fact that full

independency from the Soviet Union was unrealistic, Romanian officials, throughout the next few years, stressed their distance from Moscow.¹

During the 1960s, Romania ventured into a few isolated actions in the international arena which were strongly denounced by Kremlin. In 1967, the Socialist Republic of Romania (SRR), regardless of the other Eastern Bloc states and absence of Moscow's permission, established diplomatic ties with the West Germany. On the contrary, after the Six-Day War, it refused to sever relations with Israel. In fact, the Romanian Communist Party (RCP)² also ignored conclusions adopted at the meetings of the International Communist and Worker's Movement. These leanings bothered Moscow on through the beginning of the next decade.³ Romanian absence in the military suppression of the Prague Spring only underlined the specific position of the country within the Eastern Bloc. However, we are reminded that Ceaușescu's regime had, at the same time, no sympathy for the process of reforms in Czechoslovakia.⁴

The Romanian approach towards the Warsaw Treaty Organization was based on the aforementioned policy. As the Pact represented one of the tools which the USSR used to govern and influence its sphere of influence in Europe, the opinions on proper cooperation within the alliance's framework soon became a specific bone of contention between Moscow and Bucharest. After he came to power, Brezhnev strove for Warsaw Pact consolidation in order to make the alliance more effective in regards to Soviet diplomatic and military aims. On the contrary, Ceaușescu's regime, at least on a proclamation level, stressed the article of the Pact's founding charter which appealed for dissolution of political-military blocs after establishing some sort of collective security system.⁵ Until 1968, these contradictions often

¹ Giurescu, D. C. – Fischer-Galati, S., *Romania. A Historic Perspective*, New York 1998, 458–464.

² In July 1965, the Romanian Worker's Party was renamed to Romanian Communist Party at its 9th congress.

³ Národní archiv České republiky (NA), f. 1261/0/6, sv. 12, a.j. 11/info1, *Zpráva o sovětsko-romunských vztazích*, 13. 9. 1971.

⁴ On Romanian policy during 1968, for example Retegan, M., 1968. *Ve stínu pražského jara*, Praha 2002. In late 1968 and 1969, Romanian diplomats in conversations with Czechoslovak officials stressed out that Romania had neither taken part in the talks on the Prague Spring nor got involved in the military intervention. They assured that Bucharest intended to interfere neither in international nor internal issues, which occurred in connection with the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Archiv ministerstva zahraničních věcí České republiky (AMZV), f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 82, sign. 017/112, kr. 2, č.j. 020.500/70-2, *RSR – informace o současném stavu a perspektivách čs.-romunských vztahů*, 3. 6. 1970.

⁵ The Article XI of the Warsaw Pact's founding charter bound the member-states to strive for establishing a collective security system in Europe. The existence of the Warsaw Treaty Organization was supposed to end on the day when all-European agreement came into effect.

resulted in tense and apprehensive behaviour from the Romanian desk at the alliance meetings. Using various obstructions, Bucharest especially strove to prevent a reform of both political and military structures within the Warsaw Pact.⁶

The situation slightly changed after the invasion of Czechoslovakia. At least for some period, Bucharest considered the Soviet Union as the main threat to its security.⁷ Being afraid of the fact that Romania could be, after Czechoslovakia, the next victim of Soviet aggression,⁸ Ceaușescu calmed down his behaviour for a while. In terms of this strategy, after four years of obstructions, he allowed passing of the Warsaw Pact military statutes reform in March 1969. Thus, at the turn of the 60's and the 70's Romania was aware of two direct threats connected to membership in the alliance: the first came from the Czechoslovak experience and potential usage of the Pact military forces in an intervention against a defiant Ceaușescu regime.⁹ The second was rooted in escalation of tensions on the Sino-Soviet border. Bucharest feared that in case of war between two socialist powers, Moscow could attempt to activate the Warsaw Treaty Organization mechanism in order to involve its European satellites in conflicts in the Far East.¹⁰ Considering sources available today, it must be added that those fears seem to have been exaggerated.

However, Romania could not afford to openly move itself away from the Eastern Bloc and consequently from the Warsaw Pact; not only because of geopolitical reasons,

⁶ On Romanian attitude towards the reform of the Warsaw Pact in the 1960s for example Rinoveanu, C., Rumänien und die Militärreform des Warschauer Paktes, in: *Der Warschauer Pakt: von der Gründung bis zum Zusammenbruch: 1955 bis 1991. Im Auftrag des Militärgeschichtlichen Forschungsamtes*. Ed. T. Dietrich, Berlin 2009, 209–224; Ionescu, M. E., Rumunsko a vojenská reforma Varšavské smlouvy. *Historie a vojenství* (HaV) 2003/3–4, 699–705; Bílý, M., Počátky pokusu o reformu Varšavské smlouvy v 60. letech 20. století. *Dvacáté století/The Twentieth Century* 2011/1, 165–172.

⁷ Nünlist, C., *Cold War Generals: The Warsaw Pact Committee of Defense Ministers, 1969–90, 2001*. [online: < http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/coll_cmd/introduction.cfm?navinfo=14565>, cit. 2014-09-22].

⁸ Regarding the sources which are available today, it can be said that the Western considerations of forthcoming Soviet military intervention in Romania in the second half of 1968 and 1969 were based on irrelevant information. Baev, J., The Warsaw pact and Southern Tier Conflicts, 1959–1969, in: *NATO and the Warsaw Pact: Intrabloc Conflicts*. Eds. M. N. Heiss – S. V. Papa-cosma, Kent 2008, 202.

⁹ The Romanian top leadership correctly admitted that the invasion of Czechoslovakia had not been officially conducted on behalf the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

¹⁰ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34 RSR, e.č. 42, č.j. 023.383/69-2, *K současnému vývoji vztahů mezi Rumunskou socialistickou republikou a členskými státy Varšavské smlouvy*, 16. 6. 1969.

but also due to its ambitious economic plans.¹¹ Therefore, the official Romanian position towards the Warsaw Treaty Organization was defined largely by the exclusive claim that existence of the Pact was only temporary. Its member-states should have striven for dissolution of all military alliances, in accordance with the founding charter.¹²

The fear of repeating the Czechoslovak scenario was not the only factor which influenced Romania's more accommodating approach towards the Warsaw Pact after August 1968. The question of convening an all-European security conference began to dominate the agenda of the alliance's political meetings. In March 1969, the Political Consultative Committee approved the course in the issue which, at first glance, did not contradict the main principles of Romanian foreign policy. Ceaușescu's regime appreciated the declaration of the Warsaw Pact's supreme body calling for holding the conference without any preconditions. However, Romania stressed that this was only because the document had been worked out collectively by all Warsaw Pact member-states, reflecting Romanian priorities as well. In this regard, Romanian propaganda did not miss the opportunity to announce that the initiative opened a new route to the dissolution of military blocs in Europe.¹³ Indeed, the potential all-European security conference was seen by Bucharest as a forum of the equal, sovereign participant countries. This approach fully corresponded with Romanian effort to continuously weaken Moscow's influence on its policy.¹⁴ Romania also considered the conference as a chance to strengthen relations with the West, as it had been striving to do since the mid-60's.¹⁵ From the Romanian

¹¹ PECH, R., Rumunsko let sedmdesátých – od liberalismu k represi. *Slovanský přehled* 1992/3, 271.

¹² AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 42, č.j. 022.229/69-2, *Ohlas v RSR na budapešťské zasedání PPV VS*, 16. 4. 1969.

¹³ *Ibidem*, č.j. 023.010/69, *Mimořádná politická zpráva k ohlasům na budapešťskou Výzvu členských států Varšavské smlouvy*, 30. 5. 1969. Romanian stance on possible dissolution of the military blocs linked to the all-European security conference did not resonate even among the NATO member-states. Mostly, the small Western countries called it a “perspective option”, but absolutely non-actual. In addition, regarding the invasion of Czechoslovakia, there were opinions that this Soviet action had confirmed the legitimacy of NATO existence as a guarantee of the small European countries' independence.

¹⁴ Mastny, V., *A Cardboard Castle? An Inside History of the Warsaw Pact*, New York 2005, 40.

¹⁵ Relations between Romania and West were improving at the turn of 60's and 70's. In August 1969, the U.S. president Nixon visited Bucharest. In December 1970, Ceaușescu made his trip to the United States in return. One year later, Romania joined GATT and in 1972 became the International Monetary Fund and World Bank member. Deletant, D., *Romania and the Warsaw Pact: Documents Highlighting Romania's Gradual Emancipation from the Warsaw Pact, 1956–1989*,

point of view, the strengthening of inter-bloc cooperation was the most important aspect of a prospective security summit. On the contrary, the USSR and some Warsaw Pact member-states, which had unresolved territorial disputes with the West Germany, concentrated primarily on safety guarantees.¹⁶

Political meetings of the Warsaw Pact became more frequent in 1969 because of new international challenges. Romanian participation was not fully conflict-free. As in the past, SRR delegations sought to ensure that sessions would not exceed the scope of non-binding consultations.¹⁷ They rejected to take clear positions on a variety of contentious points, stating they were not authorized by the state and party leadership.¹⁸ Ceaușescu's regime later adopted a similar strategy towards consultations within the International Communist and Worker's Movement. Romania did not oppose consultations, but stipulated conditions of absence of criticism and non-binding character of approved declarations.¹⁹ Bucharest also made it clear that, in the process of convening, the all-European security conference would definitely not act through the Warsaw Treaty Organization exclusively. Romania considered the multilateral political meeting of the alliance to be no more than a forum where member-states inform each other about their talks with Western and neutral countries. It firmly refused to turn the consultations into shaping the unified foreign policy tack of the Eastern Bloc, which the USSR and some of its satellites were pushing for.²⁰ The rest of the Warsaw Pact was leery of this Romanian approach of

Washington 2004. [online: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/coll_romania/introduction.cfm?navinfo=15342>, cit. 2014-09-22].

¹⁶ Note on the Meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers, 21. 5. 1969. [online: <http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/17253/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/9b7b446c-693b-42d6-92a5-807295820045/en/690521_Note.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22]; Békés, C., *Records of the Meetings of the Warsaw Pact Deputy Foreign Ministers*, Washington 2005. [online: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/coll_defomin/intro_bekes.cfm?navinfo=15700>, cit. 2014-09-22].

¹⁷ In May 1969, at the beginning of the meeting of deputy foreign ministers in East Berlin, the Romanian representatives for instance declared that they were authorized by the RCP leadership to non-binding discussion only. They demanded formulation to be recorded that no real obligations would result from the talks. Ibidem.

¹⁸ NA, f. 1261/0/5, sv. 110, a.j. 181/info2, *Zpráva o průběhu a výsledcích pražské porady ministrů zahraničních věcí členských států Varšavské smlouvy a návrhy na další postup v oblasti evropské bezpečnosti*, 14. 11. 1969.

¹⁹ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 61, č.j. 017296/74, *Dosavadní postoje RKS ke svolání Evropské porady komunistických a dělnických stran*, 30. 10. 1974.

²⁰ Wenger, A. – Mastny, V., New perspectives of the origin of the CSCE process, in: *Origins of the European security system: the Helsinki process revisited, 1965–75*. Ed. A. Wenger, Abingdon 2008, 11; Mastny, V., *A Cardboard Castle*, 40.

bilateral diplomacy of its own design without taking into account the strategic priorities of the alliance. Such a situation could have potentially paved the way to superiority of the NATO countries due to their unanimity.²¹

Nevertheless, in comparison to the era preceding the military suppression of the Prague Spring, Romanian representatives behaved much more constructively at Warsaw Pact political meetings.²² They did not construct any serious obstacles, except for vetoing some less important proposals.²³ At the time, Moscow's effort to compile the final documents in a benevolent manner obviously contributed to this. According to official Soviet interpretation, Warsaw Pact declarations were supposed to reflect the priorities of all member-states. Some contradictory Romanian statements at closed meetings were disregarded by the Kremlin, as they did not pose any significant threat.²⁴ Therefore, a scheme of typical future approach towards Bucharest was set up within the Warsaw Pact in 1969. Before almost every alliance session, a few Soviet deputy foreign ministers visited all member-states, except for

²¹ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 42, č.j. 023.938/69-2, *Shrnutí poznatků z rozhovorů v Bukurešti*, 14. 7. 1969; Ibidem, č.j. 023.010/69, *Mimořádná politická zpráva k ohlasům na budapeštskou Výzvu členských států Varšavské smlouvy*, 30. 5. 1969. In fact, even NATO did not act unanimously at the time. Within its structures, French attitude towards negotiation on the basis of blocs was similarly negative to the Romanian stances within the Warsaw Pact.

²² This shift was missed even by the Western press. Ibidem, e.č. 52, č.j. 022.188/71-2, *Ohlas XXIV. sjezdu KSSS v Rumunsku*, 14. 4. 1971.

²³ In May 1969, at the meeting of deputy foreign ministers, Romania blocked reaction to Finnish proposal on the all-European security conference on behalf of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, insisting to reply on behalf of individual member-states instead. It also refused to discuss collectively within the Pact's structures the issue of discrimination of GDR at upcoming 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. Four months later, at the meeting of foreign affairs ministries in Prague, Corneliu Mănescu prevented discussion on Polish draft of the European Security treaty. However, he was supported by the East-German representatives. Note on the Meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers, 21. 5. 1969, [online:<http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/17253/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/9b7b446c-693b-42d6-92a5-807295820045/en/690521_Note.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22];

NA, f. 1261/0/5, sv. 110, a.j. 181/info2, *Zpráva o průběhu a výsledcích pražské porady ministrů zahraničních věcí členských států Varšavské smlouvy a návrhy na další postup v oblasti evropské bezpečnosti*, 14. 11. 1969.

²⁴ In December 1969, at the meeting of Warsaw Pact member-states' party leaders in Moscow, Ceaușescu for instance repeated his well-known, from the Soviet point of view undesirable demands for dismantling all the foreign military bases in Europe, dissolution of military blocs, reduction of armament levels or the nuclear weapons ban. However, the Romanian leader presented his opinions at closed session only. Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN), f. PZPR KCW, p. V/89 (2899), *Dokumenty spotkania przywódców partyjnych i państwowych siedmiu krajów socjalistycznych*, 10. 12. 1969.

Romania. *The Six* – the Warsaw Pact countries without SRR²⁵ – unified its positions this way and then put them in front of the Romanian delegation at the meeting. Following non-binding voting often encouraged Romanian representatives either to join the proposal, or to accept some sort of compromise.²⁶

Balancing Policy

The situation changed during the early months of 1970. Bucharest realized that the Soviet opinion of the all-European security conference scheme was very different. Due to suspiciously frequent talks within the Warsaw Pact, Ceaușescu's regime became afraid that Moscow's intention was to hold the conference on the basis of existing blocs.²⁷ In January, at the alliance deputy foreign ministers session in Sofia, Romania unsuccessfully suggested the preliminary meeting of all potential countries to participate at the security conference being held in its capital.²⁸ Instead, Moscow, at the time, began to consider negotiating the conditions of the conference within a working group of three states only: Belgium for NATO, Poland for Warsaw Pact and Finland for neutral countries.²⁹ The USSR planned a following alliance meeting of ministers of foreign affairs to finalize the procedure.

