MARTIN THARP

Repressed Utopias vs. Utopian Repressions: Czech Countercultural Communal Living Arrangements in the 'Normalization' Era (1970–1989)

The present contribution aims to examine this specific historic 'Second World' phenomenon — the communal living arrangements attempted by counterculturally minded, predominantly working-class youth in post-1968 Czechoslovakia, often (though not exclusively) in the former German Sudetenland — as an instance of the potentials and limitations associated with an attempt at a 'mobile commons' in 20th-century state socialism. Not only is the legacy of the Czech communes (*baráky*) an insufficiently researched historical topic, but even further, the placement of this phenomenon between its reflection of the American communal-utopian tradition in its 1960s forms, the emerging critique of industrial modernity, the growth of 20th-century 'civil-society' concepts, and the 'Cold War' mobilities across the Iron Curtain (intellectual-cultural autarky versus forced political emigration) forms a highly fruitful starting point for wider considerations. Examination of the Czech countercultural communal-living attempts within the social framework of the 'normalization' order of the 1970s and 1980s — state repression, socialist modernity, anti-public familialism — finds that their character as communities of refuge, rather than as deliberate planned experiments, places them at a particularly unique angle to the utopian vs. antiutopian debates, indeed even calling into question the very premises of this opposition.

Keywords: communal living, utopian communities, radical space, commons, resistance, socialism, Czechoslovakia, underground

The purpose of the present contribution is intended to be twofold. First, it plans to draw attention to an instance in which a 'mobile commons' appeared spontaneously within a social order that was explicitly — and occasionally violently — inimical to autonomous activity, in this instance European state socialism of the second half of the 20th century. Such an (arguably) utopian 'commons' was the loose network of communal residences created by primarily working-class youth influenced by the international counterculture of 1960s and the domestic illegal rock scene, most active in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It examines this case study in its immediate national and historical position (Czechoslovakia after the 1968 Warsaw Pact military intervention, the relations between political and cultural dissent, state cultural control), in the wider context of the 'Second World' both before and after 1989 (including the dissident and post-dissident moral critiques of utopianism and social experiment), and in the process of intellectual mobility and transfer even within late 20th century strictures — specifically, the influence and local adaptation of the American tradition of utopian communal settlements, both directly through the hippie communes of the 1960s and indirectly through the widely variegated communal experiments of the early 19th century[1].

A second matter, inevitably less empirical and more speculative, is the question of the relationship of the chosen subject of investigation to the wider cultural and geographic frameworks of situated — perhaps, more accurately, de-situated — social knowledges. Put somewhat simplistically, the issue is whether the legacy of a social phenomenon of such specificity, moreover one originating in a historical social order greatly unlike contemporary circumstances, is — as much for scholarship as for activism — genuinely relevant. By one standard, the example of a communal living experiment from a European state-socialist order may seem to have little in common with the idea of the mobile commons as "the trail, the marks or scratches punctuated on the global canvas of precarity" (Trimiklinotis, Parsanoglu, and Tsianos 2017, 225) when the social order being opposed provided a far different set of challenges than those of globalized neoliberalism. As a counterargument, though, there equally exists an emerging body of thought finding an exciting new

---

1   The scholarly literature on American utopian communities is truly vast, if not necessarily recent. Major survey works include Sutton 2003 or Fogarty 1990. An extensive list of participant accounts and memoirs of the 19th century American utopians, along with 20th century historical works in the wake of the 1960s communes, is offered by Boyer 1975. For an intriguing comparison between US communities and their counterparts in Central America, see Peterson 2005.

trajectory through the heterogeneous, forcibly historicized experience of this area, less the 'Second World' than the "embracing of liminality… of the Global East" (Müller 2020, 17), only partially overlapping the current divisions, now more hegemonic than exclusively geopolitical, between the global North and global South[2]. For now, suffice it to state that the particular combination of quasi-utopian communal attempts, as a historical legacy placed against the post-1989 anti-utopian mental stance of "a clear no to dangerous experiments"[3] — on occasion, with the same participants found assuming both positions[4] — should place the questions brought up by the anti-systemic communes under state socialism in a far more vital role than that of mere historical interest.

These communal dwellings were known to their residents under the uniform designation *baráky* — literally 'houses'[5], though on various occasions it could apply to a multi-family urban apartment or even a common gathering space that did not serve predominantly as a residence. Not surprisingly, the term was used as the title for the hitherto most extensive oral-history mapping of the Czech underground communes, *Baráky — Souostroví svobody* [The Houses — An Archipelago of Freedom], a collection of personal participant-testimonies compiled by two participants themselves, František Čuňas Stárek and Jiří Kostúr, published in 2010. In the extensive Czech Television documentary series *Fenomén Underground*, aired in 2014 and 2015, an entire episode was devoted to the *baráky*[6], while a conference organized by the main Czech research group on the history of the 1948-1989 era, the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (*Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů*

---

2   The scholarly literature on the intellectual position(ality) of the formerly Communist world has expanded notably in the past decade; besides Müller see Tlostanova 2015 or Owczarzak 2009. For more extensive discussions see Melegh 2006, or Kołodziejczyk and Şandru 2016. A different question, of course, is the deployment of post-socialist postcoloniality toward conservative, often explicitly illiberal political ends; for a description of this practice in the Polish context note Bill 2014.

3   Electoral slogan of the Czech centre-right Civic Democrats (ODS) party, 1998.

4   By this, I have in mind the public activities on the political right, both in the early 1990s and in recent years, of several key figures of the Czech counter-culture/underground, most specifically the chief organizer of one of the most important communal residences, František 'Čuňas' Stárek: see e.g., Senft (2016).

5   That is to say, the word more prevalent in informal or conversational Czech (*hovorová čeština*) as opposed to the traditionally higher linguistic register of literary Czech (*spisovná čeština*).

6   Episode 27, Baráky, aired 6 March 2015, see: https://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10419676635-fenomen-underground/.

— ÚSTR), discussed them in October 2016[7]. My own previous research, though addressing only certain residences primarily through their role in samizdat production (Tharp 2021) also touched briefly on the relationship between communal dwellings, underground or oppositional social networks, and the material and geographical conditions shaping the possibilities of resistance activity.

The existence of the *baráky*, in other words, is hardly an obscure topic for recent Czech historiography. At the same time, many aspects remain unclear. For one, the full extent of these communities is admittedly still incomplete. Within the ÚSTR research project, several participants have admitted the strong likelihood of other communal attempts occurring outside the main underground networks, yet vanishing without either coming to the attention of the police or other state authorities or making contact with better-connected circles of cultural dissent[8]. Concurrently, the examples that have been documented in the previously cited works all arose precisely within the social milieu affiliated with the 'established' dissident networks, above all Charter 77: the 'underground'. As such, the character of the known *baráky* is significantly shaped by the overlap with the collective traits and ambitions of this subculture. This coincidence should understandably be stressed in any evaluation of the communities, yet at the same time it underlines the specific, often highly contingent circumstances that shaped oppositional activities within Czechoslovakia during this period.

In a period known equally for its targeted repression of both political and cultural opposition and for its encouragement of a publicly disengaged materialism aptly characterized by the term "socialist Biedermeier"[9], there emerged in response several instances of communal living arrangements among what could be termed Czechoslovakia's "cultural dissent". To characterize the underground in brief, the term (used in its original English spelling in Czech, though occasionally in speech subjected to linguistic "domestication" as 'androš' or 'androšskej'[10]) was applied to the community of disaffected youth who rejected the forms of approved socialist life; in the eyes of the Party and police

> In a period known equally for its targeted repression of both political and cultural opposition and for its encouragement of a publicly disengaged materialism aptly characterized by the term "socialist Biedermeier", there emerged in response several instances of communal living arrangements among what could be termed Czechoslovakia's "cultural dissent".

