

L'Harmattan

# WAR MATTERS

Constructing Images of the Other

(1930s to 1950s)



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## **War Matters. Constructing Images of the Other (1930s to 1950s)**

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Constructing Images of the Other  
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ESTONIAN LITERARY MUSEUM  
INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY  
POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

**War Matters**  
Constructing Images of the Other  
(1930s to 1950s)

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## Representations of the Other in the Time of War: Does War Matter?

*The frankest representations of war and of disaster-injured bodies are of those who seem most foreign, therefore least likely to be known. With subjects closer to home, the photographer is expected to be more discreet*  
(Sontag 2003: 61–62)

Cultural representations of alterity have not lost their significance in today's world. The two volumes of the past conferences discussing the portrayal of the Other (*Images of the Other in Ethnic Caricatures*, Warsaw 2010, and *Competing Eyes: Visual Encounters with Alterity*, Budapest 2013) have borne witness to this conviction. By studying images of the past, we are also in a better position to analyse those of the present. Visual representations depend, first and foremost, on the historical period they are born in (as was the main topic of the conference held in Warsaw, 2010), on the culture and context of their origin (discussed in Budapest in 2013), and, perhaps more specifically, on the political climate, for example peace, revolution, conflict, war etc. The present volume aims to show how the Other is constructed in a context of heightened political conflict during and after wartime.

This volume, *War Matters: Constructing Images of the Other (1930s to 1950s)*, describes how we understand the role of war in how the Other is depicted. However, in the following part of Introduction we would like to point out some more general questions to which authors refer in the volume and which we perceive as crucial for the analysis. Some of the authors deal with formal techniques and means of representation (for example introduced by the increasing availability and popularity of new media); some touch upon the problem of ideologies and aims of particular representations; yet others are concerned with social and political changes and influences thereof. All in all, the interactions between a wider socio-political context and specific visual representations, as well as the more specific context (technological development of the new media used in, for example, propaganda), are at the very core of our interests.

Stuart Hall's seminal work *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (1997) has served as an inspiration for this volume. Following on from the writings of Hall, we considered it necessary to compare various visual images of the Other in order to grasp the possibilities and the potential of different means of representation (caricatures, photography, movies, works of art, and monuments). The existing and newly created imagery started to acquire new layers of meaning, coexist and influence one another, when looked at in the context of war.

WWII changed worldviews, perspectives on enemies and allies, everyday beliefs, and existing social, political and value hierarchies. It also changed how these views, beliefs and hierarchies were expressed visually. The aim of this volume is to examine how the Other is represented visually during WWII (but also the pre-war and post-war decades in order to account for the wider context), as well as providing a longitudinal perspective on the material by referring to the two previous volumes. Although our focus is set particularly on Eastern and Central Europe, we are equally interested in understanding the processes by which they represent the Other in the context of a global war (i.e. a war that was wider than the European context alone). During WWII, the number of groups considered alien or dangerous grew quickly along with their geographic scope. The examples of this volume come from pre-war, wartime and post-war Poland, Latvia, Russia, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Slovakia and Great Britain.

The representation of the Other in the time of war, on the one hand continued pre-war patterns, while on the other gained a new, more aggressive form fuelled by rising nationalism and hatred, causing a change of targets that needed to be represented (for example as a mortal enemy) as well as visualised. Susan Sontag (2003) has argued that we consider the Other—even if the Other is not seen as an enemy—as someone whom we observe, not someone who would also observe us; we consider the Other someone to be seen, and not as someone who also, as we do, sees. In the growing aggression of wartime images, the dehumanised Other, who can be observed but does not observe him/herself, is highly present (see Kleemola, this volume).

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We can easily observe that different images have different purposes. Some are used for information, others for aesthetic experience, still others for documentation and archiving. As with any product of culture, they are strongly related to the context that has created them; they also change as the context changes. It is obvious that the greater the change in the society, the more evident the transformations in the way of representing. We will look more closely at what happens to images when war starts. How does it change the images themselves and also their usage, and, more generally, how does war matter in relation to images?

This volume will try to answer questions concerning the interrelations of three important variables: war, images and the Other. The most evident change is that when countries are at war, they markedly focus on the negative sides of the enemy, wanting to capture their shortcomings, weaknesses and ridiculousness in contrast with their own advantages, strengths and sensibility. Quite often, these generalisations are based on (deliberate) ignorance (see also Davies, this volume). In documenting and analysing this, we have to pay attention to what is not depicted in the pictures equally along with what can be seen and noticed. The concealed is as important as the evident, if not more so, when it comes to studying societal processes. What is communicated explicitly and what is left implicit may inform the attentive observer about the aims, motives and ideas of the sender of the message.

We are dealing with the cultural representations and their influence on culture; for example, with the way that stereotyping functions in society. We must look at “how it works (essentializing, reductionism, naturalization, binary oppositions), at the ways it is caught up in the play of power (hegemony, power/knowledge), and at some of its deeper, more unconscious effects (fantasy, fetishism, disavowal)” (Hall 1997: 180). In general terms, all cultural representations—either of material or immaterial character—have been produced in this way, with the process of constructing meaning constantly going on everywhere we look. The idea of representation is central for the investigation of images and the Other.

We also need to reflect upon what representation means. To represent something is to depict it, to call it up in the mind by portrayal or imagination, as well as symbolising, standing for<sup>1</sup>; so representing certainly is a universal device working in all areas of culture and society. It is the main way of making meaning. Within the limits of this project, we have narrowed the wide range of elements this process entails strictly to representing encounters with the Other. In doing so, we target the representation of otherness and difference. As Stuart Hall puts it, “how other cultures are made to signify through the discourses of exhibition (poetics) and how these practices are inscribed by relations of power (politics) (...) which prevail between the people who are represented and the cultures and institutions doing the representing” (Hall 1997: 225). Marking the difference between ‘us’ and ‘them’ indicates that meaning is relational, thus the difference itself is meaningful and significant. Meaning may depend on the difference between particular opposites. It is the relationship between ‘us’ and ‘them’ that shapes the degree and expression of otherness in the representations.

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### **Photography and Caricature**

The photographic picture is in common thinking often perceived as a faithful record of reality. It is treated as an objective expression of a visual convention, exemplifying the way things are depicted at a given time. Deeper reflection, however, reveals how photography is at all times constructed and contextualised. This shows that we cannot simply take what we are seeing or what we believe is being represented for granted. Photography may also convey information of the group identity of its author, because through its affinity to a particular way of thinking it often refers to a certain culture, typical to the group of people to which the author belongs. It still documents the world, remaining an evidence of the past, although construed one; but it is also an indication or a trace of how the author has seen the reality, since every photograph carries the convictions, stereotypes, ideas etc. or assumptions of the ideology the author subscribes to.

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed overview, see Hall 1997.

War photography dates back to 1846. About a century later, in the second half of the twentieth century, advances in technology made the medium more popular among the masses (Tucker et al 2012). Photo reportages and photo essays—sequences of pictures with some text—became part of illustrative journals from the 1930s onwards. They were motivated by the increasing need of the audience to witness all events not only in verbal form but also in images. Photography became a source of information<sup>2</sup>. However, documentary pictures were not as unbiased or objective as they seemed (Butler 2010; Apel 2012; see also Kalniuk; Manikowska, this volume). There are always two levels—the events as they occur in reality and the events as depicted in representations—and this is why it is worth focusing on the ideology behind the documentary practices during wartime that either serve to raise ‘us’ onto a pedestal or construct the image of the enemy, the defeated, the Other, ‘them’ (see Demski; Kleemola, this volume).

In contrast, caricature sets off from different premises. The implicit aim of caricature is to sketch and exaggerate, not depict ‘neutrally’. In this volume, we use the term *caricature* to denote humorous satirical drawings in order to point out the politicised content of the genre.<sup>3</sup> It is also a more historical term, used when talking about visual political satire in the form of engravings and lithographs from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. The term *cartoon*, on the other hand, is used as a more general umbrella term for all humorous visual pictures (or verbal–visual combined; see also Hempelmann & Samson 2008). The power of caricature is vested in the recognisable, although grossly and blatantly exaggerated, image of the Other. It places the Other outside the normal, the accepted and the conventional, visualising the nascent juxtaposition through ridiculous details like playing with the proportions of the body, adding animal body parts, depicting the target as involved in some shameful activity etc. Although the main targets of caricaturists have usually been the clergy, politicians, noblemen and other well-off social groups, interethnic conflict may turn primary attention to ethnic targets and their bizarre, abnormal ways. In this case, caricature often uses ethnic features to depict the enemy as the Other.

In the context of war, humour may seem slightly inappropriate a phenomenon to address. Nevertheless, it is relevant to ask, drawing on previous studies (see e.g. Davies 2002; Stokker 1997), if humour disappears during war; are humour and straightforward degrading propaganda mutually exclusive or can humour function predictably in the hands of the communicator who wishes to make a point about

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<sup>2</sup> The American magazine *Life*, which was for a considerable time a synonym for the attitude that photography is a source of information and is documentary, existed until 1972, then losing its position to television (Kempf 2014: 118).

<sup>3</sup> Caricature has its roots in medieval social life and art. It mocked the elite classes and aimed to achieve a (temporary) reversal of social order, similar to carnivals (see “Caricature” in the Encyclopedia of Humor Studies (2014)).

a particular Other? This will add to the on-going discussions about the functionality of humour in general (see Davies; Kozintsev, this volume).

As we have established, one of the goals of photography and caricature is identical, that of constructing the Other. However, they operate in different ways. Susan Sontag in her book *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003) talks about the history of documenting war and suffering, and of our experiences around this documentation. She argues that shocking images are a means of making alarming matters 'real' for those privileged and safe people who deliberately ignore the atrocities and live in their own closed world. She also discusses how instead of documenting the suffering that is here and now, we sometimes choose to document the suffering that is further away from us. War, in a way, is generic, and the victims are also generic and anonymous. But it is so only when viewed from a safe distance, because those "who are sure that right is on one side, oppression and injustice on the other, and that the fighting must go on, what matters is precisely who is killed and by whom" (Sontag 2003: 10). Using photographs and caricatures usually fulfils different purposes and derives from different traditions of representations, although both may show the atrocities and devastation of the times. Documentary photography often plays on emotions and thus its force of persuasion is higher. In the case of more symbolical representation—as in caricature—the artist targets what seems to be highly valuable by the Other, educates through humour, but does not shock the viewer in a way a photographer might.

The period of WWII and the post-war decade is marked by the rapid spread of new media, such as television, cinema etc. This affected the ways in which Others were represented, exemplifying the close-knit relationship between what is being shown with how it is shown. The media introduced and familiarised people with new ways of representing the Other by giving voice to certain agents (for example caricaturists, photographers, war correspondents), institutions (for example departments of propaganda) and discourses, and dictated the conditions for inclusion and exclusion. The process was also affected by the rapidly changing situation created by victories and losses in the war. During this decade, the traditional field of visual representations of alterity started to extend. Otherness was depicted in various ways in the so-called new media (mainly film, cinema, television). As already mentioned, much of the suffering that people witnessed in pictures during the global war was faraway and thus alien to them (cf. Sontag 2003), although they could sympathise to some degree, based on their own (or their nation's) experience. Nevertheless, the category of the Other grew, changed content/targets, was borrowed, discovered, forgotten and denied—all within a short period of time during and after WWII. This is a key to our discussion: how relational wartime images were and what actually shapes the viewers' perception of the familiar and the strange. Following Sontag's line of reasoning we can say that familiarity and otherness become manifest in the opposition between the Other (and the wartime horror, devastation and suffering the Other causes and represents) and the horror,

devastation and suffering that ‘we’ have to endure. Photography comes to stand for much more than just ‘freezing our memories on film’. The attitudes visible in photography start to resemble the premises of caricature—they exaggerate the features of the people and events depicted in them, bring forth the unusual, the alien and the abnormal, criticise and moralise etc. The seemingly objective manner of the photograph starts to crumble and reveal the ideologically motivated nature of (all) representations.

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Stuart Hall claims that our subjectivities are formed through a troubled but unconscious dialogue with the Other. We can never complete the process of constructing our identity; there is no stable inner core to the Self. Moreover, “it is formed in relation to something which completes us but which—since it lies outside us—we in some way always lack” (Hall 1997: 238). The perception of the Other is always connected with that of the Self, and the aggression and offensive stereotyping seen in wartime images arises from ‘our’ refusal to recognise the enemy as a person in the way that ‘we’ are and the country of the enemy as a place equal to where ‘we’ live (Bhabha 1986 cited in Hall 1997: 238).

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Taking the representations of war that stand for different war experiences in all of their subjectivity and particularity, the whole volume presents, analyses and discusses these experiences in order to reach a comparative conclusion on how war matters in relation to images—i.e. how it affects the construction of the Other in a visual format. Documentary and representational practices functioned at that time as an attempt to record and legitimise the changes, atrocities, and political decisions. Both the photographic and comic images approved war and violence, served the same goal, tried to mobilise people and shape their attitudes. In contrast to caricatures, (documentary or propaganda) photography displays one more aspect: as Barthes has stated, photography “reproduces a set of social relations that made the taking of the photograph possible” (cited in Apel 2012: 6). In this way we come back to the idea that constructing the Other is always relational.

### Overview of the Chapters

The equation that we are studying in the present volume has three variables, the interactions of which form the core of our interest: war as a general context, images of war as the more specific focus within this context, and finally Others as a separate category depicted in images of war. The first section of the volume, entitled *Wartime Images: Marking out the Battlefield*, focuses on laying down a general backdrop for the more specific studies that follow, providing a comparative, theoretical and methodological grid that brings together the three variables that we see as central to this volume.

Christie Davies opens the volume with a novel perspective on Eastern and Central European Others using examples of Western (for example British, American) caricaturists' depiction of Poles, Russians, Jews and other nations. Although these nations are not the usual subjects for Anglo-Saxon mockery, which centres more on Western Europe, they did appear more often in the context of WWII and the post-war period, which indicates how war changes the choice of targets for caricatures in the first place. In addition to this, the war affects the way enemies are perceived by making the image more extreme and distorted. This mechanism is the same everywhere, regardless of the origin of the author. It is relevant to ask how much alterity is represented in the images, because some Others have been, and will remain, more alien than others—also outside the context of the war. This is especially true of the visual depiction of and the underlying Jewish stereotypes (see also Rosner, this volume). Through this, the interaction between war, images, and the notion of the Other is introduced as the focus of the entire volume.

Dagnosław Demski follows up by setting a theoretical and methodological framework to the research of war images. He uses the notion of iconoclasm as a starting point and asks why conflict brings about not only physical destruction but simultaneously symbolically tears down everything that is valuable to the Other. Why does this happen, and why is the inflicted violence sometimes photographed and/or published? Demski analyses a collection of photographic representations of war damage from WWII, approaching his material as an instance of an iconoclastic gesture. While doing this, he differentiates between positive and negative images: those that are used to establish power, and others that are offensive and work against power in order to overturn it. Demolishing former order and establishing new is thus the core of the process described by Demski in his chapter.

The last chapter in the introductory section, by Alexander Kozintsev, addresses the way humour changes in problematic circumstances, i.e. how war changes humour. He asks in his chapter why and when do people ridicule the object they actually want to destroy, and when do they use more straightforward methods like real aggression. War humour provides a good testing ground for attempting a clearer distinction between humour, sarcasm/irony and insult, and the central question of whether humour can coincide with invective in the very same text or image or not, and if yes then to what effect. Kozintsev analyses wartime graphic humour in Russia to answer this question and through this clarifies the definition and concept of humour in general.

The second section of the book, entitled *Ideology and the Other: The Making of the Enemy*, gives a more specific overview of the ideological Other in Europe in three different periods: pre-WWII, the war and post-WWII.

Ágnes Tamás, comparing caricatures published in selected German and Hungarian humorous periodicals during WWI and WWII, analyses how propaganda

caricatures changed through these turbulent times, taking into account the fact that failed propaganda was seen as one of the reasons for losing the war. The main difference between the comic images of the two wars (WWII caricatures being more aggressive) is related to the general context of war and the historical and cultural knowledge of people in general. Thus, caricatures from WWI display fewer motifs that demonise the enemy, probably because this was the first experience of such a total war that extended over continents and nations. Symbols (both new and old, for example those from Ancient Greek mythology) and self- and Other-directed stereotypes were actively used to boost a positive self-image and deride the enemy.

Stereotypes about the Other flourished in places where people fled from the war, contact between the more remote places and a variety of foreigners stimulated their upsurge. Britain was a favourable migration destination for Jews during the interwar period. Anna Rosner describes in her chapter the Kindertransport programme, which organised the transportation of underage Jews to British towns. Depending on the age of the children, their adjustment to the new environment was different; many lost connection with their roots and identity in the process, only to start searching for them after the war. As Rosner's focus is set primarily on the general perception of the cultural otherness of the Jews in the UK, we can see references to the imagery connected with the immigrants in her excerpts of biographies of those who had taken part in the Kindertransport programme.

18 Moving on into the WWII period, Anssi Halmesvirta writes about alienating one particular nation as the result of problematic relationships. The Finns' age-old hatred for the Russians, as the author sees it, is a tool of self-identification through juxtaposition: where Russians are seen as unorganised, barbaric and demoralised, the Finns work for a common goal, civilised and with high moral standards. The caricatures published during WWII in the Finnish sports journal *Suomen Urheilulehti* ('Finnish Sports Journal') lend support to this opposition and establish the Finns not only as the saviours of their own country, but as defending Western civilisation and its democratic values against the alleged Eastern barbarity. Humour was an inevitable part of these images because of censorship against more aggressive forms of depiction of the Other; it was also inevitable that it would suggest the superiority of the Finns over the Russians, making the latter look both laughable and miserable and thus weak and vulnerable.

Olli Kleemola, continuing the discussion of the Finnish perception of the Other during the war, concentrates on documentary photographs taken by Finnish propaganda units, which were modelled on the example of their Nazi counterparts in the Wehrmacht. He studies the differences and similarities of visual propaganda in the photographs and suggests that while the Nazi Germany was fighting a racially motivated war and the images reflected this position, the Finnish photographic material presents a more nuanced and less aggressive (even child-like and comical) picture of the Finnish enemy, the Russians. This was also visible in the tendency to

depict individuals rather than hordes of prisoners, the former leaving some room to see the human side of the Other.

The self-identification of a nation is closely tied with the social and political context of the times. Ilze Boldāne-Zeļenkova reflects on the changes in Latvian national stereotypes of themselves and the Other (focusing on Russians, Germans and Jews) in official propaganda channels and its reception by the people, showing a definite link between these two. She observes that seeing the Germans as liberators, the Jews as aggressors and the Russians as comic figures, dangerous because of their unpredictability, was the result of successful Nazi propaganda in Latvia.

Nazi propaganda is also the topic of Magdalena Żakowska's chapter. Having analysed political satirical magazines and women's magazines from WWII, she concludes that male and female German citizens were given different information about the Other, i.e. that Soviet Russia belonged in a way to parallel realities. This contrast is based on a more basic dichotomy of feminine/private vs. masculine/public, which also formed the core of gender relations in Nazi Germany.

Liisi Laineste and Margus Lääne, writing about propaganda caricatures from two sides of the front in Nazi- and Soviet-occupied Estonia during WWII, echo Boldāne's observations about the image of Russians, finding Soviet propaganda to be equally harsh. In their analysis of caricatures, both published and unpublished, they trace the main stereotypes of the two fighting superpowers within this relatively short but politically changeable period of time (1942–1944) in propaganda caricatures published on both sides of the front.

Zuzana Panczová describes not only the visual content of Slovak humorous periodicals from WWII but also the verbally expressed stereotypes of the Other and the role of the journal editors and cartoonists in shaping them. She differentiates between the enemy within, the traitor, and the outside enemy, in opposition to which the increasingly heroic Slovak stands out as a positive character.

Moving further in time to the early Cold War period (1947–1953), Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska reports on the content of the Polish communist newspaper *Trybuna Robotnicza* ('The Worker's Tribune'). She posits that many of the cartoons, although not very numerous in themselves, recycle motives known from before WWII: the generic figures of John Bull and Uncle Sam, the quintessence of evil embodied by symbols like the swastika etc. Simultaneously, the image of the New Man, arising from the destruction caused by WWII, is shown as the modernist hero who will build up the new peaceful post-war world.

In the final chapter in this section, Oleg Riabov reflects on Soviet Cold-War-era movies that depict the West as decadent, corrupt and generally a negative influence on the communist world. The female character in these films is often the key to understanding the inner workings of covert propaganda: she is seen as a victim of the capitalist system and a cruel, non-feminine enemy of the communist world. The stereotyped gender roles, with the Soviet views on gender opposed sharply to

those held in America, leads the author to conclude that cinematic representations of the female figure in Soviet movies functioned as a weapon of propaganda in the Cold War.

The final section, entitled *Old Enemies, New Faces*, maps the relationships between nations and their identity construction processes onto a more spatial context in order to understand how the processes of othering, evoked by and developed during WWII, worked on a wider social, political and geographical scale. Accentuating the uses of the past, the authors describe how old images are re-used in a new and sometimes incompatible context (which may cause a humorous effect).

The image of the West is further addressed by Tomasz Kalniuk as a continuation of the discussion started in Riabov (this volume). He describes the positive stereotyping of the US, which was a dominant motive in the Polish press in the 1930s. Europe, just recovering from WWI, looked up to the US, to the land of innovation and exaggerated proportions, and Poland was no exception. Kalniuk sees this as an important aspect of the self-awareness and self-identification of a nation, the need for which was particularly strong during the interwar period.

Ewa Manikowska's chapter about the images perpetuated in documentary survey photo projects discusses the power of images in geopolitical decisions. The material—photographs taken before the destruction brought about by the two world wars—served as propaganda material in later periods, which initiates a discussion about the ways images continue to 'live on' and mean different things to subsequent generations.

The status and re-use of photographs taken during and after WWII is also the topic addressed by Eda Kalmre. The photos illustrating her discussion depict the city space in downtown Tartu, in Estonia, where the ruins, missing buildings and empty areas cleaned of rubble were and continue to be meaningful for the local inhabitants in the reconstruction of history. She refers to the photos as an increasingly important part of remembering the wars, not only in the Soviet period but also in today when photoshopped images of old and new town landscapes are circulated on the Internet.

Dominika Czarnecka also focuses on town and city space, discussing the highly contested monuments for soldiers erected in communist Poland during the 1940s and 1950s. These numerous monuments depicting heroic Red Army soldiers can be seen as a vehicle for propaganda. Within the context of the prevailing anti-communist sentiment the symbolism in these statues' poses and their dimensions and locations became an object of (general and anonymous) scorn—this, of course, on the part of the viewer, making the monuments both familiar and alien at the same time.

Photography, even if it seems to be a 'neutral eye' that captures and documents without discrimination, is conceptualised as highly ideological by Magdalena Sztandara in her account of the images of women in Polish (Silesian) magazines of

the 1950s. Gender values were undergoing noticeable re-conceptualisation in these years, highlighting the role of the woman as a worker, mother, carrier of tradition, etc. In order for those values to be introduced and sustained, it was necessary to stage reality so that it would fit the imaginary.

Also addressing identity construction in the Silesian region of Poland, Ewa Baniowska-Kopacz describes images published in *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany* ('Silesia. Monthly Illustrated'). The visual material in this periodical aimed at constructing a 'new history' for Silesia, a region Poland regained after WWII. Pictures of rural work and the cultural and historical legacy (kings, important places and buildings) were published to present the Regained Territories as a friendly, well-known and safe space so that the audience would identify with this area, which is another good example of redefining the past and conditioning the present with the help of images.

Liudmila Limanskaya's chapter about the deconstruction of socialist ideals at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century draws the volume to a conclusion. She describes the works produced within the Sots Art movement, where the 'heroes' of socialist realism are both revived and desacralised by an ironic use of gestures, expressions and postures known from the 1950s. This shows quite clearly the persisting relevance of these images and points to the indirect effects of WWII in contemporary art.

## Conclusion

The chapters of this volume address wartime images (but, to give a wider context, include in some cases images from before and after WWII) from a number of European countries. It is exactly the multiplicity of the material that makes the volume unique. Different periods in history—and different countries or regions—highlight specific sets of topics and can be differentiated by the style of the images and by the favourite media in which the Other was represented. It is highly important to explore what causes a specific type of message to prevail in a given period, country or region. Moreover, every type of medium has its own ways of representing the reality. The representations that are studied in this volume form a comparable set of material because all of them have been shaped by the presence of total war—WWII (and WWI to some extent).

If we look into the past, we can find out something about the present. This volume shows once again that the question of how war matters makes a relevant topic—at every time when there is a split, a chiasm, similar processes are triggered. The well-known human disposition to see only black and white, heroes or villains, especially in times of conflict, is an eternal one, although with modifications conditioned by context and previous experience. We can delve deeper into the question posed by Stuart Hall<sup>4</sup> (1997: 225) by asking whether "the repertoires of represen-

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<sup>4</sup> He asks, "have the repertoires of representation around 'difference' and 'otherness' changed or do earlier traces remain intact in contemporary society?" (Hall 1997: 225).

tation around ‘difference’ and ‘otherness’ have changed” or do earlier convictions, for example ways of depiction, remain intact through different periods. This is still an open question with related examples in the present-day political arena where injustice, oppression and conflicts loom.

Although many of the questions the authors tried to answer in this volume are still open and relevant in today’s cultural, political and social situation, we would like to give special attention to the global war, WWII, as a particular circumstance which, by affecting all aspects of life, also affected the ways of conceptualising, denoting, recognising and representing the Other. Following on from the conclusions drawn by chapter authors we realise that otherness gains a particular role during wartime. It is ideologically manipulated, shaped and construed and becomes a tool of social engineering in order to allow particular groups to achieve their political goals or validate their deeds. At the same time otherness remains an element of local or national culture which derives its content from tradition and social relations. These notions of otherness interweave with each other during wartime, confronting people with a density of meanings that are significantly present in their new forms of representation. The ways that images of the Other change or are reworked from old images to suit better the purposes of war is central to the present book because it gives us a unique opportunity not only to see some reflections of political and social relations during WWII in images from the period, but also—and above all—to bring us to an understanding of the role that was ascribed to othering, to how this particular process was developed, and how it was perceived by the general audience, the people whom propaganda targeted.

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# **1. Wartime Images: Marking out the Battlefield**

## Constructing Images of the Other in Peace and War: Anglo-Saxon Perceptions and Their Relevance to Eastern and Central Europe

Unless an Eastern or Central European country has been involved in one of the wars in which Britain or America has taken part, it is not likely that its image will be found in British or American cartoons and caricatures, or indeed in those from Canada or Australia or New Zealand. The Anglo-Saxon producers and consumers of these cartoons and caricatures are largely ignorant of the caricatured identities and appearances of the peoples concerned, or the conflicts between them. We all tend to lump geographically distant peoples together into a single undifferentiated Other. Likewise, quite apart from the language problems, Anglo-Saxon observers will not even understand the visual aspect of cartoons generated in Eastern and Central Europe because they do not know the political and historical background to them. They do not, for example, know about the conflicts between Poland and Lithuania over Vilnius, Poland and the Czechs over Těšín, Poland and the Germans over Upper Silesia or Poland and the Ukraine over Eastern Galicia (Davies 1981: 390–394). In fairness to the Anglo-Saxons, I doubt if people in Finland understand the Macedonian question or Slovaks know much about the Estonian and Latvian border dispute over Valga/Valka that had to be settled by Sir Stephen George Tallents CB, CBE.

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The British and the Americans have, however, shared in the conflicts involving the two great aggressors in the region, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, and have produced their own images of these two malign totalitarian powers, as well as being well aware of the vividly illustrated hostile propaganda the aggressors themselves produced. There is a particularly strong awareness in the Anglo-Saxon world of the anti-Semitic images that permeated Europe and which became horribly intensified in the 1930s and even more so during WWII. In these, in many senses hateful images, disseminated in much of Europe, the Jew was depicted as a hyper-Other; a universal, omnipresent enemy.

In addition, the British and the Americans know full well from their own experiences of war, particularly WWII and notably in relation to the Japanese, just how the lenses, mirrors and prisms of war change the way enemies are perceived as their otherness is magnified and distorted. These mechanisms will apply also to the images generated within Eastern and Central Europe under the stress and enhanced enmities of war. Thus, both directly and indirectly, the Anglo-Saxon observer has

much to contribute to a study of how images of the Other are constructed in Eastern and Central Europe in peace and war.

Within Europe, British cartoonists have fairly clear shared conventions for depicting their larger and more immediate neighbours such as the French, the Germans and the Italians, but after that it gets a bit vague. This is true for the American authors too. The Americans even use the compound term Bohunk (which carries a derogatory meaning), combining ‘Bohemian’ and ‘Hungarian’ into one word to describe Central Europeans generally. They would have problems understanding Josef Lada’s illustrations to *The Good Soldier Švejk* which utterly depend on the contrasting facial appearance of Czechs and Magyars (Hašek (1973 [1921–1923]: 231, 368–369). To the Americans they are all ‘squareheads’. Only when there is a world conflict do East European countries appear in British cartoons and even then as a generic undifferentiated single entity or a mere list of names. East and Central Europeans have to be labelled with the names of their countries in writing, and are often invisible, their people and symbols not shown at all (Bryant 2005: 26, 40) since there are no familiar, conventional images or symbols that the British or American cartoonist can use—unlike, say, the unshaven, baguette-toting Frenchman in his beret and shirt with broad horizontal stripes; the German in lederhosen or military helmet with his *schmissen*, his facial scar from *mensur* duelling; or the dark, unshaven arm-waving Italian with a twirled moustache.

When a Soviet caricaturist draws the gallant Russian soldier in Figure 1 with upright rifle and bayonet seizing the wrist of a Polish secret agent lurking in an alleyway with knife and bomb, the British and the Americans will have no idea of the villain’s nationality even though it is signalled by his thick upward-turning, almost handle-bar, *szlachta* and officer moustache and the eagle-badge on his cap.

Yet, the converse is also true. East and Central Europeans cannot make fine distinctions about Britain. They use the words English and British interchangeably, ignoring the existence of Wales and Scotland, the other two countries that make up Great Britain, let alone Ulster. Aleksander V. Golubev (2010: 213) writing about 1930s caricatures from *Krokodil* speaks of James Ramsay McDonald as “an English politician, one of the founders and leaders of the Labour Party of Great Britain”. McDonald was in fact a very Scottish Scotsman and the British war-leader David Lloyd George, who is quoted by the English-Polish historian Norman Davies (1981: 393) that he would no more “give Upper Silesia to Poland than he would give a clock to a monkey”, was not English either. For the creators of British caricatures, Welsh and especially Scottish figures, often in distinctive national garb (Lancaster 1978: 46–47), are as important as those of distinctive adjacent nations in Eastern and Central Europe are to the cartoonists of those countries (Demski et al 2013). Is there any cartoonist in Eastern or Central Europe who knows how to depict the strange people of Lloyd George’s distant, little country with its strange, impossible to learn, language, whose national identity is centred on singing festivals? Slovak cartoonists even have problems depicting the Scots; the

Scotsmen's kilts cease to be tartan and become mere transvestite skirts, the bonnet takes on a different shape and the sporran disappears (Horecký 1985: 185–201). For the Slovaks the Scots are a distant and vague, unthreatening Other rather than a familiar neighbouring, well-observed Other and potential enemy.

For neighbours, small differences are important because they define identity and tell 'us' apart from 'them'. They are also important for other types of groups. For a Roman Catholic the differences between a Baptist, a Presbyterian, a Methodist, a Congregationalist and an Anglican are not as important or as recognisable as they are to Anglo-Saxon Protestants, but equally Protestants do not distinguish between monks, friars and secular priests let alone Franciscans and Dominicans. How many Christians can properly distinguish Sunni and Shi'ite, let alone say who the Alawites or the Khoja Ismailis are? Likewise conservatives, libertarians, social democrats and Marxists can each make fine distinctions between their own different factions but outsiders cannot and are probably not interested in doing so. We all have both near and distant Others and this will affect the nature and perceptions of any conflict that occurs. Conflicts with neighbours are more likely due to proximity but neighbours are also better understood. Sometimes conflicts with a group whose views are similar to our own are the most bitter for they may be seen as heretics or traitors (Rokeach 1960: 301) and sometimes it is those at the greatest perceived social distance who are regarded as utterly alien and in consequence rejected more strongly. The perceived nature of the Other cannot be analysed in a simple way or predicted by a simplistic theory but has to be looked at on a case by case basis and by using or generating tentative generalisations.

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### **The Others as Monkeys: A Study in Conflict**

For the British, as for the East and Central Europeans, the depiction of the Other changes radically if there is a war or some other kind of violent conflict. People who before were portrayed as benignly ludicrous can very quickly come to be portrayed with images that depict them as dangerous monsters. The ludicrous portrayals do not entirely disappear—to that extent the enemy remains a human being like ourselves (Heath Robinson 1978)—but these are supplemented and overtaken by hostile ones. Even the humorous ones may be given a new and nasty twist as cartoonists get caught up in the national fervour or seek out of self-interest to please their patriotic editors and consumers. In anti-German British propaganda posters of WWI, a new image of a once very well regarded and admired people emerged—the enemy as a raging, ape-like beast identified by his distinctive *Pickelhaube* spiked helmet (Welch 2013: 161). These images were soon taken up in Australia and later (as in Fig. 2) in America when that country entered the war (Bryant 2006: 111; Darracott & Loftus 1972a: 41; see also Koch 1997). The savage ape image ran alongside vivid illustrations of fake atrocity stories (Bryant 2006: 76–79, 114), tales of German atrocities that had never happened, such as their crucifying a Canadian prisoner of war or of events that did happen but were reported in a grossly

distorted anti-German way (Ponsonby 1991: 65–93). After the end of that war Hitler in his famous rant *Mein Kampf* (1974 [1925–1926]: 165–168) expressed his admiration for Britain’s propaganda representing the Germans as barbarians and Huns and contrasted it with what he saw as its feeble German and Austrian counterparts. Propaganda posters designed for the state have a single, aggressive purpose, far more direct and lacking ambiguity than is the case for cartoonists, unless they are under direct control, as, say, Stalin’s favourite cartoonist the wonderfully talented Boris Efimov was. In the Anglo-Saxon countries the image of the savage ape (see Fig. 2) was used as a way of getting men to enlist as volunteers or people to lend money (Bryant 2006: 111) to finance a war that did not directly concern them and which, a reasonable man would have realised, they should never have entered in the first place (Ponsonby 1991).

The images were also sometimes used in cartoons and had a new lease of life in WWII. In peacetime the German image had been quite different even though there was very strong economic rivalry between Britain and Germany, exacerbated by the high tariffs placed by the Germans on British exports at a time when Britain allowed free trade; in British cartoons such as Figure 3 the German economic rival was shown as a plump merchant contentedly smoking a distinctively German pipe (Philippe 1982: 210–211).

Making the enemy look simian is a fairly standard response to a violent conflict. When there were periodic violent conflicts in Ireland in the mid to late nineteenth century over sovereignty particularly at the time of the Fenian outrages in the 1860s, the Conservative and Unionist illustrated periodical *Punch* used similar images of the Irish (Curtis 1971) as in Figure 4 in which an Irishman wearing a hat labelled ‘Anarchy’ confronts Britannia in her helmet who is comforting a weeping Hibernia and holding a sword inscribed The Law.

British Marxists and Republicans (Curtis 1985) have labelled these images as ‘racist’. They are not. They are a standard image used when there is a strong political conflict of any kind not just between nations but between political factions. Hibernia, the female image of Ireland used by *Punch*, does not look simian (Wynn Jones 1971: 195), nor would Castle-Catholics or Irish RICs have been portrayed in this way, but only those who were violently trying to destroy the union of Ireland with Britain. Conan Doyle (the inventor of Sherlock Holmes and his opponent the Irish villain Moriarty, whom he based on Nietzsche) was of Irish descent and a staunch Unionist. No one ever used Conan Doyle’s ancestry or race against him, as they would have done in an anti-Semitic country, indeed in Ireland itself, if he had been Jewish. Conflicts between nations are often just that, conflicts over territory or sovereignty without any underlying sinister ideology being involved. When the British conflict with Ireland receded, the savagely apish image reverted to being benign and is often linked to portrayals of the unskilled Irish immigrants with a long upper-lip, working with pick and shovel (McLachlan 1973) or in social controversies involving equally long upper-lipped Irish-American priests and

cardinals (Sorel 1978). It once again became a class image of the labourer or the peasant. Apes can be benignly comical human beings as well as savages, in marked contrast to snakes, spiders, vampire bats, sharks or creatures with tentacles who are not our favourites at the zoo in the way the gorilla or the orang-utan is.

### **Vampires and Snakes: The Japanese in WWII**

During WWI the Japanese had been among Britain, France and America's allies against Germany and were depicted favourably in cartoons (Bryant 2006: 42) but on December 7, 1941, they suddenly attacked Pearl Harbour in Hawaii without a declaration of war. It was a clever, well-planned tactical operation (Schom 2004: 126–132) and it did great damage to the American fleet. In Tokyo crowds cheered at the news of the successful attack. The Americans had been trying to strangle with economic means the Japanese war effort in and against China, a war that was now four years old and where a war situation had developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage; they had become bogged down in that huge country (Furuya & Chang 1981: 652–698). The American leadership should have realised that this threat and provocation would lead the Japanese to retaliate with a pre-emptive attack and indeed American intelligence had received many accurate warnings of it. Yet they were utterly unprepared and they saw the bombing of their fleet as the ultimate in treachery (Dower 1986: 11), as an 'act of infamy'. Hatred of the Japanese attacker covered up their own incompetence. The Japanese were now represented in cartoons not only as club wielding apes, representing a brutal but open, visible and direct enemy, but by a bomb dropping vampire bat, the bat that bites the innocent, unknowing sleeper in the night (Cover of *Colliers* magazine, December 12, 1942). The monstrous ape is a distorted human being but the vampire enemy is a feared alien creature, a not-at-all-human, an inhuman, anti-human beast. When the Americans hit back and in turn bombed the Japanese, their own bomber was depicted in a poster as a brave, heroic eagle, dropping bombs on a Japanese snake. The snake is a sinister, cold-blooded creature without legs, the antithesis of a human being, the snake in the grass that strikes unexpectedly with poisonous fangs when least expected or the large snake that encircles, squeezes, suffocates and swallows. The serpent is the sly deceiver "more crafty than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made" (Genesis 3:1) the creature that persuaded Eve to pick the fruit that led to first human beings being evicted from the Garden of Eden. By contrast when shot down Japanese airmen are depicted as apes trying to paddle an inflatable life raft; they are laughable and almost human and invite a degree of sympathy as well as derision. The Japanese shown as monkeys are made to seem inferior (Dower 1986: 182–187) but not necessarily hateful.

We should also remember that Pearl Harbour looked quite different to the Japanese themselves and to their German allies. It was represented in *Lustige Blätter* as a blow of the sword, that symbol of the upright warrior but done with true German humour. The Japanese later hit by American bombs were in the main far from

snake-like but mere hapless civilians, including children, incinerated in deliberately created fire storms.

The American cartoonists also took what they saw as the different facial characteristics of the Japanese, exaggerated them and created the conventional comic image of the Japanese male who has ultra-big teeth and huge spectacles and is yellow (Dower 1986: 189; *New Yorker War Album* 1943). He often carries a bloody knife. The ugly 'Jap' even appears in official government posters warning citizens against careless talk that might unwittingly reveal information of use to an enemy, urging citizens to save scrap metal and raw materials and urging production workers to be more conscientious and punctual (Judd 1972: 120). He was a rather more vivid enemy than the familiar German or Italian also seen in the *New Yorker War Album* (1943) and a more distant kind of Other whose face could more easily be distorted. It was a war without mercy on either side (Chang 1998; Dower 1986).