Ceaușescu refused this scenario and decided to dull relations with the Warsaw Pact. He noted that Moscow's intentions contradict the Bucharest Declaration of Political Consultative Committee, which presumed preparation of the security conference on the basis of all involved countries. In consequence, he attempted to

²⁵ In the mid 1970s, *the Six* started to be officially called “closely cooperating member-states” of the Warsaw Pact. Report on the Meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers, 3. 2. 1975, [online: <http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/17364/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/c7b53278-c977-4e11-94ba-aba66db0896a/en/750129_Report_E.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22].

²⁶ Békés, C., *Studená válka, détente a sovětský blok. Vývoj koordinace zahraniční politiky sovětského bloku (1953–1975)*. *Soudobé dějiny 2011/I-II*, 81.

²⁷ AMZV, f. TO(ť) 1970–1974, i.č. 89, sign. 020/112, kr. 3, č.j. 057/70, *Záznam o návštěvě I. taj. ZÚ RSR s I. Georgescu u p. Picka dne 27. 3. 1970*.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, sign. 017/111, kr. 1, č.j. 020.534/70-2, *Informace o poradě náměstků k Evropské bezpečnosti*, 27. 1. 1970.

²⁹ This concept was soon proven to be impassable and the USSR left it behind in the early months of 1970. *Ibidem*, sign. 020/112, kr. 1, č.j. 021.648/70-1, *Oficiální návštěva ministra zahraničních věcí SSSR p. A. A. Gromyka v ČSSR – materiál pro předsednictvo ÚV KSČ*, 20. 4. 1970; *Ibidem*, sign. 020/311, kr. 8, č.j. 085/70, *Zpráva I. teritoriálního odboru ministerstva zahraničních věcí ČSSR o stanovisku SSSR k celoevropské konferenci o bezpečnosti a spolupráci*, 7. 4. 1970.

prevent upcoming political meetings of the alliance. Romania threatened that it would not participate. Up to this point, the Romanian leader had supported the Warsaw Pact's appeals on the all-European security conference for a single reason: implied negotiations between sovereign states corresponded with Ceaușescu's long-term foreign policy goals. When this assumption proved to be wrong, he started searching for support for his initiatives among neutral countries, e.g. Finland.³⁰ The Romanian minister of foreign affairs, Corneliu Mănescu, justified this move by the fact that NATO, in reaction to a Warsaw Pact session, would certainly hold a similar meeting. In Romanian opinion, this situation would inevitably lead to an all-European security conference on the basis of blocs. The ulterior motive of Romanian obstructive behaviour was an effort to prevent a new round of collective talks on possible reform of the Warsaw Treaty Organization's political structures initiated by Hungary. The preliminary agenda of upcoming meetings included this item.³¹

Moscow quickly assured its satellites that the planned consultations within the alliance would be held regardless of Romanian stance.³² However, the potential absence of Romania brought problems. The USSR intended to connect talks on the issue of an all-European security conference with the celebration of the Warsaw Pact's 15th anniversary. The scope of this propagandistic play was naturally directed by the Kremlin. The ostentatious distance of one alliance member was, from the Soviet point of view, totally undesirable as it disrupted the efforts to outwardly present absolute unity of the Pact.³³

At this point, Ceaușescu visited the Soviet capital on 19th May 1970. In comparison to multilateral meetings, his bilateral talks with highest officials of the USSR concerning Romanian policy within the Warsaw Pact were, to say the least,

³⁰ Ibidem; AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 47, č.j. 022.007/70-2, *Zasedání VNS RSR k zahraniční politice*, 3. 4. 1970.

³¹ AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 82, sign. 017/112, kr. 2, č.j. 022.176/70-2, *RSR – zpráva o návštěvě ministra zahraničních věcí RSR C. Manesca v ČSSR ve dnech 8.–11. dubna 1970*.

³² Ibidem, i.č. 89, sign. 020/112, kr. 1, č.j. 021.648/70-1, *Oficiální návštěva ministra zahraničních věcí SSSR p. A.A. Gromyka v ČSSR – materiál pro předsednictvo ÚV KSČ*, 20. 4. 1970.

³³ Ibidem, sign. 020/111, kr.1, č.j. 010.295/70-AP, *Zpráva o situaci na úseku evropské bezpečnosti pro ÚV KSČ – odložení projednání na duben 1970*, 18. 3. 1970; Ibidem, sign. 020/112, kr. 3, č.j. 0109/70, *Záznam o návštěvě p. M. Havláška ve IV. EO MZV SSSR*, 12. 5. 1970. The East-German documentation reveals that a special argumentation for purposes of the Warsaw Pact member-states' ambassadors to Bucharest was prepared. They were supposed to present it during the talks with the Romanian officials in order to assert another alliance's meeting of foreign affairs ministers. BAArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1269, *Politbüro des ZK Reinschriftenprotokoll nr. 9*, 24. 2. 1970.

tumultuous. The Romanian leader did not hesitate to openly stand up against many Soviet stances. According to testimony of RCP Executive Committee secretary Ștefan Voicu, after some of Ceaușescu's sharp responses the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), the leadership members literally turned green.³⁴ Angry Brezhnev then snapped at the Romanian leader about whether his country intended to stay within the Warsaw Pact. "If you do not want to go with us, go straight to hell," he stormed. For the first time, Brezhnev generously offered Ceaușescu to leave the alliance. Otherwise, Romania was urged to make no waves. The bid of the CPSU CC General Secretary definitely did not include the possibility of full abandonment of the Soviet sphere of influence. In fact, he prioritized the urgent approval of a new bilateral Soviet-Romanian allied treaty.³⁵ The Soviet leader was extremely critical. He pointed out Romanian rhetorical warnings against conducting Warsaw Pact manoeuvres near the borders of SRR. He asked whether Ceaușescu considered the allied states as enemies. He also rebuked Romania, stressing the need for dissolution of military-political blocs, absence of Romanian troops on joint military exercises, as well as the blocking of reform of the Pact's political structures. As before, Ceaușescu firmly rejected those accusations with the claim that his country fully adhered to the text of the alliance's founding charter. After all, he liked to refer to its vague articles which allowed various interpretations. He called the question of leaving the alliance senseless. The Romanian leader declared his interest to continue in cooperation with the socialist states. However, he warned the Soviet leadership that Romania would continuously impose a veto on all

³⁴ This happened at the moment when Brezhnev criticized the Romanian demonstrative actions which were not discussed within the Warsaw Pact in advance. In his reply, Ceaușescu provocatively noted that Romania was not the only country which failed to consult its foreign policy. He reminded that the Soviet government had begun talks in Vienna with the United States on strategic arms reduction in the same way. The Romanian leader added that Bucharest had not been informed about the proceeding of the negotiation yet. See Summary No. 10 of the Executive Bureau of the CC of the RCP, 20. 5. 1970, [online: <http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/16490/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/4ffbc115-d300-43b4-a47a-b21bc4022244/en/700520_summary.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22]. It is good to note that Romanian lack of information about SALT was unique in the scope of the Eastern Bloc. In fact, Kremlin briefed at least its loyal satellites, GDR for instance, on matter of the talks. BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1259, *Politbüro des ZK Reinschriftenprotokoll nr. 51*, 22. 12. 1969.

³⁵ Brezhnev initially planned to personally oversee a ceremonial of signing mutual allied treaty in Bucharest. In the end, he absented. According to the Soviet interpretation, the CPSU CC General Secretary demonstrated his disapproval of Romanian foreign policy in this way. AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 52, č.j. 020.206/71, *Současný politický postoj RSR ve vztahu ke státům Varšavské smlouvy*, 11. 1. 1971.

documents dealing with military, economic and political integration of the Eastern Bloc.³⁶ Brezhnev retroactively complained in a talk with the Polish Unified Worker's Party (PUWP) CC secretary and the politburo member Zenon Kliszko on Ceaușescu's strategy. "He behaved like the true gypsy," the Soviet leader raged.³⁷

Romanian resistance against Moscow's effort to improve cohesion of the Eastern Bloc never grew into an open rift. However, it complicated the Kremlin's policy within its sphere of influence, as well as its approach towards many international issues.³⁸ Regarding the absence of key Soviet documentation, the question why Moscow chose an apparently indecisive solution to the Romanian problem can be hardly answered. In general, one can claim that the USSR had four options: Ostracism, which would almost certainly have led to exclusion of Romania from the Eastern Bloc; military intervention; initiating an internal coup; or a continuous long-term leash affecting Ceaușescu and keeping his policy within the acceptable limits. An episode of rift with Albania poked holes in the first variant. In 1961, the impulsive and not so pre-calculated actions of Khrushchev's leadership caused the defection of this strategically important country from Soviet influence. Moscow considered a recurrence of this scenario undesirable. In situation, when the USSR was extremely interested in easing tensions with the West, any military solution was out of question as well. Western powers did not take any hard steps after invasion of Czechoslovakia. However, the Kremlin recognized that another similar action would either seriously complicate, or immediately terminate the process of détente.³⁹ Removal of Ceaușescu and his replacement by the representatives of pro-Soviet orientation never exceeded the scope of lackadaisical debate. From this point of view, long-term influencing of Romanian policy by diplomatic means seemed to be the most suitable solution.

An approach of Ceaușescu's regime helped this strategy. Romania never took any firm action which straightforwardly led to leaving the Eastern Bloc. Perhaps, it wanted to follow neither the Yugoslavian nor the Albanian path. Moreover, the

³⁶ Summary No. 10 of the Executive Bureau of the CC of the RCP, 20. 5. 1970, [online: <http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/16490/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/4ffbc115-d300-43b4-a47a-b21bc4022244/en/700520_summary.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22].

³⁷ According to Brezhnev's retrospective interpretation, Ceaușescu took the floor for a long time at the beginning of the talks in Moscow. However, he spoke in very general terms and tried to avoid any conflict topics. On the contrary, the Romanian leader assured that his policy basically corresponded with the Soviet positions. AAN, f. PZPR KCW, s. XIA/88, *Zapis wypowiedzi tow. L. Breźniewa podczas spotkania z tow. Z. Kliszko w dniu 2 czerwca 1970 roku.*

³⁸ Tejchman, M. – Litera, B., *Moskva a socialistické země na Balkáně 1964–1989*, Praha 2009, 7.

³⁹ Madry, J., *Sovětské zájmy v pojetí obrany Československa (1965–1970)*. *HaV* 1992/5, 126–140.

possibility that Ceaușescu considered Romanian inclusion in the Soviet sphere of influence as a guarantee of the Leninist-Stalinist regime preservation in his country cannot be ruled out. The experience of the years 1956 and 1968 suggested that Moscow would not allow any significant changes to the social-economical system in Warsaw Pact member-states. However, the Romanian leader was well aware of how much his international activity irritated Moscow. He often defused its impact. Although Ceaușescu did not change the essence of his foreign policy at the turn of the 60's and the 70's, he tried to avoid some actions which Moscow considered the most provocative. His approach towards the Eastern Bloc became more flexible. He often informed the Kremlin about his intentions in advance. According to Soviet intelligence, Ceaușescu was advised on this strategy by Yugoslavian leader Josip Broz Tito.⁴⁰

The typical and constant phenomenon of Romanian foreign policy in the 1970's became "balancing" – alternating between leaning towards the Eastern Bloc, China and also the West. The USSR still considered Romania as a part of its sphere of influence. Moscow tolerated this development, inter alia, because of the stable position of the Leninist-Stalinist regime within the country; the Soviet model of socialism remained a cornerstone of Ceaușescu's policy. The RCP maintained full control over all social processes in Romania.⁴¹ In this regard, Moscow even warned against over-strengthening Nicolae Ceaușescu's "cult of personality" during the early 70's. In praxis, the Romanian course caused the most concern to Moscow in propagandistic and ideological spheres. The nationalist rhetoric of the Romanian regime undermined the phrases about "proletarian internationalism". Romania's permanent and ostentatious proclamations of state sovereignty did not correspond with the idea of a unified foreign policy within the Warsaw Treaty Organization. However, the USSR at the beginning of the decade assured the other members of the alliance that Romania would not leave the Eastern Bloc and would henceforth participate in its organizations. Nevertheless, Moscow bore in mind that this situation would create many problems in the future. Regarding Ceaușescu's policy straining the unity of the alliance, the Soviet Union even admitted that Romanian membership in the Warsaw Pact was favourable to the West.⁴² In accordance with this, Brezhnev told Polish First Secretary Edward Gierek in the early 70's: "Nationalism twisted

⁴⁰ AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 89, sign. 020/311, kr. 8, č.j. 026.083/72-1, *Zpráva o současném vývoji na Balkáně (se zvláštním zřetelem k Rumunsku)*, 23. 10. 1972.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*; AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 54, č.j. 027280/72-2, *Celkový obraz hlavních aspektů vnitřní i zahraniční politiky RKS a RSR za rok 1972*, 19. 12. 1972.

⁴² NA, f. 1261/0/6, sv. 12, a.j. 11/info1, *Zpráva o sovětsko-rumunských vztazích*, 13. 9. 1971.

the mind of the great leader of great Romania, but we are patient. We believe he will finish his song and then will go with us.”⁴³

The very dynamical alteration of Romanian behaviour within the Warsaw Pact was significantly influenced by economic factors.⁴⁴ Plans of Ceaușescu’s leadership on economic development proved to be unrealistic. Economical complications therefore forced Romania to keep correct ties with the Eastern Bloc. Actually, the impact of cooperation with the West did not bring such benefit as Bucharest had expected.⁴⁵ In the mid-1970, Romania, therefore, instrumentally revised its intention to block political meetings of the Warsaw Pact and dampened its rhetoric for a while. There was also a calming effect brought on by a visit of a Soviet governmental delegation in Bucharest in order to sign a new bilateral allied treaty.⁴⁶

At the two following Political Consultative Committee sessions held in the second half of 1970 in Moscow and East Berlin, Romania behaved within acceptable limits. The most conflicting item came from the above mentioned effort of Hungary and the other member-states to give the more frequent political talks within the Warsaw Pact some formal rules. Yet again, the Romanian delegation blocked any discussion on the issue. During an alliance meeting in the Soviet capital in August, Ceaușescu calmly but firmly declared that the position of his country had remained constant since the mid-1960s. However, he agreed that mutual consultations on both European and global challenges at the level of ministers of foreign affairs were necessary. Nevertheless, he repeated the well-known Romanian stance that key competences in the foreign policy issues should have been maintained exclusively by individual state and party leaderships. This slightly confrontational behaviour of the Romanian First Secretary was interpreted by some Eastern diplomats as a result of an isolation of his opinions within the Warsaw Pact. In fact, it was rather part of Bucharest’s temporary tending towards the Eastern Bloc in terms of described policy balancing. Romania remained in the margins, but was not obstructive at that particular moment. It was ready to support some initiatives which, at least, partially corresponded with its foreign policy approach. In December, at the Berlin Political Consultative

⁴³ Durman, K., *Útěk od praporů. Kremľ a krize impéria 1964–1991*, Praha 1998, 117.

⁴⁴ Pech, R., *Rumunsko let sedmdesátých*, 271; Deletant, D., *Romania and the Warsaw Pact*.

⁴⁵ Romania got into troubles mostly because of dwindling of its oil and gas reserves. Bucharest was forced to buy those raw materials from Iran and to pay in U.S. dollars. Country therefore asked Moscow repeatedly for enhancement of Soviet deliveries of both strategic materials. Poor situation occurred also in food supplies; Romania had no choice but to ask the USSR for deliveries of grain again.