---

7   Note *Baráky: (Nejen) Komunitní způsob život v undergroundu*. Prague, Václav Havel Library, 18 October 2016, see old.ustrcr.cz/cs/baraky.

8   Personal comment from František Stárek (2014).

9   Credit for this designation is due to Kamil Činátl, see Činátl 2009, esp. 178-179.

10   For an intriguing view of Czech dissident slang, note Suk 1993, 105-114, esp. 110; also note http://www.disent.usd.cas.cz/wp-content/uploads/Suk_svedectvi_1981_65_Slang_Chartistu.pdf.

authorities, occupying a position somewhere between that of 'unorganised youth' [*volná mládež*, i.e., not directly involved in the Union of Socialist Youth or similar groups] and "deviant youth" [*závadná mládež*] inclined toward criminality, alcoholism, or other traditional social pathologies. Often or even primarily of working-class origin, they frequently shared a similar cultural-geographical background. Though not exclusively so, this place of origin was the provincial industrial cities toward Czechoslovakia's western edge, in particular Plzeň and its vicinity, or the northeastern coal-belt along the base of the Ore Mountains (*Krušné hory*), spanning the industrial towns of Sokolov, Klášterec, Chomutov, Teplice, Ústí nad Labem up to Děčín in the formerly German Sudetenland.

This latter region formed — indeed, to a significant degree still forms — a unique cultural geography within the Czech lands. For both Austro-Hungary and independent Czechoslovakia, it was a major economic force from the 19th century up until the end of the 20th, thanks to the extensive deposits of brown coal. Secondly, it remained a majority-German region until the expulsion of this population after 1945, followed by an intensive resettlement program accompanied by much nationalist propaganda (before and after the 1948 Communist coup) about "reclaiming the borderland"[11]. Several decades into Communist rule, though, northwest Bohemia had become a notably stigmatized region, marked not only by severe pollution from the high-sulphur coal but even more by the experience a Czech Communist social order being established in the purported tabula rasa of an ethnically cleansed territory[12].

Yet while both political authorities and official sociography found only social problems and anomie along the foot of the Ore Mountains, from the standpoint of Western subcultural studies, the situation of the industrial Sudetenland — not surprisingly — provided the necessary conditions for the emergence of alternate collective identities among its youth[13]. The influence of the 1960s counterculture, at least in its external manifestations, was felt quite rapidly in Czechoslovakia, sparking police persecution even in the years before the Prague Spring[14]. Howe-

11   See in this respect Spurný 2011, esp. chapter II, "České pohraničí na prahu nové doby", 30-81.

12   For the post-1945 history of the Czech Sudetenland, see Spurný 2016.

13   Besides Hebdige (1979) note especially Cohen (1972). It should be added that this parallel to Britain's subcultures has been mentioned even by Czech participants themselves, particularly in reference to the region as a counterpart to the Beatles' Liverpool.

14   For the history of this subculture, see Blažek and Pospíšil (2010).

ver, it was a group somewhat younger than the first quasi-hippies of the mid-Sixties, largely born in the early 1950s and thus coming of age right at the start of the post-1968 political and cultural crackdown[15], who predominantly composed the initial provincial and working-class base for the underground. It was, above all, their love of adversary-culture fashion and Anglophone rock music, rather than explicit political beliefs, that brought them into direct conflict with the authorities, before any turn to direct opposition.

Indeed, Czech oppositional activity — even the very origins of Charter 77 itself — has often been interpreted as the specific intersection of these two different (and previously notably separate) groups, starting with the interventions of support from major cultural personalities (e.g. Václav Havel, the philosopher Jan Patočka) during the trial of the rock group Plastic People of the Universe[16]. Scholarly attention towards the underground, particularly its non-metropolitan formations, has only become a significant topic in the past decade; of somewhat greater sociological significance, though, is the relative public obscurity of many of the participants, except for a few leading figures with more conventionally measurable cultural capital, such as the poet and theorist Ivan Martin Jirous. For the present purposes, I intend to define the underground as a relatively fluid formation grounded in personal ties and shared aesthetic preferences, where the oppositions of 'metropolitan/ provincial' and 'worker/intellectual' assumed rather less importance among the immediate participants than the presence of a shared disgust with the extant social order. In 21st century theoretical comparisons, it might be compared to the idea of the 'undercommons' more than to the conventional ideas of dissidence without state socialism[17], even as the pressures from the state repressive forces shaped it in the direction of a typical social movement, perhaps more strongly than might have been the case even within a state-socialist regime with more liberal policies (Maslowski 2014).

All the same, while the historiographic literature on the Czech cultural underground in the last two decades of Communist rule is extensive[18], its predominant focus has been devoted to underground activities in cultural production — predominantly music but also including

---

15   Note here Denčevová, Stárek, and Stehlík (2012).
16   In this regard, note Bolton (2012), both for his discussion of the received ideas around the "intellectual-underground alliance" and the more nuanced historical picture he presents.
17   As defined by Harney and Moten (2013).
18   For studies in English, note esp. Bolton (2012) or Hagen (2019).

samizdat[19]. This attention has meant a relative neglect not merely of additional forms of autonomous culture (e.g., amateur theatre[20]), but equally of the underground's need to expend considerable effort on ensuring the simple physical or spatial conditions where such autonomy could be practiced within socialist Czechoslovakia's surveillance state. The present study aims to address this lack, analysing the *baráky* as a unique emergence of a radical (or perhaps more accurately, radicalized) space (Kohn 2003) existing within the context of the political and economic spatiality shaped by the state-socialist order — the intersection between pre-socialist built fabrics, modernist technophilia and all-pervasive state administration[21] [including, per Lefebvre, the critique "whether it is legitimate to speak of socialism where no architectural innovation has occurred, where no specific space has been created" (Lefebvre 1991, 55)]. Equally, it is addressed as a form of cultural transfer between two geographically separate yet nonetheless historically linked traditions of communal living ideas: the American utopian tradition reflected through the 1960s counterculture, and the Czech interwar Modernist reflections (themselves influenced by, indeed often in direct dialogue with, Soviet efforts in planning and architecture) on forms of shared physical space through the early 20th century.

Stárek and Kostúr, in their survey, assign historical priority to the rural residence near Mariánské Lázně (Ger. Marienbad, West Bohemia) of the internationally prominent artist Milan Knížák, where as early as 1966 he organized meetings of the action art group Aktuál[22]. The great majority of the others, though, appeared during the 'normalizing' 1970s - not the summer of love, one might say, but the winter of malaise. And many of the communes, in turn, failed to last beyond the same decade's end. The primary reason was the targeted persecution campa-

---

19   The major discussions of Czech samizdat are Machovec (2018), and Machovec (2019).

20   Note the production of Oscar Wilde's Salome at the residence of Květa and Jan Princ in Verneřice, see Stárek and Kostúr (2010, 161).

21   Recent Czech and Slovak considerations of the urban and architectural forms of this era with respect to this ambiguous dichotomy "modern and/or totalitarian" are Moravčíková (2013) and Rollová-Jirkalová (2021).

22   On Knižák, note Stárek and Kostúr 2010, 17-29. Undoubtedly, Knížák is a significant artistic personality, and the connection between his involvement in Fluxus and the role of conceptual art in the normalisation-era cultural opposition is an important question. However, his personal stance towards oppositional movements in Czechoslovakia, applied particularly to Charter 77 but extending partially towards the underground as well, was complex and indeed notably distant, which largely places him outside the scope of the current investigation.

ign of the Czechoslovak political police (StB) against Charter 77, "*Akce Asanace*" [Clearance], deliberately aimed at forcing the most active dissidents into exile, with special efforts aimed at the more visibly countercultural and youth-oriented sections of dissent. Houses were regularly expropriated on flimsy or entirely false pretexts; in one case, the married couple Květa and Jan Princ had three properties in succession taken from them. Recent Czech scholarship has provided exhaustive detail on the planning of the StB campaign against 'deviant youth' [*závadná mládež*] (Kudrna and Stárek 2017) and the exercising of police brutality against manifestations of cultural (most often musically oriented) dissent (Kudrna and Stárek 2020).