Latter-day politically correct critics have called these images 'racist'. Maybe. Perhaps we should ask a Korean to adjudicate. It is certainly the case that there was a racial antipathy to the Japanese in America and it led to the utterly unjust and pointless deportation of most of the Japanese-Americans living in California to distant internment camps and to the eager theft of their property by the covetous citizens of that state (Tateishi 1984). But the Soviets had independently used this image of the myopic, buck-toothed Japanese enemy (Efimov 2005: 46, 49, 59), even when there was no formal war between them and Japan, whereas the race-obsessed German allies of the Japanese who saw themselves as the tall, blonde, straight-nosed, unbespectacled 'Aryan' master race did not. It was about which side the Japanese were on and that is all. Also American posters depicted their Chinese ally in a positive way (Judd 1972: C20; see also Martha Sawyers wartime poster of a Chinese family) and their cartoons are reflexive about Chinese appearance while American leaflets dropped in China give American airmen somewhat Chinese features (Philippe 1982: 260).

The Japanese for their part have a long tradition of producing images of ugly, burly, hairy, red-haired and heavy curly-bearded, pink-faced, clumsy, uncouth Europeans (Bryant 2005: 83; Clark et al 2013: 396–402). In general these images are merely bemused mockery but in wartime the mockery can turn nasty. An example of this nastiness can be seen in the portrayal by an unknown Japanese artist during the Russian-Japanese war of 1904–1905 of a hapless Russian soldier being buggered by a sword-wearing Japanese officer, the ultimate humiliation of the defeated (Clark et al 2013: 477). Mocking the face of the Other cuts both ways. To single out Westerners as being the unique producers of 'racist' images is itself a racist accusation in a world where the use of abusive images is universal.

The conflict during WWII involving the Americans, Australians, British, Chinese and Indians fighting against the Japanese was bitter, merciless and full of atrocities. The images did not cause this; they merely reflected it and by comparison with the harm inflicted on millions of slain, injured or humiliated individuals,

they are an utterly trivial matter. Images—like humour—are a thermostat telling us what the temperature of a conflict is (Davies 2001, 2011); their contribution to the conflict is very limited. Those who study images are always likely to be tempted to exaggerate the degree of their feedback into the conflict because it makes their own scholarly efforts seem more relevant. The recent vicious murder of the cartoonists of the French periodical *Charlie Hebdo* by Muslim terrorists, angry at the cartoonists' mockery of their prophet Muhammad, is merely an epiphenomenal incident in the endemic clash of civilisations (Huntington 2002) between the Islamic world and that of the Western world of freedom and democracy. The *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons were not persuasive incitement to carry out a violent deed. Rather, they angered the Muslim enemy, much as Boris Efimov's cartoons in WWII angered the Nazi leadership. If Hitler had won he would certainly have carried out his threat to kill Efimov. Bad luck for Efimov but hardly a contribution to a war effort.

### Anti-Semitism in Wartime: The Jews as the Enemy Within

If we now turn to the propaganda influenced cartoons and images produced in wartime by the Nazis and their allies and collaborators from all over Europe depicting enemy Others in WWII, what is striking is the pervasiveness of an unambiguous and thorough-going racist anti-Semitism (Judd 1972: 135–138). For the Nazis' supporters and propagandists, anti-Semitism is their core ideology and in their posters the Jew is made responsible for the war and the attacks on Germany; he is shown as the enemy also of Croatia, the Ukraine, the Low Countries, France, indeed of any country that has a tradition of vicious anti-Semitism that can be appealed to. The Jew is shown as controlling Britain, the United States and Russia and binding this unnatural alliance together (Aulich 2007: 39, 180; Bryant 2005: 90). In Figure 5 the Jew gobbles them all up. In the posters and cartoons it is claimed that Churchill and Roosevelt are themselves in reality Jews, or at the very least the mere puppets of the Jews (Bryant 2005: 77, 132; Judd 1972: C24).

In another image entitled *The Jewish Plot against Europe*, Britain's John Bull shakes huge hands with the Soviets over the map of Europe, an alliance set up by the sinister Jew whose head hovers in the sky above. Yet another reads *Behind the power of our enemies lies the Jew*. A caricatured Jew peers through a set of allied flags as if hiding behind a curtain.

The anti-Semites repeatedly claimed that the Jews had caused the war and were the instigators of the bombing of German cities by the RAF and USAAF (Bryant 2005: 98). The Western enemies were not hated in their own right and were not even seriously rejected Others but were puppets of the Jews who were the seriously hated super-Other.

For the Nazis the familiar, cultured German Jews who had repeatedly proved their loyalty to Germany, far from having been assimilated, are represented as the poor, traditional, strange-looking Jews of the *stetlach* of Galicia in disguise and now secretly undermining Germany. The Jew never changes. He is the *Der Ewige*

*Jude* of Figure 6, the eternal Jew, the enemy within. The images are the pictorial expression of a worldview out of touch with reality in which the Jew is shown as a super-Other, an utterly evil, all powerful Other, an Other who manipulates all lesser Others; the latter are shown as mere agents of the Jew or the body parts of a composite Jewish-controlled monster. The Jew of this insane anti-Semitic fantasy is the ultimate in otherness.

The Jews are thus consistently represented during the war as the most sinister, enveloping, manipulating, insinuating and utterly inhuman of creatures—as snakes, spiders, octopuses, sharks, the many-headed hydra, always identified by the stereotypical ‘Jewish’ nose and beard and side-curls (*peyes*) and labelled with the six-pronged Star of David. In Figure 7 from 1942 a gallant, naked, muscle-bound Croatian Laocoon defends himself with shield and sword against an entangling Jewish serpent that has wrapped its scaly tail is around his exiguous private parts. During WWII Croatians led by Ante Pavelic and Stane Kukavica, a Franciscan friar on horseback, not only helped the Nazis with the Holocaust but spontaneously carried out many murders of Jews on their own account.

There are other examples of the use of images of repulsive animals to depict an enemy in wartime (Bryant 2005: 91; Koch 1997: 47; Darracott & Loftus 1972b: 39) but what is particularly striking in the case of the Jews is the continued and continuous use of such images to depict them also in peace time (Aulich 2007: 145; *Hate and Propaganda* 1993). Typically, the most highly prejudiced visual images of another group are usually limited to wartime or a state of acute conflict, conflicts about a clear objective such as territory or sovereignty. The conflicts may be deplorable and destructive but there is a degree of rationality to them. The enemy may even be seen as a gallant or honourable opponent. When the war or the conflict ends, hostile images recede and soften and may even become benignly humorous (Larry 1995; Stubble 1987).

### **Anti-Semitism Outside War: A Paranoid Prejudice**

Anti-Semitism is utterly different from the general run of prejudices against or dislikes of outsiders and minorities which are most likely limited in their scope and intensity and do not even persist over time but wane when conflicts do. Anti-Semitism embodies an irrational, almost crackpot, enmity that is present in peace and war alike. It is paranoid and ascribes to the Jews actions that are not merely untrue but impossible. It is a prejudiced antipathy; more lasting, more pervasive, more intense and in consequence qualitatively worse than anything derived from Europe’s other animosities (Brustein 2003; Carmichael 1992). It embodies a dark night different from all other nights. The images of the snake, octopus and spider signify the Jews’ omnipresent influence and power rooted in a permanent conspiracy. The Bolshevik and the banker are as one, mere servants of the Jews if not Jews themselves. For all anti-Semites alike whether Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran (Hsia 1987), Roman Catholic (Kerzer 2001), Nazi (Graml 1992; Reitlinger 1968),

Soviet (Vaksberg 1994) or Sunni and Shia Muslim (Wistrich 1991: 206–239) all the ills of the world, whether a defeat in war, an economic crisis, unwanted social change, political decline, moral failure are to be blamed on the Jews, even though the causes clearly lie elsewhere. Hence the continuous use of the same images of hate that pass from group to group, and move easily between religious and secular ideologies. The anti-Semitic examples (Fig. 8 from Catholic France, Fig. 9 from Catholic Austria and Fig. 10 from the Soviet Union) all denounce imagined and fictitious Jewish traitors. No other nation in Europe or the Middle East has been consistently treated in such an extreme way (Wistrich 1991).

We are looking here at an Other different from the rest; an image that is paranoid. Anti-Semitism goes way beyond the resentments found elsewhere of middlemen minorities or of immigrants whose numbers continually increase and who refuse to assimilate or are of incompatible religions. Such resentments may well be legitimate but the resenterers cannot draw on an ancient but flexible hatred and develop the delusion that the Other is immensely powerful and sinister. Only anti-Semitism does that. Within Europe anti-Semitism is a crime *sui generis*, a unique phenomenon that led to a unique tragedy and this is reflected in the distinctive and different images of the Jew as Other.

#### Images Generated by Europe's Other Paranoid Oppressor—Soviet Socialism

34 The only other murderous insanity in twentieth century Europe even comparable with anti-Semitism was Soviet socialism, which also led to the death of tens of millions of people (Rummel 1990) and collapsed through its own intrinsic rottenness. Soviet images of the Other also reveal the enemy as hiding a sinister self. Trotsky is shown as a secret Nazi (Efimov 2005: 27, 56, 59, 63) and as conspiring with a host of 'fascist' enemies of Stalin's Soviet Union including the Japanese (Efimov 2005: 57) in which each is drawn as one of the many heads of a squamous hydra, that mythical snake-bodied being. Countering them in the cartoons is their antithesis, the NKVD, the secret police, the sword of the party, hard where they are (supposedly) slimy and squelchy, straight where they are entwining and entrapping, cleanly sharp where they are venomous. The sword like the lance is the open and direct weapon of the heroic chivalrous warrior; it is the opposite of the knife, the hidden weapon of the assassin; the knife of the 'knife in the back'. The honest sword is the aristocrat's weapon, as against the flail or pike of the peasant or the longbow of the men of the mountain who hide in the rocks until the gallant knight goes by. How curious to see the NKVD represented as or using a knightly sword (like the Stasi, which called itself the sword and shield of the party in the DDR), even though Soviet socialism meant the return of serfdom, and how ludicrous given that the Cheka-OGPU-NKVD-MGB-KGB were the most secretive and underhand of organisations. They infiltrated every institution and came for their victims at night. Totalitarian images of the Other not only lie but also invert the truth. This strange merging of enemies and their ideologies into a single enemy, even when the

enemies are in fact enemies of each other, is characteristically Soviet, as we can see from Efimov's cartoons published after Churchill's famous Fulton speech in 1946 when he accurately declared "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent." In one of Efimov's (2005: 111) cleverest cartoons a banner-waving, cigar-puffing, Churchill gird with sword and pistol, dances before the microphone that will convey his speech. Behind the capering Churchill, his own shadow reveals him to be both Hitler and Goebbels combined. Churchill, Hitler's most consistent enemy, who had fought him even when he was allied to Stalin, has now become Hitler. Absurd, mendacious and nasty but wonderfully conceived and drawn by the Soviet monster's very talented underling. As with the anti-Semites we find in peacetime as well as wartime Soviet propaganda sources, the regular use of images of snakes and octopuses (Efimov 2013: 53–54, 57, 61, 63)—images of the ultimate Other—represent the enemy. Before he fell out of favour, Trotsky was as in Figure 11 shown as a knight in a mailed breast-plate on a snorting white horse, killing with his lance a top-hatted capitalist snake. He is not very convincing as St George. It is curious how those producing the images in this 'progressive' society often reach back to ancient mythology, even to Heracles and Perseus.

Soviet images of the enemy Other refer not just to nations but to 'othered' economic groups, notably social classes, such as the kulaks, landlords, bankers, industrialists and recalcitrant peasants to be seen in Figure 12. Negative images of particular social classes in pictorial form are common enough in all countries but it was in the times of Soviet (and in China, Maoist) dominance that images of sheer hate based on class prevail. They may be seen as a natural outgrowth of Marxist-Leninist ideology and of a political order that needed continually to manufacture enemies, to create hated Others in order to give some kind of legitimacy to a tyrannical regime and to explain away its grotesque failings. It needed its artists to be a production line for images of hate, for as a favoured Soviet slogan put it 'the enemy never sleeps'. The kulak the rural peasant-entrepreneur was a favourite class enemy maligned in posters with such slogans as "Do not trust him! The kulak is the most hardened enemy of socialism" and "Punch the wealth out of the Kulak!".

### **The Fate of Eastern and Central Europe: From 1930s to 1950s**

The history of the countries of Eastern and Central Europe from the 1930s to the 1950s was dominated by the violent incursions of those two totalitarian aggressors, the Nazis and the Soviets, which led to the deaths of many millions of their inhabitants through persecution and murder as well as war (Rummel 1990: 151–216), with a particularly high death toll in the 'bloodlands' of Eastern Europe. The totalitarians' use of images of the Other was qualitatively different from those seen in the Anglo-Saxon world or the those generated autonomously in Eastern and Central Europe during the brief intervals of freedom those countries enjoyed between the two World Wars. In the interval they could produce their own images including

those related to purely local and limited conflicts and not just ones constrained or dictated by alien overlords. In the Anglo-Saxon images I have discussed there is a marked shift between those generated in peacetime and those produced during a war, when hundreds of thousands of people are killed in battle. At a time of violence it is hardly surprising that images become violent. They do not cause the conflicts (it would be naïve to think so) but are a product of it, albeit used to sustain the combatants. Soon after the war ends, the more 'violent' images disappear. The Nazi and Soviet systems were always psychologically in a state of war and their economies geared to conflict rather than consumption and so they produced these images all the time. Their images were a reflection of their willingness to murder people by the millions for ideological reasons (Rummel 1994). These were qualitatively different societies from the independent democracies and mild autocracies that existed in Eastern and Central Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. However, it has to be said that in a region where anti-Semitism was strong and pervasive, the images of the Jewish Other from this time (Demski & Baraniecka-Olszewska 2010: 33, 148, 170–171, 191–195, 208–209, 378–389 and Demski et al 2013: 462–469, 476–483; see also Lustosa 2011) are far more negative than those of territorial neighbours who are a local but not an ideological Other.

### Conclusion

36 The variety of images of the Other that exist forces us to suspect and deconstruct the very concept of the Other, to realise in how many different ways a group set apart from our own can be an Other. It may be a closely observed neighbour and cousin who differs but little from us and can be seen as a foolish comical version of ourselves, or it may be a distant Other whose ways are alien and inscrutable and whose image exaggerates these very qualities. In addition, our sense of the Other is, as Rokeach (1960) has shown, not limited to ethnic or national groups. We all have a number of important identities linked to, say, a social class, a caste, a religious denomination, a profession, a sexual orientation, and each of these carries with it its own antithesis and thus its own Other. For some individuals such an identity and the loyalties that go with it are more important than their nation. Upper-middle-class English communists tended to see their own bourgeoisie as the Other and identified with their Soviet comrades, sometimes becoming traitors. Historically aristocrats often felt they had more in common with foreign aristocrats with whom they intermarried than with their own people and for them, the local commoners were seen as the Other. Each of these Others may have allocated to it a recognisable image used in cartoon or caricature: the top-hat of the banker, the flat cap of the proletarian, the big teeth and lack of a chin that indicate the English upper class, the high brow and often baldness of the absent-minded professor or the boffin, the sly face of the lawyer in wig or high hat and gown, the handlebar moustache of the RAF officer vs. the well-trimmed moustache of his army counterpart, the heavy beard of the Orthodox clergy vs. the beardless Western clergy, the

bulky overalls and heavy boots of the lesbian and the neat and fashionable ‘camp’ suits of simpering gays—all these are the familiar markers of a group cast as the Other and used by the caricaturist, sometimes malignly.

It is equally important to distinguish between the humorous and the serious images of the Other particularly if the seriousness is linked to hostility. There is a tension between humour and didacticism. A humorous image can be used in a serious way but that requires intention on the part of a cartoonist. This is more likely to be present in wartime or if the artist is employed to do propaganda. But there is always an agent involved, someone who deliberately or under duress makes choices, which is not the case for jokes which have no authors. Jokes in consequence lack *tendenz*, those non-existent hidden purposes and intentions sniffed out by psychoanalysts. A purpose may only be (and may well not be) inserted by the individual teller (Davies 2011). In addition, we make different kinds of judgement when looking at a caricature of our own or someone else’s chosen Other. As Kant (1951 [1790]) points out, we can and should distinguish aesthetic merit in images that are contrary to our own loyalties or sentiments, however mixed our feelings may be, and I would argue that the same is true of humour (Davies 2011).

In time of war the images change to reflect the very real hostility that exists for the duration of the conflict. When the conflict ends, the image reverts, except that the cartoonists now have at their disposal the wartime images that can be adapted and softened. The goose-step, the *hakenkreuz* and the straight-arm salute still turn up in British images of Germans, as does the samurai sword, the kamikaze pilot and the rising sun in the case of Japan—but as humour for its own sake and not as renewed resentment (Larry 1995; Stubble 1987).

However, totalitarian systems generate, perhaps even need, a permanent hostile Other, one that may have little relation to reality but which is held responsible for every real failing of the system. Their mind-set is one of always being at war. The Jewish Other is the classic and most extreme case of this, but the hated Other is not necessarily an ethnic or religious group or nation. For the upholders of religious orthodoxy it might be a set of heretics from within such as the Albigensians or the Ahmadis, both of whom suffered deadly persecution. In Marxist-Leninist countries it might be a class such as the kulaks, landlords or capitalists or a group of Marxist heretics, and images of them reflect this. The class hatred is even inherited so that the penniless children or grandchildren of the propertied may also be a demonised other. The stronger the commitment to a collectivist ideology that excludes Others—whether nationalism, Marxism or a religion such as Islam—the more intense the tendency to turn those outside the fold into not just Others but rejected Others and even hated demonic Others.

We should always ask the question ‘how much’ even if we are going to answer it in numerical terms. How much alterity? Some Others are more Otherly than other Others, though in each case there will be several different dimensions of this. It is worth building a speculative model of one of these dimensions—the dimension of

rejection of the Other, one clearly reflected in the images, using an imagined scale of one to a hundred. For the Anglo-Saxon images as for those collected by my East and Central European colleagues the score varies from, say, ten to eighty with the score rising massively in wartime, as yesterday's neighbour or ally becomes today's enemy. In peacetime it can be as low as ten which simply means that the Other is seen as oddly different and locally inferior, something which, as Herodotus noted, is almost universal and which need not be a source of concern, although it can, of course, be higher. In the case of the Jews, disliked or even hated by the anti-Semites, the score for rejection might range from forty in Eastern Europe in the 1930s to a hundred under the Nazis when they were pursuing their 'final solution of the Jewish problem'. No one else scores anything like as high, except the enemies of the Soviet Union or other communist societies, who scored well over ninety when seen by the rulers of that hateful society, which in turn affected the images. The figures I have provided are, of course, imaginary but they put in perspective the wide and fluctuating variety of images of the Other which should never be casually lumped together—the differences far outweigh the commonalities.

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**WARNING: BEWARE OF SECRET AGENTS!**

Soviet propaganda poster 1939 after the Soviet invasion of Poland.  
The sinister man with the knife wears the formal uniform of a Polish officer. . . . 1

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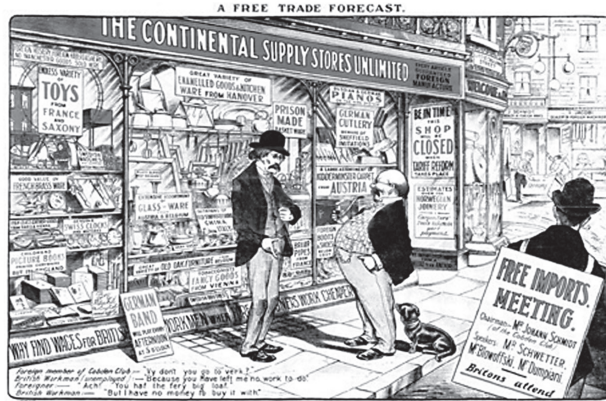
**US ARMY RECRUITING POSTER**

A savage ape has landed in America carrying off a woman whose dress has been pulled down to reveal desirable, bare breasts. She hides her face in shame and fear at what he will do next. The ape wears a German helmet marked militarism and carries a club labelled *Kultur*.

2 ..... H. Ryle Hopps, 1917.

FREE TRADE FORECAST 3

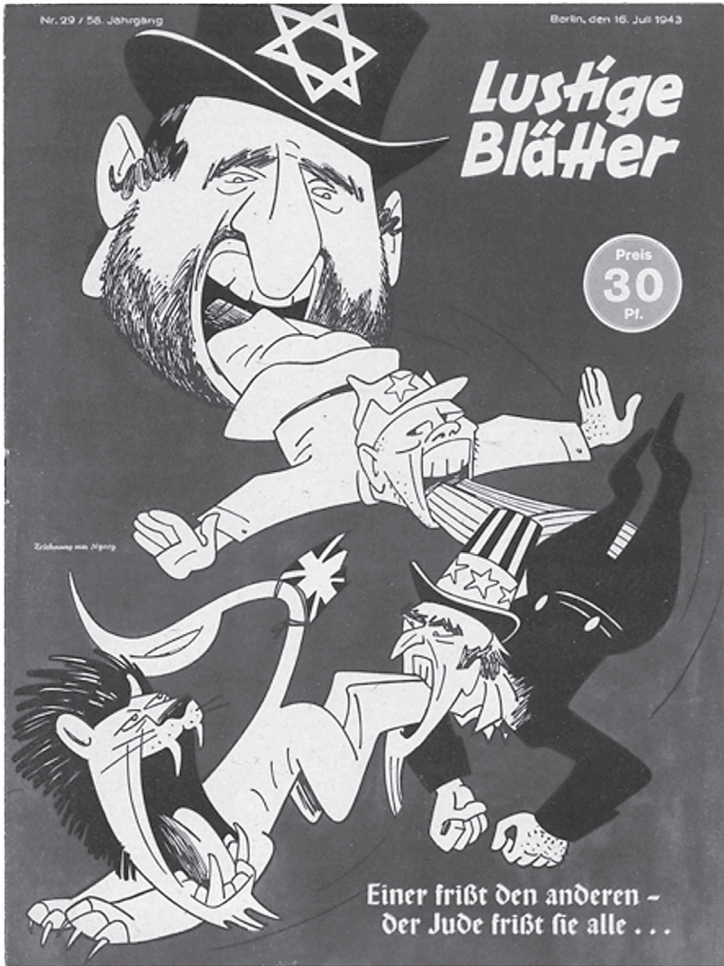
A plump and prosperous German import merchant tells a poor unemployed British worker how lucky the worker is to have free trade and cheap imports. The unemployed worker replies that he has no income with which to buy them because the competition from cheap imports has taken his job away. Published by the Imperial Tariff Reform Committee, Birmingham, England 1903.



TWO FORCES

A stern Britannia with a sword puts a protective arm around Hibernia (Britain embracing Ireland) and confronts a simian-faced Irish insurrectionist wearing a battered hat labelled anarchy who is threatening to throw a brick at Hibernia.

44



**EACH EATS UP THE OTHER—THE JEW GOBBLES YOU ALL**

Uncle Sam of America eats the British lion but is eaten by The Soviets. The Jew eats the lot.

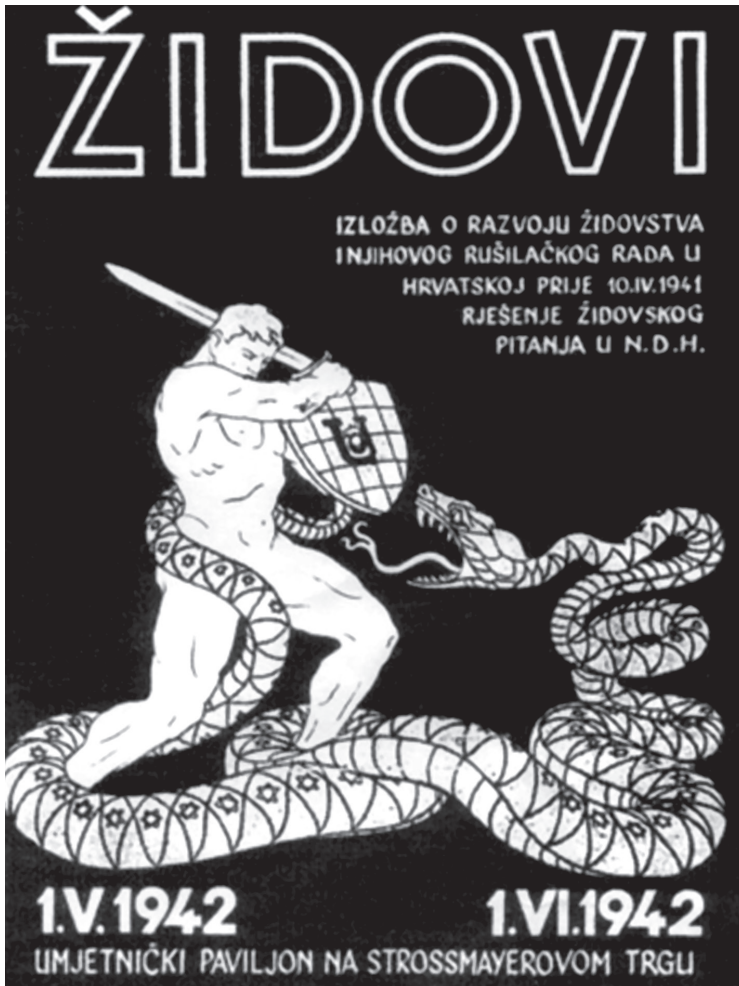
5 ..... Cover of *Lustige Blätter* 1943, no. 29, 50<sup>th</sup> year of publication in Berlin.



45

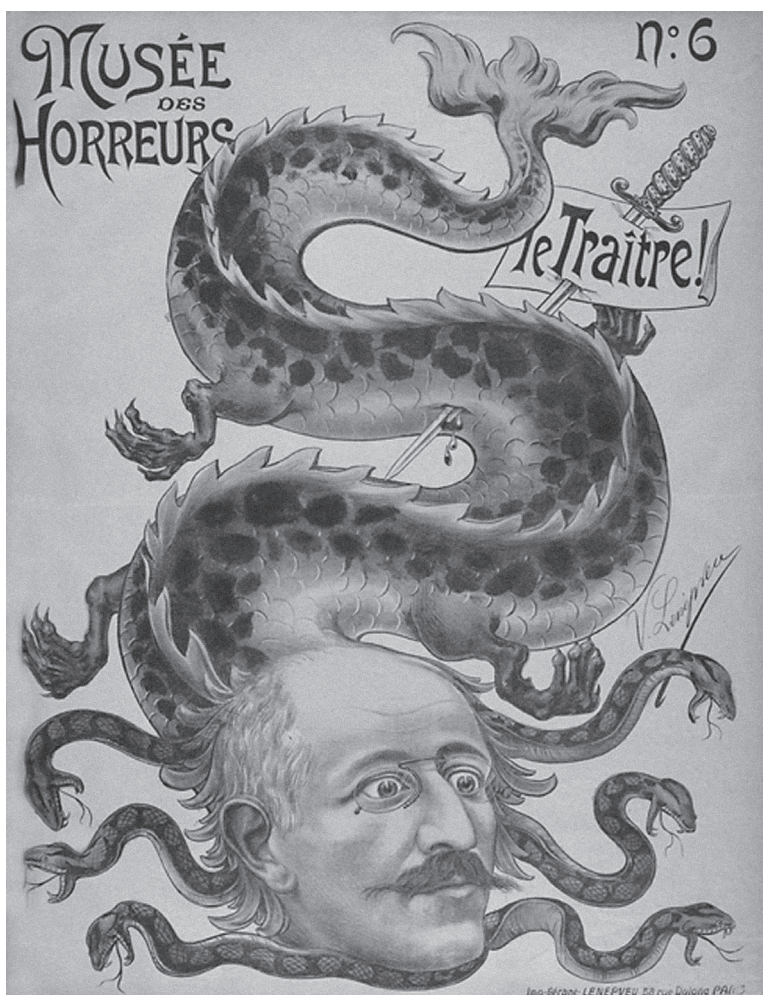
**THE ETERNAL JEW**  
Film poster from 1940 for a Nazi documentary film about the power of 'World Jewry'  
produced by Fritz Hippler. 6

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**JEW S—EXHIBITION ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF JEWRY AND THEIR DESTRUCTIVE WORK IN CROATIA PRIOR TO 10 APRIL 1941—SOLVING THE JEWISH QUESTION IN THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA**  
WWII poster announcing an anti-Semitic exhibition in Zagreb, held from 1 May to 1 June, 1942, in the Art Pavilion.

7 Published in 1942 by State Propaganda Office, Independent State of Croatia.



### THE TRAITOR

Alfred Dreyfus, the Jewish officer falsely accused of betraying military secrets, is shown as a treacherous six-headed Jewish serpent run through by a French sword indicating that he is *le Traître*, the traitor.

V. Lenepveu (pseud.?) Paris, Léon Hayard, 1899, 6<sup>th</sup> of the series *Le Musée des Horreurs* ('Gallery of Horrors').



**ELECTION POSTER "GERMAN CHRISTIANS SAVE AUSTRIA!"**

The Jewish snake with its *peyes* (side-curls) and *yarmulke* (skull-cap) has crushed to death the Austrian eagle. Presumably the numbers on the snake's neck mean the Jews are being blamed for inflation.

9 ..... B. Steiner. Printed by the Christian Social party in Austria, 1920, October 17.



**ANTI-SEMITIC IMAGE IN *KROKODIL***

Showing the Jewish "Doctor's Plot" to kill the leaders of the CPSU.

For details see Vaksberg 1994: 248–270.

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**TROTSKY SLAYING THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY DRAGON**

The image is derived from a Russian Orthodox icon of St George but the dragon has lost its wings and become a serpent. A similar image of St George is used as the coat of arms of the city of Moscow.

11 ..... Soviet poster from 1918.



**ENEMIES OF THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN**

Soviet poster produced in 1929. It attacks—from top left and clockwise—landlords, kulaks, journalists, capitalists, White Russians, Mensheviks, priests, and drunkards. Mensheviks were the more moderate wing of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party, as opposed to Lenin's Bolshevik faction. The doggerel at the bottom was written by Demyan Bedny, one of Stalin's favourite rhymesters. It calls these representatives of the *ancien regime* "dogs that have not yet been caged". They are enemies of the Five-Year Plan because they know that "it will bring about their final destruction".

## Living Images and Gestures in Wartime: The Other as an Iconoclastic Figure

*Why is it that people have such strange attitudes towards images, objects, and media? Why do they behave as if pictures were alive, as if works of art had minds of their own, as if images had a power to influence human beings, demanding things from us, persuading, seducing, and leading us astray? Even more puzzling, why is it that the very people who express these attitudes and engage in this behavior will, when questioned, assure us that they know very well that pictures are not alive, that works of art do not have minds of their own, and that images are really quite powerless to do anything without the cooperation of their beholders?*  
(Mitchell 2005: 7)

*Iconoclasm is an essential part of what it means to be a critique. But what is being broken by the hammer? An idol. A fetish. Something that is nothing in itself, but only the screen on which we have projected, by mistake, our fancies, our labor, hopes and passions*  
(Latour 1998: 65)

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Behind the pictures of the past are people who witnessed the time and the events. The representations of any era carry evidence of the thoughts and convictions of real people. Sometimes the events are tragic, as in times of war, and their influence on images may be more pronounced. This can be analysed with the help of historical sources—documents and visual material—that reflect the thorough changes.

From the viewpoint of the individual one can observe that at some point people who used to belong to the same world may begin to experience increasing polarisation. At first unnoticed, this polarisation progresses along new lines: political, ethnic, religious etc. Seen from the local perspective, this constitutes a certain phase. When unable to find a solution to new tensions, opponents become enemies. Moreover, one side starts seeking more power at the expense of the other. If the two sides feel that nothing can be done to ameliorate the tense situation, the abandonment of former friendships and cooperation may follow leading to severed ties and relinquished hopes. The evil is always seen as coming from the outside. Someone who was usually represented in a good way is converted into someone evil. When everyone freezes in their positions, the next step is violence. These conditions precede the creation of the Other.

All these elements can be found in visual representations: in pictures and caricatures. The moment when people sense that war is necessary and, consequently, engage in it, is crucial for my study. Can we grasp this moment in the pictures from the past? I propose to take a glimpse at the process of polarisation that takes place in wartime. We can observe it in the visual material representing iconoclastic acts and gestures from the times of armed conflicts.

Why do people destroy what seems valuable to others (examples in Figs 13 and 14)? And why do people photograph/depict acts of destruction (Figs 15, 16, 17, 26, 27, 28 and 29)? Such questions have special significance in the context of war, when the previously neutral or friendly relations with others gradually become estranged or hostile. Are these acts to be treated as accidental or, conversely, as deliberate blows, or rather as iconoclastic gestures? And, consequently, does war bring about new forms of iconoclasm? In this chapter, I treat iconoclasm as an interpretative tool. As criticism and protest it presents a vast phenomenon that is more complex than simply being anti-modernist. The traditional victims of iconoclasm were art and religion (Gamboni 1997: 13). Iconoclastic acts appeared in the French and October revolutions, they were present during the collapse of the communist regimes, they were used by the Nazis. I see iconoclasm as a physical attack on what represents the opponent's view. It can denote literal and metaphorical destruction. Precisely speaking, the kind of iconoclasm that I have in mind here is related to idols and the exposure of their falsehood (Latour 1998; Zaremba 2013). The presence of war-related destruction and degradation in photography can be seen as a kind of iconoclastic gesture reflecting the particular moments of the underlying dynamics of the dispute. Therefore a gesture of breaking/overturning/offending reproduces a set of relations that enable the taking of a picture. Let us try to observe what can be seen through the methodological prism of iconoclastic gestures.

The process of the destruction of existing communities and polarisation of the views (defined here as othering) operates on a deeper collective level and influences how things are viewed, the limits of what can be tolerated, or imagined, or even of what can be perceived, what is acceptable and what is excluded. On the level of representations it takes the form of specific images of destruction, and all of these will in a way embody the otherised fellow citizen.

When we focus on the images and gestures frozen in photography we can find an insight into what war images signify and why they were taken. This focus also shows how agency, as a capability to be the initiator and the designer of acts (Rapport & Overing 2000: 1), can be applied. As agency is derived from, and resided in, collective representations, we can explore the frames imposed on an individual to act within structural constraints.

This is the way in which I explore the photographing practices that can be seen as collective representations of 'crucial moments during wartime'. In contrast to the iconoclastic view—using a term coined by Elizabeth Edwards (2012)—“the

recording impulse” (the photographic impulse to save moments from oblivion) appears in the time of war; in addition, this impulse comes in order to map the events that are part of the human experience of the time. In this approach it is significant who (from which side of the conflict) takes the pictures. All sides admit that there is destruction and cruelty in war, and yet they advocate/promote, selectively and constructively, different ways of how the representations of this destruction may be aestheticised.

Photography is used to recreate the atmosphere of war and its various experiences. It is interesting to observe how these experiences are expressed through images. As we know, photography was used in various ways: to document the events of war, to achieve propaganda aims (photographers employed by the state used it to manipulate the public), to recruit people for the army, to invoke patriotic sentiments, etc. Other functions were based on war bringing about the experience of destruction, devastation and suffering<sup>1</sup>.

My aim is to explore what the photographers who worked with such specific themes were willing to see and to imagine. There are several iconoclastic motifs that can be taken into account here. Aside from the classic iconoclastic representations, I am going to present various categories of picture that can also be considered forms of iconoclastic others: scenes of destruction, incursion of invading forces and retreat of defending troops, prisoners of war, images of control, documentation or recollection, pictures of witnesses in front of scenes of destruction (taken by the invaders), images of ruins and debris (after the enemy left). I present visual materials from Central Europe—mainly from Poland, but also from Belarus, Ukraine, and the Baltic states—in order to discuss these issues.

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### Iconoclastic Gestures and Photography

This study is grounded in the discipline of visual anthropology. I pose the following question: what actions in time of war assume an iconoclastic character. My aim is to analyse iconoclastic gestures depicted in photographic material that reveal the depth of the photographers’ representational struggles to articulate wartime change. I treat the image not only as a sign<sup>2</sup>, a process<sup>3</sup> or an activity, but also as a unique gesture. I define a gesture<sup>4</sup> to be a visible action or utterance<sup>5</sup>, a kind of language,

<sup>1</sup> As Susan Sontag warned, we reach a level of satiety and lose our capacity to react and respond (2010).

<sup>2</sup> A sign in the sense of an object or entity whose occurrence indicates the probable presence of something else.

<sup>3</sup> As Krzysztof Olechnicki stated “photography (...) stopped being a product of fieldwork, and becomes a process through which the researcher comes to understanding of the world and people” (Olechnicki 2003: 9).

<sup>4</sup> The notion of gesture emerged as a technical concept in rhetoric but is also relevant to the interpretation of images.

<sup>5</sup> Concluding the May Symposium of Gesture (2004) Paul Bouissac said that “gestures can be considered from the point of view of evolution, development, interaction, transmission and transformation, and used in a sense of intentional communicative body movements to the reference to ritualistic or technical skills” (2006: 10).

an instance of non-verbal communication. I place stress on the iconoclastic gesture as it involves moments of reality in which something is broken or overturned, while it allows agency and authorship to be taken into account.

Some gestures have conventional meanings (emblems, for instance) and are socially constructed. The meaning and reference point of a gesture depends on its context. Gestures follow contemporary trends and iconographic habits. An image or its creation may form a gesture, but a gesture may be also written into the image itself. Drawing a Polish underground symbol on the street was considered as a gesture of resistance. There is a picture of people standing around a horse killed on a street of Warsaw in September 1939 (Fig. 29). If you look beyond them, you can see a poster on the building wall presenting an image of a soldier with the message: "Keep in mind the soldiers and their families". As Paul Bouissac puts it, it seems to be difficult to say where a gesture starts or ends, either in time and space or in the sender and the receiver, and what is and what is not a gesture (2006: 10). In this sense images seem to be charged emotionally or intellectually. What was and what was not shown in the picture seems equally relevant. Focusing on iconoclastic gestures that relate to destruction and degradation can help us to explore the reason for increased polarity, to see what it is and how the difference is enhanced.

Such an approach provides an opportunity to capture the ways in which war damage was presented, focusing on the relationship between people and certain emotionally charged images. It also demonstrates the dynamics of the events and allows analysis of human experience and perception of those times. The material comes from several sources. I have browsed the archives and photography collections from the 1930s and the 1940s in the NAC<sup>6</sup>, the National Museum, and the Museum of Independence. I have chosen over a dozen images to illustrate the issues under discussion.

The 1930s, 1940s and 1950s form a landmark in the history of Eastern Europe and, consequently, a period when new topics and new objects of representation appear, alongside the new ways of presenting them. Following the thought of William Mitchell, Elizabeth Edwards and Dario Gamboni analyse the selected visual representations of the Others during that period of time (the press, photography, drawings). They point out that the most visible aspect is the polarisation of images of the Other, increasingly perceived in diverging ways (in several dimensions): a) as new objects (from territories previously unknown), b) through acquiring new functions apart from commemoration, for example justifying the righteousness of war, deprecation of the enemy, c) through their behaviour, with its visual representations understood as iconoclastic gestures, and d) as blinded by images. In this context, I intend to answer questions of what forms images of the Other taken in wartime. Who is the Other, what is 'otherness' and under what circumstances can the category of the Other be connected to alienation?

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<sup>6</sup> Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe (NAC): National Digital Archives.

In the words of Mieke Bal: “vision is always implicated in a knot of power and knowledge, and (...) this contributes to the difficulty of talking about seeing, as the knowledge which we draw upon to describe sight is constituted in the same acts of looking that it analyses or critiques” (Bal 2003: 11). Seeing is nothing natural and, therefore, is closely related to matters of power. As Bal puts it: “it is rooted in cultural practices and codes as well as in sexuality, desire, and the unconscious; it is predicated on culturally and historically specific technologies; and it does not take place in isolation, either from other subjects or from other (non-visual) senses” (Ibid.: 11).