⁴⁶ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 52, č.j. 020.206/71, *Současný politický postoj RSR ve vztahu ke státům Varšavské smlouvy*, 11. 1. 1971.

Committee session, Ceaușescu, for the first time, put his signature on the Warsaw Pact's supreme body resolution denouncing the policy of Israel.⁴⁷ The proceeding and outcomes of the meeting was also appreciated by RCP Executive Committee.⁴⁸

Ceaușescu made clear that he was in favour of talks within the Warsaw Pact if they were limited to support for holding a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) based on sovereign states as the participants. He categorically refused joint actions on the behalf of the Warsaw Treaty Organization as they, in praxis, meant nothing more than support for foreign policy tack formulated by Kremlin.⁴⁹ In term of this, Romania insisted that the final documents of the Political Consultative Committee not be presented on behalf of the alliance, but only its individual member-states.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ NA, f. 1261/0/5, sv. 135, a.j. 213/1, *Informace o průběhu diskuse na zasedání Politického poradního výboru Varšavské smlouvy v Moskvě dne 20. srpna 1970*; Minutes of the Hungarian Party Politburo Meeting on the August 1970 PCC Meeting, 25. 8. 1970, [online:<http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/18034/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/89875ee9-6b04-46a4-b06b-9295e3d36f45/en/Minutes_Hungarian_Party_1970_Eng.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22];

AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 52, č.j. 020.206/71, *Současný politický postoj RSR ve vztahu ke státům Varšavské smlouvy*, 11. 1. 1971.

⁴⁸ Circular Letter by George Macovescu, 8. 12. 1970, [online:<http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/16355/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/082ec923-19b4-4ffa-8550-b3cc33d1d28c/en/701208_circular_letter.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22].

⁴⁹ Romanian dissentious position affected also activities of the editorial commission of deputy foreign ministers who worked simultaneously with the Political Consultative Committee plenary session. Bucharest's objections against proposed documents on European security, the situation in Africa, Indochina and Middle East resulted in establishing another commission on the level of ministers of foreign affairs. Both commissions then lost almost all day discussing vast number of Romanian remarks. In fact, behaviour of Romanian representatives ominously resembled previous obstructive strategy. Rhetoric of Bucharest did not change – continuously stressed conception of the countries as the international sovereigns. NA, f. 1261/0/5, sv. 146, a.j. 225/1, *Informace o činnosti redakční komise na zasedání politického poradního výboru států Varšavské smlouvy v Berlíně dne 2. prosince 1970*.

⁵⁰ Circular Letter by George Macovescu, 8. 12. 1970, [online:<http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/16355/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/082ec923-19b4-4ffa-8550-b3cc33d1d28c/en/701208_circular_letter.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22].

Chinese Factor and Balkan Initiatives

In spring 1971, the relations between Romania and the Warsaw Pact deteriorated again. The shift could have been visible at the 24th CPSU congress. In the backrooms, Ceaușescu once more openly criticized military intervention in Czechoslovakia. Romanian press afterwards significantly reduced the transcript of Brezhnev's main speech. Specifically, its foreign policy parts and sections adoring the importance of the Warsaw Pact's existence were not published.⁵¹ The exact reasons can be revealed by analysis of top Romanian leadership documentation only. However, diplomats of the Eastern Bloc countries did not miss the fact that the more positive Romanian stances at recent Warsaw Pact's sessions had been also recorded by the West. Considering this, they suspected that Ceaușescu's current sharper rhetoric was strictly auxiliary and he had only been attempting to demonstrate his continuous specific positions.⁵² Regarding this, Petre Oprea assumes that Romanian opposition within the Warsaw Pact after 1968 was motivated also by an effort to make the country more attractive to Western eyes in order to easily get American and West-European loans and modern technologies.⁵³

In June 1971, the spectacular journey of the Romanian leader to China and other Asian socialist countries marked another provocative moment.⁵⁴ The Warsaw Pact member-states perceived Ceaușescu's actions as a signal for both the West and particularly Beijing that the alliance was not unanimous in its attitude.⁵⁵ At the time,

⁵¹ The shift in attitude of Romanian press was obvious mostly in comparison to the commentaries on the recent Warsaw Pact meeting of ministers of foreign affairs in Bucharest, when media in the country had neglected usual stressing the principles of non-interference, sovereignty and state independence. AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 52, č.j. 021.324/71-2, *Ohlas bukurešťské porady ministrů zahraničních věcí členských zemí VS*, 26. 2. 1971.

⁵² AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 52, č.j. 022.188/71-2, *Ohlas XXIV. sjezdu KSSS v Rumunsku*, 14. 4. 1971.

⁵³ Oprea, P., *Die rumänische Armee und die gemeinsamen Manöver des Warschauer Paktes*, in: *Der Warschauer Pakt*, 198.

⁵⁴ Some scholars see a direct connection between the rise of Ceaușescu's megalomania and his journey to the Asian communist countries. He was actually deeply impressed by oriental cult of personality of communist leaders there. It gave him imagination of means and tools to affect the people and methods to maintain a noblesse oblige at the top of political power. Before the end of the 1970s, formation of the cults and rituals and related practices in Romania was finished. Deletant, D., *Romania and the Warsaw Pact*; Tejchman, M. – Litera, B., *Moskva a socialistické země*, 116.

⁵⁵ AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 82 RSR, sign. 017/111, kr. 1, č.j. 023.362/71-2, *Informace o návštěvě stranické a vládní delegace RSR v asijských socialistických zemích*, 6. 6. 1971.

Kremlin considered China as a serious threat not only because of mutual disputes and Sino-Western convergence, but also due to its potentially disruptive influence on the Warsaw Treaty Organization.⁵⁶ However, some parts of Ceaușescu's conversation with the Chinese leadership actually concerned the Pact. The Romanian leader said his country was ready to progressively cooperate within the framework of the alliance, but in accordance with the vague founding charter only. He was determined to prevent transformation of the alliance into a supranational organization, and deepening political, economic and military integration of the Soviet sphere of influence as Moscow intended. He accused China of helping to found the Pact, as Beijing had not opposed this step in 1955 and even accepted statute as an observer.⁵⁷ During his visit to Mongolia, Ceaușescu verbally assaulted the Warsaw Pact again. He refused Jumdzgin Cedenbal's claim that this "peaceful" organization strove for the imposition of European security.⁵⁸ Romanian distance from the Warsaw Pact was also demonstrated following Ceaușescu's absence at informal summer talks of party leaders held by Brezhnev on Crimea.⁵⁹

Some Soviet satellites reacted to the situation more vigorously than the USSR itself. The first tendencies to streamline Romanian foreign policy occurred in 1970. A few of the Warsaw Pact member-states were dissatisfied not only by the threats of Romanian withdrawal from alliance political meetings, but mostly by Ceaușescu's Balkan initiatives. In March 1970, Romanian minister of foreign affairs Mănescu formally called for the creation of a nuclear-free zone and significant improvement of mutual cooperation in the region.⁶⁰ The Soviet Union and primarily some of its satellites considered this undesirable. However, the Warsaw Pact member-states' appeals for action against the policy of Bucharest temporally faded-out as Romania dampened its activity in the mid-1970. In the wake of a new worsening of mutual

⁵⁶ Mastny, V., *A Cardboard Castle*, 43.

⁵⁷ The Chinese observers led by Mao Zedong withdrew from the Political Consultative Committee sessions in 1961. Mastny, V., *China, the Warsaw Pact, and Sino-Soviet Relations under Khrushchev*, 2002, [online: <http://php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/coll_china_wapa/intro_mastny.cfm?navinfo=16034>, cit. 2014-09-22].

⁵⁸ Minutes of Conversation of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, 25. 6. 1971, [online: <http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/16347/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/29ce4e90-afa7-4eab-a83d-76928bb1131b/en/710625_minutes.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22].

⁵⁹ AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 68, sign. 0344/111, kr. 1, č.j. 025495, *Vztahy NDR-RSR - informácia*, 3. 11. 1971.

⁶⁰ Ceaușescu's leadership officially intended to follow up the initiatives presented during the years 1957–1959 by then Romanian Prime Minister Chivu Stoica. However, those proposals had striven for different aims.

relations the next year, Hungary was first to step out against Romanian manoeuvres. In August, Hungarian diplomats were briefed to consistently refuse all attempts at aiming to disrupt either the Warsaw Pact or Comecon unity. This directive had a strictly anti-Romanian subtext.⁶¹ The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia CC General Secretary Gustáv Husák went even further: He accused RCP of leaving Marxist-Leninist positions, and supported Soviet opinions of Romania harming the Warsaw Pact's interests. Unlike the Soviets, he also criticized Romanian standpoint about the need to reduce the Pact's ability to affect its member-states' policy.⁶²

Taking into account geographical factors, the Eastern Bloc states considered Bulgaria – which remained fully loyal to Moscow – as a natural bulwark against Romanian tendencies in the Balkan area.⁶³ In this, Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov acted most proactively. During confident diplomatic talks he called for solving the issue of Romania-Eastern Bloc relations. Zhivkov suggested working-out a coherent strategy in order to influence Ceaușescu's policy towards the Warsaw Pact.⁶⁴ Harsh criticism was voiced also from East Berlin.⁶⁵ The German Democratic Republic (GDR) sharply denounced Romanian Balkan initiatives. They were marked as an attempt to establish some sort of “Balkan Pact” after the expected death of Josip

⁶¹ In addition, the directive occurred in time of significant deterioration of Romanian-Hungarian relations which had led to cancelation of planned meeting of Ceaușescu and Kadar in July 1971. AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 58 MLR, sign. 015/311, kr. 5, č.j. 024.374/71-2, *K výsledkům srpnového společného zasedání ÚV MSDS a vlády MLR v oblasti zahraniční politiky*, 26. 8. 1971.

⁶² NA, f. 1261/0/6, sv. 16, a.j. 15/2, *Návrh zprávy ÚV KSČ k mezinárodním otázkám*, 13. 10. 1971.

⁶³ AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 12 BLR, sign. 013/311, kr. 7, č.j. 025537, *Politický vývoj vztahů BLR s balkánskými zeměmi*, 8. 10. 1970.

⁶⁴ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 4 BLR, e.č. 3, č.j. 025.263/71-2, *Záznam o rozhovoru p. Jiřího Kučery, velvyslance zdejšího ZÚ se p. Jevgenievem Gromuškinem, velvyslanceckým radou ZÚ SSSR v Sofii*, 22. 10. 1971.

⁶⁵ In the early 1970s, the relations between East Germany and Romania were merely sporadic. This situation was unique within the Warsaw Pact. GDR-SRR liaison was complicated not only by Romanian general approach towards the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc. The main reason was Romanian establishing diplomatic relations with West Germany on the level of ambassadors in February 1969. Also Romanian-East-German economic cooperation remained limited to minimum. Moreover, the countries had no valid bilateral allied treaty; it was an exception within the Eastern Bloc. The document was finalized in September 1970. However, Bucharest postponed the signature for almost two years. This was probably caused also by East-German demands that the “West-German militarism” must be mentioned at least in the preamble of the treaty. Romania, which strove for correct relations with the West, opposed. Not only Romanian obstructions, but undoubtedly also radical positions of Ulbricht's leadership put an obstacle in conclusion of the agreement. BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1223, *Politbüro des ZK Reinschriftenprotokoll nr. 15*, 8. 4. 1969.

Broz Tito; at the moment when Ceaușescu would have no strong competitor in the region. Regarding his visit in China, SED leadership warned against creation of a Beijing-Bucharest-Belgrade-Tirana axis. The East-German stance mostly corresponded with Bulgarian and Soviet positions. The GDR therefore supported Zhivkov's proposal to the Warsaw Pact bodies to start dealing with Romanian policy. East-German diplomats suggested at least holding a deputy foreign ministers' meeting. Simultaneously, the Eastern Bloc countries should have striven for developing bilateral contacts with Romania as much as possible in order to create favourable conditions for general improvement of mutual relations.⁶⁶ During a visit of the Bulgarian prime-minister Stanko Todorov in Hungary, this strategy was also accepted by Janos Kadar's leadership. In late 1971, Zhivkov presented those intentions in person to Brezhnev.⁶⁷

Romanian Balkan initiatives apparently raised concerns in Moscow which considered them as a part of attempts to disintegrate both the Warsaw Pact and Comecon. The Soviet leadership could not rule out that Bucharest, according its proclaimed long-term effort to dissolve power blocs, was creating a background for a potential future military-political arrangement on the peninsula. The Kremlin correctly suspected Ceaușescu that the essence of his Balkan policy was to reduce the superpower's influence on processes in the region. Instead of full suppression of Romanian initiatives, the USSR tried to shift them in a more favourable direction from its point of view. Moscow considered the issue as an integral part of ensuring the Warsaw Pact's influence on the Balkans. It was reminded that Romania was the only member of the alliance who had relatively normal relations with all countries of the peninsula.⁶⁸ Romanian activity, therefore, seemed to be a potentially appropriate

⁶⁶ AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 68 NDR, sign. 0344/111, kr. 1, č.j. 025495, *Vztahy NDR-RSR – informácia*, 3. 10. 1971. Possibility that the East-German officials presented the stances at the direct order of Kremlin cannot be ruled out. After all, it was typical. At the time, in diplomatic talks with its satellites, the Soviet leadership actually warned against coalition of China, Yugoslavia, Albania and Romania which could have weakened the Warsaw Pact's southern flank and potentially lead to establishing some sort of "Balkan bloc" with a sealing element of Anti-Sovietism. Baev, J., *"The Crimean Meetings" of the Warsaw Pact Countries' Leaders*, 2003. [online: <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/collections/crimea_meetings.cfm?navinfo=16037>, cit. 2014-09-22].

⁶⁷ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 4, e.č. 3, č.j. 026.066/71-2, *Záznam o rozhovoru p. Jiřího Kučery, velvyslanceckého rady zdejšího ZÚ se p. Nikolajem Černevem, vedoucím 2.t.o. ministerstva zahraničních věcí BLR*, 2.12. 1971; *Ibidem*, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 12, sign. 013/111, kr. 1, č.j. 026.067/71-2, *BLR-informace o setkání stranických a státních představitelů SSSR a BLR v Moskvě*, 3. 12. 1971.

⁶⁸ In comparison to other Warsaw Pact member-states, Romanian relations with Albania were the least tense. However, they were far to being smooth. Among other things, Enver Hoxha's regime

tool for spreading the Warsaw Pact policy in the area. This was obviously possible only under the condition that *the Six* would be able to affect Bucharest and prompt it to implement a unified course of the alliance.⁶⁹

In the first half of the 70's, Todor Zhivkov formally stood in the frontlines of the effort to shape Bucharest's foreign policy. He was secretly entrusted to this role by Brezhnev himself, who noted that Ceaușescu had crossed the line. The Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) Central Committee first secretary was supposed to act as a "moderator" in attempt to prompt Romanian turnabout.⁷⁰ In the 1970's, Bulgaria was the most loyal and the most dependent satellite of Moscow.⁷¹ This could be clearly seen in Bulgarian foreign policy. The country always acted under the aegis of a unified course of the Warsaw Pact; guidelines of the alliance meetings became axioms to Sofia.⁷² Bulgarian approach towards Romania was not solely determined by more independent orientation of Ceaușescu's leadership. Sofia approved of neither Romanian positive relations with Tito's Yugoslavia, nor its stance on the so-called Macedonian question.⁷³ Regarding Romanian Balkan initiatives, Zhivkov's regime, using ideological-cliché language, warned against the penetration of nationalism, imperialism and Maoism and called for "intended counter-pressure" by the Warsaw Pact.⁷⁴

In January 1972, RCP leadership received information that the rest of the alliance members intended to use the upcoming Political Consultative Committee session in Prague to initiate a harsh assault on Romanian policy. In order to defuse expected criticism, Ceaușescu asked Zhivkov for a regulatory meeting. Bulgaria refused his call. The BCP Central Committee First Secretary insisted that the issue was too serious and therefore had to be dealt with multilaterally at the Warsaw

constantly criticized Bucharest for its continuing membership in the Warsaw Treaty Organization. NA, f. 1261/0/6, sv. 24, a.j. 25/info3, *Informace o VI. sjezdu Albánské strany práce*, 15. 12. 1971.