Within the framework of research conducted with a somewhat different object in mind[23], I personally compiled a working list of known communal residences, which here is compared to the published account of Stárek and Kostúr as well as several unpublished testimonies supplied to the ÚSTR research team. By necessity, the factual data on the full extent and range of Czech (and possibly Slovak) *baráky* should be acknowledged as incomplete, and the present theoretical reflections as at best tentative hypothesis that may not entirely correspond to the wider picture. All the same, taking the underground communities surveyed — partially by myself[24], partially by ÚSTR researchers — as a group, it could be feasible to divide them into several distinct categories:

(1) The rural dwelling as a large commune of several couples/families. Here, the primary example is the old farmhouse in the village of Nová Víska, near the industrial city of Chomutov, which formed a major focal point not only for youthful cultural discontent in its immediate region (the Ore Mountain industrial belt in the northwestern Czech Sudetenland) but equally in establishing contacts with metropolitan dissident intellectuals;

(2) The residence of a single family that provided a large space (usually an old farm courtyard) for independent cultural activities or simply sociability. Key examples include the three successive farmhouses in North Bohemia owned by (and officially confiscated from) the Princ family, or the old cottage on the outskirts of Prague owned by Olga and

---

23   Tharp 2021. As previously stated, since this work addressed samizdat production, its main source of data for communal dwellings was confined to those where samizdat was typed and printed (most notably, Nová Víska).

24   My own research on the topic included, in part, the Němec family apartment at Ječná 7 in central Prague. For the latter, it is worth mentioning the recent redevelopment of the entire building for luxury residences, and the "dissent-washing" rhetoric of the developer's website: http://www.vecna-jecna.cz/en/.

František Hochmann, destroyed in an arson attack assumed to be the work of the Czechoslovak political police (StB) in early 1989[25];

(3) The rural residence of a prominent underground figure used after 1989 specifically for events (e.g., the house of poet Ivan Martin Jirous in Prostřední Vydří, south Moravia).

Admittedly, the listing provided in *Baráky* is in a sense incomplete — not merely in the number of communities that may have existed in the given period, but also in terms of the participants' own recollections of the network of underground-friendly spaces extending beyond the residences and, in retrospect, granted near-equal standing. Repeatedly mentioned in both print and oral testimony[26] are a wider range of gathering spaces, indeed what we might now term "spatial practices", that were used by local communities or wider social networks. Besides the practice of the "open apartment" as a semi-collective space (though of course under observation from district housing authorities as well as possible pro-regime neighbours)[27], other frequently mentioned sites included underground-friendly pubs (most frequently in Prague, but present in most larger towns (Machovec 2018, 144), public parks or squares (Stárek and Kostúr 2010, 9-10) or even specific public festivals — usually associated with vineyard or hop harvests, and hence a more relaxed public atmosphere[28]. Some examples resemble, to a degree, the squatting practices of Western Europe in their involvement of abandoned structures for communal activities, though these buildings were never used, or more accurately were genuinely unusable, as residences: for instance, the locality known in the North Bohemian underground known as "Barrel House", a decrepit outbuilding near Chomutov's swimming area of Kamencové jezero used in the early 1970s and often claimed as the precursor to the Nová Víska commune[29], or even the abandoned spa building in Teplice where Stárek and his friends gathered in the late

---

25   An interview with the Hochmanns is available in Stárek-Kostúr (2010, 480-517).

26   Primarily the interviews in Tharp (2021).

27   However, the 'open' apartment was not unknown in more mainstream and/or metropolitan dissident circles, specifically through the movement of written 'production' into the realm of home handcraft via samizdat. And the domestic spaces of dissent necessarily had their own gender-determined status, even beyond typewriting: note in this regard Linková and Strakova (2017).

28   For the North Bohemian underground, a repeatedly mentioned public event was the 'Dočesná' beer festival in early September in the town of Žatec, marking the end of the hop harvest.

29   Note the interview with Miroslav Skalák Skalický, the owner of Barrel House in the mid-1970s, in Denčevová, Stárek and Stehlík (2012, 90-91).

1960s for improvised musical jams[30]. However, as will be mentioned later, squatting per se, or indeed any other illegal activities that could be avoided whenever possible, never became a part of underground social practices, particularly as the connections with metropolitan dissent grew stronger towards the end of the 1970s.

Similarly, the *baráky* varied extensively not only in the degree of their communality, their duration, or their setting, but even more in the degree of their involvement with Czechoslovakia's active opposition. Květa and Jan Princ, for instance, not only had significant personal links to metropolitan dissent — hosting, for instance, a New Year's Eve party at the start of 1977 attended by Charter 77's leading lights, among them Václav Havel — but stood more at a remove from the illegal rock scene, instead favouring a form of resistance grounded in religion and Catholic spirituality.[31] Though they worked to provide a refuge for young people "looking for meaning" from surrounding towns, their primary aim was in offering these youths the "self-discipline of the underground", and in cultural terms focused more on theatre than music.[32] During their period in the village of Robeč,

> …every Sunday morning, we did spiritual exercises.[…] During the day, we sat around, drank, sang, rehearsed plays, did whatever, but every morning, whoever wanted to do so went down into the cellar, the tiny altar with candles, water dripping like in a cave, and we held hands and gave ourselves strength for the next week (Jan Princ, in Stárek and Kostúr 2010, 162).

In Nová Víska, by contrast, the cultural focus was predominantly on music, though an equal point of importance was its role in samizdat. It was here that the illegal cultural magazine *Vokno* [Window] was first compiled, typed and duplicated, making this dwelling one of the most crucial nodes within the underground's own information system, as well as its point of connection with metropolitan dissent, since the periodical not only offered reports on the underground rock scene but regularly printed essays from Prague intellectuals who felt an affinity with the countercultural young, such as the previously cited Ivan Martin Jirous or the Catholic philosopher Jiří Němec (Tharp 2021). Nová Víska may additionally have been the first such community to receive the term *barák*; before its founding in 1979, it appears (from the testimony of singer-songwriter Dáša Vokatá) that the hippie-adjacent proto-under-

The *baráky* varied extensively not only in the degree of their communality, their duration, or their setting, but even more in the degree of their involvement with Czechoslovakia's active opposition.

---

30   Stárek, personal communication (2014).
31   Květa Princová, personal communication (2016).
32   Ibidem, 2016.

ground referred to such residences more often as "open houses" [*otevřené domy*] (Stárek and Kostúr 2010, 142).

With further analysis, Nová Víska — perhaps more than any other of the communities — would seem not only to match the idea of a genuine commune the closest, but also has tended to define the concept of the *barák*, setting it almost as an *Idealtyp* of a multi-family residence open to fellow members of the subculture and a free space for semi--public, usually cultural activities. With two official owners and an additional twelve "stakeholders", as Stárek has termed the participants who contributed financially to the house's purchase,[33] it was unquestionably the most deliberately "collective" undertaking within the underground; adding to the population were the spouses or partners of the original fourteen, several children, and various visitors for shorter or longer periods. Moreover, its residents themselves initially hoped to create not merely a social refuge from state surveillance, but equally as great a degree of economic self-sufficiency as possible. "Only diesel fuel and shoes" were planned as necessities requiring outside involvement (Stárek and Kostúr 2010, 272);[34] food was largely supplied by the garden and domestic animals (ibidem, 76).