Iconoclasm has a long history and each different case has had different causes, goals, contexts and motivations (see Freedberg 2005; Gamboni 1997). For the purposes of the present study, I define iconoclasm as a struggle against belief in the power of images attributed to idolaters. Creation and worship of images used to have a primarily religious character, but during the French Revolution or the Soviet Revolution it gained political connotations. In the politicised cases, the goal of iconoclastic gestures was to demolish everything that symbolised the former order and to establish a new and better one. By narrowing the subject matter to the issues of otherness it is possible to make a claim that iconoclasm focuses on removing the symbols important to and valued by the rejected Other. For Bruno Latour, iconoclasm is an essential part of critique, and as he contends, what has been broken by the iconoclast is a way of arguing and acting<sup>7</sup> that used to render action and argument possible (1998: 65). And what “horrifies” the local populace in the iconoclastic move is not the gesture itself that would break their idols, but their extravagant belief in the idol that the iconoclast wishes to impute to them (Ibid.: 4). Following this interpretation means that the local natives could not possibly bring themselves “to this point of believing that the others would believe in it. The only one who is projecting feelings onto the idol is the iconoclast himself, armed with a hammer, not those who should be freed by his gesture from their shackles” (Ibid.).<sup>8</sup> Iconophiles were accused of being taken in by the power of the image, and “now remained ‘liberated’ from its sway. Before being hit, the idol was something else” (Ibid.).

Following the thought of Dario Gamboni and Łukasz Zaremba, I assume iconoclasm to be a gesture (exclusively in a metaphorical sense) of overthrowing the false idols of the mind and the market, which in practice denotes a struggle

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<sup>7</sup> An accusation levelled at some people accused of being taken in—or worse, of cynically manipulating credulous believers—by someone who is sure of escaping from this illusion and wants to free others as well, either from naïve belief or from being manipulative (Latour 1998: 65).

<sup>8</sup> According to Latour the iconoclast is one who believes in belief, and the (naïve) belief might be the way for the iconoclast to enter into (violent) contact with Others. It is not a state of mind, not a way to grasp statements, but a mode of relations. It is only when the statue is hit by the violent shock of the iconoclasts’ hammer that it becomes a potential idol, naïvely and wrongly endowed with powers that it does not possess (Latour 1998: 64).

against an ideology presented as illusion—as a false awareness or a lie. According to Zaremba, those who produce iconoclastic images face a dilemma—a rejection of or a challenge to current standards of acceptability. During wartime there is a visible shift from the Other towards the Alien.

Gamboni points out that hostility afflicts the images of those who became successful (1997) or it attacks those images which embody special value. As William Mitchell puts it: “iconoclasm is not just a belief structure but a structure of *beliefs about other people’s beliefs*. As such, it depends upon stereotype and caricature (image repertoires that reside on the borders of social difference). (...) A stereotype establishes the general set of beliefs and behaviors that are attributed to others” (Mitchell 2005: 20). On the other hand, the caricature “deforms or disfigures the stereotype, exaggerating some features or rendering the figure of the Other in terms of some subhuman object in order to ridicule or humiliate” (Ibid.: 20).

Not all who are alien or Others are the iconoclasts defined by Mitchell—only some of them are, usually those to whom we ascribe more. Further to the thought of Mitchell, an iconoclast is one who creates an image of the Other as the idolater, one who sets off to punish the idolaters for their false beliefs and practices, attempting to deface or destroy their images (Ibid.: 20). This is a special case of an Other who is dangerous and charged with power. Being an idol or a ‘living’ image is always attributed by someone else and perceived through someone else’s eyes; the idolater him- or herself might not realise that this is what he/she is. The process of demonisation takes place in the eyes of the iconoclasts<sup>9</sup>. This approach fits the context of war destruction, where certain images referring to specific destruction of meaningful objects are usually charged emotionally for one or both sides.

According to Mitchell, critique assumes a separation of good from evil, therefore the issue of images is determined by the evaluation of values, and even more strongly by their ‘crisis’ which results in the fact that true critique becomes, in a sense, a default form of iconoclasm, an aspiration to destroy or expose the false images that cast a spell on us (2005: 81). In other words, an iconoclast believes that he is right or has a true god, while others have their lower or degraded idols or spirits. In line with Mitchell, we might then speak about the ‘structure of iconoclasm’. During wartime this structure would be best revealed through direct interactions with the Other.

War images are always related to cruelty and violence. Susan Sontag (2010) wrote about the various motivations and ways of presenting violence during WWI, the Spanish Revolution, WWII and the Vietnam War. Sontag shows us that the images of violence originate in various contexts under the influence of various fac-

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<sup>9</sup> As Mitchell argues, polytheism, paganism and gentle pluralism towards gods and goddesses construe a certain general approach, which may be associated with actual forms of idolatry. Iconoclasm, on the other hand, is a product of the three great religions of the Book. It springs from the principal rule, according to which images are suspicious, dangerous, evil and deceitful (2005: 20).

tors. The experience of war has many faces; war has been seen and interpreted in numerous ways.

Another relevant point is who has the right to speak. It is a thorny question. In the beginning it is the iconoclast who has that right, however, war stories are “never uncontested and over time, they change as the people who have told them grow old, move on and pass away. The central point is that the entitlement to speak about war and violence is in no sense universal. Some have the right; others do not. The difference between the two categories is a matter of social and cultural codes, which can and do change over time” (Baraban et al 2012: 32).

With the onset of war a change occurs in subject matter and tone, a polarisation of judgments and interpretations. The categories of enemy and friend are established, the enemy is openly attacked, caricatures gain sharpness, and censorship may restrict some subjects. There is a shift in power, a new order appears, the documentation of triumph and disaster—they all become reflected in photography. War excesses are also documented. The image of the Other in photography gains new, characteristically expressive, shapes. It seems worth analysing the subjects—the Others—who became the objects of attack.

If an image can be nothing in itself but only the screen onto which the author projects his or her sentiments, let us consider who may—the iconoclast or someone else—project, what may be projected and what could be ‘broken’ in particular photos.

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Generally speaking, in the context of iconoclastic gestures, images may be divided into those charged with power and those that are offensive (these are not mutually exclusive categories). An example of the former, the cross commemorating the Polish insurgents from the January Uprising (1863), erected in Gorlice, Poland, is shown in Figure 13. The actions of the Nazis, who destroyed the cross in 1940, may be seen as a gesture of disrespect towards, or denial of, local collective memory, of defiling the honour of the insurgents buried there, and thus an attack on the character embodied in the living image of past glory and sacrifice. The message could be intended to destroy hope and strip this locality of its past glory. How effective it was, we cannot say.

Let us look at another example on Figure 14, depicting the burning of portraits of Marx in Narva (Estonia, 1941). When the Soviet authorities left Estonia, representations of the much-hated regime became objects of destruction. The representations that people had come to hate symbolised the old, repressive order, but they also symbolised the hated personages themselves who were imposed on the people. The image of Marx became nothing more than a screen onto which something else was projected. The act of burning the image shows an attempt to free the people from the power of such objects. The photo registers a crucial moment and encourages the viewers to believe in change, thus convincing them that the past is history. Thus, such a gesture freed the people from their past.

War denotes political change. Some aspects of the process of change show the potential of power presented in the form of pictures. Often, the images of the destruction of the old order are taken as symbols of change. The scenes of destruction differ from each other. Those from the beginning of the war depict random losses. For example, Figure 15 shows the damaged streets of Warsaw and casual deaths at the hands of Nazi bombs. The next picture is characteristic of the later phase of the war (Fig. 16), when the Jewish people were being exterminated. The picture of a burning synagogue can be treated as an example of an iconoclastic blow. A similar instance of such scenes of destruction is Figure 17, representing a Nazi soldier setting fire to a building after the fall of the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. This sequence of representations of destruction shows the evolution of the imagery from documentation of random destruction to attempts to convince the viewer of a rightfully waged war and strip the enemy of dignity.

Another type of iconoclastic representation is the pictures of the incursion of invading forces and the retreat of defensive troops. They can appear as images of hostile forces, but also as those which, entering a town, bring in a new order. Most often, this moment was perpetuated as antagonistic and forceful; otherwise, the friendly welcome on the part of local inhabitants was usually stressed, because such images helped to influence the public, especially those who were less educated. This can be considered an iconoclastic gesture demonstrating that belief in the former order was false. Figures 18, 19 and 20 exemplify the idea.

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The march of Russian troops along the main streets of Łódź (1915) is seen in Figure 18. A march along the main public points of a city meant that the city was taken under symbolic control. What can be broken here is the continuity of the former order and the hope that derives from this continuity.

Figure 19 documents the Nazi German army entering Lviv. In the foreground we can see soldiers in a truck driving through the streets in the direction of the Old Town Square. On the left, local people, including women and children, welcome the arrivals. Who are these people? Such photographs were usually staged. Most often the first forces entering a town, for example on tanks, provoked fear and uncertainty among the local population. The vanguard troops were not welcomed. Several days later, new troops arrived to take over the local administration and the scenes of welcome were usually photographed then.<sup>10</sup> Figure 20 gives another example of this public iconoclastic gesture, Lithuanian troops entering Vilnius (1939). All the time, replacing the old order remains in contrast to embodying the otherised opposite side, which represents the integration of the Other and celebration of uniting or re-uniting it. In other words, it is difference between 'them' seeing the replacement as a positive change, and 'we' who in turn see it as forced upon 'us' by the Others.

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<sup>10</sup> From an interview with an old man, the inhabitant of a small town (western Poland, July 2014).

Withdrawal of the defending troops is also the object of photography (Figs 21, 22 and 23), as an aspect of the same process of ‘replacing old order’. In Figure 21 Polish soldiers leave Nowy Świat Street in Warsaw after the capitulation of September 1939. The next image belongs to the same category: weapons are left around the statue of Kiliński by the troops defending Warsaw, 1939 (Fig. 22). The last example depicts soldiers on their way to captivity after leaving weapons, 1939/44 (Fig. 23). It appears to me that there is nothing false in these images—they are not staged. The former order is represented in the form of relinquished hopes.

New order was presented in various manners. Such images usually depict the siege of a town, a victory, the acts of establishing the new order. They are accompanied by signs of triumph but also those of subordination and submission. The images showing how the symbols of former order and state are destroyed constitute an iconoclastic attack, stating that these symbols were only false idols. There are many examples of welcoming gates erected on such occasions. There is a photo in the archive<sup>11</sup> that presents such a gate, erected in Włodawa on the Bug river. It dates to the autumn of 1939, when German and Russian armies established a joint border. Nazi symbols are visible next to Soviet ones: the Swastika next to the hammer and sickle. It is possible to treat this picture as an icon of triumph, featuring the symbols of the new order.

60 A group of armed soldiers is depicted in the next image, as if to stress that they will guarantee and protect the new order. Another type of image belonging to the same category of securing a new power balance and enhancing a new hierarchy depicts scenes from daily life after the frontline had moved towards the east. In one example, German soldiers and a shoeshine boy are photographed against a major church.

First of all the images meant to demonstrate that the local disturbances were insignificant. The iconoclastic rupture perpetuated by soldiers taking photos on the streets of Warsaw seemed to convey the impression that the situation was under control. Secondly, the main square or street belongs to the category of public places, and as such, places which are special within the local topography. The events that occur there have public dimension and are significant for the whole community; it is possible to posit that they carry a ‘state-related’, official character. Usually, the most important local authority buildings and offices are located there, but they are also the places where one can find historical symbols of power, of the former order. Monuments of figures significant for self-determination and historical consciousness are usually erected in similar locations (see Czarnecka, this volume). From the iconoclastic perspective this is also a gesture of exercising control. Such a photo, depicting the victory of the new rule over the former one, emphasises a new status quo, and in this way breaks the power of belief in the old values.

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<sup>11</sup> There are some images that due to copyright issues could not be printed in this volume.

Taking photographs of prisoners of war was a frequent practice (see Kleemola, this volume). Soviet POWs (Fig. 24) were presented surrounded by soldiers who guarded them, but most often they were shown performing manual labour. In the photographs from the Warsaw Uprising, German soldiers were photographed surrounded by the insurgents. The figures change, the roles become reversed, but the same patterns and gestures of oppression and submission are repeated. The same category of iconoclastic gesture includes photographs of prisoners of war or those captured during military action, for example, soldiers in Polish uniforms led by armed Germans. There is also a photo of the Polish soldiers, unarmed, their epaulettes have been taken away, two of them are saluting in a Nazi manner. This last photograph is particularly embarrassing for the collective memory in Poland. It served the purpose of defamation, and by the same token was meant to lower the morale of the enemy and is particularly painful for Polish viewers.

There are also images (taken by invaders) that function as reminders or bear witness to destruction. We can include Figure 26 in this category. It was published in the German press in 1916 and showing a stopover of German troops on ground belonging to the church in the village of Michałówka, near Przemyśl. This picture also shows the destruction and desecration of a village church. The photo, if taken by a German, could be regarded as an iconoclastic blow, yet if taken by the conquered, it would present the cruelty of the enemy.

Destruction of symbols of the previous order belongs among iconoclastic gestures (Gamboni 1997; Freedberg 2005). However, a number of the photographed images bear the character of an act of humiliation or defilement<sup>12</sup> (see also Freedberg 2005 and his research on the Middle Ages). However, as Freedberg points out by way of an example, more modern images also sometimes depict traitors who are hanged (Ibid.: 262). Figure 25 represents a Nazi soldier in the destroyed Royal Castle in Warsaw. This image may be attributed with 'liveliness',<sup>13</sup> a proof of a victory, a kind of momentary memorial (in contrast to statues analysed by Czarnecka, this volume). This category also comprises memorabilia from the triumphant escapade to the East, photographs of the victors taken in various cities and towns, postcards from the eastern front, images from victory parades, photos of street patrols or of deportations of the local population.

There is a photo of a German soldier, standing against the ruins of a destroyed factory building, holds in his hands a portrait of Józef Piłsudski as an act of interruption of the tradition and memory of the former authority. There are other

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<sup>12</sup> According to Freedberg, dishonoring acts belong to the European tradition. He provides the examples dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, where in order to publicly degrade someone, pictures were used. Sometimes it was enough to expose only the picture, but in many cases degrading elements were added to the picture. The point was to punish someone in the eyes of the people by punishing their image; to disgrace someone publicly by deforming, mutilating or hanging their likeness (2005: 252).

<sup>13</sup> The term is used here in the sense that it was used by Mitchell who wrote about people behaving as if pictures were alive (Mitchell 2013).

examples of portraits of rulers or presidents that were gunshot through. The images of Marx (Fig. 14) and Piłsudski belong to the same category, although they are marked by different beliefs, i.e. they symbolise, respectively, hatred of former rule, and love towards a formerly significant and distinguished figure.

Apart from the political order, the symbols of religious order that were meaningful for the community were also often destroyed. For instance, there are images of churches, synagogues and orthodox churches being demolished. Figure 27, showing the Holy Cross Church destroyed after the Warsaw Uprising, and Figure 28, showing the ruins of St Florian church in Warsaw, are examples of documentation made by the conquered in the form of documenting a crime.

There are numerous other images (for example of burning a temple or demolishing a cross)—besides those reprinted here—that can serve as examples of such acts. They form a special category of images depicting desecration in order to strip the enemy of dignity. They are not very common in official circulation, but it is still possible to find many examples, such as the offence against an orthodox church by German soldiers, who jokingly put the ritual marriage crowns on their heads. It is an act of disgracing something that is precious for the conquered. There are also some images of desecration of monasteries and synagogues. It can be considered an iconoclastic break in which the iconoclast, attempting to deface or destroy the images, is the one who creates the image of the Other as the idolater, and is the one who sets out to punish the idolaters for their false beliefs and practices.

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The category of defaming images also covers photographs that resemble caricatures and which openly employ humorous stereotypes to show the opponent as ridiculous or simply despicable. A separate category is formed of pictures of occupants surrounded by local children. On the one hand, such photographs show the new order, hierarchy and authority as just and rightful, yet on the other hand they stress the unequal status quo. The relationship between the new authority and the defeated are characterised by destruction, by looking down upon the defeated, and most of all by a conviction about the superiority of the new rulers. My initial studies have shown that these images provoke a reaction, i.e. it is impossible to see them and remain unmoved.

All these images, in a sense, bear witness to what was happening but also construct a myth that justifies the validity of such acts. I have here ignored the images of cruelty and violence, such as scenes of execution by a fire squad, of the bodies of victims, etc. Such images express even stronger gestures of overpowering the idols of the Other.

### **The Impulse to Record in Wartime**

Artistic expression was not the goal of taking photographs in wartime. Undoubtedly, many images were used in propaganda. At the same time, some of these photographs documented numerous painful wartime events. We do not know the authors of these photographs. In all probability, they were not professionals—more likely

soldiers witnessing wartime situations. The extant documents from the period today appear as particularly interesting research material due to war context.

Roland Barthes claimed that it is difficult to speak of photography and easier to speak of a reaction to photographs (1995: 129). In practice, creating images of the Other is a gesture: an act that includes changes or breaking up the former order. If an image is an act, and not an object, then war images were made to send a certain message. Production of images of the Other fulfils different functions and emphasises different elements in different times and cultural contexts. What unifies all of them is the conviction of the communicator about his rightfulness, at least at the level of narration and persuasion.

The first mechanism that lies hidden behind the practice of creating images of the Other is an attempt to stand out from the rest. What is at stake here is social diversity, recognition of the fact that we are different, i.e. better (or sometimes worse) than others. Such a mechanism, motivated by ideology, is related to differentiation and the sense of superiority that springs from it. Thus, culture creates an opposition between the primitive and the modern, and, moreover, it attributes to the Other an acceptance of, or a belief in, false idols and erroneous images. A conviction arises that 'we', the creators of the proper images, are better than the Others, the idolaters. The next step that 'we' take is thus to fight against falsehood, illusion, blasphemy—against idolatry.

Naturally, the Nazis were not the only ones to photograph reality from the standpoint of the victor: the conqueror who brings culture, who creates a mission to civilise the East. Not too many Soviet photographs are known from that period, but they also documented similar scenes, doing it from the position of victor. The choice of subject matter during war reflects moments and places significant for the new order. The victor who creates a new order shows, via iconoclastic gestures, its superiority. These gestures spring from a need to manifest the supremacy of the victor's culture which, although they may reach a violent form in times of war.

The images are active in various ways—they shock, excite, embarrass, strip of dignity, etc. A question arises as to why these images are important. Is it so as to shock, to reject something that used to be meaningful? The act of destruction, when treated as a duty, has a public character. A soldier documents the righteousness of the fight, and does not try to free himself from his own past and context; quite conversely, he takes an active part in imposing the new authority and eliminating resistance.

The very acts of destruction mean something different than their documentation. Images of this type found their place in the press and newsreels of the new order, in memorabilia from the years of occupation. Sometimes, they formed a part of the soldiers' memories, who showed their families, relatives or neighbours from their hometown from these pictures where they had been and what they had been doing. An example of this may be found in the film shot by a German soldier from Wuppertal, who was sent to serve in Poland, in the part of the country that had

been annexed to the Reich (Wartheland). The film tells the story of a job well done: a job that consisted of taking over a town so as to enable its proper functioning. According to the film, order becomes well established in that Polish town, only at one point the soldier walks past a synagogue that was turned into a stable. In the narration reality seems to be normal, but it also consisted of subordinating the Others in acts that deprived them of dignity and destroyed what was, in their eyes, valuable and respectable.

An iconoclastic category is formed through a transformation of the image of the Other, both as physical deformation and visual representation: in the documentation of the acts of destruction, breakage, striking down of public symbols, putting the enemy in a subordinate position, ridiculed and deprived of dignity.

The general mind-set of an epoch is always seen in its choice of topics. In this sense, war is the time of creation of difficult visual foundations that form the sense of a given community. Iconoclastic blows are not inflicted by accident, they have a clear goal.

Offensive images form the core of iconoclasm. Typically, an attack takes place in the public domain, and the repertoire here is wide-ranging—burning, mutilating, shooting, cutting, putting out eyes, drenching with paint, repainting, reshaping, distorting, egg-throwing etc. Mitchell claims that images are attacked for two reasons, firstly, when “the image is transparently and immediately linked to what it represents”, and secondly, when it is believed that a “picture possesses a kind of vital, living character that makes it capable of feeling what is done to it. It is not merely a transparent medium for communicating a message but something like an animated, living thing, an object with feelings, intentions, desires, and agency” (2005: 127).

Offensive pictures are a product of the social context, and, as noted by Mitchell, of a relationship between “a specific thing and communities” (Ibid.: 131). Some of the photographs presented here offend or desecrate something precious, for example the values connected with the previous authority. They insult, and some of them violate the taboo of morality. An iconoclastic gesture wishes to humiliate or inflict pain; “the object is not to make the image disappear but to keep it around and to render its appearance in a new way, one that is offensive to the image and what it represents” (Ibid.: 132). Photographs presenting iconoclastic gestures in a sense follow the same technique as the deformations employed in caricature. They form a type of discourse with their own subject matter. This discourse, in wartime circumstances, assumes a particularly controversial character. It is a heated exchange, usually painful for one of the sides. On the other hand the representations of a controversial situation or interaction serve to justify decisive moments which reflect, or rather construct, the basis of a new order.

### Irreversibility Versus Creation of a Mythical Continuity

It appears that irreversibility of events is a characteristic feature of times of war. To this end, photographs may have documentary character—to provide a proof of the triumph, to save events from oblivion, but also to document crimes so that in the future they do not go unnoticed. Irreversibility is linked to the passage of time; however, wartime is period of destruction, breaking of the old ties and deprivation of security.

Wartime photographs can also be treated as representations of the rituals of power during the war, when hierarchy is contested in the shifting of mutual relations between the conquerors and the conquered, in the manner of perceiving the Other, and in the different ways of documenting a moment in time. Elizabeth Edwards writes that “some photographic practices emerged from an intense belief in the photograph’s ability to perform a sense of the dynamic presence of the past within the contemporary in ways that would inspire those both in the present and in the future” (2009: 132). What interests us is both “representational content”, and “analysis moving beyond ‘representation’ to focus instead on the exchange of values” (Edwards & Hart 2004: 5). The representational content takes a sharp expression, and beyond them emerge destruction and death. However, from the point of view of the authors of the photographs that I am presenting here, the situation looked different. In what Edwards describes, photographers document what is disappearing, while during wartime the authors of photographs did not attempt to perpetuate something that was disappearing; rather, they witnessed and gave testimony to their own acts of destruction in order to establish something new. We are dealing here with a shift of emphasis, and the main focus of attention is not something that disappears, but instead the active agent, the agent of the changes, or the very act of change depicted through destruction.

The present is perceived by the victors as accurate; as a transitory state that will lead to a favourable future. The war is seen as a state of crisis, but this crisis is, however, understood as necessary or even positive, because it denotes a moment when actions relevant for building a better future will take place. The future depends on the level of our engagement, sacrifice and actions. The attitude to reality is not made visible through a critique of the present, as in the case of nostalgia. What is more characteristic here is the awareness of acting within a mythical time of an *in statu nascendi*, seeing ‘us’ as the participants in the creation of a great myth. This is not a time for longing for something absent and long gone; instead, the war images point out the unique moment of changes which constitutes a mythical turning point in history. The history speaks through various actions.

At the same time, the defeated are aware of participating in a collective disaster. There is a prevailing longing for what is gone, what is absent, what is, due to intensive changes, already distant, what belongs to other times. It is a longing for an order and a country that has disappeared, and for one’s childhood which has irretrievably ended.

Due to destruction, the construction of the images of the Other during wartime is perhaps the most spectacular phenomenon of othering. It happens that during the war people become lost in the collective consciousness, attempting to navigate between two or more identities. They participate in cultural values, memories and images, which have an individualised character, although it seems that a certain pattern is repeated. A clash of collective identities forces them to make unforeseeable choices in a complex and polarised social space.

It appears that it is the inhumanity of the times, their cruelty, and the injustice and uncertainty of circumstances, together with a polarisation of wartime attitudes, that give colour to the visual representations. The living images evoke speechlessness, shock or anger on the part of their viewers and the survivors who witnessed the events in reality, but also, similarly, the next generations. Originally, these images were employed for propaganda reasons or for documentation, and yet they are still perceived by the next generations as an impulse that prompts insight into inhuman events.

The fact that they were active agents in the mythical time—at turning point of history—made them become alive. However, on the other side, as stressed by Feona Attwood et al (2013: 8), “controversial status rests not so much on their [the images] content as on the way in which that representation embodies an information system and a political order in which power is exercised through the choice of particular ways of making the camp visible while making others invisible”. The controversial nature of an image was decided by politics, i.e. with the passage of time the meaning ascribed to a given image loses its force, as what was invisible before becomes part of everyday life. The instrumental use of them enhances their potential impact.

As Dario Gamboni states: “the choice of weapons were consciously derived from the kind of battle being fought” (Gamboni 1997: 90). Did the images of the Other reflect the nature of the new revised relationship between the collective consciousness and the Other? Usually, they reflected a sense of resentment, prejudice and fear. Iconoclasm and propaganda belong to a separate order, although they have common features, for example, they destroy false images.

Apart from the acts and objects, another significant issue will also be the manner in which this act of destruction is condemned or described by the victims, saying a lot about the event and its significance. Analysing the most common picture types it is possible to learn what is important for the nations and countries engaged in war: as Gamboni would say, these acts can be seen as barbaric, primitive, blasphemous, blind; as criminal, idiotic or ignorant; as a propaganda weapon, as regressive, vulgar or as acts of vandalism (a term comparable to iconoclasm: administrative, constructive, embellishing, personified, restorative vandalism).

As representations, caricatures also serve as visual commentaries on reality. In contrast, the photographic records provide material evidence understood as real. As Susan Sontag puts it, “something becomes real (...) by being photographed”.

A photo may distort, but we always assume that what we see in it exists or used to exist (Sontag 2010: 12).

What do these unpleasant and controversial images show if we look at them as iconoclastic gestures? As an interpretative idea, such an approach prompts us to wonder whether the described efforts could, in principle, be ascribed to different well-known notions: exoticisation, creation of borders, ridicule etc. I showed examples of material that showed what was broken and how it was broken. Images reflect what is significant of the time of destruction, and 'living' means that they are neither neutral nor indifferent, but, on the contrary, they evoke reactions of various degree of intensity. They are compelling because they form a true record and its representation.

In addition, they all map human experience in wartime, starting from the initial polarisation and the signs of a new phase of power play. This transformation operates at a much wider range—changes are bigger, structures are damaged, borders shift, the imagination is disturbed and hopes are lost. The old has been replaced by the new, the better, at least richer for all who survived for the experience.

On the representational level an iconoclastic blow or attack targets what seems to be at the top of the opposing hierarchy. The process of demonisation—exposing negative features—goes along with the process of idealisation that includes hiding the negative features of 'us'. It thus reveals what was idealised based on the hidden, the closed, the concealed and the masked, and as a result, it depicts the reshuffled new power relations, at least temporarily.

On the other hand, an iconoclastic stroke in its dirty form targeted what was weak in the sense of local power relations. Stripping of dignity, humiliating and exterminating—all used as weapons by the oppressors—often deepens, changes and strengthens the split, and increase the diversification of society.

What lies at the foundation of the polarisation is 'not giving recognition to the other' (Hall 1997). If photography of devastation and of destructive gestures improves our understanding of the past, it might be a way of using documentary practices in order to overpower competing representations of the same event. What was broken or what had to be broken was not a piece of art or a religious object, however ideological or based on the idealised representation. In this sense, the iconoclastic Other as an assaulted representation reminds us not so much of what could 'not be given recognition' as of what could be demolished, literally or metaphorically, to allow the construction of the new that is no longer false, that is 'real'. Pictures of devastation and degradation in wartime were used to attack the iconoclastic Other.

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**THE CROSS COMMEMORATING  
THE JANUARY UPRISING (1863) INSURRECTIONISTS**

Monument erected in Gorlice 1940,  
Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe (NAC), no. 1\_U-1349. 13



**BURNING THE PORTRAITS OF THE IDOL OF THE COMMUNIST RULE  
(KARL MARX) IN NARVA**

14 ..... 1941 in Estonia, Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe (NAC), no. 2-1876.





**A WOODEN SYNAGOGUE BURNING IN EASTERN POLAND**

16 ..... 1943 June, Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe (NAC), no. 2-1803.



**MARCH OF RUSSIAN TROOPS THROUGH ŁÓDŹ**

18 ..... Postcard printed in 1915, Muzeum Niepodległości, P1198.



74



**THE NAZI TROOPS ENTERING LVIV**

19 ..... 1941, Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe (NAC), no. 2-1950.

**LITHUANIAN ARMY ENTERING VILNIUS** .....

1939, Muzeum Niepodległości, F8283. 20



75



**THE POLISH SOLDIERS WALK AWAY ALONG NOWY ŚWIAT STREET  
IN WARSAW AFTER CAPITULATION** .....

1939 September, Muzeum Niepodległości, F5560. 21



**THE POLISH WEAPONS LEFT AROUND THE STATUE  
OF KILINSKI BY THE TROOPS DEFENDING WARSAW**

22 ..... 1939, Muzeum Niepodległości, F2830.



**ON THE WAY TO CAPTIVITY BEFORE LEAVING WEAPONS** .....

1944, Muzeum Niepodległości, F4406. .... 23



**MARCH OF RUSSIAN PRISONERS OF WAR**

24 ..... Printed in 1917, Muzeum Niepodległości, P1200.





**A STOPOVER OF GERMAN TROOPS  
IN THE VILLAGE OF MICHAŁÓWKA NEAR PRZEMYŚL**

26 1916, author's collection.



**HOLY CROSS CHURCH IN WARSAW,  
DESTROYED AFTER THE WARSAW UPRISING**

1945, Muzeum Narodowe, Di 104116. 27



..... **RUINS OF THE ST FLORIAN CHURCH, WARSAW, POLAND**  
28 ..... 1945, Muzeum Niepodległości, P893.



**WARSAW DURING THE SEPTEMBER CAMPAIGN**

Behind the soldiers, the poster on the wall says  
"Don't forget about the soldiers and care for their families".

Poster printed in 1939, Muzeum Niepodległości, F4465.

# War Propaganda and Humour: World War II German, British, and Soviet Cartoons

## Introduction

This article deals with transformations humour undergoes in wartime. The context of war is especially relevant to the general theory of humour because it maximises the contrast between humour, on the one hand, and hostility, scorn, sarcasm, and satire, on the other. As the debates around the Muhammad cartoons affair demonstrate, the community of humour scholars is deeply divided on this issue. Some believe that humour can be a powerful weapon (Kuipers 2008; Lewis 2008; Martin 2008) whereas others argue that humour as such is but play and has little effect as a means of propaganda (Davies 2008; Oring 2008; Raskin 2008). Clearly, the debate is to some extent terminological as it hinges on the distinction between humour and satire. What then is the distinction? The simplest and the most naïve solution is to claim that humour remains humour only insofar as it does not offend anyone. With this approach, of course, the present article would be oxymoronic and devoid of object. Relaxing the approach somewhat, we might ask: “Can humour survive in an atmosphere of hate? If it can, under what conditions? Why and when do people ridicule an enemy they seek to destroy?”

We can speak of three basic forms of war propaganda: invective, satire, and humour. At first sight, they are arranged along a continuum in the decreasing order of hostility, so that invective and humour are polar opposites and satire is intermediate. Invective is the principal form of propaganda in times of danger, when the immediate task is to mobilise people against a powerful and cruel enemy. Humour is a relaxation that people can afford in times of relative safety. At first sight, invective and humour may appear similar because both are based on the idea that the enemy violates certain norms. Invective accuses the enemy of violating moral norms, whereas humour ridicules them for violating the norms of common sense.

A closer look, however, reveals the inadequacy of this static model. When viewed dynamically, invective and humour are seen not merely as opposites but as antagonists, which raises the question of whether they can coexist in harmony. Elsewhere I have tried to show that satire is inherently contradictory (Kozintsev 2010: 22–24, 39, 64–65, 114–115). In this article, I will try to explore this issue using war propaganda as an extreme example.

Works by eleven cartoonists from the WWII era will be discussed—four Soviet, three of them working together under a single alias Kukryniksy (Mikhail Kupri-

yanov, Porfiriy **Krylov**, and **Nikolai Sokolov**), and Boris Efimov;<sup>1</sup> two British (David Low and Ernest H. Shepard); and five German—Philipp Rupprecht alias Fips, Erich Schilling, Arthur Johnson,<sup>2</sup> Hanns E. Köhler alias Erik, and Hans M. Lindloff.

### Invective

I will first address one of the two extremes of war propaganda—invective. This form is unrelated to humour despite occasionally pretending to exploit humorous means. When invective does so, it is called satire. In logical terms, the reference and dictum of invective are always bona fide even when its modus is not, for instance, when the message is intentionally false. In other words, in the case of invective, as in the case of the lie, irony, and sarcasm, we always know who and what the message refers to, and what its ostensible meaning is (see Kozintsev 2010: 146–149). The modus, which includes the truth parameter, belief or disbelief, is a different matter. In practice, these notions are relevant only with regard to the recipients of propaganda, not to its spreaders. Whether or not, for instance, Goebbels himself believed what he said, the meaning of his speeches is clear to everyone.

The only country where mass indoctrination was openly declared to be the cause, not the effect, of social changes was Nazi Germany (see Doob 1950). “We could eliminate the Jewish danger in our culture because the people had recognized it as the result of our propaganda,” said Goebbels (2008 [1934]: 49). The mouthpiece of Nazi anti-Semitism was Julius Streicher’s *Stürmer* (‘Attacker’): “the most infamous newspaper in history” (Bytwerk 2001: 51), whose sole illustrator was Fips, “a cartoonist of outstanding crudity” (Ibid.: 56)<sup>3</sup>. Nearly all his linocuts exploit the same theme, i.e. “Jewish danger” (Fig. 30).

Goebbels despised Streicher and Fips for their vulgarity. His favourite cartoonist was Erich Schilling, whose drawings, while also full of malicious energy, were less paranoid and more sophisticated in both form and content.<sup>4</sup> Some of them are sarcastic (Fig. 31) but almost none are humorous. A much cruder, in fact loathsome example of obscene metaphor in Nazi propaganda, opposing it to both British and Soviet traditions (see below), is a cartoon by Arthur Johnson, motivated by the sudden alliance between Britain and the USSR after 22 June 1941 and showing the two nations as rutting dogs engaged in “dirty play” (*Kladderadatsch* (‘Tumult’), no. 27, July 6, 1941).

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<sup>1</sup> Efimov’s real surname was Friedland.

<sup>2</sup> This is a real name. Johnson’s father was the US consul to Hamburg and his mother was German (see Bryant 2013 for details about Nazi cartoonists; see also Bryant 1989, 2011; Plum 1998: 133–144; Tiffney 2009; Husband 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Streicher was hanged in 1946, and Fips-Rupprecht was sentenced to six years’ hard labour but was pardoned in 1950.

<sup>4</sup> Schilling committed suicide on April 30, 1945, one day before Goebbels.

British anti-Nazi invective is best exemplified by some of David Low's cartoons, one of which, also sarcastic, is shown in Figure 32.

The essence of invective remains the same regardless of the artistic means, as illustrated by an unusual example of Soviet anti-Nazi propaganda—an oil painting by Kukryniksy showing the last days of the Third Reich leaders (Fig. 33). As long as pure invective is involved, the difference in impact between artistic means is one of quantity, not of quality: unlike a cartoon or a poster, a painting does not belong to the mass media. Another difference, also trivial, is that a painting is somewhat less related to verbal discourse: it can have only a title but no caption (some cartoons, however, have neither captions nor titles). A far more important distinction, which I will discuss later, is that an oil painting is usually serious whereas a cartoon is satiric: it includes humorous elements in both form and/or content.

### Humour

The principal logical difference between humour, on the one hand, and invective, lie, irony, and sarcasm, on the other, is that humour encroaches not on the modus but on the reference and dictum, automatically rendering the modus irrelevant (Kozintsev 2010: 147). The problem is not objective but subjective: it lies not in the amount of fantasy and distortion but in our attitude to the message. However grotesquely the targets of invective and their behaviour may be rendered by the artists, we accept or reject the message in earnest; we agree or disagree with it (see Figs 30–33). By virtue of the “willing suspension of disbelief” we refer such a message to one of the possible worlds—the metaphoric world of hyper-reality, which may affect us even more strongly than reality itself.

We refuse to take the humorous message in earnest not because its referents are represented less realistically (in fact, the opposite may seem to be the case), but because the reference is fictitious and so is the entire message. Acceptance or rejection of a humorous message is not the same as the acceptance or rejection of an invective message. In the case of invective, we deal with a bona fide accusation even though its modus (for instance, the truth parameter) may be non-bona fide, as with the lie, irony, and sarcasm. The stronger and the more cruel the enemy is, the worse. In the case of humour, we deal with a pseudo accusation, whose principal aim is to amuse. The weaker the enemy is and the more stupidly they behave, the better. In essence, humorous accusation is largely playful and thus not an accusation at all. The meta-message of humour, which is absent in pure invective, cancels the message by saying, “This is play” (Bateson 1972: 181–198). The world to which such a quasi-message refers is an impossible world despite the outward realism with which it may be rendered. Even when humorous characters resemble actual people, they are but clowns, whose behaviour should not be taken seriously. Therefore we accept or reject the humorous quasi-message not at its own level, as in invective, but at the meta-level. The notion of modus including the truth parameter, belief or disbelief, agreement or disagreement is irrelevant in humour. We

accept the humorous message only because we find it funny, and we reject it only because we do not find it funny.

In the situation of war, humour appears whenever the immediate task of propaganda is temporary relaxation rather than mobilisation. This can be achieved by employing at least one of the following options:

- (1) The enemy can be pictured as weak, absurd, or helpless if still vicious. In Arthur Johnson's cartoon (Fig. 34), the anti-Nazi coalition leaders are but three clowns jostling each other in a futile circular motion around Europe. The futility of the enemies' actions is carried to the extreme in Ernest H. Shepard's cartoon, which strongly resembles John Tenniel's illustrations to Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books (Fig. 35) and features Hitler and Goering performing a suicidal acrobatic stunt called *The Spring Offensive*. This is a typical example of pure English nonsense because in addition to the utter idiocy of the scene, rendered in a realistic and laidback Victorian manner, it is based on an equally silly pun. No less absurd is the Munchausen-type scene depicted by Boris Efimov. Here, Hitler's idea of total mobilisation is allegorised by a dying horse ridden by the Reich leaders and supported by the monkey-like Goebbels,<sup>5</sup> who is trying to lift the animal out of the quagmire (Fig. 36).

Because the principal aim of such cartoons is to banish fear of the enemy and to boost morale, their principal message can be read as 'the enemy does not deserve to be treated too seriously'. This agrees with Freud's theory of humour: the super-ego rejects the claims of reality and puts through the pleasure principle: "Look! Here is the world which seems so dangerous! It is nothing but a game for children—just worth making a jest about" (Freud 1928: 6). Herein lies the semantic difference between invective and humour. Even when invective appears to distort reality, it still refers to reality; even when humour appears to be realistic, it still seeks to replace reality with a "game for children". While the ostensible message of wartime humour is that the enemy should not be treated seriously, its meta-message is that the message itself should not be treated seriously either. As a result, in keeping with Kant, we are left with "nothing"—a salubrious alternative to tension and fear.

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<sup>5</sup> Christie Davies believes that "the monkey is ridiculous and inferior but not altogether alien or malign" (Davies 2014: 24). Indeed, the presumed animal was different—the mouse; not an actual mouse, though, but Walt Disney's image of it. Hitler adored Disney's films, and Ernst Röhm had nicknamed Goebbels "Wotan's Mickey Mouse"—an idea that Efimov seized. However, because Disney's charming hero is quite unlike the hideous Goebbels, and because the mouse is a very unusual metaphor in caricature, many perceived Efimov's character as a monkey. Low, who admired Efimov, regarded his Goebbels as a rat (see his foreword to Efimov in Low 1944; see also Norris 2010).

It might be argued that such an interpretation is upheld by the facetious treatment of Germany's spring offensive, which in reality was successful (Fig. 35),<sup>6</sup> but is challenged by the humorous approach to the total mobilisation, which was not (Fig. 36). However, given that the primary goal of humour is to amuse and relax, not to inform and mobilise, occasional quasi-realism does not disprove the general rule.