⁶⁹ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 52, č.j. 025.188/71, *Rumunsko a balkánská otázka*, 19. 10. 1971; AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 89, sign. 020/112, kr. 2, č.j. 0441/71, *Záznam o návštěvě delegace FMZV vedené I. náměstkem ministra p. Fr. Krajíčkem v Moskvě*, 16. 10. 1971.

⁷⁰ Baev, J., *The Warsaw pact and Southern Tier Conflicts*, 200; Baev, J., *The "Crimean Meetings"*.

⁷¹ Tejchman, M. – Litera, B., *Moskva a socialistické země*, 111.

⁷² AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 12, sign. 013/311, kr. 7, č.j. 021.200/71-2, *Charakteristika postojů BLR k problematice evropské bezpečnosti*, 18. 2. 1971; AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 4, e.č. 10, č.j. 025.229, *Zahraniční politika BLR*, blíže nedatováno 1973.

⁷³ AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 12, sign. 013/311, kr. 7, č.j. 020276/70-2, *Vývoj styků BLR s NDR, PLR, MLR a RSR*, 12. 1. 1970.

⁷⁴ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 4, e.č. 7, č.j. 022.859/72-2, *Bulharská zahraniční politika v oblasti Balkánského poloostrova*, 2. 2. 1972.

Pact supreme body meeting.⁷⁵ However, before the summit in the Czechoslovak capital, Romania sent Moscow some signals that this time it would fully cooperate.⁷⁶ At the meeting itself Romanian representatives acted relatively constructively and looked for compromise in order to avoid criticism. They actually did not oppose even a new proposal to intensify political talks within the Warsaw Pact's framework. For the first time, Romania roughly admitted the possibility of formalization of such consultations.⁷⁷ The USSR subsequently appreciated that, unlike the previous year, Ceaușescu also took part in the summer Crimean meeting. His presence was considered by Moscow to be more important than the fact he again stated different positions there.⁷⁸ This new Romanian trend towards the Warsaw Pact was caused, inter alia, by the failure of Ceaușescu's Balkan policy. In early 1972, his attempts to start official multilateral talks on closer cooperation between the countries of peninsula failed.⁷⁹

In the wake of this shift, the Warsaw Treaty Organization did not deal with the Romanian question collectively in 1972.⁸⁰ Very important was the general approach

⁷⁵ Ibidem, e.č. 8, i.č. 020.483/72-2, *Záznam o rozhovoru p. Jiřího Kučery, velvyslanceckého rady zdejšího ZÚ se p. Andrášem Šárdim, velvyslanceckým radou ZÚ MLR v Sofii ze dne 19. ledna 1972.*

⁷⁶ For instance, the Romanian officials were quite unusually interested in preparation of the meeting's agenda. Telegram from Romanian Deputy Foreign Minister George Macovescu to the Romanian Ambassador in Moscow, 10. 1. 1972, [online:<http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/16345/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/3908f529-d54d-46ad-bdf5-8bc766221c9e/en/720110_telegram.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22];

Romanian Ambassador in Moscow to George Macovescu, 11. 1. 1972, [online:<http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/16342/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/cee2b150-e6ee-476d-956c-a8ce7e138386/en/720111_romanian_ambassador_moscow.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22].

⁷⁷ Minutes of the Meeting of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party Politburo on the January 1972 PCC Meeting, 1. 2. 1972, [online:<http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/18105/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/a19328f7-c508-42f2-8f85-593a871d6293/en/Minutes_Hungarian_Party_1972_en.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22].

⁷⁸ AAN, f. PZPR KCW, p. XIA/612, *Notatka z przebiegu Spotkania I-szych sekretarzy bratnich partii na Krymie /31 lipca 1972/.*

⁷⁹ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 54, č.j. 023.034/72-2, *Vývoj politiky RSR vůči Balkánu v poslední době*, 12. 5. 1972.

⁸⁰ Even the speech of Zhivkov, who initiated the move, actually remained limited to the unfocused warnings against NATO's efforts to penetrate Balkan area through intensified influencing Yugoslavia and Albania. Speech by the General Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party, 25. 1. 1972, [online:<http://kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/18104/ipublicationdocument_singledocument/21225070-bcb3-464a-86f2-edacf3a23fe3/en/Speech_Zhivkov_1972_en.pdf>, cit. 2014-09-22].

of Moscow. At the time, the Kremlin decided not to use official structures of the Warsaw Treaty Organization to solve the disputes between its member-states. All such activities were therefore put on a bilateral level. Bulgaria proved its full dependency on actual Soviet course. As the Kremlin was satisfied with the last shift in Romanian policy, Sofia also relented in its engagement of the issue. Hence, criticism resonated mostly from the GDR. East-German officials correctly stated that the essence of Romanian foreign policy remained unchanged. The recent mitigation of Romanian policy and improvement in mutual relations were considered as just a tactical retreat of Ceaușescu's leadership.⁸¹ In fact, Bucharest actually feared isolation within the Eastern Bloc; there were some serious warnings sent by Romanian allies. For instance, the PUWP CC First Secretary Gierek refused to visit SRR as part of his protest against its foreign policy⁸² and Czechoslovak minister of foreign affairs Bohuslav Chňoupek was also very critical during his journey to the country. Romania actually reacted and toned down its rhetoric, at least for a while.⁸³

Poland did not suggest influencing Romania through open polemics either. It preferred unofficial personal contacts with Romanian officials. The main aim remained not to expose disputes within the Eastern Bloc publicly.⁸⁴ However, Polish strategy proved to be little effective. For instance, in November 1972 Ceaușescu assured a Polish delegation that he would coordinate his next moves in the CSCE process with the Warsaw Pact. In fact, at the following party plenum, he declared

⁸¹ In 1972, the relations between Romania and East Germany improved. During the visit of East-German party and government delegation in Bucharest, the Romanian officials without any obstacles supported GDR's stances on future of West Berlin and after two years of obstructions they signed the bilateral allied treaty. AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 68, sign. 0344/111, kr. 1, č.j. 023.817/72-4, *K výsledkům návštěvy stranické a vládní delegace NDR v RSR-informace*, 21. 6. 1972; Ibidem, č.j. 022.277/72-4, *Záznam ZÚ Berlín o vztazích NDR-RSR*, 5.4. 1972.

⁸² Cancellation of Gierek-Ceaușescu meeting was initiated by Poland itself, not by Moscow. Warsaw only informed the Kremlin about its intention. Afterwards, the PUWP politburo member Józef Tejchme was sent to Romania in order to explain reasons which had led to revocation of the planned visit. In his reaction, Ceaușescu accused Poland of unacceptable duress on his country; among other things, he protested against the assaults on Romanian policy in Polish press. The incident later resulted in weakening economic cooperation between both countries. AAN, f. PZPR KCW, s. XIB/126, *Tezy do rozmów z towarzyszami radzieckimi*, nedatováno 1973.

⁸³ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 54, č.j. 027280/72-2, *Celkový obraz hlavních aspektů vnitřní i zahraniční politiky RKS a RSR za rok 1972*, 19. 12. 1972; AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 82, sign. 017/112, kr. 2, č.j. 022.038/73-2, *RSR – druhá informace o plnění závěrů kolegia ministra zahr. věcí v relaci s RSR ze 30. prosince 1971*, 3. 4. 1973.

⁸⁴ Ibidem, i.č. 79, sign. 016/111, kr. 2, č.j. 023801, *Informácia k vzťahom PLR – RSR*, 18. 6. 1973.

a separate course of action in order to insert into the agenda of the conference issues of disarmament and withdrawal of foreign troops from territories of European countries. The Warsaw Treaty Organization, actually, strongly dismissed those principles.⁸⁵ Despite the fact that Romania invariably supported official alliance resolutions concerning the Helsinki process, its real policy differed in many aspects. The Eastern Bloc countries, therefore, believed that Bucharest intended to use CSCE to further weaken its ties to both the Warsaw Pact and Soviet sphere of influence in general.⁸⁶

In 1973, the relations between Romania and the Warsaw Treaty Organization reached a new low point. Despite some failures, Ceaușescu still maintained his Balkan ambitions. In the first months of the year, in connection with shifts in the CSCE process and upcoming Vienna disarmaments talks⁸⁷ he, once more, tried to mobilize the countries of the peninsula into closer cooperation, regardless of their geopolitical ties. Bulgaria unambiguously stood up against this effort. Sofia refused Romanian calls for consultation and noted that the issues were supposed to be discussed on the level of the Warsaw Pact only.⁸⁸ In fact, Zhivkov's regime intended to support solely Soviet stances. Indeed, Bulgarian activities in the Balkans mainly protected the interests of Moscow. One of these interests was also the elimination of Romanian regional policy impact.⁸⁹ An important clash between both Balkan Warsaw Pact member-states occurred at a Crimean meeting of party leaders in July 1973. Zhivkov decided to plainly criticize Romanian Balkan policy. The Bulgarian leader assigned Romania as pro-China, Maoist and thus an extremely hostile axis. This, together with his other verbal assaults almost resulted in an open rift. In his reaction, Ceaușescu threatened to theatrically leave the session. Situation was calmed down

⁸⁵ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 54, č.j. 027280/72-2, *Celkový obraz hlavních aspektů vnitřní i zahraniční politiky RKS a RSR za rok 1972*, 19. 12. 1972.

⁸⁶ Romanian stances tended not only against the Warsaw Treaty Organization, but against general integration within the Eastern Bloc, as the new demands of the Romanian foreign affairs minister Macovecu showed. In July, during the CSCE negotiations in Helsinki, he proposed dissolution of not only military, but also economic blocs. AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 56, č.j. 022518/73, *Postoj RSR k přípravným jednáním KEBS v Helsinkách*, 13. 4. 1973; *Ibidem*, č.j. 024.505/73, *Ke stanovisku RSR na I. fázi KEBS*, 18. 7. 1973.

⁸⁷ In 1973, Vienna talks on reduction in armed forces and armaments in Central Europe began between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Romania once more tried to prevent negotiations on the basis of blocs.

⁸⁸ AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 4, e.č. 16, č.j. 020.038/73-2, *Záznam o přijetí rady ZÚ BLR p. G. Georgieva vedoucím 2. t.o. J. Hesem dne 3. ledna 1973*.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, e.č. 10, č.j. 025230/73, *Informace o problematice vztahů BLR s balkánskými zeměmi*, 3. 9. 1973.

by Brezhnev's personal intervention. However, he managed to iron the issue out with serious difficulty.⁹⁰

The Crimean incident was crucial for future development. Brezhnev himself also denounced some Romanian stances, either claims of Chinese contribution to détente or appeals to the start of practical moves towards simultaneous dissolution of military blocs.⁹¹ In addition, he suspected that Ceaușescu failed to inform the wider structures of the RCP about the results of the Crimean meeting of party leaders which defined, behind closed doors, the short term international priorities of the Eastern bloc.⁹² Despite those facts, Brezhnev considered aberrations of Romanian foreign policy as no fundamental problem worthy of risking an open clash and a new split within the Eastern Bloc. He believed that collective dealing with the issue at the Warsaw Pact meeting was an unnecessary dangerous move. In terms of this, the Soviet General Secretary altered also the scope of the unofficial Crimean meetings. After the 1973 row, he opted to invite the party leaders individually, never together.⁹³ Remember, at the time official multilateral political meetings under the auspices of the Warsaw Pact were held less frequently as well. This alteration was probably not caused exclusively by the Romanian factor, as it reflected a general shift in Moscow's approach towards interaction with the countries in the Soviet sphere of influence.

In fact, the Soviet leadership ignored all appeals for vigorous solutions. Thus, they were not solely presented by the agile Zhivkov.⁹⁴ Also, Polish leadership assaulted

⁹⁰ Baev, J., *The "Crimean Meetings"*; Tejchman, M. – Litera, B., *Moskva a socialistické země*, 87.

⁹¹ AAN, f. PZPR KCW, s. XIA/613, *Wystąpienie końcowe Tow. Breźniewa*, nedatováno, zřejmě červenec 1973.

⁹² Furthermore, unlike the others party leaders, Ceaușescu in praxis totally ignored the results of the Crimean meeting. AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 34, e.č. 61, č.j. 010.459/74, *Rumunská zahraniční politika ve světle komuniké z krymského jednání 30.–31. července 1973*, 17. 1. 1974; AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 89, sign. 020/311, kr. 9, č.j. 012545, *Zpráva o sovětsko-rumunských vztazích*, 3. 4. 1974.

⁹³ Baev, J., *The "Crimean Meetings"*.

⁹⁴ It happened, for instance, after the visit of Bulgarian minister of foreign affairs Mladenov in Romania when he argued with Ceaușescu on implementation of the recent Political Consultative Committee resolution. At the turn of 1973 and 1974, Zhivkov constantly warned that Romanian nationalist course had reached the level which negatively affected situation within both, Warsaw Pact as well as International Communist and Worker's Movement. From his point of view, some countermeasures were necessary; he suggested at least consulting the issue on the alliance's level. AMZV, f. DTO 1945–1989, i.č. 4, e.č. 11, č.j. 020.516, *Záznam z informace Nikolaje Černěva, ved. 2. t.o. MZV BLR o oficiální návštěvě ministra ZV BLR v RSR*, 22. 12. 1973; *Ibidem*, e.č. 19, č.j. 010177/74, *Záznam o rozhovoru velvyslaneckého rady ZÚ MLR v Sofii A. Šardiho s velvyslaneckým*

Romanian policy harder than Moscow. During his conversation with Brezhnev, Gierek even broached the possibility of establishing closer cooperation with “proletarian internationalism” forces in Romania and deeper integration of the Romanian army into the Warsaw Pact. Although Polish leadership realized that Ceaușescu knew where the limits of his more independent policy were,⁹⁵ they carefully probed whether Moscow would not try to replace him.

Along with its strategy so far, Moscow intended to influence Ceaușescu in backrooms only, even at the Political Consultative Committee session held in Warsaw, April 1974.⁹⁶ However, Edward Gierek and Erich Honecker decided to break the silence on Romania’s approach. After all, a few months before that, both leaders were unanimous both in their criticism of Romania and their bad relations with Ceaușescu’s regime.⁹⁷ Thus, at the alliance supreme body meeting, both leaders openly denounced Bucharest for helping NATO and damaging the interests of socialist countries through its moves in disarmament talks.⁹⁸ Their verbal assault actually failed; Ceaușescu used it to accuse the GDR of exceeding the rules of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Moreover, regardless of such criticism of Romania he continued the presentation of different routes.⁹⁹

radou čs. ZÚ v Sofii J. Kučerou, 4. 1. 1974; *Ibidem*, e.č. 17, č.j. 011.023/74-2, *Podkladové materiály pro návštěvu ministra zahraničních věcí BLR Petra Mladenova v ČSSR*, 31. 1. 1974.