At the same time, the radicalism of the Nová Víska community's departure from the conventional life-patterns of its place and era should not be overestimated. Socialist Czechoslovakia's mandatory employment and strict laws against 'parasitism' (Mejzr 2018) ensured that the participants remained within the monetary economy as wage-earners. Many goods (beer, fresh bread, etc.) still had to be purchased in nearby towns. Nor — perhaps still more significantly — did the practice of self-provisioning differ much in kind or degree from "mainstream" or "conformist" rural households of the era (Tharp 2021, 79). And, no less, the farmhouse itself had to be legally secured as the 'de jure' property of specific owners. Here, any parallels between underground spatiality and Western Europe's squatting movements entirely come apart: though a Czech squatting movement certainly emerged almost immediately after 1989,[35] the underground almost never ventured so far. (Even the semi-uninhabitable 'Barrel House' in Chomutov, mentioned above, was the legal property of 'Skalák' Skalický.) The struggle for legality, indeed for legitimizing recognition of property rights from

---

33   Stárek, personal comment (2016).
34   Also repeatedly noted in personal communications with former members: see Tharp 2021, 78.
35   For post-1989 Czech squatting, see esp. Märc (2022) and Novák-Kuřík (2019).

the socialist state, in nearly all cases came to form a central component of communal activity, particularly in the face of the repeated attempts (often successful) to confiscate the *baráky* from their owners, clearly with secret-police backing, often with the legal excuse of eminent domain for public infrastructure, which often was never built (Stárek and Kostúr 2010, 160-206).

While the insistence on following (even state-socialist) legality, against any deliberate infraction of the law as a form of protest, has rarely been mentioned among the underground's participants, it might not be too far-fetched to draw a parallel with the more political dissident community and Charter 77 in its own insistence on "merely" asking the regime to meet its own declared principles. Moreover, a possible (if largely unvoiced) collective decision to adhere to the letter of the law in property relations is further indicated by the fact that squatting was not quite so clear-cut an East-West difference: as in East Berlin, where *Schwarzwohnen* (Vasudevan 2015, 153-180) formed a significant force in alternative circles (Mitchell 2017, 277-302) (yet also extended into less oppositional areas of GDR society) or Poland's remote Bieszczady mountains where abandoned Lemko and Ukrainian farmsteads could be occupied without attracting much notice[36].

Nová Víska managed only a brief existence from 1979 to 1981, when the building was seized by the local authorities for reasons of "state security" and its residents forcibly dispersed. Yet it not only provided inspiration for several successors (for instance, the house in Skalice near Chrudim, central Bohemia, founded by two former Nová Víska residents (Stárek and Kostúr 2010, 344-367), but formed a major referent in both underground shared memory and its post-1989 commemoration. Primarily, the significance consisted in the activities: holding concerts, writing and printing *Vokno*, or even the day-to-day fellowship among the residents, yet further, more symbolic dimensions may also have been involved. The house itself, situated almost directly above the gigantic open-pit coal mine of Prunéřov (once the site of the demolished German village of Brunnersdorf[37]), could almost seem a visual metaphor for the post-1945 Sudetenland's peculiar mixture of careless industrialization and deliberate neglect. As much as metropolitan dissident authors began in these years to speak of a 'Sudeten homelessness' [*sudetské bezdomoví*] (Ortová 2006) for the social anomie of the region, a slightly deviating

---

36   For this information, I have relied on Laube (2006), along with personal testimony from several members of the Polish hippie scene in the 1970s, esp. Wojciech 'Tarzan' Michalewski, 119-164.

37   Viz.: http://www.zanikleobce.cz/index.php?obec=77.

(mis)translation could evoke a "Sudeten unheimlich" that — even if indirectly — encouraged and shaped a culture of instinctive opposition. In one significant sense, it provided the Sixties-influenced countercultural forms with a radically different punk-like, if not indeed punk-adjacent aesthetic; in another dimension, the holes and lacunae in the social fabric made space for deviant manifestations, both positive and negative.

With this knowledge in mind, we can invoke the idea of a specific underground spatiality — the physical network of 'safe' locations — as a map largely congruous with the immaterial (and, by necessity, quasi-secret) social network. In one sense, the community sites subsumed under the designation *baráky* are of especial interest as points of intersection between the underground's sociability (in terms of networks of personal friendships as well as cultural — primarily musical — events) and its spatiality (the radical, or arguably radicalised, spaces where they could bring this sociability into action) — in other words, a kind of police-state situationism[38]. Yet in another, they are only understandable, in other words only make sense, as part of this dispersed, indeed materially dissolved network of spaces both semi-permanent (dwellings) or highly ephemeral (town squares, public festivals), such that their isolation, perhaps even reification as specifically unique instances of aesthetics and sociabilities would in fact deprive the *baráky* of much of their significance. Following Stavridis, a thorough consideration of this spatiality as de-materialisation may well allow "dissident politics [to] escape the trap of the 'liberated enclave' imaginary and discover the power that the representations of common spaces-as-thresholds have" (Stavridis 2017, 7).

Hence, an analysis of the *baráky* in their full dimensions, both as staging points for autonomous social action and as (material) actors themselves, would need to involve several broader frameworks outside of the communities themselves or even the general underground network. On one side, the analysis should take into consideration the context of post-1968 Czechoslovakia, not merely of police repression but no less the material conditions of state socialism and planned economies, and on the other their international position as part of a (semi-)globalised counterculture of the later 20th century, filtered as it was through the semi-permeable "Nylon Curtain" (Péteri 2004) of the system's final decades. And finally, it should attempt to understand the *baráky* as an

We can invoke the idea of a specific underground spatiality — the physical network of 'safe' locations — as a map largely congruous with the immaterial (and, by necessity, quasi-secret) social network.

---

38 On various adaptations of Guy Debord's idea note, e.g., McDonough 1994.

articulated method of social critique, aimed not merely at significant aspects of 20th century modernity but even at less immediately noticeable questions.

To begin tackling this ambitious listing of investigative aims, it might be most fruitful to start with a positioning of the *baráky* against the spatial-architectonic practices of normalisation-era Czechoslovakia, as much on the level of state construction as well as the activities of outwardly conformist "mainstream" society. When invoking built space in the given setting, it is worth emphasizing that the massive state investment in large-scale prefabricated apartment construction[39], widely regarded as the determining feature of the era and the immediate reflection of state policy and ideology, was not the only change in the built and social environment. A parallel development of the 'normalization' era was the no less mass-scale increase in second-home ownership, essentially doubling in the 1970-1990 period (Schindler-Wisten 2017), though already a significant presence before. The role of the weekend cottage in Czech society post-1968 has, of course, been the subject of intense debate, both on a social and a scholarly level. Earlier discussions staked out positions between the interpretations of "cottaging" as mere social atomization (even a kind of system-stabilising repressive desublimation, though of course without invoking precisely this 1960s-vintage critical--Marxist phraseology) and as a conscious method of resistance; the latest consensus seems to view it through a more complex interplay of "micro--level processes… of rupture and continuity", between state authority and (non-oppositional) society (Alda 2020, 25). And, significantly, metropolitan dissidents did not on principle avoid cottage ownership, to look no further than, for instance, Václav Havel and his famed cottage in Hrádeček near Trutnov. Noting that the cottage genre itself reflected a distinct form of socialist class stratification — the '*chalupa*' (historic farmstead) as distinctly more prestigious than the mass-market, newly built '*chata*' — it should be no surprise that few urban intellectuals could reject the ownership of an attractive formerly German farmstead, if in a more pleasant region of the Sudetenland than the mining-ravaged Ore Mountains.