- (2) The second option for humourists during war is to make the enemy look canny rather than insidious, thereby turning him into a folkloric trickster. As a result, the cartoon becomes ambiguous: it seems to attack the target, whereas in reality it plays with a stereotype, being in essence a caricature of a caricature. The only conceivable stereotypical object of such a meta-caricature in the context of WWII was the Jew, and the only spreaders of this type of backhanded propaganda could be the Nazis. Indeed, certain anti-Semitic jokes do not differ from those that Jews tell about themselves (Davies 1990: 121; Gruner 1997: 93). Cartoons such as that by Hanns E. Köhler ("Erik") hardly evoked hate rather than laughter (Fig. 37).

Even certain 'anti-Semitic' cartoons in *Stürmer* were apparently meant to amuse the readers, not to incite them. Such was the case, for instance, with a series of anonymous pictures titled *In the Jewish Army*.<sup>7</sup> One shows a scene at a hospital. "If you don't take the medicine", the doctor says, "you'll remain ill and will stay here for a long time."—"If I collect the pills", the patient replies, "I'll set up a pharmacy after the war." Another cartoon is about a business proposal one Jewish soldier makes to another: "Isidore, would you buy my rifle?"—"What for? I have one already."—"You could resell it with 20% profit" (*Der Stürmer*, no. 22, May 29, 1941, p. 5). Of course, such jokes were unthinkable in the USSR or in Britain during the war,<sup>8</sup> but today they sound almost PC, demonstrating that "the same joke can be used for all manner of conflicting purposes, or none at all" (Davies 1990: 130). This dependence of meaning on context, in fact, lack of meaning outside context, sharply opposes humour to invective, which always means the same thing (cf. Figs 30–33).

- (3) The third option making humour possible during war is to address the theme of two competing enemies. This theme was topical in Britain in the interval between Hitler's invasion of Poland, triggered by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and his assault on the USSR, automatically turning the latter

<sup>6</sup> The offensive of the Wehrmacht in southern Russia and Ukraine in spring and summer 1942 resulted in severe defeats for the Red Army, culminating in the Kharkov disaster and the German dash across the Don River. Only in late autumn did the Soviet high command manage to turn the tide of the war, at Stalingrad.

<sup>7</sup> Their author was definitely someone other than Fips, and they were probably reprinted from some old periodical.

<sup>8</sup> In Soviet Russia, everything implying even the slightest hint of anti-Semitism was taboo from 1917 to the late 1940s.

into Britain's ally. Hitler and Stalin as two tricksters trying to outsmart each other was a popular topic of British political humour from 1939 to June 22, 1941. Thereby the age-old opposition of folkloric roles—the stupid and the canny (Davies 1990: 10–39), from which the clownish opposition of “dupes” (foolish victims) and “knaves” (clever offenders) had originated (Disher 1985 [1925]: 33–37; Willeford 1969: 88)—was actualised in the context of modern politics. While some of David Low's cartoons feature both dictators as accomplices, chums, lovers, etc. others show one of them as canny, the other as stupid depending on the situation,<sup>9</sup> but sometimes they both play these two roles at once, trying to outsmart each other like ambivalent mythological tricksters (Fig. 38).

- (4) The fourth option is to invoke what Herbert Spencer (1860) described as “descending incongruity” and Alexander Bain (1880: 259) as “comic degradation”, implying reference to animalistic drives and bodily functions (mostly sexual or digestive) or clownish primitiveness. In this competition the German cartoonists had one more edge over their opponents: apart from racist clichés, they were free to employ sexual metaphors<sup>10</sup>—an efficient humorous means which neither British nor Soviet artists could afford, though for somewhat different reasons (the social restrictions of being a gentleman, and Communist ethic, respectively). While also concerning invective (see Fig. 31) this distinction is even more evident in humour, as brilliantly demonstrated by Hans Lindloff's cartoon (Fig. 39).

Soviet and British propagandists had to resort to more decent means of degrading the situation. In Boris Efimov's 1942 cartoon, for instance, the failure of German plans to encircle Moscow and to gain access to Caucasian oil is rendered as a clownish “grasp all, lose all” gag, whereby Hitler receives a blow in the face, his stilts break, his cap falls off, and his trousers rip.<sup>11</sup> David Low degrades the same situation even more subtly: at a restaurant, Hitler angrily orders the waiters to serve him Caucasus instead of the missing Moscow.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Stalin was more often portrayed as a knave and Hitler as a dupe, an idea hardly supported by anything except the stereotypes of ‘Asiatic craftiness’ and ‘German honesty’, respectively. In one of Low's cartoons, Stalin and Peter the Great recline in a gondola which a humble gondolier—Hitler—is rowing across the Baltic Sea (*The Evening Standard*, October 26, 1939); in another, Stalin edges Hitler out of their marriage bed in the Balkans (*Ibid.*, July 23, 1940).

<sup>10</sup> This concerns not only political humour. Risqué drawings relating to everyday life are frequent in German periodicals of the Nazi era such as *Simplicissimus* (the title of this periodical stems from the novel *Der abenteuerliche Simplicissimus Teutsch* by H.J.C. von Grimmelshausen (1669)).

<sup>11</sup> Efimov 1969: 130; available at <http://www.liberty.ru/foto/Karikatury-Borisa-Efimova/Za-dvumyazajcami> (last accessed on: July 27, 2014).

<sup>12</sup> A caricature in *The Evening Standard*, October 27, 1941; available at <http://www.cartoons.ac.uk/print/record/LSE3022/zoom> (last accessed on: July 27, 2014).

The simultaneous use of two options such as 3 and 4 enhances the effect. In Arthur Johnson's cartoon, for instance, the Australian Prime Minister's decision, reached after the assault on Pearl Harbour, to regard the US, not Britain, as the nation's main ally, is expressed through the metaphor of adultery. The lascivious Roosevelt is stripping off the Union Jack in which Australia is dressed and offering her the American flag in exchange while the furious Churchill catches the lovers in flagrante delicto (*Kladderadatsch*, no. 3, January 18, 1942).

### Satire and Humour: Harmony or Struggle?

How does the unambiguously hateful message agree with the intrinsically peaceful essence of humour? Is it possible to reconcile hate with mirth, involvement with detachment, and seriousness with non-seriousness? If so, how?

It is usually said that invective and humour can coexist in satire because their domains are different: the content of satire is serious whereas its form is humorous. However, drawing a distinction between form and content is not easy even when satire is extremely hostile, as in *Stürmer*. Whereas in Figure 30, virtually no humorous elements can be found in the content, certain cartoons by Fips are partly humorous at the content level. One of them shows the Jew as the choirmaster and the three Allied leaders as choristers (*Der Stürmer*, no. 8, February 19, 1942, p. 8). The Jew is omnipotent, but Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt are mere puppets in his hands. Schilling's Stalin is monstrous (Fig. 31), but the ugly spinster whom he seduces—Britain—is pathetic and funny.

Does this bring us back to the canny–stupid opposition, i.e. to pure humour? To some extent, yes, but with one important reservation. Humour requires temporary insensibility, liberation from feeling—a “momentary anesthesia of the heart,” as Bergson (2008 [1900]: 11) put it. This is not easy to achieve during wartime. Humorous elements are traceable even in the content of a very bitter satire, but to become amusing, they must be temporarily isolated from context. For instance, Hitler in Low's cartoon (Fig. 32) is as pathetic in his conceit as he is villainous; he might be laughable were it not for the Holocaust train. Because hate and humour are antagonistic, satirists must consciously control their proportion to achieve the desired effect. In fact, they must balance on the edge.

The situation with form is more complicated because conscious control is more difficult here. Even when the content of the cartoon is unambiguously mobilising, not amusing, its form is potentially ambiguous. In another context, caricatures of Jews such as those shown in Figure 30 could well be perceived as funny and innocuous unless the deformation concerns the essence of the image, for instance, changing it from human to animal-like and inherently dangerous.

Compare Kukryniksy's oil painting (Fig. 33) with a graphic cartoon drawn by the same artists, using the same theme, and motivated by the same feelings (Fig. 40). Why do they nevertheless convey different emotions? The reason is that an oil painting carries no meta-communicative message of non-seriousness because

it requires more effort from the artist and from the viewer alike and is ipso facto perceived as serious. A cartoon painted in oil is as hard to imagine as a joke in the form of a psychological novel. A flippant graphic caricature, which is usually more distorting and hyperbolic than a painting and often portrays friends and even cult figures, can be unconsciously perceived as humorous. Sometimes, as in the case of Kukryniksy's cartoon, this may strikingly disagree with the artists' conscious intent.

Boris Efimov's sketch of Stalin (Fig. 41), drawn in 1924 when caricaturing leaders was still possible, looks ominous to us, and yet it had been destined for publication in a party periodical. Although it was rejected, no trouble for the artist ensued, evidently because the sketch was justly deemed humorous, not satiric.

But if everyone including idols can be caricatured so mercilessly, and if such caricatures can still be interpreted as good-natured, then we must admit that without prior knowledge about the prototypes it is hard to tell a hostile (satiric) caricature from a friendly (humorous) one unless an entire scene suggesting an interpretation is depicted and/or a caption is provided, as in Figures 30–32. The meaning of the image thus becomes critically dependent on the context.

Taken by itself, the scene depicted in Figure 40 provides no clues as to its meaning. No one considers physiognomy a science anymore. Anyone's face can look grotesque in the distorting mirror of caricature. Do these people look hideous because they are criminals or because this is a cartoon? Are their grotesquely exaggerated features inherent in their diabolic nature? To what crimes can a pointed nose or bushy eyebrows testify? Is it possible that these images refer to entirely different people, possibly queer but in no way criminal, such as, for instance, the Pickwick club members or, at worst, Gogol's heroes? Is it not so that even the monstrous Goering in the cartoon matches Gogol's description of Sobakevich in *Dead Souls*? In short, is the satirists' accusation serious or humorous?<sup>13</sup> While the answers to these questions appear immediately evident, it is only because we know them in advance. If no answers are available a priori, then there are no a posteriori answers either because the humorous form emancipates itself from our conscious intent and diverts our minds from seriousness to play.

It might appear that these are but theoretical subtleties of no practical relevance, at least as far as propaganda is concerned. Satire, it would seem, always preaches to the converted. True, but what exactly does it preach? Ridiculing people entails the risk of humanising them. After all, being laughable is still better than being odious. Chaplin's *Great Dictator* (1940) was conceived as a satire, but its humorous form, specifically the circus gags Chaplin the actor loved so much, undermined the invective content Chaplin the director wished to embody. "Had I known of the

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<sup>13</sup> Gogol himself was plagued with this problem, and the distinction between the amusing and the correcting functions of his work was so critical for him that his inability to resolve the issue eventually led to a severe mental crisis. Similar crises, which befell other satirists such as Swift, Ščedrin, Zoščenko, and others in their later years, demonstrate that distinguishing satire and humour is anything but an exercise in pedantry.

actual horrors of the German concentration camps,” he wrote many years after the war, “I could not have made *The Great Dictator*; I could not have made fun of the homicidal insanity of the Nazis” (Chaplin 1964: 392).

Does harmony between form and content in satire ensue after the complete truth about the prototypes has been revealed, as in the case of the Nuremberg defendants (Fig. 40)? In that case we consciously infer the meaning by juxtaposing the picture with our prior knowledge. Yet unconsciously we cannot help perceiving the humorous form as a meta-message about the non-seriousness of the message the artists tried to convey. This, of course, might disagree with the conscious design, but objectively there is no disagreement. When murderers have been caught and will not escape punishment, mobilisation is no longer needed, although calling for relaxation would be wrong as well.<sup>14</sup> This may account for the somewhat ambiguous impression the cartoon conveys.<sup>15</sup>

Gregory Bateson (1972: 212) described the conflict between the message and the meta-message as the “double bind”. This, indeed, is what happens when satire seeks to reconcile psychological and rhetoric states that are antagonistic: mobilisation and relaxation. These states can alternate but they cannot overlap. Nor can they both be cancelled at once.

Humour, too, is based on a double bind. However, the humorous double bind (friendly content in hostile form) is salubrious, whereas the satiric double bind (hostile content in humorous form) is fraught with ambiguity and internal conflict. Why? The answer is that humorous form itself is based on a double bind. Satire, therefore, means a *double* double bind because hostility in satire is part of both bona fide content and non-bona fide form. Separating the true hostility of the content from the mock hostility of the form is as difficult for the recipient as attacking seriously and in jest at the same time is for the artist. This, perhaps, is where the main problem with satire lies.

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<sup>14</sup> Nothing in this picture except the caption indicates Schadenfreude, but in another, more grotesque sketch by Kukryniksy the Nuremberg defendants appear stricken with panic (one of them even falls headlong across the bar) and the last digit of the year 1946 is shaped as a noose (<http://art-kukryniksy.narod.ru/kukryniksy30.htm> (last accessed on: July 27, 2014)). In Efimov’s cartoon, also made in the Nuremberg courtroom, the clock on the wall is encircled by a noose (Efimov 1969: 158; <http://mp3-kniga.ru/bibliofil/efimov-polveka.htm> (last accessed on: July 27, 2014)). In his Nuremberg sketches, Efimov portrays Goering as a constricting snake, and Ribbentrop as a rat (<http://propagandahistory.ru/243/Boris-Efimov---patriarkh-sovetskoy-karikatury/> (last accessed on: July 27, 2014)).

<sup>15</sup> Psychological data suggest that a sudden reduction of anger may be followed by laughter (Tomkins 1984; Keltner & Bonanno 1997). In this case, however, amusement is suppressed by repulsion.

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**THE HEADQUARTERS OF OTHERS**

30

A bunch of Jews is having a meeting. They let their nations bleed so the Pan-Jewry can prevail—never mind the mountains of corpses!

P. Rupprecht ("Fips"), *Der Stürmer*, 1942, January 22, no. 4.



Held Stalin

(nach Schilling)



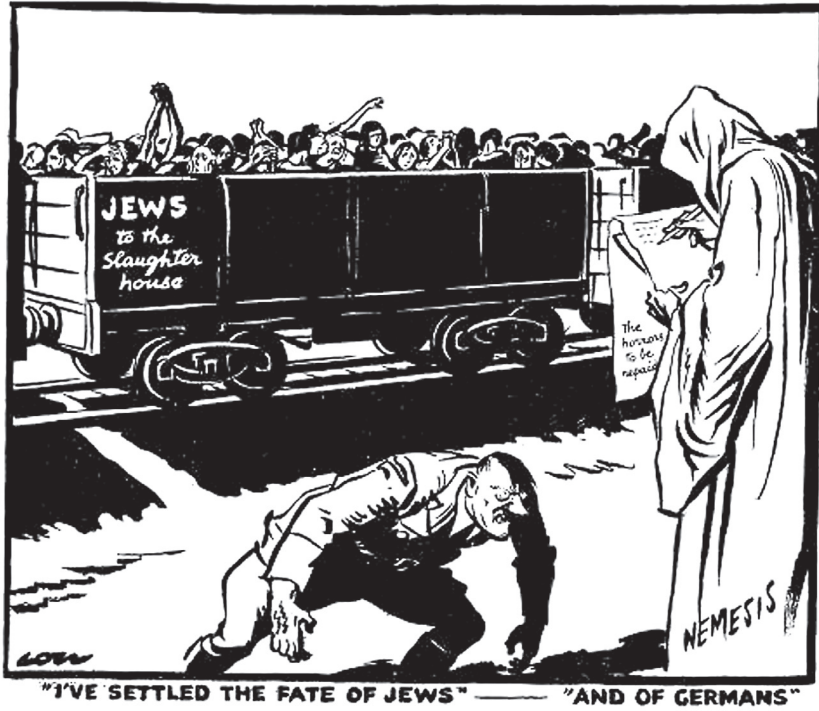
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**STALIN THE HERO**

“What, after all, are my defeats at the German Front compared to the brilliant victory over my dear Britain!”

E. Schilling, *Simplicissimus*, 1942, June 17, vol. 47, no. 25.

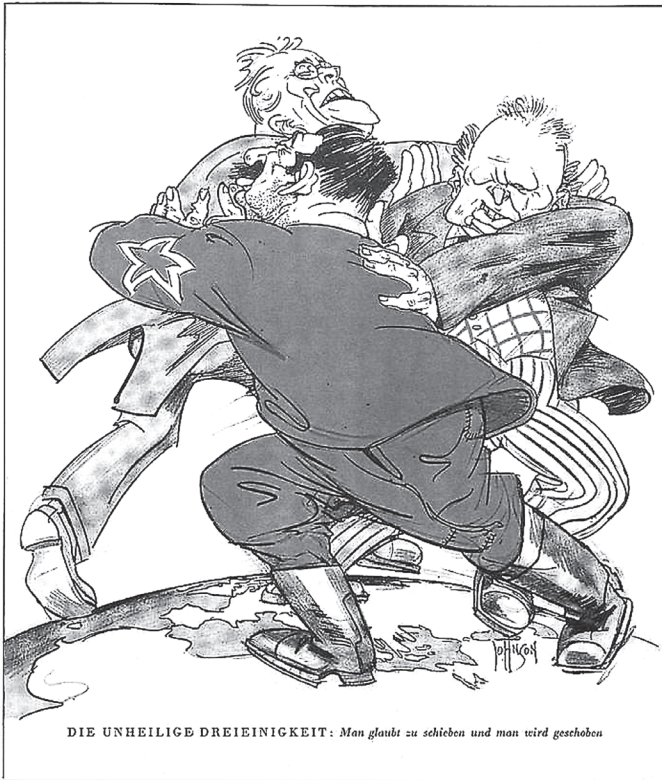
31



"I'VE SETTLED THE FATE OF JEWS."—"AND OF GERMANS"

32 ..... D. Low, *The Evening Standard*, 1942, December 14.





**THE PROFANE TRINITY**

“They think they are pushing but in fact they are pushed.”

34 ..... A. Johnson, *Kladderadatsch*, 1942, January 4, vol. 95, no. 1.



**THE SPRING OFFENSIVE**

“Nearly ready mein Fuehrer!”

E.H. Shepard, *Punch*, 1942, April 20.



**TOTAL MOBILIZATION**

36 ..... Б. Efimov, *Krasnaya zvezda*, 1944, July 30.



**TWILIGHT OF THE IDOLS**

“If we take him, we could perhaps sell him to the British Museum!”

H.E. Köhler (“Erik”), *Kladderadatsch*, 1941, August 17, vol. 94, no. 33. 37



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**SOMEONE IS TAKING SOMEONE FOR A WALK**

**SOMEONE IS TAKING SOMEONE FOR A WALK**

38 ..... D. Low, *Picture Post*, 1939, October 21.



“Yes, Mrs. Europe, this dangerous eczema must be radically removed by a first-rate surgeon.”

H. Lindloff, *Kladderadatsch*, 1941, July 27, vol. 94, no. 30. 39



**HAPPY FINAL YEAR!**

40 ..... Kukryniksy, *Krokodil*, 1945, December 30.





## **2. Ideology and the Other: The Making of the Enemy**

## The Faces of the Enemy in the Two World Wars: A Comparative Analysis of German and Hungarian Caricatures

In the interwar period the prevailing opinion both in Germany and in Hungary was that these countries did not lose the Great War on the battlefields but as a result of ineffective propaganda and press. For example, Adolf Hitler criticised the comic papers and also blamed them for losing WWI (1943: 198). Therefore, it is insightful to analyse the changes in the methods of the propaganda spread through caricatures, knowing that Germany and its ally, Hungary, subsequently lost WWII as well.

In this chapter I examine the depiction of the enemy during the periods of the two World Wars (June 1914—June 1918; September 1939—September 1944), through the caricatures of comic papers and newspapers (during WWII Hungarian newspapers regularly published political caricatures). The German *Kladderadatsch* ('Tumult') was a national-liberal comic paper during World War I that became right wing during WWII; the Hungarian liberal *Borsszem Jankó* ('Johnny Peppercorn') ceased publication after 1938. Thus I analyse WWII through the right wing newspaper *Magyarság* ('Hungarianness'), published until 1944, as was *Kladderadatsch*. In the last year of publication of *Magyarság*, the editors reprinted (with Hungarian translation) caricatures from *Kladderadatsch*—without the signature of the original caricaturist.<sup>1</sup> The nature of *Kladderadatsch*'s caricatures was determined by a small group of caricaturists, the most important of whom was Arthur Johnson, who drew caricatures throughout both world wars and became a convinced fascist during the 1930s. He perfected his method of distorting the features of the enemy in his drawings. *Borsszem Jankó* also employed several famous artists, such as Dezső Bér, Géza Zórád or Jenő Feiks, but in *Magyarság* one cannot find any drawings of these leading caricaturists.

It was during and after WWI, when, parallel with the examination of propaganda effects and application of propaganda by scholars and journalists, the opinion that the press has a great influence on people during the war (which is also reflected in the above-mentioned views held by Hitler) became pervasive (details see in Lasswell 1971). People then believed that the war could be won with well-

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<sup>1</sup> After the German occupation of Hungary (in March 1944) the coordination (*Gleichschaltung*) of the Hungarian press began immediately (Vásárhelyi 1975: 40–43). Before March 1944 the editors of *Magyarság* had occasionally used caricatures from *Kladderadatsch*, but after May 1944 this became regular.

applied propaganda; however, we know today that the human mind processes information in a more limited manner than was then assumed. Therefore—based on new knowledge acquired in the field of psychology since 1920s—one can say that different people’s brains do not convert the messages of the outside world identically, and that interpretations instead depend on a person’s prior knowledge. This in turn implies that different people interpret propaganda differently (Sipos 2011: 43–58). People from what might be called the WWI generation (for instance Wilhelm Schuster, Ernst Schulz-Besser, Eduard Fuchs) as well as scholars studying propaganda after both world wars (for example Eberhard Demm) have tried to explain why caricatures were important tools of propaganda and why they can communicate a message more effectively than any other kind of text, especially in the time of war. Schuster states that “the caricature has first rate power. Drawings speak more clearly than words” (1915: 5). Schulz-Besser argues in a similar way that, “The caricature is superpower. A well-drawn picture is imprinted much deeper into the memory than the best lead article... But humour offers much more: it helps to win the fight” (1918: 4). He adds that it was a good feeling for German soldiers to read *Kladderadatsch* on the battlefields and enjoy its well-known humour (Ibid.: 4). Fuchs accentuates another aspect, specifically that “the caricatures are the most reliable form of expression of the mass psyche, always and everywhere” (1916: VI). I can agree with Fuchs to some extent, because a caricature can achieve its goal if the viewer knows its elements and can decode them, therefore, caricatures provide future generations with an insight into some parts of collective consciousness and memory. It is safe to assume, then, that the contemporaries of WWII strongly believed in the power of the press and propaganda, although scholars of later generations also emphasise the important effect of caricatures not only on the battlefield but also in the hinterland. Demm accentuates the importance of humour in the caricatures, as does Schulz-Besser, who says: “With humour one can improve the morality and strengthen the feeling of togetherness (...) and humour can redirect discontent towards the enemy or scapegoats” (1918: 11). We will see that in the analysed caricatures that mockery is directed only against the external enemy, whereas internal political conflicts are rarely depicted. During WWII the depiction of scapegoats is unambiguous: Jews became reprehensible for everything and anything both in pictures and reality.

Wartime caricatures (like all other political caricatures) reflected on political and military events very quickly, although they were limited by propaganda aims and censorship. However, I will not discuss the analysed caricatures chronologically, because my aim is to give an overview of the array of the general strategies used in mocking the enemy during the two World Wars rather than to illustrate the well-known events of the wars by describing the relevant caricatures. I will accentuate the similarities and differences between the various means of mocking ‘the enemy’: the use of new vs. old symbols; the differences between the self-stereotypes (stereotypical depictions of the in-group and its allies) and the stereotypes of the

Other. Before I analyse the symbols and stereotypes serving the aims of propaganda in caricatures, Tables 1 and 2 summarise the number of drawings (see below in the section Depiction of the Self) and caricatures referring to the two World Wars in the various publications. *Borsszem Jankó* was the only one of the analysed papers that published drawings with scenes from the ordinary life of the in-group (Austro-Hungarian soldiers on the battlefield, in the hinterland) as well as caricatures.

Table 1. Number of published caricatures and drawings during WWI

	Caricatures <i>Borsszem Jankó</i>	Drawings <i>Borsszem Jankó</i>	Caricatures <i>Kladderadatsch</i>
<b>28 June–31 December, 1914</b>	22	30	156
<b>1915</b>	77	78	373
<b>1916</b>	85	58	355
<b>1917</b>	61	40	363
<b>1918</b>	52	28	343
<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>1590</b>

Table 2. Number of published caricatures during WWII<sup>2</sup>

	Caricatures <i>Magyarság</i>	Caricatures <i>Kladderadatsch</i>
<b>September to December 1939</b>	9	138
<b>1940</b>	90	505
<b>1941</b>	120	485
<b>1942</b>	59	423
<b>1943</b>	33	371
<b>1944</b>	43	242
<b>Total</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>2164</b>

Following the traditions of the nineteenth century the caricaturists employed well-known symbols such as the characters of ancient Roman as well as Greek and German mythology or biblical scenes. Until the end of WWI the style and artistic design of the caricatures closely followed the artistic methods of the nineteenth century. *Magyarság* featured simpler, line drawn caricatures with easily decodable messages. The style of the pictures in *Kladderadatsch* also changed to some extent from WWI to WWII, although not fundamentally. The depiction of mythical characters

<sup>2</sup> The great difference between the numbers of caricatures can be explained with the fact that *Kladderadatsch* was published in a longer form than *Borsszem Jankó*, and in *Magyarság*, a political newspaper, only a maximum of one caricature was included per day (and not every day).

was more frequent during WWI. During WWII the caricatures no longer referred to those myths which needed more serious knowledge of mythology. The editors of *Magyarság* almost never used these symbols in the first place. In *Kladderadatsch* this change cannot be explained with a change in caricaturists. Rather, in both Hungary and Germany a new generation of readers grew up, perhaps with less of a classical education, who could not, therefore, be addressed through complicated mythological stories.<sup>3</sup> The caricaturists mocked the Other using various methods: they depicted the enemy as ugly human beings or as animals, they reinterpreted scenes from Roman, Greek and German mythologies as well as the Bible. Before I discuss these, however, I will analyse the self-representations.<sup>4</sup>

### Depiction of the Self

One of the most important functions of the drawings in *Borsszem Jankó* was the strengthening of a positive self-image and of faith in victory. The pictures provide an insight into the glorious life of the military by an artist, Ákos Garay, who also fought in the battlefields (BJ<sup>5</sup>, August 2, 1914). However, these drawings of scenes of ordinary life, a genre which aims to represent 'reality', lack one aspect of wartime reality—specifically, that of suffering. Naturally, one cannot see either lost battles or dead soldiers, only hussars bearing their serious injuries heroically (BJ, September 20, 1914). The defeated enemy appears in only one context: when its depiction was to accentuate the humanity of the Hungarians, for example representing them helping the injured enemy on the eastern front.

Drawings of heroes were not used to strengthen positive self-representations in *Magyarság*. On the contrary, its caricaturists gave positive meanings to the Hungarian fascist symbol, the arrow cross, which was depicted as destroying the enemy, bringing a new revival (Fig. 42) and reconstituting the Hungarian borders to those before the Peace Treaty of Trianon (1920). The arrow cross is often depicted with sunlight or fire next to it, although the swastika also occurs next to these in many caricatures (M, July 11, 1941). Surprisingly the two symbols were published more often in *Magyarság* than in *Kladderadatsch*. In the German comic paper during WWI, German self-image was strengthened by depicting heroic German soldiers,

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<sup>3</sup> In Hungary the Ancient Greek language and mythology were not compulsory subjects between 1890 and 1924, and the interest in Greek decreased drastically (Lovász 2010: 45–52). The hegemony of Latin had also disappeared by the 1920s: the education reform of 1924 decreased the teaching of Latin greatly (Borzák 1990: 74–77). In German grammar schools both Latin and Greek remained compulsory subjects, taught in a high number of classes per week (Karsen 1923: 14–15), although only 9% of the students went to this type of school and the educated elite did not vote for the Nazis (Kuhlmann 2006: 410–411) and thereby was not the target of Nazi propaganda.

<sup>4</sup> I will not discuss the anti-Semitism or the traditional depiction of Jews in this chapter (see, however, Davies, this volume), although this will be a topic of another study I am planning to undertake.

<sup>5</sup> In this chapter I will abbreviate the titles of comic papers in footnotes and examples as follows: *Borsszem Jankó* (BJ), *Kladderadatsch* (K), *Magyarság* (M). The figures only illustrate the point, and observations are based on a higher number of caricatures.

primarily through the successful general Paul von Hindenburg and his glorious predecessor Otto von Bismarck (K, August 13, 1916). These symbolic figures and heroic soldiers disappeared in the caricatures from WWII, when the only method of propaganda was mockery of the enemy.

### Ancient Gods Employed in War Propaganda

Since the object of the present analysis is wartime caricatures, it is not surprising that we find the ancient personifications of war and peace, such as Mars the god of war, Pax the goddess of peace, and the Christian symbols of peace (the angel of peace and the dove) in the analysed caricatures. Mars was very popular in *Kladderadatsch* in 1916–17 (Fig. 43), and later, in 1939, many drawings depict Jewish journalists awakening the sleeping Mars. In 1940 the victorious Mars is depicted (K, December 1, 1940) and in 1941 the love between Mars and Venus appears (K, December 28, 1941). The male and female characters were personified by males, for instance by Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt, or by Churchill and Josef Stalin,<sup>6</sup> while ‘the Jews’ also sometimes appeared as a character in a mocking love scene. *Magyarság* depicted the bloodthirsty Mars, connecting the destruction caused by him with the money and war profits of the Jews (M, August 15, 1941). Finally, Mars appeared as death itself in both magazines (the Hungarian magazine copied the idea of the caricature from *Kladderadatsch*: K, May 28, 1944; M, July 16, 1944).

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The depiction of Pax became more and more popular between 1915 and 1918 in *Kladderadatsch*, because of the German peace offer (K, December 12, 1916) and the peace negotiations with Russia (1917); however, no similar tendency can be observed in *Borsszem Jankó*. The symbols of peace appeared in two contexts: the enemy stands in the way of peace and wants to continue the cruel war against the will of Germany (BJ, February 13, 1916; K, January 2, 1916), and Woodrow Wilson can be seen as a false angel of peace (Fig. 44; K, December 3, 1916). In such caricatures Wilson has many weapons and loans money to the entente states in order to continue the war (thus, not truly wanting to arrive at peace). Both the German and the Hungarian propaganda celebrated the peace of Brest-Litovsk (1918): the angel of peace finally found peace (BJ, March 10, 1918; K, January 13, 1918). Nevertheless, at the end of the war, Pax was depicted very differently: after signing the truce in Compiegne (1918), “the fair angel of peace” trampled a German soldier to death. In this caricature the personification of peace no longer has angelical features, it is more similar to a creature from hell (K, November 24, 1918). During WWII the symbols of peace disappeared from the pages of the analysed magazines, although it has to be borne in mind that the analysed papers were not published in the last year of the war. The caricaturists expressed the choice

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<sup>6</sup> The effeminisation of an internal or external enemy is an old and often practiced strategy of mockery in caricatures.

between peace and war with Janus, the two-faced Roman god: John Bull showed his 'peaceful face' to Wilson and his 'warlike face' to the German Michel (a personification of Germans in the comic papers). During WWII Churchill demonstrated his 'winning face' in the direction of Europe and shouted 'SOS' in the direction of America (K, June 18, 1916; K; November 10, 1940).

Apart from the gods of war and peace, several mythological stories found their way into the caricatures. At the time of naval battles one can see depictions of Ägir, a German sea giant of great power, in *Kladderadatsch* or caricatures of Neptune in *Borsszem Jankó* (K, January 10, 1915; BJ, August 13, 1916). Ägir was not only a mythological giant but also the name of a WWI German battleship. The depiction of the German giant was often similar to the representation of Neptune carrying the trident, although this did not belong among the attributes of Ägir. In these caricatures Ägir was happy when English battleships sank. Important WWII battles took place at sea as well, although symbols of these were not popular. Ägir did not resurface, and Neptune, whose role changed significantly, appears as a god defeating and threatening Britain, for example Neptune appeared in the image of Josef Stalin.

In the period of WWI the analysed papers published caricatures with figures from the Iliad and the Odyssey, as well as motifs from the Trojan War, announcing the necessity of persistence—the obvious parallel is that the Trojan War also lasted for a very long time. Caricatures referring to the ancient battlefields appeared mainly in 1915, since the caricaturists connected the characters of the Trojan myths with the war in the Aegean Sea. For example, on the Dardanelles Trojan heroes greeted German soldiers with the exclamation "Zeus strafe England!" ('Zeus, punish England!') (K, April 4, 1915).<sup>7</sup> In another caricature Zeus looks at the modern battlefields of Troy and mentions the difference between the Ancient and modern war: "Once the battle here was fought for the beautiful Helena—but now it is for John Bull's dirty account-book" (K, May 2, 1915), referring to the aims and methods of Britain's war-waging negatively. During WWII, caricatures also depicted the Trojan horse or Achilles, but again, this had been more frequent before that time. For instance, in one caricature Franklin D. Roosevelt pulls a red Trojan horse full of Soviet soldiers into Europe, thereby threatening the safety of the continent (K, January 1, 1940). However, the occupation of Crete gave relevance for the surfacing of another mythological figure, the Minotaur, who appeared as a Briton in British uniform and ate the children offered to him (K, November 17, 1940), depicted in order to demonstrate the barbarism of Britain.

During WWI the Colossus of Rhodes was depicted in connection with the fight for the Dardanelles. Germany's ally, i.e. the Ottoman Empire, was shown as the Colossus of Rhodes, although this does not suggest the same message as before,

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<sup>7</sup> The original form of the greeting originates from the German poet, Ernst Lissauer ("Gott strafe England!"—"God, punish England!") who wrote also a hate song against England (Brockhaus 1970: 507).

referring to the Ottoman Empire as the “sick man of Europe”. On the contrary, the Ottoman Empire is depicted as a more likely winner of the battle. The entente soldiers and navy are drawn in miniature, as small men and ships, in order to underscore the contradiction between the powers of the two armies (K, April 4, 1915; BJ, May 2, 1915). Turkey was neutral during WWII, thus, this and similar metaphors no longer had relevance.

Further figures of Ancient myths (Fortuna, Prometheus, Diogenes etc.) appeared primarily in *Kladderadatsch* between 1915 and 1918, and later in 1940 and 1942, although most of the characters occurred only in one or two caricatures in connection with a topical political or military event, and always with the aim that the original meaning of the myth degrades the enemy as well as the visual representation.

### Legends, Myths and Tales in Caricatures

While caricaturists mocked the enemy by using Ancient myths to deliver their point, the usual way to represent the grandness of the German army was to illustrate it with elements of German legends or tales. One of the legendary heroes of German myth was Hermann, who led the German tribes against the Romans (9 AD), carrying them to victory in the Teutoburg forest. In the *Kladderadatsch* pictures, Hermann or other soldiers from German tribes encouraged the soldiers of the twentieth century to fight against their enemies, and Lurlei, a nymph, helped the soldiers to misguide the enemy with her beauty (K, August 23, 1914; K, November 19, 1916).

The caricatures depicted the fighting through biblical scenes as well. Both in Budapest and Berlin during WWI and WWII, the press used the motif of crucifixion, which appeared in connection with various events of the wars. *Borsszem Jankó* published a caricature in which the personification of Belgium, a young woman, is crucified, while two soldiers stand next to her with John Bull as Pilate, washing his hands (BJ, October 18, 1914). The caricature suggests that the enemy does not help its allies or—in contrast with the official propaganda of Great Britain, according to which Great Britain was the protector of small nations—any of the small states of Europe. Crucifixion was depicted more often during WWII than WWI. In one caricature, a woman and her child are crucified in Neville Chamberlain’s dream (K, November 12, 1939), symbolising British cruelty in the concentration camps of Transvaal (in reference to the Boer War). In later caricatures, the crucifixion motif is applied to British and French soldiers and the personifications of the neutral states. In the last year analysed in this chapter (i.e. 1944), the cross of the crucifixion changes its shape: it is made entirely out of Soviet symbols the sickle and hammer; on this cross Europe, the allegory of the territories liberated by the Red Army (Fig. 45), and the Statue of Liberty, a general symbol of liberty, are executed. The murder of Europe is represented in a caricature with the title “Judas’s Dream” in which the betrayers are Churchill, Roosevelt and the Jews (K, Janu-

ary 23, 1944). The depiction was probably inspired by the Teheran Conference (November 28 to December 1, 1943) where Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill met for the first time and made decisions not only on the continuation of the war but also about the consolidation of Europe after the war.

The depiction of Lucifer, hell and the Grim Reaper with a scythe (the traditional representation of death) in the caricatures are linked to the horrors of war; nevertheless, the propagandistic caricatures suggest that these negative phenomena touched only the enemy (BJ, July 15, 1917; K, November 29, 1914). Death and its symbols (such as bones and skulls) often appeared in caricatures in both magazines during WWII. Mass murders, the joy of killing and cruelty in general are claimed to be characteristic primarily of Stalin (K, July 9, 1944; Fig. 46). The German and Hungarian caricaturists wanted to point out that the western states overlook the crimes against humanity of the Soviet dictator. We should not leave out the fact that these caricatures presented the brutality of the Soviet dictator very realistically, albeit with propagandistic aims. Furthermore, other motives connected with death such as funerals and coffins usually symbolise the end of the great colonial empire of Britain. In the caricatures Churchill is depicted burying the coffin of the Empire, or digging its grave (K, April 5, 1942; M, October 15, 1940).

The Devil appeared in *Kladderadatsch* in almost every year of both wars. The German comic magazine shows the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain Edward Grey as Lucifer in order to question his true intention to mediate a peace treaty. Later Stalin, Roosevelt or Churchill are depicted as the Devil himself; Wilson also appears in hell, furthermore, the Jewry of the Western World are identified with the underworld (K, August 16, 1914; K, November 29, 1914; K, February 25, 1940).

The inverse of hell, i.e. paradise, also appears in the caricatures of *Kladderadatsch*. During WWI, one caricature shows Michel, the personification of Austria, and Eva as the personification of Austria-Hungary, arriving at paradise when the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy has just occupied a territory from Romania (K, August 12, 1917). *Kladderadatsch* was the only paper that depicted paradise in later numbers of the magazine as well. According to these caricatures, the British live blindly in the British paradise; they do not know the real news about the war and their allies. One can see also Franklin Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor with a pomegranate shaped like a grenade (involving a pun in German: *Granatapfel* meaning the fruit, and *Granat* meaning the weapon). They wear clothes with dollar signs, suggesting that they are no longer innocent. The snake luring them to temptation appeared as a Jew (K, July 16, 1944; K, August 3, 1941).

The phrase “Soviet Paradise”—*Sowjetparadies*, originally the title of a German exhibition on the Soviet Union in 1934 and later the title of a Nazi propaganda film from 1942—had an ironic meaning. The aim of caricatures using it was to show the ‘real’ face of communism, specifically that of death, terror, poverty and starvation, characterised the “Soviet Paradise” most adequately. Next to the Soviet

figure, Jews are very often depicted in these caricatures (M, June 26, 1941). The Soviet Union was not depicted in *Magyarság* before 1941, when Germany attacked it.<sup>8</sup> The first caricature mentioning it, published in June 1941, refers to “The real lords of the Soviets” (Fig. 47), associating anti-Semitic and anti-Bolshevik stereotypes with the Soviet Union.<sup>9</sup>

### Animals from Coats of Arms and Other Figures Personifying Lands

Animals from coats of arms as personifications of countries appeared in the examined caricatures as well, and through these symbols the enemy was also mocked or derided. If the animals were injured or maimed, then the message conveyed by the caricaturist was that the enemy lost its (financial or other) power or some of its territories. In both the Hungarian and German press, caricatures often used these animal symbols. Animals symbolising various countries (for example the bear for Russia and later the Soviet Union, the lion and the unicorn for Britain, the rooster for France, and the bald eagle for the US) have longstanding traditions.