⁹⁵ Romania rejected Polish criticism of its Balkan initiatives. Ceaușescu’s regime referred to previous Polish actions and appeals for settlement of Central-European region. AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 79, sign. 016/111, kr. 2, č.j. 023134, *Informácia o některých poznatkoch z návštěvy viceministra p. Trepczynského v Rumunsku*, 22. 5. 1973; *Ibidem*, č.j. 023801, *Informácia k vzťahom PLR – RSR*, 18. 6. 1973; AAN, f. PZPR KCW, s. XIB/126, Handouts for conversation of the PUWP CC First Secretary E. Gierek with the CPSU CC General Secretary L. Brezhnev, undated, perhaps 1973.

⁹⁶ AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 89, sign. 020/311, kr. 9, č.j. 012545, *Zpráva o sovětsko-rumunských vztazích*, 3. 4. 1974.

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, i.č. 68, sign. 0344/311, kr. 10, č.j. 024.098/73-4, *Návštěva stranické a vládní delegace PLR v NDR*, 3. 7. 1973.

⁹⁸ Especially East Germany was caught by surprise when realized that the Romanian representative at Vienna disarmament talks intended to propose international supervision of involved countries’ territories through a network of the control posts. That would have supposed also clear definition of the areas of no military activity. According to the East-German delegation, Romania in this manner threatened both success of Vienna talks as well as security and sovereignty of the socialist states. BArch, DY 30/2351, Telegram to SED CC on Romanian proposals put forward at Political Consultative Committee session, 18. 4. 1974.

⁹⁹ Not only Romanian proposals on Vienna disarmament talks were unacceptable for the rest of the Warsaw Pact member-states. Ceaușescu also appreciated positive role of China in détente process and declared support for Egypt-Israel treaty. Furthermore, he refused to label Pinochet’s coup in Chile as a fascist putsch. On the contrary, the Romanian leader urged the final communiqué

In the wake of this fail, Soviet strategy of long-term and systematic influence appeared to be much more effective. At the meeting, Romania, in fact, announced its preliminary consent to establishing the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs within the Warsaw Pact. In spite of Bucharest agreeing with this step under the condition of maintaining every party and government right to shape its own foreign policy, Romanian officials admitted that the meetings of the body could be held even thrice a year. Ceaușescu stated that in the current situation, stressing importance of the alliance's political activities rather than its military dimension, was necessary. This opinion essentially corresponded with then-claims of the Soviet leader.¹⁰⁰ In fact, Romania ceased stalling reform of the Pact's political structures after almost ten years without being firmly pushed into it.¹⁰¹ *The Six* actually expected that creation of new bodies would bring increased opportunity to bulwark Romanian divergent tendencies more effectively.¹⁰² As a result of the Political Consultative Committee meeting in Warsaw, individual ministries of foreign affairs of the Warsaw Pact member-states were instructed by Moscow to avoid any activity against Romania. The Soviet satellites were supposed to solely analyse Romanian policy towards both the Warsaw Treaty Organization and Comecon.¹⁰³

This conciliatory approach of Moscow in the Romanian question was apparently reflected even towards the beginning of the disintegration of the entire Eastern Bloc. In the first half of the 70's, the USSR had forged no methods on how to pacify easily and without serious international complications an undesirable policy of some country within its sphere of influence. However, Kremlin did not realize the severity of the problem until the beginning of the next decade when it was not able to force Polish party leadership to suppress their opposition movement.

to appeal for simultaneous dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization once more. The Romanian representative in the editorial commission again tried to alter the documents in preparation in terms of Ceaușescu's speech. The situation resulted in failure of Secretariat's work; the texts had to be compiled during separate negotiation of the Soviet and Romanian delegations.

¹⁰⁰NA, f. 1261/0/6, sv. 115, a.j. 117/1, *Zpráva o průběhu a výsledcích zasedání Politického poradního výboru států Varšavské smlouvy*, 24. 4. 1974; *Ibidem*, *stručná charakteristika vystoupení vedoucích jednotlivých delegací na zasedání politického poradního výboru*, 24. 4. 1974.

¹⁰¹After 1970, the USSR instructed its satellites to be patient and not to put the issue in front of Romania in ultimate way. *Ibidem*, sv. 12, a.j. 11/info1, *Zpráva o sovětsko-rumunských vztazích*, 13. 9. 1971.

¹⁰²*Ibidem*, sv. 144, a.j. 149/2, *Zpráva o výsledcích jednání náměstků ministrů zahraničních věcí členských států Varšavské smlouvy*, 5. 2. 1975.

¹⁰³AMZV, f. TO(t) 1970–1974, i.č. 82, sign. 017/112, kr. 2, č.j. 012.472/74-2, *Zpráva o návštěvě ministra zahraničních věcí RSR p. Macovesca v ČSSR*, 2. 5. 1974.

ABSTRACT

Romania in the Political Structures of the Warsaw Treaty Organization at the Turn of 1960s and 1970s

Matěj Bílý

The paper analyses a problematic relationship between Romania and the rest of the Warsaw Treaty Organization member-states at the turn of the 1960s and the 1970s. It mostly focuses on the interaction within the alliance's political structures, as well as those aspects of mutual relations which directly concerned the Pact. The analysis is primarily based on wide research in Czech, Polish and German archives, supplemented by already published documents. The paper explains the basic features of dynamic changes of Romanian attitude towards the Warsaw Pact in the period, which resulted from general approach of Nicolae Ceaușescu's authoritarian regime towards the entire Eastern Bloc. The study also suggests why Kremlin tolerated Romanian behaviour and ignored a calling of some Soviet satellites for harsher actions against Bucharest.

Key words: Warsaw Treaty Organization, Eastern Bloc, Romania, Nicolae Ceaușescu

АННОТАЦИЯ

Румыния в политических структурах Организации Варшавского Договора на рубеже 1960–1970-х годов

Матей Билы

Статья посвящена проблематике непростых взаимоотношений между Румынией и другими государствами-участниками Организации Варшавского Договора на рубеже 1960–1970-х годов. Основное внимание сосредоточено на взаимодействии внутри политических структур альянса, а также на аспектах взаимоотношений между ними, имеющих непосредственное отношение к договору. В основу анализа положены результаты обширной исследовательской работы в архивах Чехии, Польши и Германии, дополненные ранее опубликованными документами. В статье разъясняются основные особенности

динамических изменений в отношении Румынии к Варшавскому Договору в указанный период, которые обусловлены общей позицией, занимаемой авторитарным режимом Николае Чаушеску во взаимоотношениях с Восточным блоком в целом. В статье также высказывается предположение о том, почему в Кремле мирились с данной ситуацией и игнорировали призывы социалистических стран-сателлитов к более жестким мерам в отношении Бухареста.

Ключевые слова: Организация Варшавского Договора, Восточный блок, Румыния, Николае Чаушеску

Amanda C. Fisher

INFERTILITY, ABUSE, AND MENOPAUSE:
Surrealist Motherhood in Jan Švankmajer's *Little Otik*

Jan Švankmajer's quintessentially surrealist film *Little Otik* portrays motherhood as disastrous and flawed: his female characters are not just neurotic; their mothering actions also unfailingly lead to the destruction of people and things around them. In order to create such a vicious version of motherhood, Švankmajer utilizes the great agency that surrealism provides the unconscious. Indeed, playing upon his characters' desperate dreams and neuroses, Švankmajer permits fetishized desires to overtake reality. He first establishes the neighbours' young daughter, the eponymous character's infertile mother, and the old caretaker as representatives both of the three main stages of womanhood (pre-pubescence, adulthood, and menopause); and of three improbable approaches to motherhood (too early, barren, and too late). Then, in keeping with surrealist methods, Švankmajer repeatedly emphasizes the negative and uncanny elements of the characters' experiences and yearnings. The result is a motherhood that is conclusively savage, violent, and cannibalistic.

Surrealist Overview and Background

Little Otik is a clear example of the surrealist movement. Displaying elements of surrealism as outlined by the prolific Andre Breton and Georges Bataille, Švankmajer creates a world for his characters in which desperate desires take on a life of their own and, ultimately, overpower reality. Bataille points out that surrealism values dream-like approaches to art and literature. That is, art should be irrational or, at

the very least, it should emphasize the absence of rationality.¹ Breton, too, emphasizes dreams as a fundamental aspect of surrealism: it is through dreaming and desiring, he claims, that a surrealist character has the ability to more easily accept his/her existence.² By abandoning rationality, then, the surrealist construct holds the potential for overcoming great disappointment.³

In *Surrealism and Film*, J. H. Matthews offers further support of this considerable power that surrealism instils upon desperate yearnings. Matthews suggests that subconscious ambitions are allowed an agency in surrealist productions that would not be found in more realistic works. The action of the surrealist film, for instance, moves forward not only via actual interactions, but also through emotional longings.⁴ As Matthews claims, suppressed desires are just as influential upon surrealist plots as are real-life activities, if not more so. In fact, for the surrealist movement, a blurred boundary between reality and dreams is essential to demonstrating the tremendous influence of innermost desires.⁵ Reality, then, is not at all separate from hopes and aspirations; rather, careful harmony between the two spheres⁶ must be found.

Of course, the aforementioned agency of dreams does not mean that the transition from boring reality to inner fulfilment is not painful. Quite the contrary, as Bataille demonstrates. According to Bataille, in order to accomplish a state that exists beyond one's real self, a person must endure discomfort and even agony.⁷ This excruciating realization of desire is unquestionably present in Švankmajer's film, at least in regards to maternity: perhaps paralleling the pain of childbirth, not one woman in this work enters into motherhood without encountering violence.

¹ Bataille, G., *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, New York 2006, 57. Surrealist works, he says, are "not subordinated to the control of reason".

² Breton, A., *First Manifesto of Surrealism – 1924*, trans. A. S. Kline, místo vydání neuvědno, 2010, 10. "The spirit of the man who dreams is quite content with what happens to him. The agonizing question of possibility is no longer posed," Breton proclaims.

³ As will soon be demonstrated, *Little Otik* is no exception to this claim: particular aspects of the disappointment the characters face in the real world disappear in the surrealist sphere.

⁴ Matthews, J. H., *Surrealism and Film*, Michigan 1971, 7. "Surrealism at all times emphasizes [...] feeling rather than thought, instinct and desire rather than reasonable commonplace."

⁵ Ibidem, 4. "Surrealists [...] refuse to separate what they call dream from life. They are free, therefore, to subject reality to re-evaluation. They demonstrate that man's sensitivity to what is real is deeply influenced by his desires."

⁶ Frank, A., *Reframing Reality: The Aesthetics of the Surrealist Object in French and Czech Cinema*, Chicago 2013, 18. Or, as Frank puts it, "a balance between physical reality and the unconscious".

⁷ Bataille, G., *The Absence of Myth*, 190. "The quest for the grail [i.e., realized dreams] is linked with the pursuit of anguish, to the extent that profound pleasure can be experienced only in anguish."

In *Little Otik*, the above aspects of surrealism are combined with folkloric characteristics and are coloured by trends in contemporary Czech culture, which will be addressed in the sections below. The result, as will soon be seen, is an undeniably savage motherhood.

Abnormal Motherhood

Since Švankmajer incorporates trends from various spheres in order to strengthen his surrealist approach, it is important to understand both historical and literary contexts for his work. Historically, motherhood has long been considered a complicated state. Indeed, as Simone de Beauvoir remarks in *The Second Sex*, with pregnancy many insecurities begin, together with complexities a woman must face as she transitions into a motherly figure.⁸ Similar issues and questions are applicable to recent trends in Czech motherhood. Women of the Soviet period who suffered from the so-called “modern slavery” of having to simultaneously work two full-time jobs (in both the public and domestic spheres) suddenly found more options after the fall of Communism.⁹ In an effort to secure better employment and more satisfactory lifestyles, Czech women pursued higher education at an increased rate after 1989. This aspiration for advanced scholarship in turn led to a delay of or reduction in childbirth.¹⁰ These post-Communist decreases in Czech childbearing support Beauvoir’s claims of complicated pregnancy and motherhood. Already uncertain about how to fit into a new society or economy, the Czech woman

⁸ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex*, New York 2011, 538. “Pregnancy is above all a drama playing itself out in the woman between her and herself. She experiences it both as enrichment and a mutilation; the fetus is part of her body, and it is a parasite exploiting her; she possesses, and she is possessed by it.”

⁹ Raabe, P. H., Women and Gender in the Czech Republic and Cross-National Comparisons, *Czech Sociological Review* 7.2 (Fall 1999), 223.

¹⁰ Sobotka, T., Fertility in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989: Collapse and Gradual Recovery, *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung* 36.2 (2011), 274. As Sobotka states, “the boom in tertiary education was a major factor behind the postponement of births, [...] as having children during one’s studies became rare and many younger people increasingly postponed family formation even after the completion of their education.” See also Kostecký, T. – Vobecká, J., Housing Affordability in Czech Regions and Demographic Behavior – Does Housing Affordability Impact Fertility?, *Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review* 45.6 (Dec. 2009), 1198. In the 1990s “the total fertility rate [of the Czech Republic] dropped [...] and remained there throughout the period between 1996 and 2003”.

intuits that parenting may obscure her own existence or future; therefore, she delays childbirth until she is well established in society, or in some cases, she eliminates motherhood from her future entirely. The traditional expectations and roles of mothers are broken down by this socio-economic shift, and the result is parenthood outside of the standard framework.

Abnormal and negative motherhood is seen in a literary context, as well, and at times parallels real historical trends. In understanding this overlap, Beauvoir's commentary is once again a useful tool. Beauvoir spotlights women who, rather than approaching motherhood in a selfless manner, bear children to offset neurotic or depressed feelings.¹¹ These so-called "bad mothers" exacerbate an already difficult process by conceptualizing their children through lenses tinted by their own neuroses. According to Beauvoir, women who enter into parenthood for questionable reasons reproduce and prolong despondency through their offspring.¹² Beauvoir's motherhood, then, is almost contagious in its neurotic qualities. Yet these characteristics can be traced throughout certain literature, as well. For instance, Irina Strout notes additional female characteristics that lead to abnormal motherhood within literary works. Oftentimes, Strout claims, an imaginative and desperate female character is rejected by those in her community. Thus, the forsaken woman is a figure not unknown to literature:¹³ heroines who do not fit neatly into the cultural concept of normal motherhood are renounced and anathematized by their own society.

In *Little Otik* specifically, similar issues of delayed and abnormal motherhood come into play. While the women's levels of education, economic success, and employment are never addressed directly, Švankmajer does allude to the aforementioned post-Communist changes in Czech motherhood. For instance, Božena Horáková and her husband seem to have unlimited funds: depressed by their failure to procreate, the couple buys a house in the countryside. There, Božena escapes the stress of the urban environment, which frequently reminds her of her inability to become pregnant.¹⁴ Later, once Otik has fully revealed his ravenous nature, one never

¹¹ Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex*, 566. Pregnancy serves "as a remedy for melancholia or neuroses".