Against the geographic-architectonic relations of panel block and weekend house, though, the underground *baráky* stand out as neither specifically conformist nor oppositional, but indeed an utter refusal of the surrounding world. In this refusal, not only the idea of the negotia-

Against the geographic--architectonic relations of panel block and weekend house, though, the underground baráky stand out as neither specifically conformist nor oppositional, but indeed an utter refusal of the surrounding world.

---

39   Currently, the most extensive study is Skřivánková, Švácha, and Lehkoži-vová 2017. For a historical perspective, see Zarecor 2011.

tions and mutual manipulations between state and public is elided, but even the dichotomy of atomized — or more precisely familiarised — living spaces, whether apartment or cottage. The aspects that this refusal assumed could arguably be divided into two distinct areas: the rejection on one hand of what might be termed in a wide sense 'socialist materiality' and on the other, the Janus-faced practice of what might be termed 'socialist familialism' — the focus on the private, domestic sphere over the politically devalued public space.

My own employment of the term 'socialist materiality' aims to extend it beyond the current engagement with the now-historicised material culture of state-socialist economic production, whether in its popular--nostalgic mode[40] or its more analytical scholarly investigations[41]. Instead, it aims to work toward the inclusion of economic life, as much of relations as of objects, within the framework of contemporary revisionist- or post-Marxist critiques of economic and material restraints as a tool of social control in their own right, manipulated by state authorities rather than merely arising from inefficiencies or errors[42]. And a considerable feature of a specific 'Nylon Curtain' materiality, in turn, was shaped by the fetishization of objects from the (Cold War) West, ranging from the enormous efforts to make purchases through official foreign-currency retail outlets[43] up to the collection of even discarded packaging, drinks cans, or similar waste materials. A third possible category of material culture, lying somewhere in between the worlds of state production and Western fetishism, could be that of the homemade — from entire weekend cottages to household crafts up to the crafting of naïve 'domestic art' (Činátlová 2010).

Juxtaposed with the material economy of state socialism, or perhaps even the "hyper-materialized" economy as a system-stabilizing force, the inspiration of the Western counterculture of the 1960s (at least for some) did not appear a self-indulgence of the privileged, but in fact a form of resistance in its own right. Daily life in a rural *barák* — whether communally inhabited or largely private — could at least with some interpretive accuracy be described as itself a critique of socialist materiality through lived practice. As a form of opposition, it was directed

40   Examples of this genre — whether as in print or online — are multiple; simply within the Czech context, note e.g. Šťastná 2017, or among websites: expo58.blogspot.com (though largely with a focus on design and the applied arts).

41   For a survey of recent work in this area, note Fidelis 2017.

42   Viz. Fehér-Heller-Márkus 1986, also note Tharp 2018.

43   For an overview of the hard-currency market in socialist Czechoslovakia, note Havlík 2020.

not so much against the figure of *Homo sovieticus* as much as *Homo chaluparis*, the conformist forever oscillating between panel flat and weekend refuge. Or, for that matter, even the weekend independence of the long-established working-class outdoor subculture of "tramping" (Bren 2002, 127-133): the guiding principle of the underground, as repeatedly stated by its participants (at least retroactively), was for its cultural difference to be a 'life-stance' (*životní postoj*) — and hence it was crucial to achieve the establishment of an independent physical space where not only the unwelcome state repressive forces could be held, however briefly at bay, but no less the unwelcome presence of the state's economic and aesthetic hegemony.

Yet even beyond establishing the *barák* as continual residence, the question of these additional hegemonies brings up another dimension that tends more to separate the Czech communal living attempts from the Western, if predominantly North American, hippie communes. To be sure, the majority of US countercultural settlements, in parallel with the *baráky*, situated themselves in extant buildings — to cite Iain Boal, "either Victorians or empty industrial buildings in the urban context or abandoned farmhouses beyond the city" (Boal 2012, xix) — in this way, significantly resembling the 'time-radicalized' deserted or decrepit spaces of the Czech normalization era, if not perhaps even reaching back to an earlier pre-Modernist aesthetic against the sleek conformity of the postwar Machine Age[44]. Yet there was one visually striking (if perhaps somewhat over-medialized) trait of several communes: their creation of entirely new architectural forms, often with an eye towards economic and ecological self-sufficiency. Most notable in this area was Colorado's Drop City, with its geodesic domes compiled from scrap metal (Sadler 2006). Even beyond specific built spaces, American observers like Greg Castillo have noted an influence in design aesthetics and environmentally aware urban planning of a "hippie modernism [that] focused not on rigorous form but rather on a kind of socially inspired bricolage" (Castillo 2015). It is precisely in this bricolage, contrastingly, that the Western countercultural approach appeared against the backdrop of normalisation-era Czechoslovakia (as outlined above) less of an inspiration and

---

44   Undoubtedly, the psychedelic aesthetics of the US counterculture of the 1960s, reaching back to Art Nouveau or even late-Victorian prototypes, represent a clear reaction against post-1945 visual modernity. On a more spatial level, the decade also saw — even beyond the counterculture itself — an increased appreciation for pre-Modernist architecture and urbanism, often in direct opposition to the International Style hegemony of the first two postwar decades; for an intriguing early example, note the strongly polemical tone of Maas 1957.

more of a parallel — matching the tolerated private sphere of handcrafts and domestic art, of the many bestselling publications like *Vlastní výroba bytových doplňků*[45] or the DIY programs on Czechoslovak state television hosted by Přemek Podlaha. Indeed, in the latter case, with Podlaha's advice on what to do with chance or disused objects, "if in the woods you come across a discarded Škoda fender" (Činátl 2010, 159)[46] put out across thousands of TV sets, even Drop City seems at once less radical, perhaps even banal.

Here, the notably unaltered form of the Czech communal residences gains another interpretation beyond the harshly limited economic possibilities of the communities themselves, or the need to avoid police surveillance. The activities of the Czech counterculture, such that it was, were no less aesthetically oriented, but almost entirely in a de--materialised sense, looking towards the performative and interactive — primarily musical, of course, but even the production of samizdat periodicals and news-sheets could be interpreted as itself a kind of mutual 'performance' upon the typewriter (Tharp 2021, 189-204). And if the music famously looked toward the Velvet Underground over folk or psychedelic inspiration, the visual style, genuinely produced (to cite Dick Hebdige's formulation) 'in indecent haste' (Hebdige 1979, 111), lay far closer to punk than to any incarnation of 'hippie modernism'. Viewing the few surviving photographs of Nová Víska (after its domestic 'chronicle' was confiscated by the police upon the community's dissolution, never to be found again), or even of better--documented communities, the grainy black-and-white images of daily life have, for all the cheerful fellowship among the persons shown, a kind of post-punk starkness at odds with the swirling colours of conventional hippiedom. Or, for that matter, the official aesthetics of state-produced objects, whether consumer goods or publications, still within the confines of a persisting Machine Age look. It is indeed no accident that after 1989, the establishment of a legal, above-ground cultural sphere matched an explicit anti-Communist stance with a repudiation of the old regime's aesthetics. The physical artefacts and semiotic indicators of this era, from album covers through formerly samizdat journals (the short-lived legal *Vokno, Revolver Revue*, or even for its first decade the newsweekly *Respekt*) used precisely the same gritty

---

45   I.e., "Homemade Household Accessories", reprinted 1975, 1976, 1977 and 1983.

46   It should be noted, at least for historical accuracy, that Podlaha's career was no less successful after 1989, with his televised DIY advice broadcast up until only a few months before his death in 2014.

punk-flavoured look to defy equally the old regime and the new con-
sumerist world[47].