Let us now concentrate on the motif of the bear, as it illustrates the close connection between the caricatures and the political and military events during both wars. Until the spring of 1915 the bear in the caricatures is shown fighting, but without injury. In May the animal appears with bandages and its fur is torn. Later in the period of the Russian retreat he is seen bleeding heavily, suggesting the great number of Russian casualties. In November 1916 the bear is shown with injuries on all of its body, and the caricaturists add new bandages and wounds up until the beginning of 1917. In the last period—before the Peace of Brest-Litovsk—the bear can no longer fight. However, after the peace treaty the bear appears healthy and strong again, and the entente wants him to fight against Germany, however, this Russian bear is not dancing to the tune the entente is singing (K, November 19, 1916; K, January 21, 1917; K, March 25, 1917; K, August 25, 1918). During WWII, caricaturists followed the instructions of propaganda, thus, in the caricatures the Soviet bear is laughing at British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in 1939, because Germany and the Soviet Union—former enemies—signed a non-aggression pact, in 1940 the Soviet bear is urinating on the tombstone of the League of Nations, and furthermore, the French Marianne smashes the glassed-in photograph of a Soviet man angrily, but no other images referring to the Soviet Union appear until its attack (K, November 19, 1939; K, January 1, 1940; K, February 18, 1940). In July 1941 the mating of the bear with the British lion is depicted. Jewish features can be observed on the heads of both the bear and the lion—similarly to the

<sup>8</sup> Balázs Sipos analysed the articles of the newspaper, and, according to him, the editor of *Magyarság* tried to follow the guidelines of German propaganda, thus, he did not publish negative articles about the Soviet Union after August 1939. However, from the summer of 1941 the articles strongly attack the Soviet Union (2011: 239–252).

<sup>9</sup> This belief in a supposed connection between the Bolsheviks and Jews had traditions in the right wing propaganda and press of both Hungary and Germany (Sipos 2011: 240).

above-mentioned caricature from *Magyarság* (K, July 6, 1941). In *Kladderadatsch* caricatures published after 1941, the bear rarely appears without Stalin's face drawn into its figure (for example, on his stomach). The shadow of the red bear haunts over Europe, or Stalin snarls at the small nations or even at his allies. One can see the injured bear in *Kladderadatsch*, but not often. In the caricatures in *Magyarság*, the bear is gripped by a pair of pliers bearing the swastika (K, February 14, 1943; K, March 19, 1944; M, November 27, 1941).

The English heraldic animals—the unicorn and the lion—appear in the same way as the bear: when the entente or allied troops lost battles or resources on the continent, caricatures were published showing the lion with injuries, bandages, bleeding, with lost limbs or crying (a very cowardly act) in the caricatures of both wars (Fig. 48). No respect is given to the king of the beasts in the caricature in which he begs the Turkish pasha in Egypt (K, October 31, 1915). The unicorn appears rarely and only in *Kladderadatsch*, his most characteristic feature being that he crashes into something, for instance into a flagpole with the Turkish flag (K, January 3, 1915). Britain also appeared as a sea lion in the period of WWI when the caricaturist wanted to refer to a naval battle (K, July 23, 1916). Another animal generally connected with Britain is a bulldog, snarling next to Churchill, which emphasises British aggression (BJ, April 7, 1918).

Sometimes one can see more than one injured animal in a caricature, for instance, the bulldog and the Gallic rooster together (Fig. 49). The depiction of France using a rooster wearing the Gallic cap has no connection to the French coat of arms, although it is deeply rooted in tradition. The Romans used the word 'Gallic' for the territory of modern France, and the Latin word means both 'Gallic man' and 'rooster'. This animal was also depicted wounded or with bandages (K, July 23, 1916). In the period of WWII one cannot find the rooster after 1940, after the German occupation of France.

The aim and logic of caricatures with the symbolic figure of a country—Marianne in the Gallic cap for France, Ivan the Cossack for Russia, later the Bolshevik worker for the Soviet Union, the figures of Uncle Sam and John Bull—or depicting leading politicians (K, November 26, 1939) who are also injured, missing limbs or bleeding, is the same as with the animals. In both analysed periods caricatures of deformed human beings were published in great numbers. These caricatures are in stark contrast to the caricatures referencing the in-group (see section Depiction of the Self), in which the German eagle flies over the battlefields, or in which brave and strong German soldiers are smiling. The extent of the deformation of human beings differs in the two analysed periods. The politicians and personifications of the countries were shown more amorphously (for example with a disproportional body or ugly features) during WWII and more frequently than earlier. While *Magyarság* changed the facial features or the normal proportions of the human body, the caricaturist of *Kladderadatsch* modified the figures in more varied ways: the characters of the latter are often shown without clothes (referring to their immo-

rality) or in torn and patched clothes (suggesting that they are short of financial resources), and often old and fat (while the Germans are shown as young and handsome). Their nudity and depiction as lovers (for example, Roosevelt and Stalin, or Churchill and Stalin, etc.) or even as prostitutes (primarily Marianne during WWI, and American women during WWII) were intended to mock the enemy strongly and to make it repulsive (K, November 11, 1917; K, October 19, 1941). In caricatures from WWII, enemy nations were shown not only as prostitutes but, more often, as rapists (K, November 12, 1939).

### Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided only a brief overview of the various faces of the enemy, pointing out old motifs used to mock the enemy (using oppositions such as beautiful vs. ugly, young vs. old) and describing the modified focus of caricatures in the analysed period (for example, fewer depictions referring to mythology, and more deformed figures, either human or animal, during WWII). The cruelty of wars was depicted only with allegorical scenes, although war propaganda pervaded every depiction. Before WWI no one had experienced a total war, therefore, the caricatures from both wars were different: the comic papers could publish pictures about topics other than the war (for instance, internal political conflicts), the enemy was not demonised, maps symbolising newly occupied territories appeared often, and, before the age of war photography, amputation as relating to a representative of the enemy was popular, which represented the loss of territories (Tamás 2013). During both world wars the caricaturists avoided drawing maps and depicting the process of amputation by doctors (symbolising powerful countries) in the analysed comic papers. Only the results of amputation were depicted on the body of the animalised or demonised enemy. The belittlement of the enemy depicted in human form was also a new element of caricature during WWI.

The depictions in *Borsszem Jankó* were more subdued in comparison with the German comic magazine; however, the caricatures of *Magyarság* spoon-fed fascist propaganda openly and strongly, with very simple symbolism. Despite the strict censorship, *Borsszem Jankó* was able to publish caricatures criticising the government or referring to the problems of the civilian population: unfaithfulness, life without men, shortages, and starvation. At the same time, pacifist ideas were completely banned from all of the papers. During WWII censorship became stricter, and, therefore these problems could no longer be depicted in caricature. However, neither were Germany nor its allies were able to win WWII with this much more controlled propaganda and press.

The readers—soldiers as well as people in the hinterlands—could observe the enemy in the comic papers, and in addition, other types of graphical image (for example postcards, leaflets etc.) conveyed the same message with similar visual communication strategies. The depiction of the enemy is stereotypical, schematised, and generalised, the same message recurs again and again: the—sometimes very

distant—enemy and his goals are evil. The caricaturists employed various methods to show the evilness and to degrade the enemy: leading politicians appeared as weak and bloodthirsty, as injured animals or mythical figures, and in these myths and tales they are the negative characters. The enemy soldiers were represented as cruel and whole nations as uncivilised barbarians.

In contrast, depiction of the self had opposite features: allied soldiers and those associated with them are good-hearted and brave, the leaders behave heroic, and the hinterland is strong and civilised. The way of representation modified from the period of WWI to the epoch of WWII to some extent, but the message remained the same. Because of the repetitive and generalising character of propaganda images some aspects of these caricatures might have influenced thinking about enemy nations or politicians.

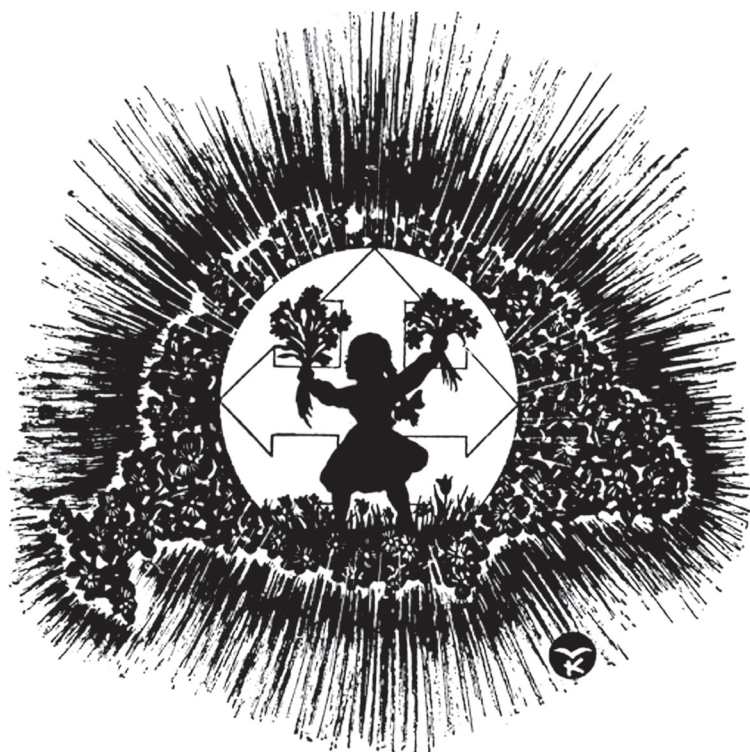
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**SPRING SUCCEEDS TO WINTER** .....

*Magyarság*, 1940, March 24. .... 42



**DER KRIEG IM EWIGEN EISE**

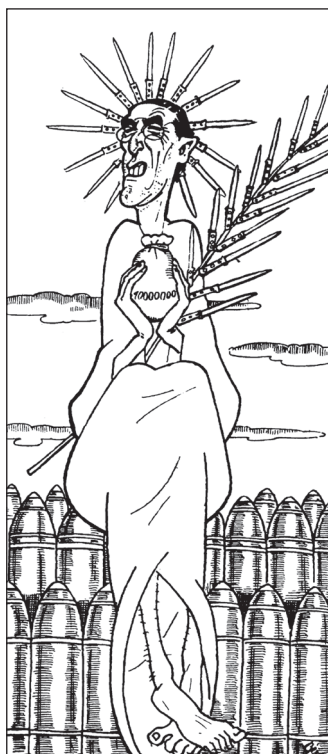
'The war in eternal ice/hurry'. The title refers to the German expression "to be in hurry" ("in Eile sein") and the caricature refers to the Italian front line in the high mountains covered with ice ("Eis").

43 G. Brandt, *Kladderadatsch*, 1915, July 11.

A SKETCH OF STAINED GLASS FOR THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER OF THE WHITE HOUSE

44

D. Bér, *Borsszem Jankó*, 1916, April 30.



123



THIS IS WHAT "LIBERATED" TERRITORIES LOOK LIKE...

*Magyarság*, 1944, September 2.

45



**THE REFINER**

(According to Stalin's roster, Germans abuse the Soviets.)

"My soldiers are used to this, and the way the Germans  
treat them does not agree with the laws of humanity..."



125

**THE REAL LORDS OF THE SOVIET** .....

*Magyarság*, 1941, June 25. 47



**THE SECRET**

Churchill: "Psst, we are doing very badly."

The British lion: "Tsk-tsk, this is a bad surprise for me."



**AFTER THE LONG SCUFFLE** .....

D. Bért, *Borsszem Jankó*, 1918, April 7. .... 49

## German Jewish Migrations to Great Britain 1933–1939: Remarks on Cultural Otherness

In the eighteenth century, Great Britain became one of the most attractive migration destinations for the European Jewry. It is estimated that by the end of the nineteenth century approximately a quarter of a million Jewish immigrants had arrived in its cities—later some carried on their journey across the Atlantic Ocean, while others stayed and settled, slowly joining and changing British society.<sup>1</sup> The outbreak of WWI put an end to one of the largest Jewish migrations of the modern era.

During the interwar period, the patterns of Jewish migration to Great Britain changed according to modifications introduced to laws and regulations on the migrations themselves, as well as according to Jewish settlement across the European continent. One thing though remained unchanged—the perception of Great Britain among the oppressed residents of Europe. The British Isles appeared to them not only as a gateway for onward travel to America, but also as a place offering shelter. A moderate political scene that rejected radicalism together with support for nationalistic ideology among the British seemed to guarantee continuity of attitudes and approach towards the refugees among both the citizens and the political establishment. For people living in countries that introduced racist restrictions, these factors increased the attraction of the British Isles as a migration destination.

Although Great Britain has played an important role in the whole of Jewish migrations for two centuries, during the interwar period it was not the place of first choice for many Jews. Countries bordering Germany—such as the Netherlands, France and Czechoslovakia—were chosen more frequently. There were several reasons for this, key among them was being close to family members and friends left behind. Smaller distances meant smaller travel expenses for those visiting and for family members of those who already emigrated willing to rejoin their families in a new place of residence. The new places were also commonly chosen with one particular condition in mind—the presence of active and large Jewish communities in the migration destination. Certainly that condition did not matter as much to the assimilated Jews, but for those more pious and traditional, being able to move from one community to another was crucial. The existence of such communities guaranteed acceptance in a familiar environment with fewer cultural differences.

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<sup>1</sup> Numbers of those who stayed and those who chose to migrate onwards can only be estimated as we lack reliable data.

The Jewish exodus from Germany in the 1930s can easily be divided into several stages, with the first migration wave starting shortly after Hitler came to power. The second started after the worsening of the legal situation of Jews in Germany, finding its peak shortly after the terrifying events of *Kristallnacht* in November 1938. Until then the number of Jewish immigrants arriving in Great Britain had been relatively small, especially compared to the numbers arriving in Palestine or the Americas. Between November 1938 and September 1939 these numbers rose drastically. Out of 100 000–150 000 Jews who left Nazi controlled territory after *Kristallnacht*, 40 000 gained permission to go to the British Isles. Most immigrants considered British ports a transit space on their way across the ocean; they would apply for their North or South American visas once in Great Britain. Others recognised Great Britain as the place in which they wished to settle. The outbreak of the war forced many of the former to stay, and so it has been estimated that approximately 80 000 German-Jewish refugees were present in Britain in autumn 1939 (Berghahn 2007: 76). Other researchers, like Yvonne Kapp, claim that the number was slightly higher—up to 90 000 refugees (London 2003: 11).

Although the estimates appear to be slightly inaccurate, what is certain is that among the number in question there were nearly 10 000 Jewish refugee children who arrived in Great Britain with the Kindertransports (see below). Questions arise again in discussing numbers of immigrants who decided to go back to continental Europe shortly before the war. Yvonne Kapp and Margaret Mynatt show that the number might have been as high as 20 000–30 000 (1997: 3). Others, like Louise London, believe that their numbers did not exceed 10 000 (2003: 11–12). The reasons for this re-emigration remain unclear, but it can be assumed that they were multiple and that each re-emigrating person must have considered some of them important enough to take the risk. British legislation allowed only certain people to enter the country; many of the immigrants were therefore forced to leave their relatives in continental Europe. Re-joining the family should be considered the most important reason. Many Jews also tried to travel back to assist their friends or relatives in escaping the threat of the Nazi regime. Others decided to travel back because of homesick and an inability to fit into the new environment.

German-Jewish immigrants also travelled to the territories controlled by British authorities. Between 1933 and 1939 approximately 140 000 Jews arrived in Palestine by legal as well as illegal channels. Between 1933 and 1945, the United States of America took nearly a quarter of a million Jewish refugees from Nazi controlled areas, although migration to the States was not easy and in many cases the immigrants were rejected (London 2003: 12). During the interwar period numerous countries limited the number of immigrants allowed to enter their territory. In 1924 the US introduced the Immigration and Nationality Act, specifying the annual number of immigrants according to country of origin. The Act indicated that in 1939, 27 370 people from both Germany and Austria would be allowed to

gain visas and permission to stay (*Voyage of St Louis* 2014). The quota was quickly filled and waiting lists grew.

### Major British Projects

In the 1930s British authorities together with the non-governmental organisations carried out two major projects aimed at helping Jews oppressed by the Nazi regime in Europe. Both had a common goal, but differed in everything else. Chronologically, the first one started in 1933 and focused on adult Jewish inhabitants of Germany and Austria. Individuals eligible for help were mainly scientists, researchers, and artists, who were subject to the racist legislature of the Third Reich. The second, carried out from November 1938, was aimed at helping Jewish children—from infants up to seventeen-year-olds. Today it is known as the Kindertransports.

Today both of these programmes are recognised as exemplary actions which could have been carried out on a larger scale, but in 1930s they were often described as questionable or unnecessary. The discussion did not focus on the need for aid, but on its outcome. Adult migrants aroused the most suspicion. Unlike the children—considered harmless, innocent, and vulnerable—adults were seen as potentially impeding British economic growth by taking jobs designated for the British, misusing social care, or even (due to their German origins) posing a threat to Great Britain should war break out. Public opinion simply feared large numbers of immigrants with German cultural background, and this fear was strengthened by the Germanophobia of the late 1930s.

Those who decided to emigrate from Germany in the early 1930s were in a considerably more fortunate position. In the early years of the Nazi regime one could still emigrate with some money and other possessions. Passports obtained before the first legislative changes (not yet containing information on ethnic background) were also considered valid. This group consisted mainly of businessmen, artists, and scholars, people who managed to build up contacts and friendships which were helpful when they migrated. Those without private connections could obtain assistance from the Academic Assistance Council, later called the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL). The organisation later joined with the *Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland*.<sup>2</sup> The aim of the organisation was to help scientists and researchers oppressed for racial or political reasons; its funding was mostly based on individual donations (large sums came from British university teachers). The SPSL financed those who could be employed in Great Britain and provided all applicants with advisors responsible for finding job offers. If employment could not be found, the organisation asked research facilities to grant the immigrants hospitality and allow them to work in the laboratories, archives, and libraries of the facilities in question. Since the number of positions suitable for the immigrants was very limited, the SPSL tried to organise special lec-

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<sup>2</sup> The Emergency Association of German Scientists in Foreign Countries.

ture tours for its wards. They would be then granted a special six-month grant and sent with all necessary documents to visit a number of US universities. Lecturing gave them a chance to present themselves in America and increased the chances of finding employment there. The SPSL would also help them with all the paperwork required when emigrating across the Atlantic. The society's report states that out of over 2500 registered scholars, 601 were still living in Britain in 1946, 307 of them being of German descent. The vast majority of the rest—nearly 2000—moved to and worked in the US (Berghahn 2007: 77–78). These data of course show only partial statistics on the number of immigrants and contain only those registered by the SPSL.

This programme bears no particular name and was based on two general ideas. The first one referred to a “republic of science” (Ibid.: 79), an idea from the inter-war period claiming that science should be done without reference to geographical and political borders, and that the exchange of researchers, their ideas, and techniques should be a priority in scientific life. The second is believed to have originated in Winston Churchill's speech, recalled by Sir Ludwig Guttman<sup>3</sup> in an interview in the 1960s: “Since the Germans have thrown out their best scientists, we have made whole benefit of it.”<sup>4</sup>

The second programme, focusing on children, started after *Kristallnacht*. As a result of an appeal from the British Refugee Committee, on November 9, 1938, a debate influenced by the events of *Kristallnacht* took place in the House of Commons. By then, the authorities had already refused 10 000 Jewish children entry to Palestine.<sup>5</sup> The discussion led to a new agreement, according to which an unspecified number of Jewish children would be allowed to enter Great Britain itself.<sup>6</sup> The regulation stated that neither parents nor guardians were allowed to accompany the children, all of which had to be under the age of seventeen. Organisers of the programme also had to provide each child with a sum of £50—the money to be spent on re-emigration, once the situation in their home towns improved. All expenses were to be covered from private funds, be it from Jewish organisations, donations or private people willing to help. Between December 2, 1938 (when the first transport arrived at Harwich) and September 1, 1939, approximately 10 000 children made the trip to the British Isles.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Professor Sir Ludwig Guttman, born 1899, died 1980. Neurologist, founder of the Paralympic Games, emigrated to Great Britain in 1939, worked in Oxford.

<sup>4</sup> Britain and the Refugee Crisis 1933–1947 in Parkes Archive, University of Southampton, Sir Ludwig Guttman, Accession No 004596/03, p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Between 1918 and 1948 the territory was under the British mandate.

<sup>6</sup> Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team, *the Kindertransports*, <http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/holoprelude/kindertransport.html> (last accessed on: October 1, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *Kindertransport, 1938–1940*, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005260> (last accessed on: October 1, 2014).

Unlike the adult migrations, Kindertransports can be characterised as well organised and unified, with all the transports following the same pattern. They took place under the auspices of the Movement for the Care of Children, later renamed the Refugee Children's Movement (RCM). The rescue operation also involved World Jewish Relief<sup>8</sup>, a Jewish charitable organisation founded in 1933 to support Jews under the Nazi regime. British-based organisations were responsible for finding foster families, boarding schools, or orphanages willing to take care of the children. Then the information on the number of those with secured accommodations was sent to the authorities in Germany and Austria.<sup>9</sup> People connected with local charity organisations, synagogues, and Jewish communities created lists of families seeking a way to send their children abroad. Those who had relatives willing to help were given priority, later the lists focused on the families of the oppressed Jews—for example those already arrested or suspected of political engagement who could be interned at any time. Next to be enlisted were children from poorer families and orphanages. Children were submitted by their parents, guardians, or community representatives, who visited the families to explain the idea of the project. When the list was closed, the RCM would arrange a train, which would take children from the listed cities on a specified day. They would then travel to one of the German ports, where—after going through border control—they would be allowed to board a ship leaving to England. On arrival in London (most of the Kindertransports arrived at the Liverpool Street station), children travelled to their new places of residence. However, the transports could not exceed the number of the children for whom support would be provided.

Soon it became apparent that the numbers of those willing to travel were greater than the number of places secured for the refugees. Jewish organisations in Britain focused then on opening new places designed to take only children—Jewish schools and orphanages were opened, many foster families were enlisted, often without proper control over who was volunteering to become a guardian. The haste and high number of minor immigrants complicated the course of the project. Soon it became clear that many children were in fact kept in good conditions, but cases of abuse or mistreatment were not isolated (Leverton & Lowensohn 2003). Approximately one-third of the children were placed in Christian homes. An unknown number was denied their identity, baptised and simply brought up as Christian British (Endelman 2002: 215). Many changed locations multiple times, unable to fit in.

The Kindertransports project was intended from the very beginning to provide a limited stay in Great Britain for the participating children. It was believed they would be shortly going back home, as soon as the situation of their parents improved and it would be once again safe for them to reunite with their guardians.

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<sup>8</sup> Formerly known as the Central British Fund for Germany Jewry.

<sup>9</sup> Some transports were also organised from Czechoslovakia, the free city of Gdańsk and Poland.

Due to their age, the chances of them entering the labour market were considered nil. They were also supposed to stay in the care of Jewish organisations, Jewish orphanages, foster families, or in some cases relatives. Because of that they were not seen as a threat to the social care system. Moreover, after living for some time in Great Britain, they were expected to become well acquainted with British culture and later (after the fall of the regime) to serve as links connecting both countries in cultural, political, or even diplomatic ways.

The number of immigrants arriving in Great Britain by other channels remains unclear. Nonetheless it is well known that there were numerous cases of German Jews arriving in the British Isles by other means. There was a reasonably large number of women employed as domestic help; other people claimed to have (actually fictitious) relatives in British cities. The stories of these people are no less interesting than those of the people arriving as part of the erstwhile projects, and most of the issues discussed in the further part of the article apply to them as well.

### **Cultural Otherness**

German-Jewish immigrants of all ages faced the issue of cultural otherness, homesickness and alienation. Such feelings are common among immigrants across the globe, but German-Jewish immigrants at the times of Nazi regime shared a specific kind of alienation.<sup>10</sup>

They came from the country with which Great Britain found itself at war, and although their experiences differed greatly, some aspects remained common. Most of them spoke no, or very limited, English upon arrival. They shared the joy of being away from the war and Nazi ideology, as well as the feeling of alienation in a country with different culture. Both groups dealt with the problems in different ways, and both faced different threats.

It is thought that the children found it easier to overcome these difficulties. All of them, whether living with their relatives, foster families, or in boarding schools, had to learn the language. They were expected to continue their education in British schools, and were frequently placed in classes with their British peers. The teachers, even if they spoke German, were supposed to use only English in classes. Memoirs and letters written by Kindertransport children (Leverton & Lowensohn 2003) clearly show that for them knowledge of English was a method of communication—something they had to learn quickly, to be able to state their needs or fears. It came easier to the younger children; those who were in their teens recall it as being harder. The speed of learning also depended on the environment—those who stayed in orphanages or boarding schools with other Jewish children usually needed more time to master the language. Those who did not have any connection with Yiddish or German learned faster. The accent was not something of great importance. Most of the children acquired the accent easily; some of them

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<sup>10</sup> The issue is discussed in a further part of the article.

even recalled feeling awkward after meeting with their relatives, who did not stand a chance of mastering it. That was the case of a girl whose mother managed to leave Germany in the summer of 1939, and was later employed at the school where the girl was a pupil: “I was very embarrassed (...) about her accent” (Berghahn 2007: 114). However, many of the children focused on a different issue—their appearance, often described by their peers as “exotic”. In fact their appearance did not differ in a significant way, often it did not differ at all, but the remarks had a stronger influence than logical argument or even seeing a mirror reflection. The “exotic” look was supposed to refer to the exotic origin of Jews, though none of the features could be in fact considered exotic.

The authorities organising the programme did not have enough resources to check on all of the foster families and lacked sufficient funds to make sure all of the children’s needs were met. Many of the young refugees recall that although their living conditions had improved compared to those they faced in Germany, they recognised themselves as poor compared to their British peers. There are known cases of Kindertransport children who felt they would abuse the kindness of their guardians if they asked for new clothes (they usually wore clothing already used by other children) or even for larger meals (Ibid.). They felt homesick and for many of them being sent away meant tearing them out of the world they knew and throwing them into the unknown. They usually needed more time than the adults to recover after the relocation, more time to acclimatise and build up confidence.

For the adults—participants in the first project described—language appears to have been one of the greatest problems. Few of the scholars employed by British universities knew the language well enough to give lectures or hold classes. Many had to devote their time to improving their language skills, as they had difficulties understanding questions their students would ask. However, an issue that seems to have been even more troublesome was accent. Interestingly, it played a much more significant role in the personal lives of refugees than in the professional. Some of the scientists and artists recall having problems when their new peers and colleagues learnt that they spoke with a German accent. The immigrants would often admit they were indeed German-Jewish, which led to hostility and suspicion. This type of incident seems more common in smaller cities and among the less educated British population; they also increased in frequency with the rise in support for Sir Oswald Mosley,<sup>11</sup> the British Union of Fascists and their ideals.

In September 1939 a new law was introduced, an act which many of the German-Jewish refugees recall as the biggest threat they had to face after the migration. The British government based its statements on a regulation introduced during WWI, which also existed as a draft during the interwar period. The act was called

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<sup>11</sup> Born 1896, died 1980, British politician, leader of the British fascist movement and member of parliament 1918–1924 and 1926–1931.

The Defence Regulation and existed as part of the Emergency Power Acts. It was divided into two sections, A and B, where A was supposed to be implemented as soon as the war started, and B at a later date to gain greater control over the civil residents of the Isles. The regulations empowered the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, stating the following: “If the Secretary of the State has reasonable cause to believe any person to be of hostile origin or associations, or to have been recently concerned in acts prejudicial to the public safety or the defence of the realm, or in the preparation or instigation of such acts, and that by reason thereof it is necessary to exercise control over him, he may have an order against that person directing that he be detained” (Farbey, Sharpe & Atrill 2011: 97). The Defence Regulation 18B empowered authorities to detain people, also allowing the police to arrest and intern those who could be charged with the offence. It applied to both the British and the immigrants. There was no time limit for the investigations, and therefore internment had no time limit as well. One could be imprisoned and interned without any actual allegations being made.

The regulation was in line with the fact that traditionally, during times of war, British authorities could apply the status of enemy alien<sup>12</sup> to any person from the countries with which the state found itself at war. Because of this, as soon as Great Britain declared war on Germany, all German citizens became enemy aliens (the same applied to Austrians and Italians). The status was official, although people not involved with the authorities did not have access to information about to whom it applied. Nonetheless immigrants who were willing to acculturate and assimilate, but who had this status applied to them, quickly understood that for the state they were not as welcomed as they thought they would be. This increased the feeling of rejection and alienation on a personal level and increased the problem of lost identity, described more widely below.

Shortly after the declaration of war Great Britain also introduced a curfew—aliens were not allowed outdoors after 10 pm. They also had to carry documents with them at all times, and present them whenever asked by the officers. Many of the scholars recall being stopped and checked at least once.

Those who underwent the naturalisation process were in a better situation, which, however, did not mean they could not be detained. To become naturalised, one had to be a resident for at least five years.<sup>13</sup> This meant that immigrants who came to Great Britain before 1934 either already underwent the process or could do so. Those who migrated at any later point of time had no legal grounds to apply for the naturalisation documents.

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<sup>12</sup> Immigrants from countries with which Great Britain found itself at war were given enemy alien status. Those who proved loyalty towards Great Britain after specific investigation, could gain friendly alien status. This meant one could avoid internment, apply for state positions and even join the army.

<sup>13</sup> Britain and the Refugee Crisis 1933–1947 in Parkes Archive, University of Southampton, Sir Hans Krebs, Accession No 004498/05, p. 31.

In September 1939 thousands of refugees tried to enrol for National Service. Many besieged the recruiting offices, government bodies and professional organisations to offer their services. The majority of them were turned down and given enemy alien status, increasing the feeling of rejection and leaving their future uncertain—they could have been deported at any time or allowed to stay in Great Britain and work as they wished. Because of their status they needed letters of recommendation and legal agreement to work for the state no matter what sort of service they applied for. Authorities asked the refugee organisations to create lists of the immigrants who were registered and known to various committees and departments. Then the applicants were to be listed as ‘known to be reliable’, ‘insufficiently known’, or ‘suspected of being unreliable’. Organisations shortly became overwhelmed by requests, and not having enough personnel to do a thorough job, they based their opinions on earlier information on the immigrants. Their statements were based on documents filed during the migration process, containing such information as political beliefs of the immigrants, their occupation, education, everyday problems, and social status before and after migration. Organisations cooperated with the Home Office and the police to gain dossiers on the refugees (Kapp & Mynatt 1997: 76–77). In the autumn of 1939 there were so many requests that it quickly became clear that one had to wait weeks if not months to receive full documentation and opinion. This also applied to the people already arrested or interned, who needed to wait in internment camps.

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Those who gained permission to work for the state were directed to various positions. Minors were usually forced to stay at home and continue their education, but those living in larger cities and not sent to the countryside<sup>14</sup> would often volunteer in fire brigades or other civil services. It was their duty to warn people of air raids, lead them to shelters, and help put out fires or search for the injured after air raids. Others helped in hospitals or factories supporting the defence industry (including production of uniforms, tents, bandages, or weaponry). Adults had more opportunities; some could join the army, others used their professional skills to help in other ways. Among the German-Jewish immigrants there were those who mastered several languages and could work as interpreters; there were also doctors, who were usually directed to military hospitals together with physiotherapists. Others were experts on military engineering, aviation, or even nutrition (who helped create rations for the troops).<sup>15</sup> Many of those whose professions were of

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<sup>14</sup> The Government Evacuation Scheme was created in 1938 and implemented by the Ministry of Health. It divided Great Britain into zones classified as reception, neutral and evacuation, and aimed at moving civilians away from endangered areas (large cities and military zones) to safer ground, mainly small towns and agricultural areas. The effectiveness of the plan was reduced by the government recognising other expenditure as more necessary. During WWII nearly 1.5 million people were evacuated, including approximately 15% of the children living in endangered areas.

<sup>15</sup> For more information see the Parkes Archive, *Britain and the Refugee Crisis 1933–1947*, University of Southampton in Great Britain.

no use to the army or authorities were sent away and told to support the country simply by fulfilling their everyday duties.

The immigrants could easily get into trouble with the uniformed services. Curfew was only one of the dangers, as the majority of arrests were made after denunciations from ordinary citizens or after being stopped by the police in public places. British society was clearly aware of the possibility of German spies working in the country, and after Nazi Germany became an enemy, many were on the lookout for people acting suspiciously. Speaking with a strong German accent could be cause enough for denunciation. Refugee organisations often advised immigrants not to read German newspapers in public, not to listen to German radio, and not to speak German (or Yiddish) in public places. Most of all they warned that one should never suggest that something was better in Germany than in England. In 1939 The Board of Deputies released a booklet titled *While You Are in England*, which would be given to any refugee entering Great Britain. It contained a list of things one should and should not do; it also explained that not following the instructions might lead to suspicion of being too close to Germany and its politics (Endelman 2002: 216). It was advisable to keep one's identity to oneself and carry the required documents at all times. Fear of Germany and negative attitudes towards it were visibly present among all classes of British society.

There were numerous internment camps spread across Great Britain. They differed in locations, restrictions, and living conditions. Their inhabitants, the internees, were usually of German, Austrian, or Italian origin, but there were also camps in which Britons favouring the Nazis would be isolated. These included the lower class as well as members of the aristocracy. The best known camps were located on the Isle of Man, first opened during WWI. There were camps at Knockaloe on the west coast, and smaller camps on the east coast in Douglas (parts of the city were simply cut off from the rest of the world and served as camps). Women and children accompanying internees were held near Port Erin and Port of St Mary in the south. British fascists and Italians were held at Peel<sup>16</sup>. There were many more camps, all quickly filling with the suspected and the sentenced. Most camps had very similar rules, but there are known cases of special treatment of some of the prisoners (especially the wealthy British). An internee could bring in one suitcase containing private belongings, but no sharp objects nor foreign language books were allowed. All letters and parcels had to go through censorship control before being delivered or sent, and visits were prohibited. An internee could leave the camp for interrogations or court hearings only.

It is estimated that by September 1939 there were approximately 70 000 enemy aliens living in Great Britain. About 65 000 of them were of German or Austrian origin, a vast number of them with Jewish roots. It is extremely hard to estimate how many of them had spent their time in the camps, but it is known that

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<sup>16</sup> Isle of Man homepage <http://www.isle-of-man.com> (last accessed on: September 1, 2014).

within six months of the beginning of the war, 60 000 were examined and either given friendly alien status or interned. By 1942 most of the aliens were released or shipped abroad, with Canada being the most popular destination. Public opinion did not pay much attention to the fate of the interned until July 1940, when the *Arandora Star* (a luxury liner used for internee transportation to Canada) was sunk by a German submarine taking down 146 German and 453 Italian prisoners (Atkins 2005: 86).

### Conclusion

The Jews of Britain gave newcomers a mixed welcome. Some became deeply involved in refugee work or took in Kindertransport children. Others remained unmoved and did not respond to calls for more funds, did not offer homes for unaccompanied children, and even trivialised the threat of Nazism. For the newcomers Great Britain was a place of numerous possibilities. There were already some active Jewish communities (mainly established in the nineteenth century), Jewish charitable organisations and authorities willing to consider helping the oppressed. Great Britain was also a gateway from which one could try to migrate even farther—to the United States, Australia, or South America.

Jewish organisations tried to help the oppressed German and Austrian Jewry in many ways. The two projects presented above are just a part of a wider aid effort, some parts of which were more, and others less, successful. However, it should be mentioned that actions such as the Kindertransports are unique and no other country can today claim to have done anything similar on such a scale. There are also many works discussing the outcome of both actions. The problems, which occurred after the outbreak of the war, went further than might have seemed at the beginning. Most of the scholars who came to Britain made their living in British institutions of science and learning. They supported Great Britain while it was at war with their home country, and the vast majority chose to stay in England after the war ended. Most of them, however, claimed that they never really felt British. This is a case of so-called 'lost identity', which touched them in a significant way. At the same time most of them came from assimilated families who acknowledged their Jewish roots, but were more German than Jewish in terms of culture and upbringing. In the 1930s they realised that their homeland rejected them and that they had lost the need for self-recognition as Germans, although they never gained a sense of being British. Only their children—and most of all their grandchildren—see themselves as British.<sup>17</sup>

All Kindertransport refugees share this feeling, but approach it in slightly different ways. Those who during their journey were old enough to realise the situation, tried to maintain their identity and remain Jewish. For them this was their link with their parents and relatives. For those who were too young to understand why

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<sup>17</sup> For more information see the Parkes Archive, Britain and the Refugee Crisis 1933–1947 collection.

they had been sent away, or even too young to remember their parents, a different problem arose. Some of them were brought up in the Jewish tradition, knowing who they were and what happened to them. Others lived with Christian families and there are known cases of children who were denied their Jewish heritage—they were adopted, baptised and brought up as British without any recognition of their history. The number of such cases remains unknown, but associations of Kindertransport children report on new members discovering their pasts every year. The vast majority of the children are the only members of their biological families to survive the holocaust. After the war, as they grew up, many of them felt British and thankful to the state, various organisations, and their guardians. They settled in Great Britain and recognise themselves as members of British society. However, in comparison to their peers of British origin, the group in general proves more flexible in terms of living conditions and sense of self. There are cases of children moving to Israel, the US, Canada or continental Europe for many reasons ranging from work possibilities to the search for one's roots and identity. Gideon Behrendt, one of the Kindertransport children who arrived to England in December 1938, and stayed in hostels in different parts of the country, made friends with three other boys. In his memoirs he wrote: "The four musketeers took different routes. David Goldberg settled in Edinburgh and, together with his lovely wife Ray, raised a wonderful family. Simon Issman went and made his home in New York and worked hard to establish himself (...) What has become of you, Walter Kohn? We have not heard of you in nearly fifty years (...) Myself? After serving in the army, I decided that once the war was over I would not be a refugee anymore and that what I needed most was a homeland. So I got myself a homeland, Israel" (Leverton & Lowensohn 2003: 31–32).

Both groups shared the experience of being rejected by a place they considered their homeland. It seems clear that adults and children looked upon that in different ways, although both groups had to deal with new environments and new situations. While the feeling of being different from their peers did not have any immediate effect on the youngsters, it did affect the adults. The possibility of denunciation, followed by possible arrest and internment, was a big threat. As an action it resulted in inquiries, questions about the past and extended separation from the world, which might even have resulted in job loss. It also made many of the immigrants consider British hospitality more critically and less unconditionally.