¹² Ibidem, 567. When women use motherhood to escape depression or neuroses, "this chain of misery perpetuates itself indefinitely", she claims.

¹³ Strout, I., "She Who Dwells Alone...": Mad Mothers, Old Spinsters, and Hysterical Women in William Wordsworth's Poetry of 1798, in: *Disjointed Perspectives on Motherhood*. Ed. C. F. Florescu, Maryland 2013, 159. "Women with depraved imagination are abandoned, isolated or labelled mad." For more information on neurotic motherhood, please see the other articles in this same book.

¹⁴ The urban setting is one in which there is an influx of advertisements, even about pregnancy and child-rearing. As Zachary Snider points out in "Unwanted Mother, Unwanted Motherhood:

satiated by just milk and carrots,¹⁵ the Horákovás buy massive amounts of meat in order to satisfy his hunger. Such gargantuan quantities of food are undoubtedly expensive; therefore, one may draw the conclusion that the Horákovás enjoy a relatively stable amount of financial security, or at least they did before being bestowed the gift of Otik. Historically speaking, then, the combination of economic success with delayed motherhood and difficult propagation is hardly surprising: although it is impossible to identify Božena's level of education, her fairly successful position in life mirrors those of the aforementioned '90s Czech women.

Furthermore, the isolating aspect of unnatural motherhood in *Little Otik* is indicative of both Strout's and Beauvoir's claims. Švankmajer's neurotic women, who imagine non-traditional motherhood, can enjoy no position other than isolation from the rest of society. For example, in accepting a tree stump as her legitimate child, Božena is the epitomic abnormal mother: not only does she override a natural suppression of reproduction, but she also raises a non-human baby. Her experience with motherhood, then, is a complete outlier to the rest of her society, and by attempting to protect her precious offspring, Božena becomes only further isolated. Her husband, initially frustrated by her acceptance of just a "piece of wood", eventually grows to fear Otik and demands that he be killed. Božena's subsequent rejections of his pleas isolate her from her own partner; ultimately the Horáková family dynamic pits Božena and Otik against Karel (the father). Finally, in attempting to hide her secret, Božena also removes herself from her urban community. She covers Otik up in public and locks him away at home. Whenever people inquire after him or attempt to see him, she snaps at them and, at times, even forcibly restrains them. Paralleling the aforementioned literary trope of female anathematization,

Competing Maternities in Selby's *Requiem for a Dream*", advertisements represent the forced normalcy of life. For example, in the beginning scene of *Little Otik*, a radiantly pregnant woman in bright red clothing advertises easy, successful pregnancies. In other words, she and her parenting experience serve as the norm. Such advertisements are entirely non-existent in the country setting; therefore, one could consider the country-house as a true retreat from painful reminders of infertility.

¹⁵ Not just adult desires, but also infantile ones are given agency in surrealism. Since in Freudian philosophy infantile desires conflate basic needs (food, comfort, and so on) with fetishization, the milk and carrots here may be seen as objects representative of sexual activity. The carrots (phallic shapes) are soaked in milk (an unmistakable parallel to both sexual fluid and mammary excretion). Food and sexual desire are inseparable at an infantile stage, if we follow Freud's line of thought; thus, these objects may be seen as satisfying both the stomach and the groin.

then, her mothering becomes an entirely private and isolated matter, one in which no one – neither her husband nor her neighbours – may actively participate.¹⁶

Isolating motherhood is a factor in Alžbětka's case, as well. Neither child nor adult, Alžbětka walks a fine line between naïve innocence and sexual maturity. With no siblings and no other children living in her apartment building, she is by far the youngest person in her domicile. Ultimately, though, it is her pursuit of motherhood that causes the most severe cases of abandonment by those around her. The book she reads on infertility and sexual dysfunction angers her father, who punishes her every time it makes an appearance: he both physically and emotionally pushes her away. Eager to not replicate an infertile lifestyle that she believes to be contagious, Alžbětka also sets herself apart from Božena: she rejects Božena's well-intentioned gifts and motherly caresses. By taking an acute interest in abnormal motherhood (that is, pre-pubescent motherhood with fairy-tale qualities), Alžbětka embodies Strout's and Beauvoir's commentaries on abnormal motherhood. Both neurotic and incredibly imaginative, the young girl becomes gradually more removed from her community. Meanwhile, entering into motherhood for unnatural reasons, Alžbětka perpetuates a negative cycle of upbringing, in which Otík's monstrous behaviour is never forced into submission.

Folkloric Elements

Švankmajer further reinforces the surrealist aspects of his film by applying key elements of the folktale. Indeed, by basing *Little Otík* on K. J. Erben's nineteenth-century fairy-tale *Otesánek* Švankmajer makes no effort to hide the essential role that folklore plays in his more contemporary version of the story. In fact, in many ways, aspects of *Little Otík* parallel elements established by two key folklore canons: both *The European Folktale: Form and Nature* by Max Lüthi and *Morphology of the Folktale* by Vladimir Propp.

¹⁶ One should also note that, in placing Otík under lock and key even when in public, Božena is continuously reliving the pregnancy denied her by unconquerable infertility. The well-protected baby carriage, the secured apartment, even the dank basement Otík is later locked in – all these places are symbolic of Božena's womb. Božena keeps careful watch over these areas and permits access only with hesitation, much as she might with her own uterus. It is through this method that Božena furthers the private and alienating aspects of her motherhood.

In *The European Folktale*, Lüthi outlines many aspects of folklore that set it aside from the broader literary canon. Elements such as one-dimensionality, abstraction, depthlessness, and simplistic repetition are just some of the themes Lüthi identifies as pertinent to the folktale. Many of these general folkloric qualities directly relate to *Little Otik*. For instance, folklore characters accept the supernatural as a normal part of existence. Never are characters surprised by a so-called otherworldly figure, and they converse quite naturally with humans and talking animals alike.¹⁷ Such is the case in *Little Otik*: after Otik takes on life, most people who encounter him do not question his existence. Instead, they simply wonder how best to interact with him: essentially, is he friend or foe? Only those who have not seen the stump child with their own eyes are hesitant to accept the possibility of alternate life forms.

Additionally, in true folkloric fashion, physical pain and abuse are not always portrayed realistically in *Little Otik*. Within a folktale, a person may suffer remarkable physical torment, such as dismemberment, with minimal reaction; indeed, hardly do blood and pain enter this particular genre.¹⁸ Similar glossings over of extreme violence are conducted in *Little Otik*: Alžbětka's elderly abuser and Otik's father are devoured off screen. Instead, Švankmajer takes an entirely simplistic approach towards death, much like in the folktale. While the characters' imminent deaths are made known, many of the gory details are eliminated from the screen.¹⁹ The sexual abuse that young Alžbětka endures from her paedophilic neighbour Žlábek is displayed in similarly elusive terms. Each time the elderly Žlábek puts on his glasses for a closer look at the girl, a desperate hand reaches out from his unbuttoned fly. No engorged genitalia are revealed, and no specificities of molestation are ever illustrated.²⁰ The lack of an on-screen portrayal of this abuse is therefore quite similar to Lüthi's conception of simplified painful events.

¹⁷ Lüthi, M., *The European Folktale: Form and Nature*, Indiana 1982, 6–7.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 12–13.

¹⁹ Of course, Švankmajer does show more brutality in his film than would be seen in the traditional folktale. In some cases, the simplistic, non-bloody deaths to which Lüthi refers are not applicable to *Little Otik*: bones and bits of flesh from gobbled-up animals and people are left for Otik's parents to see, and in one particularly disturbing scene, the screaming face and spurting blood of the social worker are smashed against a translucent door as she succumbs to Otik's insatiable hunger. Nevertheless, because of the above-mentioned bloodless deaths, one cannot ignore the presence of the folkloric interpretation of pain and anguish within the film, as well.

²⁰ Just because on-screen sexual molestation is never shown, though, does not mean Alžbětka has not suffered victimization. Indeed, Alžbětka's routinely evasive or terrified reactions to this man demonstrate that she suffers some type of abuse.

Extremes are yet another aspect of folklore that directly relate to *Little Otik*. Characters of folktales suffer from severe forms of punishment,²¹ and Švankmajer's world proves to be barely different in this respect. Any isolation a character feels in the film, for instance, eventually becomes total abandonment: Božena, the infertile mother of Otik, is forced to hide her impossible child in their apartment; the ravenous infant is ultimately tied up and locked away in a dark basement; the pre-pubescent Alžbětka, by prematurely pursuing motherhood, distances herself from her own family. The condition of Božena and Karel can also be seen as extreme punishment: although desperate to have children, not just one, but both of them are infertile. Božena's attempts at pregnancy later in life, therefore, prove to be much more complicated than what her real counterparts of the '90s encounter. Indeed, while the likelihood that both a woman *and* her partner suffer from infertility is quite small, it is this same remote possibility that plagues the Horákovás.

Additional extremism continues throughout the film. Alžbětka guiltlessly sacrifices Karel to Otik as punishment for him having locked his son in a trunk; Alžbětka's sexual abuser is similarly fed to the monster; and the caretaker marches downstairs after Otik destroys her cabbage patch, presumably to split him in two (which is how the original fairy-tale ends). In all these cases and more, punishment is incredibly severe: the cessation of life and the prevention of further development serve as exclusive means of discipline. Other extremes are identifiable in *Little Otik*, as well. There is the extreme of reproductive inability: the childless couple in the film parallels the common folkloric trope of an old couple who has always wanted children but who could never conceive. The extreme of criminal behaviour is also present: Alžbětka quickly transitions from relatively harmless theft to the atrocity of human sacrifice.²²

In his work, Lüthi addresses also the issue of unteachability. Folklore characters, he claims, never learn their lessons; they act instinctively and instantaneously, without considering past episodes in which the same actions ended badly.²³ This folkloric quality is unavoidably present in Švankmajer's film. Never seeming to learn from previous mistakes, the characters in *Little Otik* automatically cycle through the same set of actions. For instance, no matter how much he consumes – whether it is her own hair, their cat, the postman, or a social worker – Božena still considers Otik to be eternally innocent. She refuses to learn from Otik's increasingly dangerous

²¹ Lüthi, M., *The European Folktale*, 29.

²² *Ibidem*, 35.

²³ *Ibidem*, 39.

behaviour, and instead begins anew with her belief in his purity after each cannibalistic episode.²⁴

This concept of unteachability corresponds with Propp's discussion of folkloric repetition, as well. In his *Morphology of the Folktale*, Propp insists that repetition plays a crucial role in the construct of the folktale. The specific type of repetition may vary, he claims, but nevertheless the general theme of repeatability is frequently present in folktales.²⁵ *Little Otik* is no different in this sense. Božena's process of mourning her infertility is seen in her persistent packing and unpacking of unused baby clothes. Karel, later violently reacting to Božena's acceptance of Otik as a real infant, beats the stump against a table, yelling several times that it is just a piece of wood. The caretaker repeatedly returns to her cabbages to ensure their successful growth. Even the insertion of Erben's fairy-tale into Švankmajer's work, as narrated by Alžbětka, is repetitive: the presence of the original tale returns again and again to be compared to "real" events within the film.

Infertility and Objects

The aforementioned surrealist elements strengthened by historical and literary trends cause specific instances of motherhood in *Little Otik* to be not just negative, but also destructive. The first type of violently abnormal motherhood is adult, yet barren, as represented by the infertile Božena Horáková. Despite an overpowering desperation to become a mother, Božena is generally disassociated from sex, one of the only actions that, in truth, could actuate her deepest desire of becoming a mother.

²⁴ Of course, in some ways she is technically correct. In a surrealist setting, all desires are fetishistic, and all fetishized desires within infants are basically the same. Each desire and impulse that an infant has, is simultaneously libidinal and entirely innocent. Food, human contact, comfort – these and more could be seen as displacements of sexual contact. Yet because everything can be seen as sexual, then everything is non-sexual at the same time. As such, Otik is both a voracious monster and a purely innocent being. For more on sexuality and eroticism in a surrealist context, see the chapter "Happiness, Eroticism and Literature" from Georges Bataille's *The Absence of Myth*.

²⁵ Propp, V., *Morphology of the Folktale*, Indiana 1958, 67. "Repetition may appear as an even distribution (three tasks, three years' service), as an accumulation (the third of three tasks as the most difficult, the third battle the worst, etc.), or may twice produce negative results before the third, successful outcome."

Indeed, with the exception of Otik's birth scene²⁶ and the hair-eating scene,²⁷ Božena is entirely disassociated from sexuality and its reproductive consequences: not only are both Horáková's infertile, but they also seem disinterested and distant from sex itself. A realistic approach to Božena's situation, then, reveals only hopelessly eternal infertility.

However, Božena can be defined in more ways than just through her actions (or lack thereof, when regarding sexual intercourse). In true surrealist style, it is not physical behaviour, but rather the objects around her, that best expose Božena's desires and thus allow her to become a mother in spite of sexual dysfunction. Indeed, as Alison Frank claims in *Reframing Reality: The Aesthetics of the Surrealist Object in French and Czech Cinema*, objects are essential to the art of surrealists due to their close connection to the unconscious.²⁸ Therefore, Božena is defined by these so-called "surrealist objects": objects that are not just practical, but that also have the ability to demonstrate personal desires and needs.²⁹ Like Otik himself,³⁰ other objects in Božena's life magnify her desperation to reproduce. Her suitcase packed with brand-new baby clothes, for example, is certainly practical: if she wants a child, she must have clothes for it to wear. However, this suitcase also represents her tremendous eagerness to have a child, her failed attempts at becoming pregnant, and her stubborn unwillingness to ever fully abandon the dream of having a child. Indeed, although she packs up the clothes after a final visit to her doctor, she never gives away the suitcase. She thus demonstrates either a glimmer of hope that the scientific proof of her infertility is faulty, or else a fairy-tale belief that miracle birth is possible.

²⁶ Božena's husband pulls a tree stump out of the ground with great force and effort. The camera angle (a close-up of his face while he is forcefully tugging at something out of the frame) hints at masturbation. His return to Božena with the end result of his masturbatory act (a polished and shaped tree stump) suggests that she served as his inspiration.

²⁷ As Otik is eating Božena's hair (the first example of his gluttony) her husband comes from behind to cut her hair and save her from being scalped. The positioning of him directly behind Božena, as well as their quick back-and-forth movements and sharp cries, illustrate the only on-screen example of "sex" the two have in the film.

²⁸ Frank, A., *Reframing Reality*, 16. "All surrealist objects may be considered personal because the associations that the unconscious suggests in relation to the object will be symptomatic of the individual's preoccupations."

²⁹ *Ibidem*, 21.

³⁰ Hames, P., *The Core of Reality: Puppets in the Feature Films of Jan Švankmajer*, in: *The Cinema of Jan Švankmajer: Dark Alchemy*. Ed. P. Hames, New York 2008, 83–103. Otik, Hames argues, "is a direct creation of the characters' desire".