At the same time, the underground network of friendships and affi-
nities not only rejected the commodity fetishism of socialist materiality,
but even more the social atomization of the late state-socialist era. In
the case of Nová Víska, citing its main organizer (and co-owner) Fran-
tišek Stárek, the creation of this community was directly inspired by his
viewing of *Easy Rider* in Budapest in 1970[48]. That the hippie commune
at the film's start, rather than the tragic romance of the open road, seemed
the more compelling vision in the wake of 1968 and all that followed
should come as no surprise. The enforced 'nucleation' of private life
under socialist atomization only grew stronger, reinforced as much from
above as spontaneously arising from below[49]. Consideration of this pro-
cess of atomization in the service of power has been frequent in Czech
social analysis ever since 1989. Familialism as a central factor of the era
has been described by sociologist Ivo Možný in his analysis of the sys-
tem's functioning and equally its eventual failure (Možný 2009: from
the shift to private life after 1968 and continuing through the increasing
detachment from collective institutions not merely within dissent but
even among political and economic elites. From another angle, one
recent study by Kateřina Lišková details the role of popular psychology
and marital counselling in the same decades in enforcing both familial
privatism and a notably retrograde shift back towards traditional gen-
dered roles and hierarchies (Lišková 2016).

If the social analyses of dissent stressed the political dichotomy
between the emptied public sphere and the enclosed refuge of a strongly
privatized family life, its physical-spatial parallel was undoubtedly the
mirroring typologies of the prefabricated housing estate and the week-
end-cottage colony[50]. The damaged space of the Sudetenland, or the
quasi-situationist networks of underground refuge, all offered radical or
radicalized spaces, yet still more radical as a social phenomenon was
what these spaces hoped to encourage: a non-familial — or, considering

---

47   Regarding continuities over discontinuities in the transition from sam-
izdat production to legal publication possibilities in the 1990s, note Tharp 2020.

48   Stárek, personal comment, 2016.

49   Again, note the analysis of Cohen 1972, citing the high-rise council flats
of Britain in the 1960s as a destructive force on extant working-class community
networks, thus driving the youth in the "nuclear" apartments to seek their own
community through music- or fashion-based subcultures.

50   Note Bren 2002 for the most prevalent analysis, though also compare
several contributions in Rollová-Jirkalová 2021 for a newer critique of earlier
oppositions.

the birth of a new generation of children within the underground, more accurately extra-familial — sociability. Historically, this sociability was given only the slimmest chance: harassment, followed by the deliberate campaign to drive dissidents into exile, eventually the imprisonment of Stárek and Jirous for the 'hooliganism' of producing *Vokno* (Kudrna and Stárek 2017). And the question is open as to how congruent it may have been with the prevalent civil-society discourse of the 1990s — or alternately, how unassimilable.

Yet in a final, indeed somewhat bleakly ironic twist, a broader historical scope that includes the continuities between the pre-war world and that of state socialism would note that from the very start of Czechoslovakia's existence as an independent state, ideas for collective dwellings were prominent in expert, even public discussions. The architectural historian Herbert Guzik has discerned several distinct lineages of pre--Communist collective residential ideas: a liberal-feminist aim toward reducing women's household burdens through shared facilities (promoted inter alia by future Czechoslovak president T.G. Masaryk), a left-wing avant-garde tendency influenced by Soviet as well as German studies and realizations, and the 'industrialist' response immediately after the war (Guzik 2018)[51]. The result was the realisation of two actual buildings. One of these, the *Koldům* in the North Bohemian industrial town of Litvínov, has been intensively studied in the past decades not only for its architecture but equally for its social composition (Daňková 2014). And notably, it was mentioned to me personally by one former Nová Víska resident as a threatening monolith inescapable on the town horizon, indeed a physical embodiment of everything wrong with the current system[52].

Guzik, of course, notes the common thread of a belief in technocratic expertise underlying all three collective-housing intentions, the faith of architects and planners in using physical environments to shape and guide society (ibid.) In this way, the Modernist collective dwellings planned or realized are hardly any more radical as spaces than the atomized unit of the prefabricated flat of the model socialist citizen; only, perhaps, more 'utopian' in their aims of effecting change rather than reacting (as in the latter case) to simple necessity. It is telling indeed that the only two realized Czech large-scale communal dwellings came about through the efforts of corporate enterprises (one private, one

From the very start of Czechoslovakia's existence as an independent state, ideas for collective dwellings were prominent in expert, even public discussions.

---

51   For more on the Czech architectural avant-garde and its own relations to Marxism both theoretical and actual note Švácha-Dluhosch 1999.

52   Interview with Sylva Chnápková, Osvračín, 2017.

recently nationalized) prior to the implementation of a full command economy.

Perhaps more germane to the wider implications of Czech (Czechoslovak) collective living, though, might be precisely the longstanding Americophilia — from the First Republic up through the normalization years and beyond — that was able to take the idea of the utopian social imagination from across the Atlantic and adapt it in new conditions. And it is this question of imagination that brings up the final point of the present contribution: the conflict — emerging out of the moment of the Second World's end but reaching chronologically and geographically far beyond — between the idea of "things being different" and the hegemonic ascent of an antiutopian thinking notably more pervasive than merely its instrumental justification for marketist economics. The intellectual background of this historical moment has been described by Susan Buck-Morss: "the utopian dream that industrial modernity could and would provide happiness for the masses. This dream has repeatedly turned into a nightmare, leading to catastrophes of war, exploitation, dictatorship, and technological destruction" (Buck-Morss 2000, xiv). A parallel to this analysis, though, is the strong hegemony during the following two decades within the former Second World of a 'Cold War liberal' argumentation from such thinkers as Isaiah Berlin, Karl Popper, or Ralf Dahrendorf. The last-named thinker's oft-cited contention that "with the terrible dialectics of the non-rational,[…] utopia first requires and then glorifies suppression" (Dahrendorf 1967, 139) does not merely sum up the anti-utopian mood of the political or journalistic sphere in the post-1989 world, but indeed could be traced still further to many other areas of intellectual life. One outcome could be a certain reductiveness, if not even self-imposed restriction, in the effort to imagine social relations and structures as possibly different (Olssen 2003), or a deliberate rejection of any alternative social imaginations. Another could be — as the current contribution aims to rectify — a misunderstanding of alternative and/or oppositional social formations within the period consigned to the 'totalitarian-utopian' interpretation precisely through this prism of sceptical right-liberal understanding.

Without the normative-defensive impulse as a factor in the analytical process, in turn, the researcher — and here the positionality of a certain detached comfort is clearly an advantage — can examine a past commons not simply for its inspiring messages of 'outrage and hope' (Castells 2012) but equally for its limitations, drawbacks, even failures. Yet even this investigative process is not merely about pragmatic judgement: it should equally bring into its scope a final dimension, one that

marked (and continues to mark) the intellectual history of the past three decades since the 1989-1991 dismantling of the state-socialist order. Beyond all these wider questions, though, the crucial point for the present study is that the various Second World social imaginations commonly subsumed under the category of 'resistance to state socialism' can only be explained very imperfectly through the paradigm of an anti-utopian negative liberalism, turning any dissent into a future message of system-stabilisation. Even worse: to force all forms of imagining something beyond the extant state-socialist order into this single paradigm, as a bland assertion of negative liberty, is not only factually incorrect, but unjustly obliterates the possibility of their providing intellectual inspiration for the very different challenges of the present.

Hence, by way of conclusion, a comparison between late 20th-century subcultures across the 'Curtain' (whether the material metaphor is 'Iron' or 'Nylon'), is inevitably a pairing of the unequal, even considering the mutual knowledge and indeed admiration on both sides. Yet even with these conditions in mind, there are two matters in which the Czech underground's efforts genuinely stand out as making a contribution toward the future, rather than simply to the antiquarian reconstruction of the pre-1989 world. One is through their reaction to the social practices of cynical atomization in both command and market economies, regardless of how entrenched they may have become. And the second is, to return to Stavridis, in their status as the 'space-as-threshold': their rejection of the cosy refuges of Socialist Biedermeier in favour of a more significant network of action. Reading the 'mobile commons' of the *baráky* from 2022 is inevitably historicized not merely by the time distance, but all the more so by the arguments over the current state and future trajectory of the regions where state socialism once ruled: on one hand, the programmatic anti-utopianism of the 1990s, on the other, the paralysis of the social imagination that a closed society is likely to leave in its wake. The Czech underground offers us a 'utopian' commons precisely in its literal etymological 'placelessness' of the word, in its emphasis on activity over materiality, and its highlighting that more than any physical spaces, the central form of resistance lies in human sociability.