For the children the remarks on their otherness occurred over a longer time scale. Most of the Kindertransport children believed that they were in some way different from their peers and lived with that opinion for years. It did not support assimilation and acculturation and often became a long-lasting basis for feelings of rejection and abandonment. Mary Arnold, five years old on arrival to England, writes a lot about misfortune, abuse and rejection in her testimony. She faced hostility both at school and in her new home, where she felt treated more as home-help than anything else. Unlike the biological daughter of her foster family, she was

told to help in the kitchen and clean up the house, she was also denied correspondence with her mother or contact with the man sent to check on her by the Jewish Board of Refugees. In her testimony she recalls the teachers and her peers behaviour after she turned up at school knowing almost no English at all: “We started going to school (...) I was put at the back of the class as I couldn’t speak English very well, and the teacher gave me cards with drawings on and names at the bottom of the card. Nobody took much notice of me. One day after school, a boy started shouting and pointing his finger on me shouting ‘German Jew’. I didn’t know what he meant. I didn’t know what a German Jew was” (Leverton & Lowensohn 2003: 19). Irene Liron, a girl who arrived to London in May 1939, recalled the feeling of otherness and rejection in her memoirs. After bombings of London she was sent to Devon, and attended a local village school: “This school consisted of one large room with two teachers. I don’t know if I learned anything during that period, but I tried very much to ‘belong’ and not be different from the other children. I wasn’t very successful in that, as I was considered a German (they didn’t know what Jewish was) and as England was at war with Germany, it made things even more difficult for me. But what was the most difficult for me at this school was the weekly visits to the village church for prayers. My parents were traditional but not religious Jews, but all the same I felt that by going to church I was sinning. I pretended to pray, with the rest, listened to the vicar’s sermon, but it was terrible ordeal for me. Of course I know that if I had said one sentence, that I was Jewish and didn’t want to go to church, nobody could have made me—which just goes to show how foolish children are, because their one desire is not to be different” (Leverton & Lowensohn 2003: 198). Another example of a girl talking about otherness as well as ‘no longer being different’ could be Lenore Davies, who arrived to England at the age of thirteen. Soon after her arrival she was taken in by an Englishwoman (in her memoirs she does not mention the woman’s name). Years later she recalled differences in hers and her foster mother’s habits: “(...) my table manners were different, not wrong; my phraseology was poor, not impolite; my English general knowledge was limited, not stupid” (Leverton & Lowensohn 2003: 65). Lenore spent three weeks with the family and was then sent away to a hostel in South London where she joined a school. She wrote: “When war broke out, I was evacuated with my school. This time I was more experienced—I had seen it all before (...) Suddenly I was no longer different, everybody needed to be looked after also” (Ibid.).

Many of the children changed locations multiple times. Being separated from their parents and being forced to find their place in new environment played an important role in the flexibility they shared in their adult lives. Frequently they move and change places of residence, not only because it comes easily for them, but also because they rarely feel at home and (due to past events) treat society as something that might never fully accept them.

The cultural otherness played a more important role than the visual. It was the language barrier, the accent and the attachment to German culture, things difficult

to mark or hide. Most of the German-Jewish immigrants arriving in Great Britain in the 1930s were assimilated and acculturated, not traditional. They would not have side-locks or long beards, nor wear traditional clothes. They looked and acted like educated, promising German scholars. Of course, some of the children came from traditional families, but in their case it was the new environment that influenced them the most. Most of them rejected traditions for various reasons (with lack of family being the most important among them), assimilating and becoming simply Europeans. It was also at this point that the Anglo-Jewish community started to assimilate on a greater scale than ever before. In the early 1940s many refugees found employment, joining ranks with non-Jews against a common enemy. The war put an end to this migration and gave rise to the time of settling-in.

### Acknowledgements

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## Refugee Children's Movement, Ltd.

Telephone : MUSEUM 2900 Ext... 79...  
MUSEUM 6811.

Bloomsbury House,  
Bloomsbury Street,  
London, W.C.1.

**PLEASE QUOTE** RE VDZ/YH

4th October 1943.

Miss Rudkin,  
St. Hilary,  
367 Church Street,  
N.9.

Dear Miss Rudkin,

Re. Grete GLAUBER - 4882. b:6.5.30.

I was very pleased to see from the Welfare Report that the above named girl is so happy in your home and so well cared for in every respect. Our Welfare Worker reports that she is receiving no instruction in the Jewish religion. You will understand that we are very much concerned that the children under our care receive some form of religious instruction in order to keep them to the faith of their parents.

Would you, therefore, be kind enough to let me know whether I can assist you in any way in arranging religious instruction for the above named girl.

Yours sincerely,

*W. van der Zyl*

Dr. W. van der Zyl.

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..... LETTER TO OLIVE RUDKIN FROM THE REFUGEE CHILDREN'S MOVEMENT

50 ..... Jewish Museum London Archive, catalogue no. 1993.74.32.

**LUGGAGE LABEL FOR MARGIT FREUDENBERGOVA**

Jewish Museum London Archive, catalogue no. 2009.19.2. 51



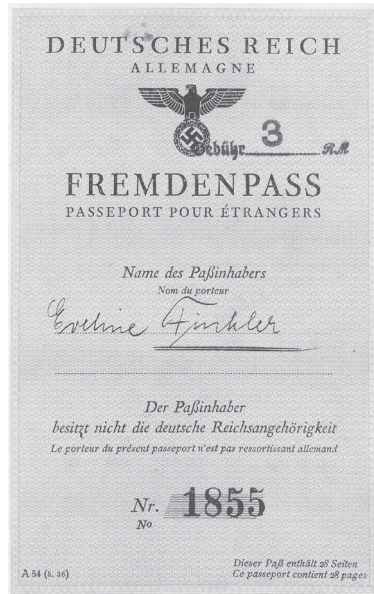
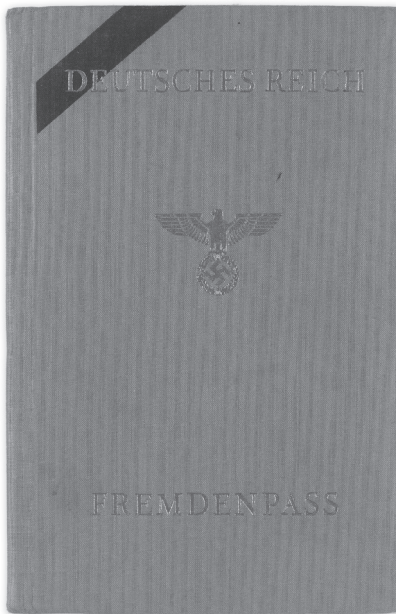
143



**GIRL WITH HER FOSTER FAMILY, 1939**

Jewish Museum London Archive, catalogue no. 371.1. 52

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**DEUTSCHES REICH 'FREMDENPASS' OF EVELYN FINKLER, 1939**

53 Jewish Museum London Archive, catalogue no. 1998.62.9.

PERSONENBESCHREIBUNG  
SIGNALEMENT

Staatsangehörigkeit: staarbo  
Nationalité:  
Beruf: Hochschülerin  
Profession:  
Geburtsort: Wien  
Lieu de naissance:  
Geburts-tag: 4. 4. 1930  
Date de naissance:  
Wohnsitz oder Aufenthaltsort: Wien  
Domicile ou résidence:

Gestalt: klein  
Taille:  
Gesicht: rund  
Visage:  
Farbe der Augen: grün  
Couleur des yeux:  
Farbe des Haares: sehr blond  
Couleur des cheveux:  
Besondere Kennzeichen: /  
Signes particuliers:

2



Unterschrift des Inhabers  
Signature du porteur

Pauline Finkler

3

GELTUNGSBEREICH / GELTUNGSDAUER  
VALIDITÉ DU PASSEPORT

Inland u.  
Der Paß gilt für Ausland  
Le passeport est valable pour

Der Paß wird ungültig mit Ablauf des  
Le passeport expire le  
14. Oktober 1939

falls er nicht verlängert wird.  
à moins de renouvellement.

Die Rückkehr nach Deutschland wird während der Geltungsdauer des Passes gestattet.  
Le retour en Allemagne est autorisé durant la validité du présent passeport.

Es wird hiermit bescheinigt, daß der Inhaber die durch das Lichtbild dargestellte Person ist und die darunter befindliche Unterschrift eigenhändig vollzogen hat.  
Le soussigné certifie, que la photographie et la signature apposées ci-contre sont bien celles du porteur.

Wien 14. Okt. 1938

Der Polizeipräsident in Wien  
Behörde / Autorité  
Unterschrift / Signature  
Finkler

\*) Der Inhaber unterliegt jedoch dem Sichtvermerkzwang.  
Toutefois le porteur est tenu à se procurer le visa d'entrée.

4

Nr. 256 Gebühr 20.00

Sichtvermerk  
für Finkler Pauline  
(Noms des titulaires)

zu ein- und zweifachen Wiedereinreise in das Reichsgebiet über jede amtlich zugelassene deutsche Grenzbergangsstelle die Grenzbergangsstelle(n).....

Der Sichtvermerk kann zum Grenzterritorium bis zum 14. 10. 1939 einmaltig benutzt werden.  
den 16. Nov. 1938

Der Polizeipräsident in Wien  
(Dienstort)  
H. C. Milanda  
(Unterschrift)

MANCHESTER CITY POLICE  
ALIEN'S REGISTRATION OFFICE.

Certificate No. 11/1442  
Date of issue 5/4/46.

## The Old Foe Again: The Pictorial Image of the Ruskie (*ryssä*) in the *Finnish Sports Journal* during the Winter War (1939–1940)

### Introduction

The Finnish ‘hatred of Ruskies’, in Finnish *ryssäviha*, is a traditional designation for a strong xenophobia towards everything Russian, which included deep suspicion and fear of Russian activities and aggression. During the Winter War (1939–1940) when the Soviet Red Army attacked Finland, it manifested as a desire to stop Russian onslaught, and ultimately, eliminate its presence as the ‘old Eastern foe’ (in Finnish: *idän vanha vainooja*) in order to secure the integrity and security of the Finnish nation in the future. In general, it could also surface in hostile attitudes towards the Russian form of government, irrespective of its nature, whether tsarist or Communist, and towards Russians as people (Vihavainen 2013).

Concerning the origins of the hatred and fear of Russians, there are two prevalent interpretations in vogue. The first one has it that the Finns and the Russians had been archenemies throughout history or at least since the Great Wrath (1712–1721), when during the Great Northern War the Russians occupied and ravaged Finland. Since then Finnish folklore and local history have carried with them the figure of the “violent, barbaric Russian” who had raped “virgin Finland” (Vilkuna 2005: 493–494, 531–533). This interpretation speaks against the earlier view, according to which there was no longer any particular enmity between Russian rule and the Finns in the long nineteenth century when Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire (1809–1917). For example, tsar Alexander II was greatly respected in Finland for his reform and language policies—his statue still dominates Senate Square in Helsinki. In his influential essays *Vihan veljistä valtiososialismiin* (‘From Brothers of Hatred to State Socialism’) Matti Klinge explains that the ‘hatred of Ruskies’ was a later phenomenon, disseminated during the Finnish Civil War (1918), when the juxtaposition between Finns and Russians was politicised and exacerbated by the extensive White Finn propaganda war against bolshevism (Klinge 1983: 57–112). Both interpretations hold because they deal with ideas in different classes of Finnish society, the former with the long-term peasant attitudes and collective memory, the latter with the ideology of the right-wing intellectuals of the 1920s–1930s. There was a tint of racialism in the attitudes of the intelligentsia too, as the Finns were occasionally warned against “blood-brotherhood”, Russian “racial” contamination, which had augmented the “Red rebellion” and would lead to perilous assimilation of the Finns to the Rus-

sians (Aho 1918: 7, 116–117). By positing such an ominous prospect, the divided nation—Whites vs. Reds, i.e. bourgeois vs. working-class—was to be reunited. After the Whites won the Civil War, the message that the main threat to Finnish integrity was now Communism was preached by the right-wing rear-guard radicalism of the Academic Karelia Society (*Akateeminen Karjala-Seura*), and in the late 1920s and early 1930s by the Lapua Movement (*Lapuanliike*) and the Patriotic Front (*Isänmaallinen Kansanliike*). These movements attracted young academics, clerics and independent peasantry, from Ostrobothnia, in particular.

Apart from historians, cultural anthropologists have also stumbled upon the fact that the Finnish collective memory still retains the image of Russia as a sort of eternal threat. It preoccupies the minds of the Finns, who have suspicions about the Russians who buy land and property in Finland, and of the foreign and security policy experts, who claim that the main purpose of Russian foreign policy towards Finland is to instigate a silent and constant threat and thus keep them out of NATO. Gallup International has also identified that 62% of Finns have negative views of Russians, the second highest number after the people of Kosovo<sup>1</sup>. It seems that during the crisis in Ukraine, these attitudes and suspicions have actualised, and are personified in the figure of President Putin. An opinion poll carried out by *Talouselämä* reports that 59% of Finns, mainly right-wing people, regard Putin as a threat to European political stability (published in daily newspaper *Keskisuomalainen*, May 31, 2014: 10).

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### The Pictorial Russian

The Finnish hatred and fear of ‘Ruskies’ came to the fore in many textual representations during the Winter War in newspapers, journals and novels. ‘Ruskie’ is a very derogatory stereotyping noun designating the Other that could never be domesticated, standing beyond history for the Finn. During the Winter War Ruskies were not regarded as an army of trained soldiers with military virtues but as a demoralised and disorganised horde of Asiatic barbarians who attacked senselessly and wildly, without understanding of the rules of modern warfare. The Finns were seen as the reverse of this image, defending not only their own country but also Western civilization and its foundational, mainly conservative but also democratic, values (freedom, i.e. Finnish independence, the sanctity of private property, Christianity, chastity, democracy and civic virtue) against the onslaught of the barbarian East. The Winter War brought the juxtaposition of Western Finns and Eastern Russians to its critical, breaking point. For example, interviews with soldiers from the Eastern front confirmed that the “hatred of the Ruskie had reached limitless proportions” (*Suomen Urheilulehti* (‘Finnish Sports Journal’), January 4, 1940), meaning that the Finns were now fighting mercilessly for their survival (Halmesvirta 2014: passim).

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<sup>1</sup> See: ‘Ryssäviha’, Wikipedia (last accessed on: February 24, 2014).

Because of wartime censorship which forbade extreme pictorial expressions of opinion and attitudes, the Russian soldiers could not be shown in figures and cartoons in the same aggressive way as they were depicted in the texts, but in a rather humorous, satirical way: they could be ridiculed for stupidity and various, real or imagined, weaknesses and failings. Many jokes were also connected to the image of the Ruskies, for example, in the last phase of the war it was said that they had at last learned to ski but their feet had to be nailed onto the skis (*Suomen Urheilulehti*, February 15, 1940). Or he could be used as of an object of a lesson, as in illustrations asking “please, do not give away anything that might help the enemy” in which he was shown as a devious spy listening to street-talk. In any case, he was not shown as a typically Slavic *Untermensch* as the Nazis showed him (cf. Kleemola, this volume). The humanity of the Russian was not expressly denied as hatred was buried in the illustrations under humour.

The pictorial examples come from *Suomen Urheilulehti*, which was in comparison with daily newspapers and regular journals quite straightforward in its textual and pictorial representations of the Ruskie (for example “The unsportsmanlike Ruskies hit us below the belt”)<sup>2</sup>. *Suomen Urheilulehti* has been chosen here for closer scrutiny because it has not been previously studied and contained a whole series (eight) of figures of Ruskies from January 1940 to March 1940. The cartoonist was Arnold Tigmann, who worked for the Finlandia news agency and drew the same series for the newspaper *Suomen Sosiaalidemokraatti* (‘Finnish Social Democrat’, Hänninen & Karjalainen 2014: 24–25). Being humorous or educational, they contradicted the aggressive textual message (Halmesvirta 2014). They were suitable entertainment especially for soldiers who were also sportsmen, serving on the Eastern front. In them hatred could not be shown and fear was couched in gestures of easy defence (Figs 55, 59), weakness (especially Fig. 57), sheer stupidity (especially Fig. 56) or childish playfulness of the adversary (especially Fig. 54). Some of the figures (especially Figs 58, 60) were not actually humorous but instructive and moral. In them the Russian was devious and the Finn clever. Figure 61 combines some of the elements appearing in other images and pinpoints the Russian essence and national character with the disgusting features of a female Ruskie (see detailed explanations below). This sort of humour was compensation for the ‘small’ Finns facing the attack of the mighty Soviet Union (cf. David vs. Goljat), and it was highlighted when the Finns realised that they could hold their ground. As Vesa Vares in his study of humorous essays in a leading daily newspaper, *Uusi Suomi* (‘New Finland’) has shown, the message of humour was supportive and stabilising, creating feelings of superiority for the Finns (Vares 2012: 59–61).

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<sup>2</sup> *Suomen Urheilulehti*, March 3, 1940.

## Explanations of the Figures

### *Figure 54*

In the first cartoon a Russian soldier has succeeded in capturing a field kitchen from the Finns and is happily salivating and shouting: “*A vot!* Now I’ll be promoted to the rank of the Provisions-Commissar” (*Suomen Urheilulehti*, January 1, 1940). The hidden message is that the Red Army was physically weak and undernourished because proper rations were not distributed, instead they were given vodka. Here one can see two soldiers saying ‘AAH!’, i.e. we are getting sufficient rations at last. In reality, the POWs the Finns captured were usually in quite bad shape physically and mentally. This was largely because Red Army provisions were inadequate in winter conditions and the Army had prepared for an easy and smooth victory. Although the Red Army had hundreds of tanks, the soldiers remained hungry and not so enthusiastic about winter warfare.

### *Figure 55*

The title of the caricature is: *Mr Molotov’s present nightmare* (Ibid.: January 2, 1940). When the Russians bombarded Helsinki, the Finnish air defence was very effective and the bombardment caused only some minor damage. The figure shows both Russian incompetence and carelessness and Finnish preparedness.

### *Figure 56*

Once more the field kitchen is in action (Ibid.: February 2, 1940). After fierce fighting on the northern front (at Suomussalmi), it was discovered that Russians ate almost everything they could find: in this cartoon they are shown cooking and eating washing powder (called “LUX”) after having robbed a food shop. The laughable consequences can readily be seen.

### *Figure 57*

This cartoon is very different from the others. There is a light touch of self-assured humour in it, showing Finnish soldiers marching to the front in regular formation while a Finnish street sweeper enigmatically asks: “Poland lasted only two weeks, I wonder how many weeks the Soviet Union can last?” (Ibid.: February 15, 1940). This optimistic question bordering on prophesy was obviously inspired by the Finnish success on the front at the time: the Red Army had suffered heavy losses in December 1939 and January 1940. One implication is that the Finnish soldier is the opposite of the Russian and is competent and gallant. It was calculated that one Finn equalled ten ‘Ruskies’, and one Finnish sportsman-soldier even more (Ibid.: February 1, 1940).

*Figure 58*

Here one sees yet another kind of Russian: a reconnaissance parachutist has been successfully dropped behind the lines in Finland to gather information (Ibid.: February 15, 1940). The caption reads: “Be aware, you are overheard!” Note: different but much-used stereotypic features of the Russian can be seen here: the Red Army cap and crooked smile.

*Figure 59*

Showing Russian incompetence and mercilessness (Ibid.: February 22, 1940). The boy says: “They make such a hell of a noise that even the fish flee!”, “Fishing boys are important bombing targets to the ‘Ruskie bastards’”. By starting the war, the Soviet Union disturbed the peaceful life of the Finns.

*Figure 60*

In this Figure a Russian reconnaissance parachutist is landing in Finland (Ibid.: February 29, 1940). The explanation says: “This happens to Russian parachute forces if every Finnish boy is vigilant”.

*Figure 61*

Last but not the least: in this larger figure a Russian woman is conducting the propaganda war against Finland (Ibid.: January 2, 1940).

She is *Moskovan Tiltu* (‘Tiltu of Moscow’), the main radio propagandist against the Finns, constantly irritating them with mockery and derision.<sup>3</sup> Her message painted Finland’s leadership as a “vicious and reactionary Fascist clique”, implying that it should be replaced by a Communist (Terijoki) leadership. In the world famous Finnish war novel *Tuntematon sotilas* (‘The Unknown Soldier’, 1952) by Väinö Linna, Tiltu shouts with a loudspeaker across the frontline: “Poor Finnish boys, surrender and come and get bread from us”, to which Finnish soldiers laughingly retort: “You dirty old hag, come and get butter on your bread”. In this cartoon she is depicted in rags and almost without teeth reading from the TASS ‘news’. She is also undernourished and really ugly—not the same kind of ugliness as the furious Russian female soldiers encountered in battle (also quite a humorous encounter). Notice that in the left corner Stalin is smiling; Tiltu’s propaganda work is well performed. The caption reads: “Horrible old hag!” and the explanation is: “Even the microphone is terrified of the canards [frogs] flowing out of her mouth”. This refers to official Russian propaganda, which said that the Soviet Union was constantly winning the war in spite of terrible losses in December 1939 and January 1940. Stalin’s plan had been to overrun Finland in two weeks.

<sup>3</sup> Who she might have been is unknown.

## Conclusion

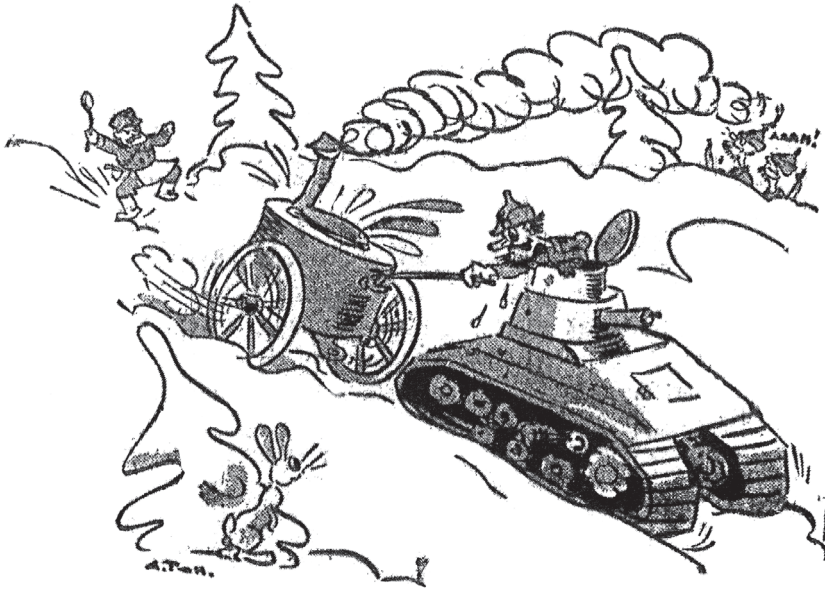
The dualism of aggressive texts vs. humorous figures remained in the *Suomen Urheilulehti* throughout the Winter War. By definition, a cartoon (*pilakuva* in Finnish) should be humorous, poking fun of its subject matter. How on earth could killing be depicted in a funny way? In addition, in *Suomen Urheilulehti* ridicule was regarded as the right and most efficient tool to lift the spirits of the soldiers on the front and satisfy the need to make Russians look both laughable and miserable. In contrast, whenever a Russian civilian featured in the texts, he/she was deemed to be innocent, misled by the regime. The message to kill as many Russian soldiers as possible was reserved for the editorials, special articles and letters from the front (Halmesvirta 2014: 40). For one reason or another, cartoons disappeared from the journal during the Continuation War.<sup>4</sup>

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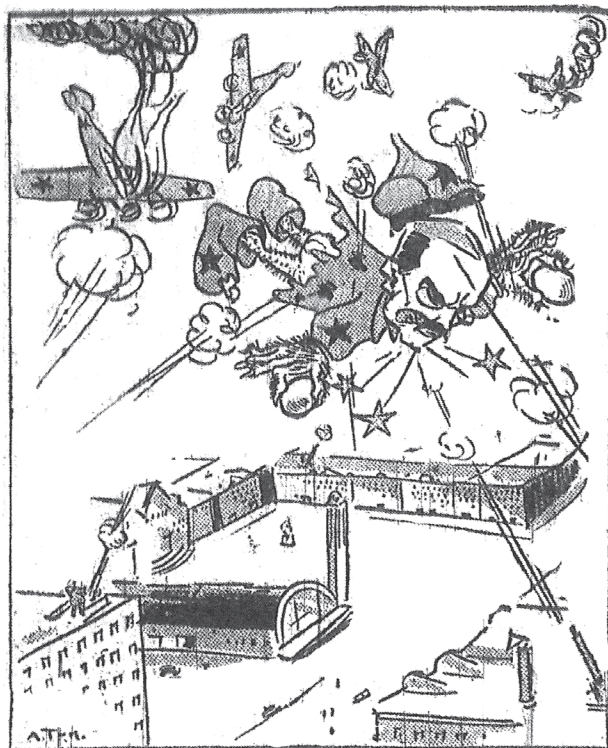
<sup>4</sup> On what happened to the image of the Russian during the Continuation War (1941–1944), see Kokkonen 2014: passim.



**A RUSSIAN SOLDIER HAS SUCCEEDED IN CAPTURING  
A FIELDKITCHEN FROM THE FINNS**

“A vot! Now I’ll be promoted to the rank of the Provisions-Commissar”

54 ..... A. Tigmann, *Suomen Urheilulehti*, 1940, January 1.

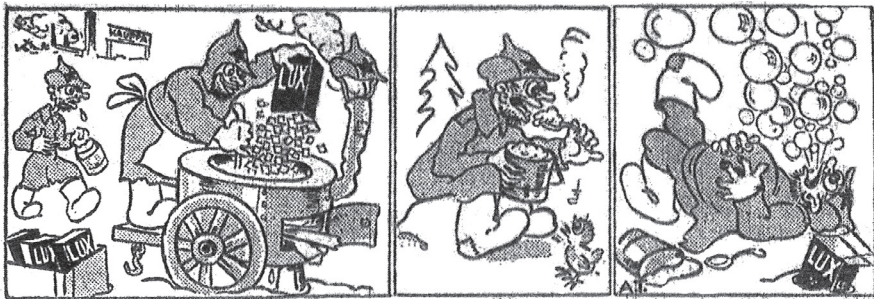


#### MR MOLOTOV'S PRESENT NIGHTMARE

When the Russians bombarded Helsinki, the Finnish airdefence was very effective and the bombardment caused only some minor damage. The figure shows both Russian incompetence and carelessness and Finnish preparedness.

A. Tigmann, *Suomen Urheilulehti*, 1940, January 2.

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**RUSSIANS COOKING AND EATING WASHING POWDER  
(CALLED "LUX") AFTER HAVING ROBBED A FOOD SHOP**

56 A. Tigmann, *Suomen Urheilulehti*, 1940, February 2.



**FINNISH SOLDIERS MARCHING TO THE FRONT**

“Poland lasted only two weeks, I wonder how many weeks the Soviet Union can last?”

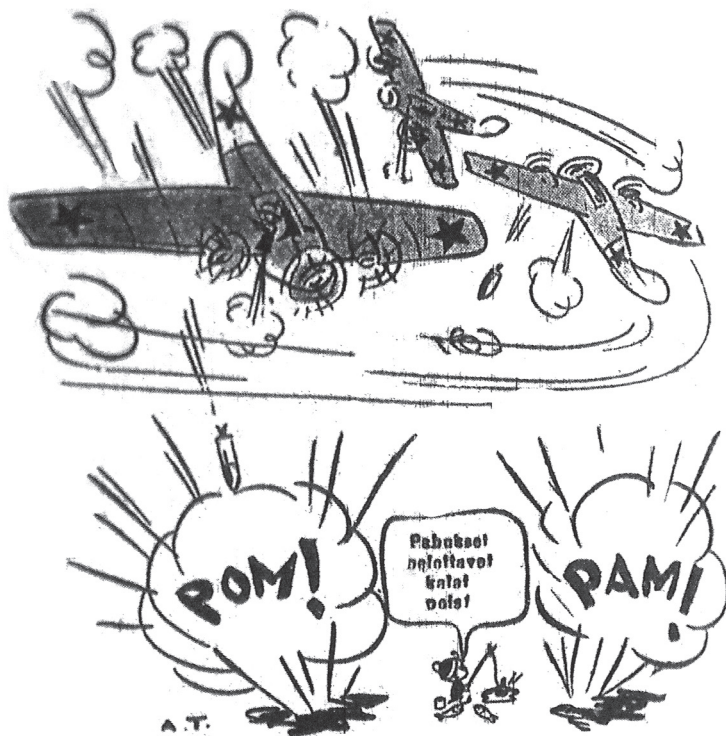
A. Tigmann, *Suomen Urheilulehti*, 1940, February 15.

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**BE AWARE, YOU ARE OVERHEARD!**

58 ..... A. Tigmann, *Suomen Urheilulehti*, 1940, February 15.



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**“FISHING BOYS ARE IMPORTANT BOMBING TARGETS  
TO THE ‘RUSKIE BASTARDS’”**

The boy says: “They make such a hell of a noise that even the fish flee!”

A. Tigmann, *Suomen Urheilulehti*, 1940, February 22.

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**THIS HAPPENS TO RUSSIAN RECONNAISSANCE PARACHUTISTS  
IF EVERY FINNISH BOY IS VIGILANT**

60 A. Tigmann, *Suomen Urheilulehti*, 1940, February 29.



**HORRIBLE OLD HAG!**

“Even the microphone is terrified of the canards [frogs] flowing out of her mouth”.

A. Tigmann, *Suomen Urheilulehti*, 1940, January 2.

## Soviet Prisoners of War in Finnish and German Propaganda Photography 1941–1944<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, I study the photographic material produced by German and Finnish propaganda units. By comparing Finnish and German materials, I seek to analyse the images of the enemy present in their propaganda photographs and the various ways in which these pictures were used as part of the war propaganda of both countries, and to create and strengthen enemy images. Although the main focus of this chapter is on the differences between Finnish and German visual propaganda, I also discuss the similarities between these same photographic materials. In general, the chapter seeks to discover general tendencies in the use of propaganda photographs in Finland and Germany from a comparative perspective. Comparing these propaganda materials is interesting because both countries were waging war against the Soviet Union, but doing so based on quite different premises. While textual propaganda and the images of the enemy it creates have already been studied rigorously in both countries (see, for example Luostarinen 1986; Pilke 2009; Pilke 2011; Volkmann 1994), a vast amount of photographic propaganda is still practically untouched.<sup>2</sup> This might be due to the fact that, to date, the vast majority of historians have been reluctant to use photo materials as primary sources. As David F. Crew put it: “Yet German historians have only recently begun to pay serious attention to the politics of images” (cited in Paul 2014).

Even though only few instructions about how prisoners of war (POWs) were to be photographed can be found in both countries, I expect the photo production of Finland and Germany to reflect different premises. Germany was fighting a racially motivated “war of extermination” that was defined by Adolf Hitler as follows: “We must get away from the idea of the camaraderie of soldiers. The communists are no comrades—neither before [the battle] nor after it. [The fight against the Soviet Union] will be a fight for extermination” (Hitler, March 30, 1941, cited in Streit 1997: 9). According to Heikki Luostarinen, the Finns were not fighting a racially motivated war and thus their propaganda was able to construct a more nuanced,

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is connected to my dissertation project “The Soviet Union in Finnish and German private and propaganda war photography 1941–1945”, in which I analyse the enemy image of the Soviet Union in Finnish and German propaganda and private photography.

<sup>2</sup> In his book *Visual History. Ein Studienbuch*, the German photo historian Gerhard Paul encourages historians to analyse the images of the enemy taken under National Socialism with the help of photo material because photos played a central role in national socialist propaganda (Paul 2006: 13–20). As I write this, Harriet Scharnberg is writing her doctoral thesis about the image of Jews in national socialist photography for the University of Halle in Germany.

less aggressive image of the enemy, which also enabled Finnish propaganda to describe the enemy as child-like and having comical features (Luostarinen 1986: 417–419; see also Halmesvirta, this volume).

### Research Questions, Material and Methods

WWII broke out in the autumn of 1939, when the National Socialist Germany had long been planning to produce and spread war propaganda. The *Wehrmacht* were the first armed forces in the world to set up special propaganda troops, *Propagandakompanien* (abbreviated as PK; Knightley 1975: 220–221), which were in charge of both domestic and foreign war propaganda. Until 1942, these troops were part of the signal corps. After having grown to a size of about 15 000 men, it became an independent branch, subordinate to the *Wehrmacht* and *Waffen-SS*, but also took orders from the Propaganda Ministry. No correspondents or photographers from any German magazines or newspapers were allowed at the front, and the press received all of its photographic, and a large amount of textual, war material from these *Propagandakompanien* (Uziel 2008: passim).

In the summer of 1941, when Finland—side by side with Germany—went to war against the Soviet Union, the Finnish Armed Forces set up their own propaganda troops. The Finns were given practically no training in producing propaganda, whereas the Germans had to attend special courses before they were released to the front. During these courses, the propaganda troops to be were taught, among other things, two topics that were certainly helpful when taking propaganda photographs: the basics of propaganda production, and the way that German photo censorship worked. While most Finnish propaganda troops did not necessarily have any expertise in the field of photography at all, the German propaganda corps was mostly either professional or amateur photographers (Major Gunnar Waselius's travel report from Germany 1942). Moreover, although the Finnish organisational structure was borrowed from Germany, the Finnish propaganda troops' tasks were more varied: while, according to the instructions given to the German propaganda corps they were only allowed to take purely propaganda photographs, the Finns' tasks even included ethnological photography in occupied areas (Major Gunnar Waselius's travel report from Germany 1942).<sup>3</sup>

The primary subject of this chapter is a set of propaganda photographs taken by Finnish and German propaganda troops featuring Soviet prisoners of war. The Finnish propaganda troops took approximately 150 000 photographs in total during the Continuation War (for general background information about the Continuation War, see Kinnunen & Kivimäki 2012). Approximately 1000–1500 of them show Soviet prisoners of war; the rest mainly depict Finnish soldiers and

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<sup>3</sup> While the task of the German Army's propaganda troops was indeed only to produce propaganda photographs, there certainly were other organisations in wartime Germany that were in charge of ethnological photography.

their equipment, as well as views of the occupied areas. The photos of POWs were mainly taken shortly after the beginning of the war, most likely due to the fact that the majority of the prisoners of war in Finnish captivity were captured during the so-called assault phase of the Continuation War, that is, during the summer or autumn of 1941, and thus the prisoners of war topic was of most interest at that time.

The photo archives of the Finnish Army survived the war almost completely intact, so these so-called TK photographs and their original captions are now accessible at the *SA-kuva-arkisto* (Finnish Wartime Photograph Archive) on the Internet ([www.sa-kuva.fi](http://www.sa-kuva.fi); on Finnish propaganda troops, see Perko 1974; on their photographs, see Paulaharju & Uosukainen 2000; Porkka 1983; Kleemola 2011; Pilke & Kleemola 2013).<sup>4</sup> During the war, the German propaganda photo archives consisted of up to 3 500 000 photographs. In the final phase of the war, the German Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, gave an order to destroy them. Fortunately, this order was disobeyed and approximately 1 500 000 photographs survived the war, 1 200 000 without captions. These photographs are stored in the *Bundesarchiv Bildarchiv* in Koblenz, Germany (Buchmann 1999: 29). The rest, approximately 300 000 photographs, belong to the archive of the German wartime photo agency, *Scherl Bilderdienst* (Hofmann 1993: 23–25). These PK photographs, also stored in the *Bundesarchiv*, are from all fronts of the Second World War.<sup>5</sup> Photographs from the eastern front compose a significant part of this material. Approximately 1500–2000 of them show Soviet prisoners of war. For this chapter, I have studied the photographic materials of both countries and chosen five visual themes to analyse. These five themes—photos of prisoners being captured, photos of large prisoner masses, photos of the good care the prisoners enjoyed, ‘type photos’, and photos of ‘comical enemies’—reflect in the best possible way the similarities and differences between Finnish and German propaganda photography. Other than these topics, there are only photos of prisoners of war working and of interrogations, both of which can be seen as snapshots with no clear propagandistic purpose, and thus of no interest to this study.

In addition to the photos found in the archives, I also study selected illustrated magazines from both countries in order to examine which kinds of pictures were published and which not. For the German section, I analyse three leading wartime illustrated magazines: *Die Wehrmacht* (the official army magazine, published biweekly from 1936 to September 1944), *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* (‘Berlin’s Illustrated Magazine’, the biggest illustrated magazine in wartime Germany, published weekly from 1892 to 1945; Stahr 2004: 81–83) and *Illustrierter Beobachter* (‘Illustrated Observer’, the official Nazi Party magazine, published weekly from 1928 to 1945). For the Finnish section, I analyse two leading illustrated maga-

<sup>4</sup> “TK” stands for *Tiedotuskomppania*, which translates literally as ‘information troops’.

<sup>5</sup> A small part, approximately 2000 photographs, is stored at the *Dokumentationszentrum des Österreichischen Widerstandes* (DÖW), in Vienna, Austria.

zines: *Suomen Kuvalehti* ('Finland's Illustrated Magazine', the leading illustrated magazine in wartime Finland, published from 1916 onwards) and *Hakkapeliitta*<sup>6</sup> (a military illustrated magazine owned by the Civic Guard Organisation, published weekly from 1926 to the autumn of 1944, when the Civic Guards were disbanded; Pilke 2012: 37).

Methodologically, my work draws on visual history, a concept introduced by the German historian Gerhard Paul in 2006. Visual history considers pictures as an independent category of sources that are capable of transferring meanings and ideological viewpoints. Photography and photographs have, until recently, seldom been studied in the field of history. Perhaps this is because of the special nature of the medium of photography: seemingly neutral, it captures moments and sights; but in reality, the pictures we take are formed in our heads long before the shutter closes. Thus, photographs can be considered products of the information, attitudes and prejudices the photographer has collected (Paul 2014).

The photographs analysed in this chapter are considered propaganda material created by state-controlled photographers in order to transfer and promote special meanings. In this respect, captions linked to the pictures play an important role. The captions not only affect the pictures' reception, but also create a mental context in which the picture is embedded (Sontag 2011: 104; Glasenapp 2012: 5). By analysing the captions, I attempt to reconstruct the context of the photos in order to reveal the desired propagandistic message.

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### Similarities of Depicting Prisoners

Both Finnish and German propaganda troops took a great deal of pictures of surrendering enemy soldiers and long lines of prisoners being brought to POW camps (see Figs 62<sup>7</sup> and 63<sup>8</sup>). Pictures of enemy soldiers being captured were often forged, because it would have been dangerous to try to photograph such scenes at the front. Pictures of captured enemies with their hands up and photos of large masses of defeated prisoners tell us little about how to see 'the enemy', but are instead to be seen as a visual proof of their own troops' success. Pictures of long rows of prisoners marching were also often taken in countries other than Finland and Germany (for example Frolov 2012: 82–83; Blank 2003: 81–85).

Pictures of surrendering enemy soldiers and masses of prisoners were published in all the Finnish and German magazines studied, although in Finland this was done only occasionally. In Germany, pictures of crowds of prisoners and surrendering enemies seem to have had a much more central role as they were published very frequently. During 1941 and 1942, some of these pictures even made their way

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<sup>6</sup> *Hakkapeliitta* refers to a historical term for a Finnish cavalryman who fought in the Thirty Years' War; it has no meaningful translation into other languages.

<sup>7</sup> Original caption: *Vankeja tuodaan Karhumäestä*. For translation here and after see captions below illustrations.

<sup>8</sup> Original caption: *5 venäläistä antautuu. Vas. alikersantti Hautalammi oik. Hermannin Pihlajamäki*.

onto the front covers (for example *Die Wehrmacht*, no. 23, 1941: cover; *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, no. 39, 1941: Flug zur Front; *Illustrierter Beobachter*, no. 5, 1942: *Sie hau'n den Teufel aus der Hölle*). Similar photos were also printed on German propaganda leaflets intended to convince enemy soldiers to surrender (Buchbender 1978: 72–75).

It seems that in Germany, photos of surrendering enemies and masses of enemies being transported were consistently used to imply victory, even though this victory had not been achieved in reality. Historian Christoph Hamann, who has studied the use of photos showing prisoners of war in German propaganda, states that old prejudices had created an image of the enemy as “Asian masses” ready to occupy Germany (2003: 18; for the role of “hordes” or “masses” in Finnish enemy images, see also Halmesvirta, this volume). Hamann further states that photos of large numbers of Soviet POWs were deliberately used to visualise the German triumph over these masses, especially at the beginning of the war (Ibid.). This is supported by the fact that in speeches given at this secret ministerial conference, Goebbels instructed the national press to highlight the large number of Soviet prisoners taken by the Germans (Boelcke 1989: 192).

In Finland, propaganda troops were given a general instruction at the beginning of the war to photograph “themes that would prove the cruelty and the big losses of the enemy” (Major Gunnar Waselius’s travel report from Germany 1942). Pictures of surrendering enemies and crowds of captives can no doubt be seen as containing such themes, but unlike in Germany, these pictures were not used systematically.

Both the German and Finnish archives also contain quite a few photos that show the good care being given to Red Army soldiers, as well as photos of Soviet soldiers and officers enjoying their stay in Finnish or German POW camps.<sup>9</sup> Figures 64<sup>10</sup> and 65<sup>11</sup> show two Finnish photos as examples.