Other objects illustrate this desperation to become a mother, as well. Having been presented Otik by a teasing husband, Božena begins acting as though the stump were real.³¹ She becomes keen on faking a pregnancy so she can take her new-born home with her. Soon, she proudly presents to Karel her pregnancy pillows, with months one through nine³² laid neatly upon their bed. To her husband's great horror, Božena follows through with her scheme of fabricated pregnancy, thus tricking practically everyone into thinking she truly is expecting. Even food displays this unyielding commitment Božena has to her dream. Like Beauvoir's mothers who enthusiastically suffer pain from pregnancy,³³ Božena is determined, and even happy, to go through the discomfort of pregnancy, despite having an empty womb. For instance, although they make her physically ill, she eats pickles with whipped cream.³⁴ She does this, presumably, because legitimately pregnant women have similarly strange cravings.³⁵

Alison Frank suggests that surrealist objects are directly connected to a character's subconscious obsessions. Therefore, it is only fitting that objects surrounding Božena are a substitute for the reproductive sex she never experiences. The pregnancy pillows are laid out on the bed she shares with her husband, suggesting that she has replaced all hope of sexual intimacy with a pursuit of fantastical motherhood. When Karel learns that she has informed the neighbours of her pregnancy, there is a close-up of Božena's hands pushing a needle through a buttonhole (an unmistakable reference to intercourse). These surrealist objects, like the baby clothes, are practical: she seems to be repairing a clothing item for Otik. Yet the shot of the needle entering the buttonhole occurs at the very moment when Božena says that she is pregnant. Here, Švankmajer demonstrates that material representations of sexual contact better illustrate a fictional pregnancy than an actual intercourse does.

³¹ Dryje, F, The Force of Imagination, in: *The Cinema of Jan Švankmajer: Dark Alchemy*. Ed. P. Hames, New York 2008, 143–203. She initiates “a game of ‘as if’ as [she] starts to treat the piece of wood as if it were a real living child”.

³² These pillows, when placed underneath clothing, are intended to imitate a pregnant woman's growing womb. Each month is slightly larger than the next.

³³ Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex*, 538. Many women “take intense pleasure in enduring” pregnancy.

³⁴ Like the milk and carrots that Otik voraciously consumes, the pickles and whipped cream are unmistakable allusions to both sexual activity and fertility: the phallic pickles are covered in a substance that closely resembles seminal fluid. In devouring these objects, Božena is simultaneously emanating both pregnancy and sexual virility.

³⁵ Because of these “cravings”, it is hardly a surprise that when the time to give birth comes, she screams as a result of her fake contractions. This occurs even when she is in the presence of only her husband, who is fully aware of their mutual barrenness.

Thus, the importance of the relationship between object and surrealism is demonstrated in Božena's case. Real-life encounters between her and her husband fall flat; no offspring can ever be produced in such a setting. The acceptance of surrealist objects as an extension of Božena's innermost dreams, on the other hand, propels her into a surrealist world in which infertile motherhood is possible.

Escaping Sexual Abuse

The young girl Alžbětka also stumbles upon surrealist motherhood by way of sexual dysfunction. In her case, though, it is abuse, and not infertility, from which she suffers. In many ways, she is a victim of the myth that childhood is an ideal, innocent state. Despite complaining to both her mother and the caretaker about the sexually aggressive behaviour of Mr. Žlábek,³⁶ she is forced to endure his unwanted advances in isolation. Neither her mother nor the caretaker is willing to admit that such a feeble man could or would molest a young girl, and thus they both perpetuate the distorted concept of idealized adolescence, as Švankmajer would claim.³⁷ The Alžbětka of the real world is therefore stuck in an unprivileged childhood existence,³⁸ in which no one believes her cries for help.

With the help of objects Alžbětka also enters into surrealist interactions with the world around her. To Alžbětka, adolescence is a strange and dangerous mix of abuse, curiosity, and suspicion – all aspects that are reflected in objects around her. For example, each time he encounters her, the paedophile neighbour puts on his glasses. These not only allow him to see her better,³⁹ but they also trigger in Alžbětka a justified fear of sexual advances, as evidenced by her holding onto her

³⁶ It has already been noted that each time Žlábek sees Alžbětka, there is movement in his pants, and a reaching hand pops out. Further predatory behaviour is seen later when, upon seeing her peering into her neighbours' keyhole, he stretches his arms out to her partially exposed bottom. While no sexual abuse is present on screen, his reaction to seeing Alžbětka and her extreme discomfort upon meeting him both hint at an offstage abuse of a sexual nature.

³⁷ Richardson, M., *Surrealism and Cinema*, New York 2006, 131. There is a "deformed" perception "of childhood as a lost paradise", Švankmajer argues.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, 129.

³⁹ The significance of the paedophile's glasses is two-fold here. As stated above, they allow him to see more clearly the object of his sexual attraction. Yet, one should also consider a more surrealist approach to the lenses: serving as a sort of film through which suppressed desires may be perceived, the glasses are a passageway into a strange (and disturbing) world of realized dreams.

skirt whenever he reaches for her. Furthermore, her childlike curiosity to better understand the molestation of her body leads her to voraciously read a book on sexual dysfunction and infertility. This book provides more than adult-themed information, however. By using it as a booster seat at the dinner table, Alžbětka demonstrates a belief that the physicality of this object, like its contents, can help her reach adulthood. Finally, the cream-filled chocolate that Božena gives her stirs within the girl a deep sense of suspicion: fearing that the young couple's infertility is contagious, she drops the sweet and its sperm-like contents on the floor.

One could argue that these objects do not outline a surrealistic approach to Alžbětka's understanding of her environment, and that instead, they simply demonstrate the normal confusion and superstitions of an abused young girl on the verge of puberty. However, the author of this paper would claim that, in combination with one more object (that is, her fairy-tale book) the objects allow Alžbětka to take the leap from reality to fairy-tale, and thus do fall within the realm of surrealism. Her eager exchange of the sexual dysfunction book for this book of fairy-tales, in which she first reads the story of Otesánek, suggests that fantasy is just as believable to her as is reality. She neatly substitutes commentaries on slow sperm and infertility with details on Otesánek's insatiable hunger. Indeed, both topics seem to be given equal merit in Alžbětka's eyes; one is not more reliable or rational than the other.

Paralleling Božena's experiences, it is Alžbětka's abnormal interactions with her world that ultimately both propel her into surrealist motherhood and provide her an escape from sexual abuse. For example, claiming that it wet itself, she spansks her baby-doll, thus giving an inanimate object the agency to redirect shame away from herself.⁴⁰ At another point, she positions a ball under her shirt, in imitation of Božena's similarly fake pregnancy. This same object is seen bouncing down the stairs several times. By chasing the ball (as much a representation of early stages of motherhood as it is an imitation of a fetus), Alžbětka is able to literally run past the location where she typically encounters her abuser. In doing so, she avoids further painful situations. Finally, her incessant spying on Božena and Otík, as well as her

⁴⁰ Certainly this example of fictionalized mothering indicates that Alžbětka's concept of motherhood is somewhat twisted from the beginning. By scolding a doll that, in her mind, failed to control its bladder, Alžbětka is imitating her own neuroses and in essence is transferring them over to a new generation (coincidentally, this is quite in keeping with Beauvoir's claims). Upon adopting Otík as her own child, Alžbětka displays similar transmission of neurotic behaviour. Perceiving Otík to be as isolated and ignored a figure as she, Alžbětka takes it upon herself to care for him, presumably so as to eliminate both her and his states of loneliness. Yet in complying with his extreme gluttony in order to emotionally support him, she parents no better than the Horáková's, whom she so strongly scrutinizes.

acceptance of Otik as a child long before he is “born”, preoccupies her.⁴¹ This investigation of Božena’s unnatural motherhood distracts Alžbětka from the topic of sexual dysfunction. Eventually, her curiosity regarding Božena’s surrealist circumstances allows Alžbětka to accept the Otesánek fairy-tale as truth and to stand up to her abuser.⁴² Perhaps most importantly, though, Alžbětka eventually begins her own state of motherhood with the stump child. Since motherhood is often associated with a lack of sexuality,⁴³ her transformation into Otik’s mother⁴⁴ allows her to shed her role as a sexual abuse victim. Therefore, both by accepting Božena’s fantastical motherhood and then by inheriting the role of Otik’s mother, Alžbětka finds an escape from the oppressive abuse of her childhood.

Menopausal Birth

Správcová (the building’s caretaker) enters into surrealist motherhood from a slightly different angle than Božena and Alžbětka do. As a post-menopausal woman, she has, like Božena, no hope of naturally birthing a child. Yet Správcová does not seem to desire a human baby, specifically; instead, she transcends the barrenness of her womb by raising cabbages from seed.

Správcová’s process of growing these plants, while fragmented throughout the stories of the other two mothers, is painstakingly illustrated. One sees, for example, how the caretaker penetrates the dirt of the starter pots with her index finger, so as to create a nourishing spot for each seed. This penetration is the sexual act that allows the seeds to begin growing in a safe, womb-like environment. Later, the seeds are transferred to the harsher environment of the outdoors. Here, Správcová

⁴¹ Alžbětka sees Otik in Božena’s lap while the latter is still supposedly pregnant. This prompts Alžbětka to ask her own mother whether humans, like kangaroos, can take babies out of their stomachs at will.

⁴² While she is spying yet again on Božena, her neighbour, for a second time, attempts to grab her partially exposed behind. This time, however, she turns around and yells at him, thus scaring him off.

⁴³ Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex*, 539. The breast of a pregnant woman, Beauvoir claims, is no longer “an erotic object” because it is now “a source of life”.

⁴⁴ At a later point in the film, Božena caves in to Karel’s demands and agrees to lock Otik in the dark and empty basement of their apartment building. It is here that Alžbětka comes face to face with Otik, and it is here that she feels sympathy for him. Shortly afterwards, she begins to mother him, providing him with toys, company, food, and discipline.

continues to look after them, hoeing out weeds and providing plenty of water. In many ways, these plants are her new-borns: they have exited the womb but still require close attention and care.

Because of her cabbage babies, Správcová is attuned to the natural process of growth in a way Božena never is. Božena is so desperate to mother Otik that she eliminates the ninth month of pregnancy altogether, giving “birth” instead to a premature baby. Správcová, on the other hand, understands the slow process of nature and the many months it takes for seeds to sprout and grow into adult plants. She patiently and calmly provides her cabbages with what they need until they are full size. In doing so, it is she, and not Božena, who embodies Beauvoir’s commentary on normal motherhood: directly involved in natural development, the cabbage mother transcends humanness by creating a symbiosis between animal and plant.⁴⁵

The caretaker’s patience sets her apart not only from Božena, but also from Alžbětka, who is so eager to discard childhood that she adopts the role of mother before reaching puberty. Therefore, a viewer may initially be lulled into the assumption that the quiet caretaker demonstrates a non-savage example of surrealist motherhood. Indeed, Správcová seems to exist in a peaceful state of cabbage tending, removed from the frantic events in the apartments above. In fact, while she is passively connected to issues of brutality (she reports to the police the rapid disappearances of people whom Otik has consumed, for instance) there is little in the earlier actions of the caretaker that link her directly to violence.

All the same, in spite of her patient tendencies, Správcová is eventually forced to be violent, as foreshadowed by Alžbětka’s book of fairy-tales. Upon observing her garden patch littered with the sad remains of stolen cabbages, Správcová finally acknowledges the existence of Otik and marches downstairs, a hoe in hand, to defeat the destructive monster. It is this action of vengeance that demonstrates the depth of her commitment to gardening, and which allows her surrealist motherhood to take a violent turn. Like other objects in the film, Správcová’s cabbages are not just practical. They, too, are surrealist, and demonstrate a secret need of the caretaker,⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex*, 538. “Snared by nature, [the pregnant woman] is plant and animal, a collection of colloids, an incubator, an egg,” Beauvoir states. While Božena and Alžbětka also unify animal and plant matter by accepting a tree stump as a baby, the difference here is that Správcová approaches the symbiosis in a natural way: her cabbages are *like* babies for her, but she does not trick herself into believing they are *actually* children with human characteristics.

⁴⁶ Frank, A., *Reframing Reality*, 21. “The surrealist object’s meaning is often mysterious and very personal”, Frank claims.

one that is never truly explained.⁴⁷ However, while the cabbages' particular meaning is never defined, their value to Správcová is clear: they are equivalent in worth to another person's child. Therefore, if destroyed, they may – and even ought to – be avenged.

Savagery, Violence, and Cannibalism

Although the female characters' experiences with surrealist motherhood in *Little Otik* are unique from each other, one particular aspect unites them all together: when their innermost dreams are realized, disaster is imminent. Indeed, all three examples of motherhood end in both physical and emotional destruction. For instance, in spite of endless signs that Otik is a voracious monster, Božena stubbornly defends Otik's actions. When he eats her hair, she worries about him choking; when he devours her cat, she states the animal was old and would have died soon anyways; when he consumes the mailman and social worker, Božena, while traumatized, still remains adamantly opposed to her husband's wishes to end Otik's existence.⁴⁸ Her folkloric (that is, her simplistically unchanging) support of Otik in light of violent and cannibalistic acts proves that her desire for reproduction has taken precedence over everything else. She has been given the opportunity to mother, in spite of infertility, and she will never abandon her new state. In the battle between human life and surrealist motherhood, Božena chooses the latter. She thus seals the fate of the cat, the postman, the social worker, the paedophile, and ultimately her husband and herself, as well.

Alžbětka demonstrates similar commitment to preserving Otik's life despite his violent acts. Thanks to her fairy-tale book, she knows quite well of Otik's ravenous appetite for human flesh. Yet she still takes Otik under her wing and provides for him. Like Božena, once she has escaped her problems through this distorted form of motherhood, Alžbětka cannot go back. Realizing she can no longer feed him from her parents' fridge, she resorts to a savage solution that calls to mind the European folktale: using matches to symbolize all the inhabitants of the building (including her own parents), she picks at random who will serve as Otik's next

⁴⁷ I would claim that the main incentive behind the caretaker's gardening is to transcend menopause. Other motivations certainly are possible, but one simply cannot know for sure without further background information on her life.

⁴⁸ Dryje, F., *The Force of Imagination*, 192. Or, as Dryje puts it, to "kill the unmanageable glutton".

meal. In doing so, she takes Božena's passive acceptance of cannibalistic acts to another, more disturbing level. Unlike her older counterpoint, then, Alžbětka fully recognizes Otik's desire for flesh and ultimately sacrifices human life for him, first by luring her abuser to Otik's dark corner, and then by notifying Otik of his approaching father.

In consideration of all the destruction Otik causes, it may be tempting to regard the caretaker's act of revenge as beneficial. After all, she is the only one who breaks the growing trend of violence and rids the world of a deadly monster. Yet one must also examine how her vengeance affects the young Alžbětka. Otik has served as a means to an end for the girl. He has permitted her to shed her victimized skin and become a non-sexual mother, and thus he is an essential aspect of this non-sexuality. Indeed, although her abuser is no longer a threat, having been consumed by a folkloric form of punishment, Alžbětka's position at the end of the film as a non-erotic mother relies heavily on Otik's existence and need for care. In accepting the real presence of a fictional figure (Otik as Otesánek), Alžbětka has grown emotionally attached to folkloric extremes, in terms of both punishment and basic interactions. Her role as a mother is structured heavily around Otik's demands of playtime and feeding, and, without Otik to nurture, Alžbětka is at risk of reverting to a restrictive childhood.

Správcová, therefore, causes emotional damage on Alžbětka by attacking Otik: she eliminates the main source of structure, comfort, and affection in the young girl's life. On the delicate edge between childhood and adulthood, Alžbětka is doomed by the caretaker's actions to tumble back into the frightening and isolating world of adolescence. There, she has no one to provide for, no one to distract her from thoughts on sexual dysfunction, and no one whom she can truly trust.⁴⁹ Because of the caretaker's vengeance, Alžbětka is thus violently ripped from adulthood before she is given much chance to grow.