The Czech underground offers us a 'utopian' commons precisely in its literal etymological 'placelessness' of the word, in its emphasis on activity over materiality, and its highlighting that more than any physical spaces, the central form of resistance lies in human sociability.

References

Alda, Kristina. 2020. "Getting Away? How State-Run Media in Late-
-Socialist Czechoslovakia Helped to Subtly Control Potentially Dan-
gerous Everyday Practices among Cottage Owners." *Studia Ethno-
logica Pragensia* 1: 21-36.

Bill, Stanley 2014. "W poszukiwaniu autentyczności. Kultura polska
i natura teorii postkolonialnej." Translated by Piotr Juskowiak. *Prak-
tyka Teoretyczna* 11: 107-127; English version at: https://nonsite.org/
seeking-the-authentic-polish-culture-and-the-nature-of-postcolonial-
theory/.

Blažek, Petr, and Filip Pospíšil. 2010. *Vraťte nám vlasy! První máničky,
vlasatci a hippies v komunistickém Československu*. Praha: Academia.

Boal, Iain, Janferie Stone, and Michael Watts, eds. 2012. *West of Eden:
Communes and Utopia in Northern California.* Oakland: PM Press.

Bolton, Jonathan. 2012. *Worlds of Dissent. Charter 77, The Plastic People
of the Universe, and Czech Culture under Communism.* Cambridge,
MA: Harvard University Press.

Boyer, Paul. 1975. "A Joyful Noyes: Reassessing America's Utopian Tra-
dition." *Reviews in American History* 3(1): 25-30.

Bren, Pauline. 2002. "Weekend Getaways. The Chata, the Tramp and
the Politics of Private Life in Post-1968 Czechoslovakia." In *Style
and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post- War Eastern
Europe*, edited by David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, 123-140.
Oxford: Berg.

Buck-Morss, Susan. 2000. *Dreamworld and Catastrophy.: The Passing of
Mass Utopia in East and West.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Castells, Manuel. 2012. *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements
in the Internet Age*. Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Castillo, Greg. 2015. "Hippie Modernism." *Places Journal.* https://doi.
org/10.22269/151026.

Chelcea, Liviu-Druța, Oana. 2016. "Zombie Socialism and the Rise of
Neoliberalism in Post-Socialist Central and Eastern Europe." *Eura-
sian Geography and Economics* 57: 521-544.

Činátl, Kamil. 2010. "Časy normalizace." In *Tesilová kavalérie. Popkul-
turní obrazy normalizace,* edited by Petr A. Bílek and Blanka Činát-
lová, 166-187. Příbram: Pistorius & Olšanská.

Činátlová, Blanka. 2010. "Invaze barbarů do české kultury:
Antropologický rozměr domácího umění." In *Tesilová kavalérie.
Popkulturní obrazy normalizace,* edited by Petr A. Bílek and Blanka
Činátlová, 154-165. Příbram: Pistorius & Olšanská.

Cohen, Phil. 1972. "Subcultural Conflict and Working-Class Community." Originally in *CCCS Working Papers* 2: 5-53, reprinted 1997 as Chapter 2 of *Rethinking the Youth Question. Education, Labour and Cultural Studies.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Dahrendorf, Ralf. 1967. *Society and Democracy in Germany*. New York: Doubleday Anchor.

Daňková, Hana: *Kolektivní dům v Litvínově v letech 1945-1960*. 2014. MA thesis, Charles University, Prague.

Denčevová, Ivana, František Stárek, and Michal Stehlík. 2012. *Tváře undergroundu*. Praha: Radioservis.

Fehér, Ferenc, Ágnes Heller, and György Márkus. 1986. *Dictatorship over Needs: An Analysis of Soviet Societies*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Fidelis, Malgorzata. 2017. "Pleasures and Perils of Socialist Modernity: New Scholarship on Post-War Eastern Europe." *Contemporary European History* 26(3): 533-544.

Fogarty, Robert S. 1990. *All Things New: American Communes and Utopian Movements, 1860-1914*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Guzik, Hubert. 2018. "Ignoring and Erasing: Collective Housing in 20th Century Czechoslovakia." *Docomomo Journal* 59: 26-31. https://doi.org/10.52200/59.A.RU7AKBT6.

Hagen, Trever. 2019. *Living in the Merry Ghetto: The Music and Politics of the Czech Underground*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harney, Stefano, and Fred Moten. 2013. *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*. Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions.

Havlík, Adam. 2020. *Veksláci v socialistickém Československu.* PhD dissertation, Charles University, Prague.

Hebdige, Dick. 1979. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. London: Methuen.

Kohn, Margaret. 2003. *Radical Space: Building the House of the People*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Kołodziejczyk, Dorota, and Cristina Şandru. 2016. *Postcolonial Perspectives on Postcommunism in Central and Eastern Europe*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Kudrna, Ladislav, and František Stárek. 2017. *Kapela. Pozadí akce, která stvořila Chartu 77*. Praha: Academia-ÚSTR.

Kudrna, Ladislav, and František Stárek. 2020. *Kniha v barvě krve. Násilí komunistického režimu vůči undergroundu*. Praha: Academia-ÚSTR.

Laube, Roman. 2006. „Hippies na Východě." *Revolver Revue* 64: 119-152.

Linková, Marcela, and Naďa Straková. 2017. *Bytová revolta. Jak ženy dělaly disent.* Praha: Academia-Sociologický ústav AVČR.

Lišková, Kateřina. 2016. "Sex under Socialism: From Emancipation of Women to Normalized Families in Czechoslovakia." *Sexualities* 19(1-2): 211-235.

Maas, John. 1957. *The Gingerbread Age: A View of Victorian America.* New York: Bramhall House.

Machovec, Martin, ed. 2018. *Views from the Inside: Czech Underground Literature and Culture (1948-1989). Manifestoes - Testimonies - Documents.* Praha: Karolineum.

Machovec, Martin. 2019. *Writing Underground: Reflections on Samizdat Literature in Totalitarian Czechoslovakia.* Prague: Karolineum.

Märc, Vojtěch. 2022. "How to Do Politics through the Window? Squatting in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic after 1989." In *The Rule over Your Affairs Once Lost Will Return to You. Architecture and Politics after 1989*, edited by Cyril Říha. Prague: Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design.

Maslowski, Nicolas. 2014. "Underground jako sociální hnutí?" In *Magorova konference: K dílu I. M. Jirouse,* edited by Edita Onuferová and Terezie Pokorná, 146-151. Praha: Revolver Revue.

McDonough, Thomas F. 1994. "Situationist Space." *October* 67: 58-77.

Melegh, Attila. 2006. *On the East-West Slope: Globalization, Nationalism, Racism and Discourses on Eastern Europe*. Budapest: Central European University Press.

Mejzr, Martin. 2019. *„Kdo nepracuje, ať nejí": Fenomén „příživnictví" v socialistickém Československu.* MA thesis, Charles University.

Mitchell, Peter Angus. 2017. "Socialism's Empty Promise: Housing Vacancy and Squatting in the German Democratic Republic." In *Dropping out of Socialism: The Creation of Alternative Spheres in the Soviet Bloc,* edited by Juliane Fürst and Josie McLellan. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Moravčíková, Henrieta. 2013. *Moderné a/alebo totalitné v architektúre 20. storočia na Slovensku / Modern and/or Totalitarian in the Architecture of the 20th Century in Slovakia.* Bratislava: Slovart.