In Figure 64, a wounded prisoner of war is lying on a bed while a nurse adjusts his bandages, and a man wearing a light Finnish army coat and a white cloak stands next to the nurse. There are several elements showing that conditions in the prison hospital are much more pleasant than those in the Red Army.

In Germany, photos of a similar style do exist (for example picture B15310 in the *Bundesarchiv*, collection Bild 183). The captions of the German photographs, however, often report that Soviet/Russian medical personnel are caring for the prisoners. This is because instructions given at the beginning of the attack on the Soviet Union stated that only captured Soviet medical personnel, bandages and

<sup>9</sup> Among the pictures in the Finnish wartime photo archive that show what good care was being taken of the prisoners, a total of three subcategories can be found: pictures of wounded prisoners who are being cared for, pictures of spare-time activities and pictures of happy prisoners. Because of the central role the comparative viewpoint plays in this chapter, I concentrate here only on the first category, because the latter types are practically missing in the German archives.

<sup>10</sup> Original caption: *Venäläistä vankia sidotaan llomantsin kenttäsaivraalassa.*

<sup>11</sup> Original caption: *Sotavankreja aterialla eräässä maatalossa. Ateria ja asema sama kuin rengeillä.*

drugs could be used to care for wounded prisoners of war (Streit 1997: 184). In Finland, captured medical personnel were also used to care for POWs, but Finnish personnel were also used (Pietola 2005: 83, 92; Sairila 2004: 175); and thus, the nationality of the nurses and doctors does not play any significant role in the captions of the Finnish propaganda photos.

In Figure 65, one can see prisoners eating at a Finnish farm. The central element in the picture is the food. The caption implies that the prisoners are treated as equal to Finnish workers on the farm, and that they are given enough food as long as they keep working. In Germany, there are also pictures showing that Soviet prisoners are given food, because the Germans also wanted to signal that the prisoners were treated well. There is, however, one significant difference between the Finnish and German photos. In Finland, the prisoners were often sent to work on private farms. During the time prisoners spent there, they occasionally developed close relationships with the farm owners, becoming something near to a family member (Hokkanen 2004: 82). Meanwhile, in Germany, POWs were also used for farm work; but in contrast to Finland, the PK troops were not allowed to take photos on the home front. Most German propaganda pictures were thus taken in POW and transit camps, and they lack the familiar atmosphere present in Figure 65.

In both Finland and Germany, pictures of well-treated prisoners of war were primarily used in active propaganda against the enemy, to convince enemy troops to give up fighting and surrender. The Finns had been using photographs in their propaganda leaflets since the Winter War (1939–1940). Because photos were considered proof of reality among Soviet soldiers, the pictures of a familiar atmosphere on Finnish farms were effective propaganda weapons. A photo of the frozen corpse of a Soviet soldier was often printed on those leaflets as well, which provided a contrast to the more pleasant images. This signalled to the Soviets that they had a choice between good care in Finnish custody and death in the Finnish forests (Salminen & Suvanne 1989: 34–35). Ortwin Buchbender, who has analysed the Germans' active propaganda against the Soviet Union, states that photos of good care being taken of POWs were also used in German propaganda leaflets as evidence to disprove Soviet propaganda that the Germans would torture prisoners of war (1978: 64–65). Pictures of well-treated prisoners of war were used in Soviet visual propaganda as well (for example Frolov 2012: 186–187).

In addition to the propaganda meant for the enemy, the Finnish photos of well-cared-for prisoners might also have been intended for publication in foreign countries. It was stated in Finnish instructions concerning the treatment of POWs that prisoners should be treated humanely “to show that we are a cultured nation in all circumstances” (Pietola 2005: 68). These pictures might have been intended to show an external audience how well Soviet prisoners were being treated in Finland. There are, however, no sources to confirm the distribution of such pictures to foreign countries during the war and thus, this cannot be proved.

### The Main Differences: Racial and Humorous Propaganda Photos

Soon after the beginning of their attack on the Soviet Union, the German Minister of Propaganda demanded that the German press and propaganda troops should create clear visual comparisons to demonstrate the superiority of their race and lifestyle to the German people (Boelcke 1989: 183). From then on, visual comparisons were an essential part of German visual propaganda. One such topic was comparisons between Soviet and German soldiers, as shown in Figure 66<sup>12</sup>.

At the top of this photo collage, you can see a German soldier with a motorcycle. At the bottom, a group of soviet POWs are sitting on the ground. The collage is by no means self-explanatory; thus, the propagandistic caption is an important part of the desired message. Christoph Hamann states in his article about POWs in German propaganda photography: “With another uniform, the POW, now described as a ‘beast’ or an ‘animal’, could embody the desired characteristics of a strong-willed German soldier” (Hamann 2003: 17–18).

Such photo collages were occasionally published in *Illustrierter Beobachter* and *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, sometimes even on the front cover (for example *Illustrierter Beobachter*, no. 52, 1942). After the German defeat at the battle of Stalingrad, this kind of contrasting pair collage disappeared, most likely because from that point on the Germans tried to shift the focus of their propaganda from racial points of view to the common European battle against the Bolsheviks (Luostarinen 1986: 403–411).

The Finnish propaganda troops and magazines studied for this chapter neither constructed nor published such direct visual comparisons, presumably because the tone of Finnish propaganda was not based on racial ideology, even at the beginning of the war, as was the case in Germany; and thus the constructed image of the enemy was not so black and white (Ibid.: 417–419).

Another speciality of German propaganda troop photographs was the so-called *Typenbilder* (literally, ‘type photos’), as shown in Figure 67<sup>13</sup>. They were significantly more common in German propaganda than the photo collages described above.

*Typenbilder* are mostly portrait-type photos taken at close range so that the “racial characteristics” of their subjects would be easy to see, as in Figure 67. These

<sup>12</sup> Explanation to the photo: *Zwei Welten die ein Abgrund trennt. Willensstark, zielsicher und selbstbewusst ist der Soldat der Deutschen Wehrmacht. Er weiss, warum er kämpft und er weiss auch, dass ihm die Heimat alles das zur Verfügung stellt, was er für diesen Kampf benötigt. Was hat dagegen das Sowjet-Regime aus dem russischen Volk gemacht. Unsere Soldaten begegnen beim Kampf im Osten unter den Bolschewisten Typen, die an den Abschaum der Menschheit erinnern. Gemeine, brutale Gesichter sind es, rohe Gesellen, die zu jedem Verbrechen geneigt sind. Sie entsprechen ganz dem Land, aus dem sie kommen, das in der Verwahrlosung und Verelendung erstarrt ist.*

<sup>13</sup> Explanation to the photo: *Gestalten aus dem ‘Sowjet-Paradies’. In den Gefangenenlagern mehren sich jetzt die Verbrechertypen, wie wir sie aus den schlimmsten Zeiten der ‘Kommune’ in Erinnerung haben. Unter den Juden, die hier in Uniformen der Sowjet-Armee stecken, findet man zudem noch Typen, denen man ansieht, daß sie zwar zu allen Mordtaten fähig sind, im gegebenen Augenblick aber als Soldaten trotzdem versagen.— Rechts ein pockennarbiger Mongole, der würdig in die Reihen der Bolschewisten paßt.*

images served one propaganda purpose: to demonise the enemy and serve as embodiments of any negative characteristics associated with the enemy (Vuorinen 2012: passim), which would visually underline the superiority of both the German race and national socialist ideology. The prisoner photographed in Figure 67 is depicted as a symbol of the sub-humanity of the Soviets. If the caption is read closely enough, one will notice that it does not say anything about the crimes or murders this particular prisoner has committed, but instead says that he must be a criminal because all his kind are.

These *Typenbilder* were frequently published in all the German magazines studied for this chapter, except *Die Wehrmacht* (for example *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, no. 29, 1941: *Faces of the Soviet Army*; *Illustrierter Beobachter*, no. 11, 1943: cover). Surprisingly, even though the Finns did not have any German-like racial ideology, they also took photos that at first glance resemble those of the German propaganda troops, such as Figure 68<sup>14</sup>.

These photos, like the German ones, show one prisoner; but the captions in the Finnish photos are shorter and appear neutral: they do not comment on the appearance, race or character of the prisoner in any way, negative nor positive. Sometimes, they mention which race the prisoner belongs to; sometimes, they do not. These pictures, even though they resemble the *Typenbilder* at first glance, are generally not taken at such close range. This might be because Finnish propaganda was not, as already mentioned, based on a racial way of thinking as German propaganda was.

Because the concept of race did not play as important a role in Finnish society as it did in German, it is puzzling why Finnish propaganda troops took such pictures, even more so because they were only rarely published in the Finnish magazines studied (for example *Hakkapeliitta*, no. 29, 1941: *Meeting the first prisoners of this war*). This kind of photo was not mentioned in the instructions given to Finnish propaganda troops either. One possibility is that, because the Germans were seen as having top-of-the-line propaganda machinery and because Finnish propaganda troops had not received any training in propaganda photography (Major Gunnar Waselius's travel report from Germany 1942), they based their own work on that of their German colleagues, imitating their pictures.

Another possible reason for the Finnish 'type photos' is the great interest Finns had in the areas they had occupied in East Karelia. These areas were to be unified with the rest of the country after the war to form a so-called Greater Finland, which was to be inhabited by Finns and Karelians. The Finns did indeed have something that could be called a national, if not racial, policy. This, however, never reached the extreme levels of German racial ideology. There was never a plan to, for instance, exterminate people who were of the 'wrong' race. In short, Finnish

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<sup>14</sup> Original caption: *Aunuksesta saatuja vankeja.*

propaganda aimed more at integrating the ‘right’ races (Karelians and other Finnic races) than at discriminating against the ‘wrong’ ones.

The Finns hoped to find enough men of Finnic origin among their prisoners to take part in populating occupied East Karelia. Because of the interest in Finnic prisoners, all POWs were classified according to their nationality (Pimiä 2009: 215). Those of a Finnic nationality were then interviewed in order to collect information regarding their language and culture (Ibid.: 204–229). The Finnish *Typenbilder* might have been taken to visually document the prisoners who had been interviewed. I consider the last explanation for the *Typenbilder* improbable, however, because the photographs have not been captioned systematically, which would be considered a minimal requirement for scientific photo documentation. In most cases, the captions contain neither the name of the prisoner nor the race he belongs to. With regard to the fact that Finnish *Typenbilder* were taken in remarkable numbers shortly after the beginning of the war, I suppose them to have been taken in imitation of their German colleagues’ work.

In addition to the Finnish type photographs, another Finnish speciality was photos of captured Red Army soldiers who belonged to the Finnic nations, as in Figure 69<sup>15</sup>.

Figure 69 shows four prisoners sitting on the ground, looking into the camera. Despite the caption, only one of them is smiling. Pictures showing happy Finnic prisoners were occasionally published in Finnish magazines (for example *Hakkapeliitta*, no. 31, 1941: *Fighting their way through to Karelia’s singing lands*). Even though the Germans photographed quite a few civilians with Germanic origins in the occupied areas, no photos of POWs with German family ties are known. Due to the racially-founded enemy image present in German propaganda, photos of Germans serving the Red Army might simply have been so impossible a case for the national socialist propaganda machinery to handle that these photos did not pass censorship, if they existed at all.

As mentioned earlier, Luostarinen (who has analysed Finnish wartime textual propaganda) has stated that, due to the long common history of Finland and Russia, the Finnish enemy image was not absolutely negative: Finns could also see comical, childlike characteristics in Soviet soldiers (1986: 417–419; see also Vares 2012: passim; Halmesvirta, this volume). This humorous viewpoint was reflected in Finnish propaganda photographs too, as seen in Figure 70<sup>16</sup>.

Figure 70 shows two Soviet soldiers, one standing, playing an accordion next to a truck, the other sitting on the ground and listening. The photo is not self-explanatory. After reading the caption, it becomes clear how absurd playing an accordion is when one has just been taken prisoner. Such comical sights were completely

<sup>15</sup> Original caption: *Tytyväisiä ovat kaukaiset heimoveljemme, neljä tservissää, antauduttuaan meikäläisten vangiksi.*

<sup>16</sup> Original caption: *Ryssä on luonnon lapsi. 3 päivän helvetin jälkeen hän soittelee haitaria.*

unknown in German propaganda photography. Because of their racially-motivated propaganda, demonisation of the enemy was much more categorical in Germany than in Finland (for the role of humour in German war propaganda, see Alexander Kozintsev, this volume). Finland and Russia had a much longer common history as well—either as one state or as neighbours—which in turn makes it possible to notice such comical features (Kirves 2008: 38–42). The photos showing comical features of the Russians were, however, only taken in fairly small numbers at the beginning of the war and were not published in the Finnish magazines analysed. In the spring of 1942, Finnish propaganda troops were given an order to stop describing the enemy as ridiculous or pathetic, because the heavy losses that the Finns had suffered by then would otherwise have been difficult to explain if the enemy was described as clearly inferior (Kleemola 2011: 86). This instruction may have prohibited Finnish propaganda troops from taking further humorous photos.

### Visual Propaganda with Different Starting Points

Studying the photos of both countries showing prisoners of war indicated that there were indeed common themes in the photographic propaganda materials of Finland and Germany: the photographs of surrender, as well as the photos of well-treated prisoners and large crowds of captives, can be found in the photo archives of both countries. The differences between the Finnish and German photographic materials were, as expected, to be found in the pictures concerning race. The Germans aggressively propagated their racial policies visually, while the Finns were more careful in this respect. The photos common to both countries, intended for foreign and enemy propaganda, were those of well-treated prisoners and surrendering enemies as well as crowds of captives, while the photos concerning the racial and humorous aspects of the enemy image were mainly intended for domestic propaganda, and thus more strongly reflected the different ideologies of each country.

The analysis of wartime illustrated magazines showed that the German propaganda machinery had clear strategies that were consistently realised: propaganda troops produced the pictures that were needed for the time being, and magazines supported the construction of the enemy image with their picture choices (Hamann 2003: 18–22). Meanwhile, Finnish propaganda troops often produced pictures that were neither published in illustrated magazines nor used in propaganda leaflets. This may be because, in contrast to the German *Propagandakompanien*, Finnish propaganda troops had been given no special training in producing propaganda.

Common to both Finnish and German photo material is the fact that only quite small changes can be seen in the material. As mentioned previously, photos with humorous aspects disappeared from Finnish internal propaganda in the spring of 1942 as the propaganda troops were instructed to treat the enemy with more respect; and the visual counterparts typical of the German propaganda at the

beginning of the war disappeared after the defeat at Stalingrad; but, all in all, the photo propaganda does not actually reflect the changing situations during the war very well.

Of course, the cases analysed here only allow us to obtain a crude idea of what kind of visual strategies were used to describe ‘the enemy’ during WWII in Finland and Germany. Still, they show that even though Finnish and German propaganda photography has certain universal characteristics, they certainly differ from one another and also reflect the different points of view of both countries.

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**PRISONERS BEING BROUGHT FROM KARHUMÄKI** .....

Finnish propaganda photo taken by Tauno Norjavirta in 1941 (SA-kuva 66138). 62



**FIVE RUSSIANS SURRENDERING. ON THE LEFT CORPORAL HAUTALAMMI  
AND ON THE RIGHT HERMANNI PIHLAJAMÄKI**

63 ..... Finnish propaganda photo taken by Viljo Pietinen in 1941 in Uukuniemi (SA-kuva 37835).



**A WOUNDED RUSSIAN PRISONER BEING BANDAGED  
AT THE FIELD HOSPITAL OF ILOMANTSI**

A Finnish propaganda photo taken by Pekka Kyytinen in 1941 (SA-kuva 23826). 64

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**THE PRISONERS ARE EATING AT A FINNISH FARM WHERE THEY ARE WORKING. THE PRISONERS EAT THE SAME FOOD AS THE FINNISH WORKERS LIVING ON THIS FARM**

65 ..... A Finnish propaganda photo taken by Neittamo in 1941 (SA-kuva 36968).



Two worlds separated by an abyss. The soldier of the German Wehrmacht is strong-willed, confident and inerrant. He knows why he is fighting, and he also knows that the home front will deliver him everything he needs for fighting, but what has the Soviet regime made out of the Russian people? Our soldiers on the eastern front are confronted with fellows resembling the scum of the humanity. Brutal, wicked faces, brutal fellows ready for all kinds of crimes. They are suitable representatives of the land they come from—the Soviet Union is stuck in poverty and neglect.

A German propaganda photo taken by Funk and Zwiesel in July 1941 (Scherl—Dokumentationszentrum des Österreichischen Widerstandes (DÖW) 7190).



Fellows from the Soviet paradise. In the POW camps, the number of such criminal fellows who remind us of the worst times of the commune continuously increases. Among the Jews here in the uniform of the Red Army, there are fellows who are seemingly capable of any murder but still fail as soldiers. On the right hand side we see a pockmarked Mongol, a suitable representative of the Red Army.

67 ..... German propaganda photo collage taken by Schneider in 1941 (DÖW—7190).



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**PRISONERS [SIC] FROM THE ONEGA AREA** .....

A Finnish propaganda photo taken by Ovaskainen in 1941 (SA-kuva 44987). 68



**HAPPY DO THEY LOOK, FOUR SONS OF OUR FAR-AWAY KINDRED NATION,  
THE MARI PEOPLE, AFTER LETTING US CAPTURE THEM**

69 ..... A Finnish propaganda photo taken by Pohjanpalo in 1941 (SA-kuva 33625).



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**THE RUSKIES ARE CHILDREN OF NATURE—  
AFTER A 3-DAY HELL, HE PLAYS ACCORDION**

A Finnish propaganda photo taken by Nikulainen in 1941 (SA-kuva 44102).

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## The Other in the Perception of Latvians during World War II

The topic of WWII remains very important in Latvia, not so much in connection with public interest in the discovery of new facts or the search for new discourses in studies by historians, but because of the existence of two entirely different views on the topic in the Latvian public space, divided according to ethno-linguistic principle. One of these views has formed on the basis of statements in Soviet historiography, while the other may be characterised as a national perspective on the past of the state and the people. Publicly expressed mutual accusations contain certain borrowings from the ideological rhetoric of the totalitarian regimes of occupation in Latvia in the twentieth century, closely related to the processes of WWII. The war was a period when a cardinal shift in the views of Latvians can be identified, and according to research data (Apine 2007: 22; Boldāne 2012: 264; Dribins 2002: 91; Saleniece 2004: 44; Zellis 2012: 7; Ziemele 2001: 25 etc.) the views that appeared at this time or have arisen out of the modern assessment of this period are still on the agenda of Latvian society.

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Anthropologists Anthony Cohen and Nigel Rapport take the view that society is composed of and constituted by subjective individuals in interaction (1995: 12). The way we understand the world, talking and writing about it, is socially constructed (Freeman 1993: 198). Ethnic identity in this sense is a product of social construction based on the belief that its members are connected by natural ties, that they share a common culture, an idea (myth) of common origin and a common history. Each nation “has the necessary set of features”, which is designed by a single model, including not only an autonym, a common language and a common history associated with memory and fate, but also a traditional culture, mentality, ethical and aesthetic values, even taste and landscape, myths and heroes, sacred texts, etc. (Smith 1997: 30; Löfgren 1989: 9). Differences among ethnic groups are self-evident and accepted in society, but when these differences are highlighted and updated in the public space in various discourses and from different aspects, the question arises—why? In whose interest is it being done (Anttonen 1996: 17)? The intensity of information in both time and space can create an illusion that the message has a high index of confidence, and convert it into an individual personal experience (Pratkanis & Aronson 2001: 11).

Latvian self-perception (Boldāne 2012: 80–86)<sup>1</sup> consists of the following areas: work (mainly physical, symbol: a nation of farmers), culture (the native language, folklore, ethnography, the Song Festival etc., symbol: a nation that sings), history (the victim and aggressor scheme, in which Latvians were the victims, embedded in the collective narratives of history, symbol: a nation of orphans). Due to the Latvians' long-standing status as a minority, and in later times due to the importance for Latvians of behaviour specific to minorities, as well as because of institutional support (even in periods of occupation Latvian folksongs and the scheme of evaluating Latvian history through the prism of the victim (Latvians) and the aggressor (Germans or Russians) were used in school textbooks, cited in speeches by politicians etc.), the Latvian auto-stereotype has changed little since the second half of the nineteenth century. The author's study confirms the role of the Latvian auto-stereotype in the creation of hetero-stereotypes. When judging Others, essential criteria put forward are the person's Latvian language skill, the role in the history of their country and attitude towards the Latvian perspective on its history, as well as profession, traditions and customs that differ from the Latvian characteristics. Different social and physical appearances were also noted.

Analysis of the succession of Latvian ethnic images has led to the recognition that in different historical periods different symbols of the Latvians' self-identification have been more dominant. The symbol of the nation that sings dominated in the second part of the nineteenth century due to the necessity of demonstrating to the world that Latvians had their own ancient culture. Greater emphasis was placed on the nation of farmers symbol during the interwar period, influenced by the ideology of the authoritarian regime of Kārlis Ulmanis (1877–1942). And during WWII the motif of orphans was renewed and recalled in the minds of Latvians (it has retained its dominant position today).

Latvians are not unique in this regard, since a number of social science studies stress the importance of a historical consciousness seen as a social construction created by mutual interaction and communication among people and structured by language (Tajfel 1982: 42; Friedman 1992: 837–859; Bērks 1998: 30). Commemoration influences intergroup communication and participates in the creation of differences and ethnic boundaries between groups. In any case, the marking, building and crossing of boundaries is already a matter of politics (Kõresaar 2005: 45). Thus, it is important to stress that when we discuss public perceptions during the period of WWII, the presence of foreign powers and powerful propaganda mechanisms applied by them have to be taken into account.

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<sup>1</sup> While working on the doctoral thesis "Ethnic Stereotypes of the Latvians at the End of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Influence of Historical Factors" the author conducted field studies in all ethnographic regions of Latvia and in Riga. For the doctoral thesis the author used 117 interviews with Latvian respondents, which were correlated with printed source materials beginning with the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Propaganda: Mechanisms, Content and Form

In this article, the concept of propaganda is used to mean the systematic dissemination of information (disinformation) by a regime of occupation using recognisable schemes, symbols and codes, with the purpose of instilling a desired point of view and pattern of behaviour in local society. For propaganda to be effective, it must be institutionalised and should enjoy limited or absolute power over propaganda channels (Herman & Chomsky 2006).

In the occupied territories both Soviet and Nazi regimes used propaganda techniques they had already applied in their own states, adapting them to local conditions. The number of propaganda institutions in the arsenal of both occupying powers in itself indicates the importance of this field in communication with the local community (Table 1).<sup>2</sup>

Table 1. Propaganda authorities of the occupation regimes

Soviet	Nazi
All-Union Communist (Bolshevik) Party	Press and Education Division of the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (in Berlin)
USSR People's Commissariat	Propaganda Division of the Chief Commissar for the Reich in the Occupied Ostland territories
Central Committee of the Latvian Communist (Bolshevik) Party	Propaganda units of the General Commissar of Riga
Propaganda units of local departments of the Latvian Communist (Bolshevik) Party	Lower-level propagandists

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The network of propaganda institutions of both occupying powers extended from the central to local authorities. People who knew the local conditions and collaborators who had become recognised and esteemed personalities were used by both occupation regimes. For example, censorship of the official newspaper of the Nazi occupation period, *Tēvija* ('Fatherland'), was entrusted to a former Latvian citizen, the pro-Nazi Baltic German Ernst von Mensenkampff, who in the interwar period had been an editor of the magazine *Rigasches Rundschau*, published in Latvia (Zellis 2012: 61). He had returned to Latvia as *Sonderführer* of a propaganda unit (*Propagandastaffel*).

Studies on the regimes of occupation in Latvia (Stepens 2007; Zellis 2012; Oļehnovičs 2004; Kangeris 2007; Žvinklis 2004) confirm that almost all channels available at the time were used to disseminate information: printed publica-

<sup>2</sup> Table based on the following studies (Stepens 2007: 99–120; Zellis 2012: 47–100; Kangeris 2007: 190–218). The researchers of Nazi propaganda in Latvia distinguish several periods, based on the institutions that dominate in setting the tone of propaganda. Table 1 covers the period from December 1941 up to December 1943 (Zellis 2012: 50).

tions—newspapers, pamphlets and books; visual advertising—posters, photos and cartoons; artistic and documentary film; radio and even theatre shows and tours.

The printed media represented one of the most widely used and accessible means of obtaining information. Propaganda literature published in the territory of Latvia can be divided according to topic into: 1) anti-Semitic literature; 2) anti-Bolshevik literature; 3) anti-‘Anglo-American plutocracy’ oriented literature; 4) commercially residential propaganda literature (Zellis 2012: 136). One of the most popular books published in the frame of Nazi propaganda was *Baigais gads*<sup>3</sup> (‘The Year of Horror’), describing in an anti-Semitic and anti-Bolshevistic style the events in Latvia during the Soviet occupation of 1940/1941. Latvian bookshops and library bookshelves were profusely supplemented with brochures on the topic of anti-Semitism and anti-Bolshevism, prepared by central and local propaganda institutions such as the Anti-Semitic Institute in Latvia (Kangeris 2007: 204, 213), although public demand for them was not high (Zellis 2012: 140). A popular work was the compilation of political cartoons entitled *Trijotne* (‘Threesome’) by Ernests Rirdāns (1942). During the Soviet and Nazi occupations both the official press, namely *Cīņa*<sup>4</sup> (‘The Struggle’) and *Tēvija*<sup>5</sup> (‘The Fatherland’), and the regional press were subject to censorship. In addition to press publications providing information during the Nazi occupation years, the humorous magazine *Humorists*<sup>6</sup> (‘The Humourist’) was published, bringing together jokes, satire, feuilletons and cartoons appropriate to the ideology of the time.

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Audio-visual media were recognised as constituting one of the most potent propaganda weapons. The milieu of the time is characterised by posters. Poster propaganda clearly manifested demonisation of the enemy: Bolshevism is represented as a skeleton or a beast, while the caricatured negative image of the Jew is intensified by using very dark colours. In actual fact, due to financial reasons, visual posters were rarely used, more common were textual posters repeating the slogans that could be read in newspapers (Zellis 2012: 147).

During the Nazi occupation the press intensively advertised the anti-Semitic Nazi films *Süss the Jew*<sup>7</sup> and *The Eternal Jew*,<sup>8</sup> both shown in Latvian cinemas in

<sup>3</sup> Kovaļevskis P. & Norītis O. et al (eds) *Baigais gads: attēlu un dokumentu krājums par boļševiku laiku Latvijā no 17. VI. 1940 līdz 1. VII. 1941* (The Year of Horror: Collection of Images and Documents on the Bolshevik Period in Latvia from June 17, 1940 until July 1, 1941). Rīga: Zelta ābele, 1942. The book was re-published in 1943.

<sup>4</sup> This daily newspaper as *central publication* of the Latvian Communist Party was officially published in Riga from June 22, 1940 until July 4, 1941. Circulation: 60 000 to 200 000 (Fligere 1995: 42–43).

<sup>5</sup> This daily newspaper, published in Riga from July 1, 1941 until April 29, 1945, became the unofficial voice of the Nazi occupation regime and had the greatest number of readers. Circulation: 280 000 (Fligere 1995: 125–126).

<sup>6</sup> Politically satirical magazine. Issued once a month. Circulation: 50 000 to 70 000 (Fligere 1995: 59).

<sup>7</sup> 1940, film directed by Veit Harlam; screened in Latvian cinemas from 1941 onwards (*Tēvija*, 1941, no. 21: 5).

<sup>8</sup> 1940, documentary film directed by Fritz Hippler; screened in Latvian cinemas from 1941 onwards (*Tēvija*, 1941, no. 61: 2).

1941; *Red Mist*,<sup>9</sup> made in Latvia, appeared on the screen in 1942. Many well-known photos were used in the creation of documentaries. Nazi propaganda also used such means of expression as exhibitions (for example, in 1944 an exhibition called the *Red Terror Show* was held in the building of the General Directorate of the Interior), and tours to the basements of the so-called 'Corner House', the former headquarters of the Soviet secret police, and local prison courtyards. Especially in the early stages of their rule the Nazis made extensive use of radio, in response to which the Soviet regime removed antennae and confiscated people's radios at the beginning of the war (Stepens 2007: 101).

The range of topics communicated by the two totalitarian regimes is very similar: explanation of the causes of war, glorification of the authorities, praise of the invincible army (the Red Army or the *Wehrmacht*), suppression of resistance/promotion of cooperation with the regime, criticism of the enemy's state system and social situation, criticism of the enemy's policy of conquest and the creation of an image of the enemy using the background of historical events. In the case of Nazi propaganda many of these statements were based on the argument that it was necessary to fight against Jews, Bolsheviks and Anglo-American plutocracy.

It should be noted that the two occupying powers used the rhetoric and symbols employed in the enemy's propaganda in their own propaganda, caricaturing them.

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### Changes in the Image of the Other in the Perception of Latvians

From the respondents' narrations as well as answers to direct questions it follows that the main sources of information and perspectives of local societies at the time were personal experience, *Tēvija*, *Baigais gads*, posters and excursions to the prison yards.

Every family had [the book] *Baigais gads*. (...) One didn't need to influence people's minds by means of *Baigais gads*, or *Tēvija*. You could go to [Riga] Central Prison and have a look; also at the corner of Stabu Street [in Riga] the Germans opened an exhibition, which one could go and see (E 74 310).<sup>10</sup>

When analysing the cartoons included in the newspaper *Tēvija*, scholars have stressed that the majority of these were published in the first years of the Nazi occupation regime because creation of a clear-cut image of the enemy was important in the initial period of the war. The importance of the cartoon for tuning public opinion was welcomed by the Nazi propagandists, who considered that it was "ideal for performing (...) the essential task of the era—it brings up, explains,

<sup>9</sup> 1942, documentary directed by Konstantin Tumili; screened in Latvian cinemas from 1942 onwards.

<sup>10</sup> M 1937 Limbaži. Here and below: the first letter symbolizes the respondent's gender, the figure is the year of birth of the respondent and the place name is the respondent's place of residence.

agitates, unmasks and accuses” (Erlahs 1941). Studies of the role of caricatures in Nazi propaganda reveal that among other subjects, four were paramount: 1) people obliged to the liberators; 2) people participating in liberation; 3) the presentation and derision of the enemy’s characteristic features, personification of the enemy; 4) humorous and satirical illustrations of the information presented; illustrations with a nondescript subject (Oļehnovičs 2004: 34). Most of the caricatures published in *Tēvija* were created by the Latvian artists Ernests Rirdāns (1901–1954) and Reinis Birzgalis (1907–1990), although there were also some re-prints from the German newspapers *Interpress* and *Die Lustige Blätter* as well as the *Orbis-Photo-Osträum-Bilderdienst* agency.

Based on analysis of the narratives of 49 interviewees belonging to the oldest generation in the context of WWII, Others can be divided into three groups: 1) Jews as aggressors, Bolsheviks and victims of the Holocaust; 2) Russians as Red Army soldiers and Bolsheviks; 3) Germans as *Wehrmacht* soldiers and liberators.

### The Jews

The narratives of respondents belonging to the oldest generation reveal a shift in their attitude towards Jews. Apart from the stories from the interwar period about Jews as merchants and traders, craftsmen and pharmacists etc. united with Latvians by ties of honest economic cooperation, in the respondents’ descriptions of the situation during WWII the image of the Jew obtains novel features. The Jews have been become part of the Latvian narrative about the nation’s history, taking on the roles of aggressors (Fig. 71) or supporters of the Bolsheviks as aggressors (Fig. 72).

1940 and 1941 was a turning point [in Latvian-Jewish relations]. So it was! They were the main ones running about with those [red] flags (...) They greeted the ‘Russian’ army. It was also written everywhere. And they were the main secret policemen (E 74 256).<sup>11</sup>

The selected quotation reveals the source of the respondent’s concepts—“it was written everywhere”. One of the tasks of Nazi propaganda was the introduction of anti-Semitic statements into the consciousness of local society. The publishing of anti-Semitic texts, caricatures, photos and descriptions continued even after the physical destruction of the Latvian Jews in December 1941.<sup>12</sup> Anti-Semitism was not separated from other Nazi propaganda themes such as anti-Bolshevism and anti-Anglo-American plutocracy. In communication with Latvian society the promoters of Nazi propaganda generally exploited the topic of the crimes committed during the year of Soviet occupation, positioning the Jews and Russian Bolsheviks

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<sup>11</sup> F 1931 Riga.

<sup>12</sup> During the Holocaust, Latvia lost 68 000–70 000 Jewish citizens (Stranga 2008: 532; Dribins 2002: 91).

as aggressors and the Germans as liberators. For the Latvians, among whom everybody knew somebody who had been killed or sent to Siberia, this was emotionally a very difficult and sensitive subject. And this was an effective way of communicating to local society the idea of the absence of human traits among the Jews.

One of the most effective methods of shaping public opinion was through comparison, even juxtaposition of the Latvians and the Jews, used in such propaganda materials as the book *Baigais gads*, the documentary *Red Mist*, and others. The use of various artistic techniques, such as emotional descriptions of images recorded in photos, ironic captions to caricatures and the use of specific colour tones in order to highlight positive or negative features of the image, etc. gave the desired effect—that of allowing the killing of the Jews without arousing widespread public protest.

During the war, I remember there was a poster: a Jew drawn with a crooked nose, and a list of 20 points. I remember it went: “Who does not work but eats? The Jew. Who deceives my nation? The Jew.” This, too, had a kind of...It worked, the propaganda, it worked. It undermined the morals of the people... (E 74 289).<sup>13</sup>

In contrast to German caricatures, those drawn by Latvian artists characterised Jews mainly using the specific appearance of members of the Jewish community as archetypically established in European Christian culture: a hooked nose, black, curly hair, payots, traditional peculiarities of dress etc. (Oļehnovičs & Zellis 2005: 59). And this is how respondents describe the visual characteristic of Jews. The appearance of the Star of David and similar symbols in Latvian caricatures, observed in the second half of the Nazi occupation regime (*Humorists* 1944: 1), must be associated with the growing impact of propaganda.

### The Russians

The Russians are a neighbour nation of the Latvians and have been present in the eastern border area of Latvia for centuries. Sketching portraits of Russians in the reality of the interwar period Latvia, respondents emphasised the Russians' religion (Orthodox and Old Believer), their low level of education, their status as rural residents, their occupations and their appearance (beards, the men's long shirts tied around the waist etc.).

Talking about the first year of Soviet occupation, the respondents did not refer as much to the arrival of the Bolsheviks or the Red Army as they did to the arrival of Russians and the beginning of the 'Russian times'.<sup>14</sup> The appearance, posture

<sup>13</sup> M 1931 Ludza.

<sup>14</sup> The ethnonym *Russians*, as used by respondents, is conceptually broad. In one sense it refers to all the Russian-speaking residents of Latvia. Respondents also tend to substitute by *Russians* such terms as *communists*, *Bolsheviks*, *Soviet people*, *Red/Soviet Army soldiers* etc. Use of the Russian language by these groups can be regarded as the reason for the broad range of application of the ethnonym.

and behaviour of the Russian soldiers who crossed the Latvian border in 1940 differed significantly from that of the Latvian army soldiers and the *Wehrmacht* troops met subsequently.

On May 1, 1941 we went [on a march] to the stadium. (...) The Russian army went before us (...) the red flags (...). We walked and talked about how we could have fallen so low that we were going behind this kind of army?! They were ridiculous! Those long *gimnasterka* (military shirts) over the knees, the belts in the middle, those hats on their heads and the thing on the top. And the whole army—what they look like! (E 74 555).<sup>15</sup>

These perceived differences formed the image: untidy, inaccurate, inappropriately clothed, undisciplined, uneducated, violent and thievish.

In 1940, as soon the Russians came into Riga...“*Бей, ломай,—всё наше!*” (Beat, rob—all ours!)—was this the slogan of Lenin? “*Грабь награбленной!*” (Rob what has been robbed!). Such were the slogans of the ‘liberators’! (E 74 251).<sup>16</sup>

The second direction in which these interviewees spoke about the Russians in the context of the first year of Soviet occupation is irony about the mission embedded in this ideology—to liberate and bring culture. These are the same topics and images one could find on the pages of the official Nazi press. Both the appearance and behaviour of the newcomers and their belief that they were liberators and bringers of culture was not understood by the locals and led to resistance, which in the interviews took the form of ironic statements by the respondents, such as, the Russians ‘liberated’ the Latvian people from their state, their land, their culture and in many cases their lives. And this irony is frequently found in the caricatures in the press of the Nazi occupation period (Fig. 73). The interviews contain quotes from the rhetoric of Nazi propaganda discrediting the enemy—the Red Army soldiers. A few examples: soldiers of the invincible army racing away from the approaching German army (*Daugavpils Latviešu Avīze* (‘Daugavpils Latvians’ Newspaper), no. 25, 1941: 4). soldiers of the invincible army struggle against superior military might in the form of thousands of lice (Fig. 74), and the stupidity of the soldiers leading to tragic consequences (*Humorists*, no. 11, 1943: 3). In several of these images where Nazi propaganda caricatures the expressions and designations existing in the rhetoric of the Soviet authorities can be noted—“the invincible army”, “liberators” etc.

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<sup>15</sup> F 1922 Limbaži.

<sup>16</sup> M 1920 Daugavpils.

Up until 1942, alongside the figure of the Bolshevik Jew, Nazi propaganda also emphasised the role of the Russians in the events of the Year of Horror in Latvia. However, the situation at the front in Russia prompted a change in focus, and while Jewish Bolshevism remained absolute evil, Russians were presented as a nation that had to be liberated from this evil, visualised as a skeleton or beast. In the visual propaganda distributed in Latvia Russian appears as a collective farmer in rags, the fruits of his labour consumed by Jewish commissars (*Tēvija*, no. 53, 1941: 5), or as a comical-looking soldier (a *budenovka*,<sup>17</sup> with a shirt a few sizes too big etc.), or desperate person, forced to fight by the Soviet dictatorship (*Tēvija*, no. 30, 1941: 5). That, presumably, was due to the fact that Russians had lived in Latvia for centuries and for Latvian society ‘the Russian’ was not just a figure from a newspaper or a propaganda poster. Neither was the Russian community as secluded or visually or culturally different from that of the Jews. Demonisation of the image of the Russian would have achieved the opposite effect—distrust in news sources. Direct sources from the Nazi occupation period do not confirm that the attempt to implant the image cultivated at the beginning of the occupation of the Russian as enemy was successful. At the time, the Russians were not perceived as the Latvian’s own people either, but rather as a marginal group (Zellis 2012: 270).

Continuing this theme, it should be mentioned that during WWII in the Latvian public space the bear was a recognised symbol of the Russian people (*Tēvija*, no. 124, 1941: 2). The bear as a symbol of the Russians is also present in the interview material (E 74 256, 247 etc.).

When we thought about what awaits us, everyone preferred the Russian bear instead of the Black Knight (E 74 211).<sup>18</sup>

### The Germans

In the interwar period the Latvian attitude towards the Germans as a threat and an undesirable element of society was clearly visible—from the content of school textbooks to the pre-election rhetoric and the jubilation of 1939, when a large proportion of Latvian Germans left their homeland. Since the creation of Latvian national history in the second part of the nineteenth century, the Germans had been described as aggressors, whose symbol was the Black Knight. This symbol is incorporated into the book *Lāčplēsis* (1888) by Andrejs Pumpurs (1841–1908), considered a national epic, as well as the play *Fire and Night*, 1907 by Rainis (1865–1929), also significant to Latvians. The symbol of the Black Knight was often used during the interwar period, in pre-election rhetoric and visual advertising. This theme is also expertly woven into Soviet fear propaganda, which aimed to invite collabora-

<sup>17</sup> *Budenovka*—part of the Red Army uniform: a soft, woollen hat that covers the ears and neck; the hat has a peak and is decorated with a red star.