Conclusions

Incorporating various historical and literary elements into his fictional world, Švankmajer creates a remarkable example of surrealism in *Little Otik*. It is within this surrealist framework that Švankmajer allows three of his female characters to see their most secret desires come to fruition. Whether stemming from overcoming

⁴⁹ In taking revenge, Správcová goes back on her promise to passively listen to Alžbětka's fairy-tale, therefore betraying the girl's faith in adults.

infertility, from escaping sexual abuse, or from transcending menopause, the realization of desires results in a motherhood that is quite miraculous. Indeed, it would be impossible to see similar examples of motherhood in a non-surrealist and more realistic setting.

Yet these unnatural surrealist phenomena are more than just miraculous; they also magnify and intensify the darker sides of inner yearnings, and thus ultimately lead to violence and brutality. Božena is repeatedly given a chance to face the savagery of her son but she never does so. In fact, her obsession with abnormal motherhood ends only once Otik has consumed her. Alžbětka is a similarly questionable guardian. She would rather sacrifice her own parents to Otik's bottomless stomach than abandon her newfound role as an asexual mother. Finally, the caretaker falls back on a promise when she avenges the destruction of her cabbages. The effect on Alžbětka is severe emotional anguish, instability, and, more than likely, developmental regression.⁵⁰ As surrealism gives such great agency to innermost desires and aspirations, the final result of granting the deepest of wishes is a complete disdain for physical and mental safety. In the end, the surrealist motherhood of *Little Otik* is nothing other than violent, brutal, and even cannibalistic.

ABSTRACT

Infertility, Abuse, and Menopause: Surrealist Motherhood in Jan Švankmajer's *Little Otik*

Amanda K. Fisher

Jan Švankmajer's surrealist film *Little Otik* (2000) portrays a devastating and atypical model of motherhood. Božena Horáková, the main female character, suffers from infertility and adopts a tree stump, which soon comes alive and starts consuming people. A little later, Božena's neighbour, Alžbětka, who is trying to escape from sexual abuse, takes over as the stump Otik's second mother. Meanwhile, the old housekeeper at their apartment building attempts to grow cabbage, but when Otik destroys her garden, she takes violent revenge for her "children's" death. Jan Švankmajer uses typical surrealist methods to prove that artificial motherhood – motherhood

⁵⁰ Of course, the film ends before this character is further developed, but nevertheless the trajectory towards regression seems fairly clear.

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despite infertility and menopause or as a result of violence – will eventually prove to be vicious and destructive.

Key words: Jan Švankmajer, *Little Otik*, surrealist motherhood, Alžbětka, Božena Horáková

АННОТАЦИЯ

Бесплодие, насилие и менопауза: сюрреалистическое материнство в фильме Яна Шванкмайера «Полено»

Аманда К. Фишер

В своем сюрреалистическом фильме «Полено» (2000) Ян Шванкмайер представляет нетипичный и разрушительный вариант материнства. Главная героиня фильма, страдающая бесплодием Божена Горакова, усыновляет пень, который в скором времени оживает и начинает поедать все вокруг, включая людей. Соседская девочка Альжбетка, спасаясь от сексуального насилия, позже становится второй матерью пня Отика. Старая смотрительница их дома пассивно выращивает из семян капусту, но после того, как Отик уничтожает ее сад, она яростно мстит за смерть своих «детей». Используя типичные сюрреалистические методы, Ян Шванкмайер доказывает, что искусственное материнство, т.е. материнство вопреки бесплодию и менопаузе или как результат насилия, в конечном итоге оказывается порочным и разрушительным.

Ключевые слова: Ян Шванкмайер, «Полено», сюрреалистическое материнство, Альжбетка, Божена Горакова

REVIEWS

Nada Vaverová

REVIEW ON A BOOK BY PAVEL ŠTOLL:
Latvian Culture and the Moravian Church. The Czech
Context of Latvian Cultural Traditions

Štoll, P., *Latvian Culture and the Moravian Church. Czech Contexts of Latvian Cultural Traditions in the 17th-20th Centuries*, Prague: Karolinum 2013, 323 pp., ISBN 978-80-246-2284-2

The monograph created on the basis of the doctoral dissertation *Latvian culture and Moravian Church. Czech Contexts of Latvian Cultural Traditions in the 17th-20th Centuries* by a Czech lettonist provides a detailed insight into permeation of Czech cultural and literary traditions into the Latvian area. Even though the author places his book into the Czech and Slovakian translation and literary-science Baltistic context, it comprises the first systematic research of its kind.

The author assumes a gestalt philology viewpoint and lists two different approaches as methodology sources: a structurally-semiotic based on Tartu school and a receptionally-hermeneutic one. Due to the fact that most of the texts originate in the National Revival era, when the non-aesthetic functions of literature played a significant role, the author chooses Lotman methodology and, in accordance with the connection to domestic Baltistic tradition, its Czech continuation in processing of semiotic-typological studies of the national era culture penned by V. Macura. The researched subject is defined by certain Latvian cultural traditions from the 17th-20th century and their Czech contexts, which have been mediated mostly through German Herrnhut (Czech: Ochránov) passed reform movement of the revived Moravian Church. Inspired by the Moravian Church preacher J. A. Comenius, whose influence is mapped in the work, the monograph employs a triadic division of separate cultural contexts for its structure. The division *Sapientia Mentis* (Wisdom of Mind) notices the beginnings of Latvian education and science popularisation, and thus follows up on Comenius' ideas from the area of paedagogics and didactics, which have met with acceptance in Latvia through the efforts of the pastors E. Glück and probably G. F. Stender as well. Similarly, as the research of

Czech and Slovak literary-science, Baltistics is summarised in the introduction. Fundamental historic and religious facts relating to the Latvian country and typologisation of Latvian National Revival according to M. Hroch are presented in the following chapter. The *Sapientia Mentis* first presents a researched list of facts relating to the influence of Comenius' works in the Baltics. Apart from that, through a literally genetic line represented by his son-in-law, a Moravian Church bishop and politician Petr Figul Jablonský in Klaipėda, and grandson D. A. Jablonský in Lithuanian Biržiai, Comenius' thoughts had been spread by the Tartu university professors and even his textbooks can be tracked throughout Latvia. Since "knowledge is for Comenius inseparably connected with faith in God" (p. 63), further, at least typologically, followers of Comenius had become the above-mentioned pastors. The chapter further treats Czech influences in the culture of Latvian National Revival, noteworthy of which is the Latvian translation of a poem from the compilation *The Hundred-Leaved Rose* by Čelakovský, whose musical rendition is among the most popular Latvian songs to this day. Another important inspiration by the Czech National Revival would be orthography. Whilst this fact is rarely-known nowadays, a professor of the Charles University, Josef Zubatý, was among the godfathers of the modern Latvian orthography.

The second part of Comenius' triad, *Pietas Cordis* (Piousness of Heart), presents an insight into the Latvian Herrnhuterian Movement and Czech-Latvian musical contacts; further it typologises Livon Herrnhuterian culture using Lotman semiotics, and divides texts into primary, secondary and tertiary using Gérard Genet's terms of transtextuality, intertextuality, architextuality, metatextuality and paratextuality combined with the viewpoint of genre-stylistic character. Under these criteria, the primary Herrnhuterian texts are defined as "architexts of Herrnhuterian literature, which were created in the Herrnhuterian community and for its needs" (p. 162) and their vast majority comprises of manuscripts with a distinct religiously-ethical or social dimension. Beletry with Herrnhuterian thematics written outside the Herrnhuterian movement, and not intended for its purposes, is classified as secondary. The author compiles a list of works (among which the chronologically first is the first Latvian realistic novel at all, *Times of the Land-Surveyors* by the Kaudzīte brothers) by important Latvian authors in this chapter, among whom one can find R. Blaumanis, K. Skalbe and J. Veselis. The author then analyses the pivotal works (*Times of the Land-Surveyors* and J. Poruks' drama *Herrnhuterians* and several other his proses) and proceeds from then, via, in Latvian culture frequently appearing so called the "pure in heart", the "white robe" symbol and the good simpleton Antiņš to analysis of tertiary texts, which are all called the "Culture of Heart". The tertiary texts differ from the primary and secondary ones in the fact that they do not specifically mention the Herrnhuterian movement, yet can be genetically or typologically connected to it. This part is concluded with the introduction of life

and work of a Latvian writer, literary researcher and a translator of Czech prose and poetry, Marta Grimma.

In the last part of the triad, *Tranquillitas Vitae* (Peace of Life), the book delves into texts emphasizing social, national or political themes. If until now J. A. Comenius was the main link to the Latvian area among the significant people in the Czech culture and history, this part focuses on the reflection of Jan Hus, especially of his (idealised) life. Besides Jan Hus, this part treats the strongly morally functioning Livon brethren codex, which is compared with the previous German and Comenius' Moravian Church codices.

The entire book is, with systematic consistence, divided into chapters (with the core of the work structured into the mentioned Comenius' triad), sub-chapters and smaller parts; it includes an English résumé, a pictorial supplement and a name index. The author places Latvian reflexions of Czech culture into the European frame using his broad knowledge going beyond Lettonistic literary science and remembers to consider a combination of influences (e.g. the influence of domestic folklore tradition). His research builds on the work of Latvian colleagues pursuing the Latvian Herrnhuterian movement. He also hints at the possibility of further research of the Estonian Herrnhuterian movement. The publication deserves attention of anybody interested in the fates of the Moravian Church, Latvian literature and culture in general.

Tereza Chlaňová

THE FIRST YEAR OF VISEGRAD EASTERN PARTNERSHIP LITERARY AWARD

Literatures of the countries of the Eastern Partnership (EP) do not belong to frequently and plentifully read ones in Central European countries. Causes for the marginality of these literatures are numerous and they are not always easy to detect or clarify, let alone eradicate. It is highly positive that one can find initiatives aiming at the change of such a situation. In 2014, The Department of Russian and East European Studies (Faculty of Philosophy, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia) initiated the creation of The Visegrad Eastern Partnership Literary Award project (VEaPLA), which is supposed to become a platform for cooperation among intellectuals working in the field of literature of the post-Soviet area and in the V4 countries. The Head of the Department Doc. Mgr. Ľubor Matejko, PhD. and his colleagues managed to form the team of scholars including the partners from the V4 countries (The Czech republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia) as well as from the countries of the EP (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldavia, Ukraine) who would contribute to the presentation of the authors of poetry, fiction and non-fiction literary works from the countries of the EP to readers from Central Europe. On the 4th of July 2014, the first VEaPLA jury meeting was held in Bratislava. The main goal was to choose the winner of VEaPLA and thus to support an outstanding personality and popularize his/her works as well as his/her country. There were two main criteria to meet: 1) the nominated book had to be published within the last three years; 2) the book was supposed to have an exceptional response of the public and a particular impact on the life of the country. The nominations (supported by short justifications, added reviews and critiques) had been submitted by the current project partners from the countries of the EP, namely from Armenia, Belarus and Ukraine. Unfortunately, no nominations came from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldavia. Armenian partners nominated two young authors: a fiction and non-fiction writer Aram Pachyan (born 1983) for the book *Goodbye, Bird* (Yerevan: Antares Publishing House, 2012) and a writer, actor and playwright Hovhannes Tekgyozyan (born 1974) for the book *The Fleeting City* (Yerevan: Antares Publishing

House, 2012). Both authors, although each by different means, attempt to present the contemporary world as an unstable, incomprehensible, “fleeting” and hostile entity causing the feeling of isolation of the individual (Tekgyozyan does this by the means of fantastical cartoon-animated descriptions, echoing voices; Pachyan by creating a complicated puzzle-like-text balancing on the verge of reality, imagination, recollections, thus erasing the borders between them). Belarusian partners nominated three authors: a philosopher, essayist and literary critic Valiantsin Akudovich (born 1950) for *A Book About Nothing* (Minsk: Logvinau, 2012), a poet, prose-writer, translator and philosopher Ihar Babkou (born 1964) for the book *A Minute* (Minsk: Logvinau, 2013) and a writer and translator Alherd Bakharevich (born 1975) for the book *Hamburg Account of Bakharevich* (Minsk: Logvinau, 2012). The last nominations came from Ukraine: Lina Kostenko (born 1930) for her book *Diary of a Ukrainian Madman* (Kiev: A-ba-ba-ha-la-ma-ha, 2010), Yuriy Vynnychuk (born 1952) for his book *The Tango of Death* (Kharkov: Folio, 2012). Unfortunately, the book by Lina Kostenko was eliminated, because it did not fulfil the condition of the year of publishing; Yuriy Vynnychuk was not taken into account for the late nomination. The final combat thus took place among Belarusian and Armenian authors. Especially interesting nominations were those from Belarus, not only because of the various genres of the nominated books (Babkou – fiction, Bakharevich – literary essays, Akudovich – a book of philosophy), but also for the extraordinariness and originality of the personalities themselves. The choice was thus enriched by subjective, witty, iconoclastic and destructive assessment of the classical Belarusian literature in the form of over 50 essays (Bakharevich), a book dealing with the metaphysics of absence (Akudovich) and a novel introducing the question of the role of the intellectual in the contemporary Belarusian milieu, his isolation and loneliness and thus creating “the specific zone of thinking” (Babkou). VEaPLA jury, consisting of Lubor Matejko, Mária Kusá, Anton Eliáš (Comenius University, Bratislava), Lajos Pálfalvi (Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest), Paulina Olechowska (University of Warsaw, voted in absence – by post) and Tereza Chláňová (Charles University, Prague), decided to award as the Book of the year 2014 Ihar Babkou’s *A Minute*. The jury valued the wide range of Babkou’s activities (including high originality of his philosophical essays), his influence in the Belarusian intellectual milieu, taking into account the fact that several Babkou’s books have won particular attention of the reading public from Belarus and beyond. Last but not least, the members of the jury appreciated Babkou’s cultivated use of language, which, on the top of that, becomes the theme itself – the question of the artistic expression. The consequence of the award does not lie only in the increase of the prestige of the author and the financial prize of €1,300, but also in publishing the book in one of the languages of the V4 countries (this time in Slovak; Ihar Babkov. *Minútka. Tri príbehy*. Translation Ivana Slivková, Lubor Matejko. Artforum 2014). The jury meeting was not restricted only to the discussion about the nominated

books; the present members had the possibility to be introduced into the situation of the chosen literatures of the EP by the post-graduate students of the Department: the current literary process in Armenia was presented by Nina Cingerová, the Belarusian literature by Ivan Posokhin, Kateřina Hřčková concluded by the outline of Georgian contemporary literature. The outlines of Moldavian and Ukrainian literatures (authors: Libuša Vajdová, Irina Dulebová) appeared in the Eastern Partnership Literary Review (Vol. 1 [2014], No. 1), a periodical closely related to the above described activities of Lubor Matejko and his team. This periodical (planned to be published by the Comenius University twice a year) is intended to be dedicated to the literary scenes of the countries of the EP. Last but not least, it is necessary to mention also the project's aim to create a database of authors, literary reviews, publishing houses and literary awards, festivals, competitions and events of the literary life scene in the countries of the EP (in an electronic version). All in all, the first year of the project has demonstrated a great potential and a promising development in the future.