Možný, Ivo. 2009. *Proč tak snadno… Některé rodinné důvody sametové revoluce*. Praha: SLON-Sociologické nakladatelství.

Müller, Martin. 2020. "In Search of the Global East: Thinking between North and South." *Geopolitics* 25(3): 734-755.

Novák, Arnošt, and Bob Kuřík. 2019. "Rethinking Radical Activism: Heterogeneity and Dynamics of Political Squatting in Prague after 1989." *Journal of Urban Affairs*. https://doi.org/10.1080/0735216 6.2019.1565820.

Olssen, Mark. 2003. "Totalitarianism and the Repressed Utopia of the

Present. Moving Beyond Hayek, Popper and Foucault." *Policy Futures in Education* 1(3): 526-552.

Ortová, Jitka. 2006. "Sudetské bezdomoví." In *Proměny sudetské krajiny*, editd by Matěj Spurný, 188-197. Praha: Antikomplex.

Owczarzak, Jill. 2009. "Introduction: Postcolonial Studies and Postsocialism in Eastern Europe." *Focaal - European Journal of Anthropology* 53: 3-19.

Péteri, György. 2004. "Nylon Curtain. Transnational And Transsystemic Tendencies In The Cultural Life Of State-Socialist Russia And East--Central Europe." *Slavonica* 10(2): 113-123.

Peterson, Anna L. 2005. *Seeds of the Kingdom: Utopian Communities in the Americas.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Pullmann, Michal. 2011. *Konec experimentu: Přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu*. Praha: Scriptorium.

Rollová, Veronika, and Karolína Jirkalová, eds. 2021. *Budoucnost je skryta v přítomnosti. Architektura a česká politika 1945-1989. / The Future Is Hidden in the Present. Architecture and Czech Politics 1945-1989.* Prague: Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design.

Sadler, Simon. 2006. "Drop City Revisited." *Journal of Architectural Education* 59(3): 5-14.

Senft, Lukáš. 2016. "Čuňas, estébák kapitalismu." *Deník Referendum,* 19 July. https://denikreferendum.cz/clanek/23398-cunas-estebak--kapitalismu.

Schindler-Wisten, Petra. 2017. *O chalupách a lidech: Chalupářství v českých zemích v období tzv. normalizace a transformace.* Praha: Karolinum.

Skřivánková, Lucie, Rostislav Švácha, and Irena Lehkoživová, eds. 2017. *The Paneláks: Twenty-Five Housing Estates in the Czech Republic.* Praha: UPM.

Spurný, Matěj: 2011. *Nejsou jako my. Česká společnost a menšiny v pohraničí 1945-1960.* Praha: Antikomplex.

Spurný, Matěj. 2016. *Most do budoucnosti. Laboratoř socialistické modernity na severu Čech*, Praha: Karolinum.

Spurný, Matěj. 2019. *Making the Most of Tomorrow: A Laboratory of Socialist Modernity in Czechoslovakia*. Praha: Karolinum.

Stárek, František-Kostúr, Jiří. 2010. *Baráky - souostroví svobody*. Praha: Pulchra.

Šťastná, Renáta et al. 2017. *Vzpomínkomat.* Brno: BizBooks.

Suk, Jaroslav. 1993. *Několik slangových slovníků*. Praha: Inverze.

Sutton, Robert P. 2003. *Communal Utopias and the American Experience. Religious Communities 1732-2000*. Westport: Praeger.

Švácha, Rostislav, and Erik Dluhosch. 1999. *Karel Teige: L'Enfant Terrible of the Czech Modernist Avant-Garde.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Tlostanova, Madina. 2015. "Can the Post-Soviet Think?" *Intersections. East European Journal of Society and Politics* 1(2): 38-58.

Tharp, Martin. 2018. "Guitars and Howls: Towards the Roots of the Provincial Czech Underground in the 1970s." In *Bezčasí: Československo v letech 1972-1977*, edited by Jiří Petráš and Libor Svoboda. Jihočeské muzeum v Českých Budějovicích, ÚSTR: Praha-České Budějovice.

Tharp, Martin. 2020. "Space, Paper, Transition/ality at Bolzanova 7. The Dissolution of the Czech Samizdat Scene and the Growth of Zine Culture in the 1990s." *Forum Historiae* 14(2): 93-103.

Tharp, Martin. 2021. *Paper Agora: The Samizdat Periodical Vokno and the Provincial Czech Underground in Historical and Social Perspective.* PhD dissertation, Charles University, Prague.

Trimikliniotis, Nicos, Dimitris Parsanoglou, and Vassilis Tsianos. 2017. "Mobile Commons and/in Precarious Spaces: Mapping Migrant Struggles and Social Resistance." In *Politics of Precarity. Migrant Conditions, Struggles and Experiences*, edited by Carl-Ulrik Schierup and Martin Bak Jørgensen. Leiden: Brill.

Vasudevan, Alexander. 2015. *Metropolitan Preoccupations: The Spatial Politics of Squatting in Berlin*. Chichester: Wylie-Blackwell.

Zarecor, Kimberley Elman. 2011. *Manufacturing a Socialist Modernity: Housing in Czechoslovakia 1945-1960*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

MARTIN THARP received his PhD in historical sociology from the Faculty of Humanistic Studies, Charles University in Prague. Previously, he studied Slavic philology and international relations at Columbia University.

Address:
Faculty of Humanities
Charles University
Pátkova 2137/5
182 00 Prague 8 - Libeň
Czech Republic
email: MTharp@seznam.cz

Autor: Martin Tharp
Tytuł: Zrepresjonowane utopie kontra utopijne represje: czeskie kontrkulturowe modele życia wspólnotowego w okresie „normalizacji" (1970-1989)
Abstrakt: Niniejszy artykuł stawia sobie za cel przeanalizowanie pewnego specyficznego zjawiska w „Drugim Świecie" – wspólnotowych modeli życia, wypróbowywanych przez kontrkulturowo zorientowanej, w większości pochodzącej z klasy robotniczej młodzieży w Czechosłowacji po 1969 roku, często (choć nie tylko) w byłym niemieckim Kraju Sudetów – obrazujących potencjał i ograniczenia związane z ustanawianiem „mobilnych dóbr wspólnych" w dwudziestowiecznym socjalizmie państwowym. Nie tylko dziedzictwo czeskich komun (*baráky*) pozostaje niewystarczająco zbadanym tematem historycznym, ale – co więcej – usytuowanie go pomiędzy refleksją nad amerykańsko komunalno-utopijną tradycją lat sześćdziesiątych, wyłaniającą się krytyką przemysłowej nowoczesności, wykwitem dwudziestowiecznych konceptów „społeczeństwa obywatelskiego" i mobilością doby „zimnej wojny" w poprzek „żelaznej kurtyny" dostarcza wysoce owocnego punktu dla dalszych rozważań. Przyjrzenie się czeskim kontrkulturowym, komunalnym modelom życia w społecznym kontekście porządku „normalizacji" lat siedemdziesiątych i osiemdziesiątych – represji państwowych, socjalistycznej nowoczesności, anty-publicznego familiaryzmu – pozwala ukazać ich charakter jako społeczności ucieczki, bardziej niż celowo rozplanowanego eksperymentu i umieszcza je w wyjątkowym miejscu na osi debat między utopijnością a antyutopijnością, kwestionując same przesłanki stojące za tą opozycją.
Słowa kluczowe: życie wspólnotowe, społeczności utopijne, przestrzeń radykalna, dobra wspólne, opór, socjalizm, Czechosłowacja