<sup>18</sup> F 1931 Riga.

tion with the Soviets and eliminate collaboration with the approaching Nazi regime (*Cīņa*, no. 134, 1941: 6). A knight on horseback, reminiscent of a character from a mask parade, is represented by two *Wehrmacht* soldiers. His approach brings hunger, terror, war and slavery.

Older people all remembered very well what the Germans had done in the First World War. The forces of Bermondts had also stolen and murdered, and had done all manner of villainies (...) If Soviet power had not been established and if [Soviet representatives] hadn't behaved the way they did and done such abominations—murdered, imprisoned and deported to Siberia, then we wouldn't have welcomed the Germans with flowers (...) but after the horrors perpetrated by the Soviet system, we indeed welcomed the Germans as liberators. Although after that we saw that it was nothing better (E 74 247).<sup>19</sup>

They [the Germans] were perhaps more polite. Intelligent, in any case. [The Russians] came in all violent, but these... But there was arrogance from one side and the other. [The arrogance] could certainly be felt (E 74 329).<sup>20</sup>

Due to the historical situation and through the efforts of Nazi propaganda the images of the Black Knight and the German baron were replaced by the image of the German soldier, who positively shines in comparison with the Red Army soldier in the background. This image is not present in caricatures, but can be found on posters (Fig. 75). In addition, in photographs of soldiers from both armies the visual superiority of the German soldier is clearly shown (thorough and accurate, corresponding to the image of the military, Fig. 76).

The Nazi propaganda focused on “liberation from Soviet tyranny”. A priority propaganda slogan was “The German Army—liberator” (Fig. 75). The same show that was staged by *Wehrmacht* propaganda in all the major cities of the Soviet Union was also staged in Riga. This show was filmed and photographed and later, during the occupation years, was tirelessly repeated to the Latvians. July 1<sup>st</sup> was declared a day of celebration in the calendar of the occupying regime, and as this day approached new posters appeared to explicitly express gratitude for liberation.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, we must first say that the huge propaganda machine, covering all channels, even such a form of interpersonal communication as rumours, inevitably made an impression on individual perceptions.

In the last six years before the country was occupied, an authoritarian system had existed in Latvia. The absence of the opportunities offered by democracy dis-

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<sup>19</sup> M 1927 Bauska.

<sup>20</sup> F 1935 Valmiera.

couraged people from making independent decisions and expressing their points of view publicly. Latvians had become observers. Despite their ideological differences, in their rhetoric both occupying powers presented the Latvians as a people who were to be freed. In the case of the Soviet occupying power Latvians would be saved from themselves (singling out a class in the search for an enemy). The Nazi occupation authorities came to rescue the Latvians from the danger approaching from the East, represented by the Jews and Bolsheviks. The Latvians were the ones being rescued, or the ones who, by obeying the law and contributing their work, had helped save themselves.

Changes in the ethnic Latvian perceptions of ethnic groups examined in the article took place directly as a result of Nazi propaganda efforts. Skilful use of the context of the situation and symbols, themes and images recognisable to the local community permitted the propagandists to speak an easily understood language. The intensity of propaganda in the period researched in this study is clearly visible in the narratives of the respondents, both in their direct stories about its influence and in the presence of expressions characteristic of Soviet and Nazi propaganda in their vocabulary.

The black and white perception of the world characteristic of totalitarian regimes highlighted categories such as ‘us’ and the Other, as well as the symbolic boundaries between them. Positioning themselves in the same category as the Latvians (‘we’), the propagandists created a situation in which the enemies of the Nazi regime—Jews, Bolsheviks and Anglo-American plutocracy—were shown to be Latvian enemies too, even if this did not always bring results. In order to discredit the image of the enemy, tools such as irony, caricature and dehumanisation were used, while such symbols as skeletons, monsters, lice and bears were the most frequently used for visualising the enemy.

A pronounced focus on the topic of the Year of Horror (still known today by the name *Baigais gads*, a name invented by Nazi propaganda) in communication with local society provided the basis for changing the view of the history of Latvia and the Latvians, presenting the Germans as liberators, the Jews as aggressors and the Russians as comic figures, dangerous because of their unpredictability.

By using ironic images and cartoons by Latvian artists, along with photographs presented in published sources, it has been possible in this article to identify a visualisation of some of the ethnic images given by respondents in interviews. The black-and-white worldview and the definition of absolute evil that characterised the propaganda of the occupying powers, including visual expressions of it, are not present in the respondents’ narratives.

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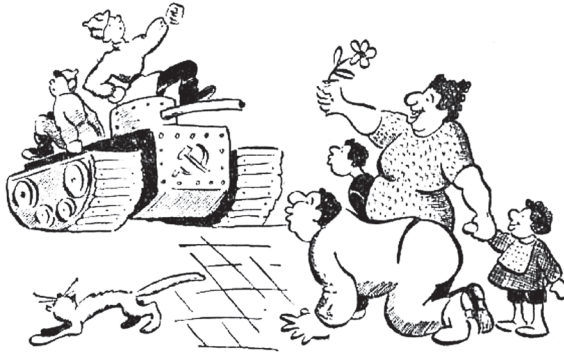
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72 "THE LATVIAN PEOPLE" TOOK TO THE STREETS  
AND CONGRATULATED THEIR LIBERATORS

R. Birzgalis, 1940, June 17, from the series "Īsais vēstures kurss"  
(A Short Course in History) in *Tēvija*, 1941, November 11.



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VITAMĪNS: "LIBERATORS". DURING THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION  
CELEBRATIONS, STALIN PROMISED TO SOON LIBERATE LATVIANS,  
ESTONIANS, LITHUANIANS AND OTHER NATIONS

Commissioner: "Is everyone liberated?"

KGB man: "All on the ground floor, but up there someone seems to be living still."

Commissioner: "Immediately liberate the upper floor!"

73 *Humorists*, November 1943 (A Short Course in History) in *Tēvija*, 1941, November 11.

Padomju Savienībā ieradies Ruzvelta vēstnieks Hopkins  
iepazīties ar sarkanarmiešu «grandiozajiem panākumiem»



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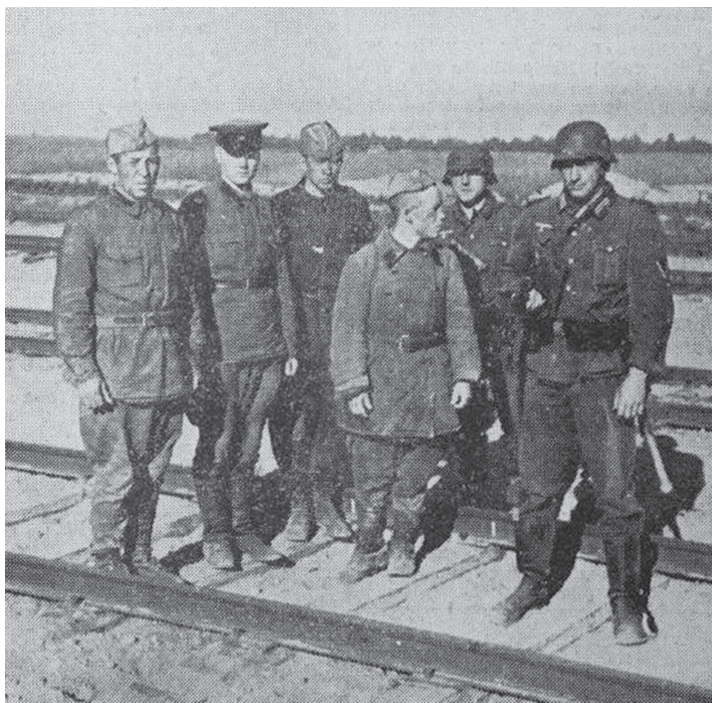
**“THE INVINCIBLE” AT WORK.**  
**ROOSEVELT’S AMBASSADOR HOPKINS HAS ARRIVED IN SOVIET UNION**  
**TO LEARN ABOUT THE “GRAND SUCCESS” OF THE RED ARMY**  
Stalin: “Look, comrade, how well we are doing—one is not afraid to face up to one hundred.”

*Tēvija*, 1941, August 6. 74



**TOWARDS A SHARED HAPPY FUTURE**

75 ..... Poster printed in 1942, NLL collection.



**SOLDIERS FROM THE GERMAN ARMY  
AND PRISONERS FROM THE RED ARMY**

*Tēvija*, 1941, July 12. 76

## Male War, Female War: The Image of Russians and the Soviet Union in Nazi Propaganda from 1941 to 1945

Caricature played a special role in WWII propaganda in Germany, as it was a useful and attractive tool with which to present information about political events. Cartoons were not only published in special satirical magazines, but also in newspapers directed towards representatives of all social classes, as well as both to males and females. The first half of the twentieth century was generally a time of increase in the number and popularity of journals in the Western world, and the rich tradition of German graphic political satire, derived from the mid-nineteenth century, made it obvious to the Nazis that they should use cartoons as a convenient vehicle for their message (Coupe 1998: 26).

The National Socialists put an end to the freedom of the press. Due to the Reich Editorial Law (October 1933), journal editors were instructed what to emphasise or play down, and even which words or expressions could be used and which should be omitted. As William Coupe states, “comment on home affairs was limited to cartoons of approbation, while satire was reserved for Germany’s real or imagined enemies” (Ibid.: 26).

Intended for the broad masses, whose intellectual capacity was—according to Hitler—very limited, understanding little and forgetting a lot, Nazi propaganda revealed this scorn for the memory and intelligence of people nowhere more evidently than during WWII, and thus especially in the attitude towards Soviet Russia (Ibid.: 28–29).

First, the German invasion of the Soviet Union was explained as being in fact a defensive war, not only against imperial Soviet politics and Bolshevism as a whole, but also against British and “Jewish conspiracy”, which were accused of being the real driving forces of the war (Dmitrów 1997: 253).<sup>1</sup> Secondly, anti-Soviet propaganda evolved in accordance to the changing situation on the Eastern front. Initially, it was filled with over-optimistic claims that the war with the Soviet Union would be a victorious *Blitzkrieg*, because the Russian army was in every respect inferior to the *Wehrmacht*. It was pointed out that the Russians were representatives of “Coolie and Fellaah races” and as such were long-suffering, diligent, and fertile, but that they were also an undemanding and submissive people (Zimmermann

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<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the ordinary Germans realised that the Nazi discourse about the defensive war was supposed to hide the real, invasive intentions towards the USSR (Dmitrów 1997: 244).

1933: 5–70), pre-determining them to be perfect slaves, but not soldiers.<sup>2</sup> The Nazis even claimed that the German conquest of the Soviet Union was a kind of favour to these people, because it liberated them from the horrors of life under the Bolshevik regime.<sup>3</sup> Surprisingly, both claims, about the Bolshevik threat and Russian passivity, did not interfere with each other. The USSR and the Russians, the representatives of inferior races, were supposed to be dangerous because, it was argued, the British government, together with Jewish Bolsheviks and capitalists, managed to convert them into an obedient tool and to embroil them in the anti-German plot (Schilling 1941).

Nevertheless, this discourse definitely shifted from the indoctrination of disdain to the indoctrination of fear after the Germans had been defeated at Stalingrad in 1943. It was then that the Nazis decided to proclaim total war against the Soviet ‘beasts’, and began to glorify the epic heroism of the German people, which could even lead to their noble death. It was said that only the full mobilisation of German resources, incorporating every citizen, could lead to victory over the USSR. Especially after 1944, when the Red Army began its march towards Berlin, Joseph Goebbels stepped up his efforts to convince everyone, including women and children, to join in the life-and-death, self-destructive struggle against the increasingly demonised “Jewish-Bolshevism” and the Russians, who, citizens were told, could commit the most perverse atrocities (Welch 1993: 106–107, 120, 124).

In addition to this propaganda, it should also be stated that male and female German citizens to a large extent were indoctrinated in different ways. This can be clearly recognised through the example of comments in magazines aimed at the general public and women on the same facts associated with the Soviet Union. According to the vast majority of the German press, the most important results of the outbreak and the course of the war with the Soviet empire were its political and military implications, while from the point of view of the women’s magazines such problems as the epic heroism of German soldiers longing for home were dominant. The editors of the general press mainly tended to create an image of the Soviet Union by using dehumanising, racial, obscene and anti-Semitic motifs, while the publishers of women’s magazines mainly exploited semi-compassionate discourses.

The aim of this paper is to analyse a variety of images depicting the Russians and the Soviet Union, using some selected Nazi newspapers from June 1941 to February 1945 as material for the study.<sup>4</sup> I am going to compare not only the content of the most representative ‘traditional’ German political-satirical magazines

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<sup>2</sup> A classic example of this type of propaganda is the book *Untermensch* (‘Subhuman’), edited by Heinrich Himmler in 1942, intended for SS soldiers who participated in ethnic cleansings in Eastern Europe.

<sup>3</sup> This issue was particularly highlighted in 1942, when an exhibition called “Soviet Paradise” was staged, which revealed the alleged inhumanity of the Soviets to their own people by showing “original” housing conditions in the USSR, torture chambers and corpses (Welch 1993: 103).

<sup>4</sup> The last issue of *Der Stürmer*, the periodical supported by the authorities for the longest period of time, was published in February 1945.

(*Kladderadatsch* ('Tumult') and *Simplicissimus* ('Simpleton')) and tabloid press (embodied by *Der Stürmer* ('The Attacker')), but also one of the most popular journals aimed at women (*NS-Frauen-Warte* ('National Socialist Women's Guard')).

What was specific in these newspapers? *Kladderadatsch* was the oldest German satirical journal<sup>5</sup>, which in the second half of the nineteenth century was extremely popular among the middle class. Nevertheless, after 1923 its politic sympathies began to evolve from conservative towards German Nationalist and Nazi. Eventually, in the early 1930s, the magazine fully supported Hitler's anti-Jewish and anti-social-democratic policies. *Simplicissimus*, on the contrary, was a liberal satirical magazine, combining brash and politically daring content with a bright, immediate, and modern graphic style. However, when Hitler came to power the editor Thomas Theodor Heine was forced to resign and the other members of the team toed the Nazi party line.<sup>6</sup>

*Der Stürmer*, on the other hand, was a weekly tabloid-format newspaper that became one of the most popular magazines during the Third Reich<sup>7</sup> and a central element of NSDAP propaganda. In contrast to the magazines mentioned, which were generally read by the middle-class and intellectuals, it was predominately directed towards labourers. Moreover, its vulgar style, combined with violent, sometimes pornographic content, directed first of all against the Jews, caused concern about the image of the party among many NSDAP members.<sup>8</sup>

All of these magazines were widely distributed throughout the parts of Europe conquered by the Third Reich, and were also available to German soldiers at the front. One of these newspapers, *Simplicissimus*, was also, during the WWII, published in Italian, which means that it functioned for Italian allies as well.

Finally, *NS-Frauen-Warte* was a biweekly (later monthly) illustrated journal, which in 1933 reached the status of the most popular German magazine for

<sup>5</sup> Published in Berlin from 1848 to 1944.

<sup>6</sup> Published in Munich from 1896 to 1967, with a hiatus between 1944 and 1954. The weekly circulation of *Kladderadatsch* was about 40 000 copies and of *Simplicissimus* about 85 000 copies in the interwar period.

<sup>7</sup> The journal was published in Nuremberg from 1923 to 1945 by Julius Streicher, a prominent NSDAP official. As Mark Bryant states, "by 1927 *Der Stürmer* was selling 14 000 copies a week, by 1934 circulation reached 100 000, and by 1935 it was almost up to 500 000" (2008: 60–61). In the second half of the 1930s the weekly circulation of the magazine was as much as 700 000 copies. After 1933 there were also nine special editions with print runs as high as two million copies (Liebel 2010: 55). Nevertheless, from 1940 the circulation of the magazine was reduced because of paper shortages (Bryant 2008: 61).

<sup>8</sup> The paper's motto was "The Jews are our misfortune" (*Die Juden sind unser Unglück*) and its major aim was to "storm the red fortress". Citing Bryant, "between August 1924 and March 1933 at least thirty-five issues were either banned, confiscated or barred from street sale for libeling public officials, leaking details of court cases, or for religious offences. Perhaps the most notorious was the 'ritual murder' special issue of 1934—claiming that Jews murdered people and drank their blood—which (...) led to international protests" (2008: 61). During the Olympic games in Berlin in 1936, the sale of *Der Stürmer* was restricted because of foreign visitors (Liebel 2010: 57–60).

women.<sup>9</sup> It was the only journal for women that was party approved and the only one containing information on foreign politics (Kramer 2011: 37). On the other hand, in contrast to some more progressive journals for women, it promoted an entirely traditional image of German females, that is, the image of mother and housewife.

The thesis I would like to prove is that the visions of the USSR, spread over the pages of Nazi general and women's magazines, embodied in fact parallel realities. Furthermore, I intend to provide evidence that both types of journals tended to frame the image of the Soviets by projecting on the Eastern significant Other certain traits which could be described as parts of the German collective unconscious, that is, opposite to the core values appreciated in German society.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, I am going to explain why the editors of the Nazi press used different methods to indoctrinate German male and female citizens. The thesis I will try to prove is that this situation can be derived as well from Nazi ideology concerning the social roles of males and females, as from the specificity of particular types of magazines, which evolved from the expectations of West European and American readers in the second half of the nineteenth century. I suppose that it was the long lasting social convention that had a great impact on who read the particular types of newspaper, and that it was the rules of the genre that dictated the way of presenting (or the fact of not presenting at all) the information about foreign countries (for example the Soviet Union) in different types of magazine.

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Because satirical magazines used to contain anti-feminist and erotic motifs, as well as political motifs, and because the German (and other West European) women tended to perceive the political sphere as a field of male interest and activity, it can be assumed that satirical newspapers were generally neither aimed at women, nor read by them. Moreover, because women's magazines as a rule were focused on typical 'women's problems', that is on love stories, family life and child-care, and did not discuss political issues (Menéndez 2009: 284), I presume that it was believed that if these journals were to attract women with the information of foreign countries, these messages had to be adapted to 'feminine' perception and intellectual skills.

### **The Male War: The Image of the Soviet Union in the Nazi General Press**

The first question to answer is whether the anti-Soviet messages published by renowned satirical magazines had much in common with the primitive propaganda

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<sup>9</sup> Put out by the *NS-Frauenschaft*, the Nazi organisation for women, *NS-Frauen-Warte* was published in Leipzig from 1932–1945. By the end of the 1930s its circulation was 1 200 000 copies (Kramer 2011: 37).

<sup>10</sup> In this respect, I would like to follow the arguments of Joanne P. Sharp, who states that "there is no single identity, but always one defined in distinction from another" and "the drawing of boundaries to construct a coherent identity of national Selfhood from international Otherness is key to understand the process of international politics" (Sharp 2000: 27).

spread by tabloid newspapers such as *Der Stürmer*. The answer may seem paradoxical, but the comparison of both, in my opinion, reveals many more similarities than differences.

All of the journals mentioned here displayed first of all anti-Semitic motifs. Enemy no. 1 was the Jewish communist, who was often supposed to be both a Bolshevik and a Jewish rabbi, or an idol. His figure was generally presented as a “short, fat, ugly, unshaven, drooling, sexually perverted, bent-nosed, with pig-like eyes” (Liebel 2010: 59–60) sub-human who looked like a devil (Figs 77, 78).

Non-Jewish Soviet leaders, especially Stalin, were also permanently shown as possessing Jewish traits. It can be even stated that Soviet rulers or even just communist party members in the USSR were en masse portrayed as Jews: both directly and indirectly, in the latter case using such metaphors as lice and rats (Arnold 1941; Dmistrów 1997: 329–332). ‘Jewish features’ were also usually attributed to other metaphoric depictions of the USSR and its rulers, such as spiders, dragons or snakes (see also Davies, this volume).

Where did these concepts come from? Bolsheviks, portrayed as Jewish traitors, murderers of Christ, and demons, certainly did not have much in common with real Soviet communists, including Jewish ones, whose ideology was based on atheism and destroying national and cultural inheritance. They can also hardly be recognised as counter-images of those produced by Soviet propaganda. In fact, the Nazi anti-Semitic motifs can be surely called variations or mirror images of German self-stereotypes, strongly reinforced by the specific Western European religious obsessions.

The Nazi images of perverse communists can be traced to biblical sources, where the devil takes the form of a snake, that is, a form of malign cleverness, and where the death of a snake saves humanity from the presence of evil (Benjamin 2008: 71), as well as to the Protestant (and generally Christian) tradition of criticising the Jews for being immoral (Jensen 2007: 367). The thesis of the specifically religious character of Nazi anti-Soviet discourse is further confirmed by the statements of Nazis themselves. It was Julius Streicher—the publisher of *Der Stürmer*—who wrote in his diary in 1936: “We have dedicated our lives to the fight against the murderers of Christ (...) If we always think of Adolf Hitler then we cannot fail to receive strength and benediction from heaven” (cited in Carr 2003: 25).

Paradoxically, it can be assumed that Nazi sacral discourses can be traced from the fact that Nazism itself could be regarded in religious terms. After all, the Nazi faith strongly relied on such religious practices as indoctrination, preaching, mass gatherings, shrines and rituals (Carr 2003: 24–25). Furthermore, in my opinion, Nazi Germany generally needed to project the fears and desires of ‘decent’ German citizens onto the Soviet Other, which lead Nazi propagandists to permanently focus on such issues as sacrilege, blasphemy, black magic and the violation of moral principles. It should not be forgotten that an important component of Nazi propaganda was the myth that communists were people who attacked women and

children both at home and on the street and enticed women into “Asiatic orgies”. In addition, the myth that the “Soviet paradise” was a country where little girls prostituted themselves to stave off hunger was widely spread (Wackerfuss 2013: 321).

The other common feature of anti-Soviet discourse in Nazi magazines for the general public was the fact that they similarly exploited the motifs of Russians as barbaric ‘sub-humans’. Russian soldiers in particular were presented as gorilla- or rat-like bloody beasts with slanted eyes, for whom robbery, burning churches, rape, and killing were the main pastimes (Waschik 2005: 216–217). The cartoonists were also unanimous in representing Stalin as a “monster, a latter day Genghis Khan or Ivan the Terrible, who butchered his associates and starved millions to death” (Coupe 1998: 28–29).

It ought to be noted as well that other dehumanising anti-Soviet images used by the Nazis, especially metaphorical comparison with such despicable creatures as lice and rats, can be derived from the Western European obsessions with filth and hygiene problems on the one hand, and from the German tradition of depicting the Balkan people as “dirty” and “villainous” on the other (Żakowska 2013: 314–315).

When we take a closer look at the discourse of hygiene and superior civilisation, we can observe that an important role was played by body-oriented rhetoric. It can be assumed that these anti-Soviet images were created to convince readers of the equity of Nazi ideology regarding the fundamental differences between ‘Aryan’ and ‘sub-human’ races. The physical inferiority of the Soviets was to serve as a flattering reference point for the idealised bodies that represented the warrior-like German protagonists.

To explain this phenomenon, it is crucial to underscore the great importance of health and aesthetics for the Nazis. Not only were National Socialists fervent admirers of the maxim “a healthy body in a healthy mind”, but they also interpreted a sick, frail body as a sign of mental sickness (Baur & Hofmeister 2008: 282). Furthermore, they associated the concepts of health, beauty and masculinity as coherently intertwined. As Ute Frevert says, the (at least theoretically) well-muscled National Socialist elite “publicly boasted its exclusive and aggressive male character” (Frevert 1988: 240), glorified the idea of a conflict as an opportunity to achieve personal magnificence (Wackerfuss 2013: 305–306, 310), and despised every sign of weakness.

In addition to the mentioned similarities, several differences between the anti-Soviet sentiments in the satirical press and those in tabloid newspapers can be observed. The ‘traditional’ journals used more refined visualisation methods. Caricaturists used a broad spectrum of ideas and emotions: from humour, mockery, disgust and disdain to fear and pathos. A variety of discourses were used: not only racial and patriotic, but also cultural, custom- and gender-oriented, and aesthetic. The graphic style of the cartoons combined grotesque, realistic and naturalistic,

even extremely anti-aesthetic features, complemented by vulgar, perverse, and semi-pornographic language. In these caricatures, discourses based on several different pairs of contradictions (such as beauty vs. monstrosity, strength vs. indolence, heroism vs. foulness) can be observed.

Examples of perverse discourses are caricatures showing sexually exposed, often grotesque, human bodies (Fig. 79). The majority of women's portraits presented in these caricatures had perverse characteristics in the sense that they shared crucial features with female images from typical erotic magazines from the time of Weimar Republic.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, it is important to stress that the women displayed in these journals mainly represented the 'vamp' style, that is, exactly the type of female that had been condemned by the Nazis (Pine 2010: 125).

What conclusions can be derived from these perverse discourses? Deviant practices have always been associated with the eccentric deeds of artists and the representatives of the higher classes. There is no doubt that authors and recipients of perverse messages have to be aware of their ambiguous character, as well as being able to get satisfaction out of taboos. Perverted people are anything but innocent, primitive beings, because they are always aware that they should not break the rules they are violating (Roudinesco 2009: 10–11).

In contrast to the traditional satirical magazines, *Der Stürmer* tended to exploit a more moderate graphic style, distinctive especially for children's comics, with its both grotesque and simple means of expression, lacking ambiguous metaphors. As an example, the pictures commenting on the battles on the Eastern front in both 'traditional' and tabloid magazines can be compared. *Simplicissimus* illustrated the 'Spirit of Stalingrad' with gigantic, battle-worn but defiant German infantrymen looking down at a small and very Asiatic Stalin and saying: "You think you have defeated me, Stalin, and yet you will be defeated by me" (Fig. 80; Coupe 1998: 31). *Der Stürmer*, under the title 'Victory-Peace', showed a bombastic Teutonic warrior with a raised sword and a huge crying crocodile with a bleeding jaw behind his back (Fig. 81). As a result, the illustration from *Simplicissimus* reveals a great deal of pathos despite its hypocritical message, while the picture from *Der Stürmer* can hardly be called anything other than kitsch.

The differences between the content of these magazines can also be shown through the example of how they used animal metaphors for particular nations and countries. The 'old' satirical journals often exploited the traditional image of Russia and the USSR as a bear (de Lazari, Riabow & Żakowska 2013: 11–12). The main purpose of this metaphor was to visualise the barbaric character of the Bolshevik regime and the threat caused by the Soviet beast to civilised Europe (N.N. 1942;

<sup>11</sup> Such magazines as *Reigen* ('Round'), *Berliner Leben* ('Berlin Life') and *Film, Tanz, Exotik* ('Film, Dance, Exoticism') should be mentioned. The first two journals visualised the atmosphere of decadent Berlin, while the latter displayed female Hollywood stars in enticing poses. In the Third Reich the sexually provocative journals were replaced by politically correct nudist magazines with dissuasive titles, such as *Gesetz und Freiheit* ('Law and Freedom'), which presented naked bodies only in non-erotic poses (Maack 2008).

Schulz 1943; Schilling 1943; Gulbransson 1943). On the contrary, the cartoons published in *Der Stürmer* generally lacked animal images, and therefore they did not refer to the symbol of the Russian bear, similarly to the other explicitly Nazi journals such as *Völkischer Beobachter* ('People's Observer') and *Brennessel* ('Nettle'). How can this phenomenon be explained? In my opinion it derives from the fact that Nazi ideology worshipped wild, noble animals such as bears (Sala Rose 2006), while on the other hand the propagandists were convinced that there was no better way to stigmatise an enemy than by attributing Jewish traits to him (Dmitrów 1997: 329–332). Nevertheless, a third explanation should also be mentioned there. It is possible that the editors of *Der Stürmer* avoided animal metaphors because they wanted to make their narratives more understandable to labour-class readers.

Furthermore, it was particularly *Der Stürmer* that pursued conspiracy theories and generally practiced a paranoid way of reasoning. From this perspective it is important to stress that in contrast to the perverted, often ironic messages hidden behind satirical narratives in *Simplicissimus* and *Kladderadatch*, the paranoid ones were clearly less ambiguous. Authors and bona fide recipients of paranoid assumptions are usually not only convinced that these visions are legitimate, but are unable to perceive the world in any other way than through primitive pairs of contradictions. Paranoiacs would never perceive themselves as perpetrators. They always see themselves as innocent victims (Robins & Post 1997: 7–17).<sup>12</sup>

Let us provide an example. One of the illustrations published in *Kladderadatch* in December 1942 visualised the changes in British opinions about Stalin (Johnson 1942). In 1940 he was supposed to be a hybrid of a devil and a hairy monster waving the sickle and hammer. In 1942 he became a whiskered saint. The caricature ridiculed not only the second, but also the first, demonised image. Therefore, in my opinion, the author of the caricature suggested indirectly that there was generally no reason to treat any propaganda messages seriously. In addition, in December 1942 *Der Stürmer* published a caricature about the anti-German coalition. The cartoon presented Europe as a potential victim of the devilish forces, supported by the Jews, and this idea was visualised through the figure of a spy and of Semitic eyes, surrounded by the flags of the USSR, Great Britain and the US, composed in a triangle (Fips 1942). What was the latter metaphor supposed to stand for? For absolute evil, a coalition of great powers or for 'Jewish spirit', striving to take control over the world? One thing is certain: this picture was definitely not an ironic play with artistic conventions. It was a very serious call for national vigilance and a warning against worldwide conspiracy.

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<sup>12</sup> In that sense the mentioned Nazi rhetoric anticipated both the US and Soviet propaganda from the Cold War period (Sharp 2000: 71–75).

### The Female War: The Image of the Soviet Union in *NS-Frauen-Warte*

The next question to answer is whether the content of *NS-Frauen-Warte*, the official Nazi-approved journal for women, tended to reveal more similarities with 'traditional' satirical newspapers or with the one more explicitly driven by Nazi ideology—*Der Stürmer*. Paradoxically, in my opinion the differences between the journals for the general public and *NS-Frauen-Warte* are much more significant than the differences between *Simplicissimus*, *Kladderadatch* and *Der Stürmer*. The magazines for the general public contained discourses on great politics, reflected in the most important events on the international stage: alliances, conferences, negotiations and military campaigns. *NS-Frauen-Warte* spread knowledge about the supposed daily life in the Soviet Union: the situation of children, customs, material and hygienic conditions, as well as, with respect to internal politics, the Bolshevik regime's persecution of the Russian people.

The press for the general public exploited the visual and verbal metaphors of Russians, Bolsheviks and the Soviet Union, which were built on images of bloody beasts and devils. *NS-Frauen-Warte* often exploited the image of the USSR as a giant on clay legs, and seemed to truly sympathise with its "backward", "undemanding", and suffering people (Figs 82, 83, 84). It is important to stress that the Soviet Union was generally not portrayed in *NS-Frauen-Warte* as a threat—articles would rather describe the country's poverty, lack of resources, and inefficiency than its strength and might (compare Sharp 2000: 66). Furthermore, humoristic and realistic graphic style prevailed on its pages, and naturalistic and grotesque style was avoided. The major type of discourse concerning the USSR was based on such pairs of contradictions as good vs. evil, civilization vs. backwardness, child-friendly German culture vs. child-neglecting Bolshevik society, and therefore I would call it an ethical, humanitarian one (Fig. 85). I believe that the purpose of this type of propaganda was rather not to humiliate or demonise the Soviets, but to ridicule them and show them a kind of patronising compassion.

The question remains as to why the differences in presenting anti-Soviet motifs in Nazi magazines intended for the general public on the one hand, and for women on the other, were so profound. In my opinion, these differences first of all reflected the dichotomy, as mentioned by Michelle Rosaldo, specifically the pair of contradictions of feminine/private vs. masculine/public. Through the prism of this pair of contradictions, a system of gender relations can be described in which women are assigned the activities associated with the private sphere, and men are destined to perform cultural and political actions in the public arena (Rosaldo 1980).

I share the opinion that "National Socialism was the most repressive and reactionary of all modern political movements" (Mason 1995: 132) with a clearly defined illiberal and protective policy towards women, even if in practice "it turned out to be more illiberal and less protective than declared" (Ibid.: 132). The political leaders clearly regarded women as a very special category among the ruled, that is, "that part of the population on whom (...) novel, major and general hardships

should not arbitrarily or continuously be inflicted,” as Tim Mason states (1995: 149).

Aiming to “liberate” women from the ideas of emancipation, the Nazis limited women’s education opportunities, lessened professional options, and excluded all but a few women from the political arena. Generally, women’s intellectualism was rejected as unhealthy (Mouton 2010: 945–949).<sup>13</sup>

In the Third Reich, like in almost all other countries in the world, public and family life was described as sets of contradictions. The public sphere was regarded as “cold, impersonal, competitive, insecure and often arbitrary or opaque, usually enormous in scale, demanding, geared to efficiency and, perhaps above all, tending to reduce the person through the progressive division of labour to a function, so that work becomes instrumental” (Mason 1995: 205). Family, on the contrary, was supposed to be “the *compensation and the justification* for this anxious and alienated toil, both the refuge from the compulsions of work and the unquestionable good for the sake of which the public sphere is endured: the family is warm and supportive, individual, intimate and secure” (Ibid.: 205–206). In that sense, “Nazi propaganda magnified the fundamental reconciliatory function of family life, which turned out to be the more important the more intense the economic and political pressures became” (Ibid.: 205–206). As Adolf Hitler said: “The world of the man is the state (...) his struggle on behalf of the community, [...while] the world of the woman is a smaller world. For her the world is her husband, her family, her children and her home.”<sup>14</sup>

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It is true that under a totalitarian regime such as the Third Reich, all spheres, including family and intimate life, were regulated by the state. Nazi propaganda was everywhere, spread through the education system, ideological trainings and the mass media. Consequently, racial and anti-Communist propaganda was also visible in the magazines dealing with childcare and cooking recipes.

The ideal German citizen, from the point of view of the Nazis, was healthy and fertile, physically trained, tidy, hostile towards the representatives of other races<sup>15</sup>, but first of all disciplined and obedient to the authorities. The same ‘virtues’ were appreciated during the war. The role of men was to fight on the battlefield, that of women was to serve on the “domestic front” (Mainwald & Mischler 2003: 104). I agree with Gisela Bock’s statement that the “Nazi regime attributed greater im-

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<sup>13</sup> In 1934, a *Numerus Clausus* was introduced to limit the number of women in incoming university classes to ten percent, reversing the trend in effect since 1918. The number of female university students fell drastically from 18 315 in 1932 to 5 447 in 1939. From 1936 women were prohibited from working as lawyers or judges (Mouton 2010: 948–949).

<sup>14</sup> Adolf Hitler, speech to the National Socialist Women’s organisation, Nuremberg Party Rally, September 8, 1934 (Mason 1995: 131).

<sup>15</sup> This rule especially applied to women, as it was believed that after having sexual relations with a representative of an “inferior race”, an Aryan woman was forever deprived of the possibility of giving birth to a “racially valuable” child (Gruber 1939: 48).

portance to pursuing racist policies than to keeping women in their traditional sphere.”<sup>16</sup> It was not only German men who were exposed to the brutality of war. German women were also involved in its machinery: they worked in factories and some of them even served in concentration camps.

On the other hand, it is also true that German men and women in general did not get information, including information about the war, from the same sources. In my opinion, women, who had been socialised to the roles of mother and housewife, were firstly much more attracted by the ‘real-life problems’ than by ‘dirty’ and sophisticated political issues. Secondly, some messages from the magazines for the general public were considered to be inappropriate for women’s eyes. It can be said that such satirical magazines as *Kladderadatsch* and *Simplicissimus*, as well as tabloid magazines such as *Der Stürmer*, used to function in the Third Reich as a substitute of erotic magazines.

However, does this mean that German men’s and women’s worldviews differed profoundly one from each other during WWII? No. All German society was more or less involved in the ‘total war’ and its consequences. Moreover, it can be stated that all Germans shared another significant feature. They were in general spared of an important hardship: critical reflection and the feeling of guilt for the sins committed in the name of the state. The totalitarian regime succeeded in persuading the German people that it were the enemies of the Third Reich who were responsible for the atrocities of war, and Nazi propaganda essentially influenced that process.

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<sup>16</sup> For instance, “women were not fired *en masse* from employment and driven back to home and hearth. Actually the number and proportion of women in the labor force increased, and so did the proportion of married women and mothers. Nazi propaganda and ideology did not include ‘Kinder, Küche, Kirche’ or the biblical exhortation ‘Be fruitful and multiply’. Actually, Nazi race hygienists often and deliberately polemicalised against these slogans. The number of convictions for abortion declined during most of the Nazi period in comparison with the years of the Weimar Republic... Under the Nazi regime, abortion was no longer simply prohibited but was practiced widely on ‘racially inferior’ and hereditarily diseased women” (Bock 1998: 94–95).

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ZURÜCK ZU ABRAHAM!

**SACRIFICE OF CHILDREN. BACK TO ABRAHAM**

“Stalin demanded the extradition of the southern Italian workers’ children.

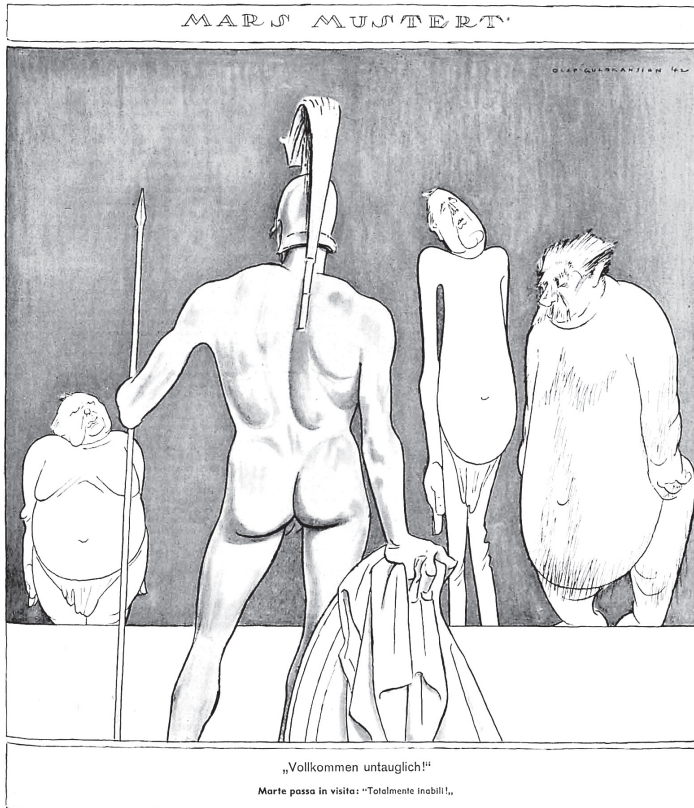
The plutocrats agreed with his demands”

A. Johnson, *Kladderadatsch*, 1944, January 2, no. 1, p. 1.



**THE NEW BRITISH COURSE**

The devil holds her on the neck. Farewell! Here there is no return.



**MARS SCRUTINIZES**

**Totally unfit!**

Der Geist von Stalingrad

(Erich Schilling)



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**THE SPIRIT OF STALINGRAD**

You think you have defeated me, Stalin, and yet you will be defeated by me.

80 ..... E. Schilling, *Simplicissimus*, 1943, February 17, no. 7, p. 100.

## Sieg - Frieden



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### VICTORY—PEACE

Judah has to yield to the German sword. / We will triumph over hatred and meanness.  
/ Because only then there will be peace, / which will give new life to all the people.

Fips, *Der Stürmer*, 1942, April.

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# Ein anspruchloses Volk

Skizzen  
aus dem bäuerlichen Sowjetparadies



Man haust mit den Tieren unter einem Dach und



2

lebt fast ausschließlich von Sonnenblumenkernen



Das Waschen sieht ungefähr so aus

3

Wie überhaupt der Gebrauch unserer alltäglichsten Gegenstände ziemlich unbekannt ist

Zeichnungen und Text:  
Obergefr. R. P. Bauer



4

Als Sonntagsvergnügen widmet man sich dem gegenseitigen Läusen ...



5

## UNDEMANDING PEOPLE. SKETCHES FROM THE PEASANT SOVIET PARADISE

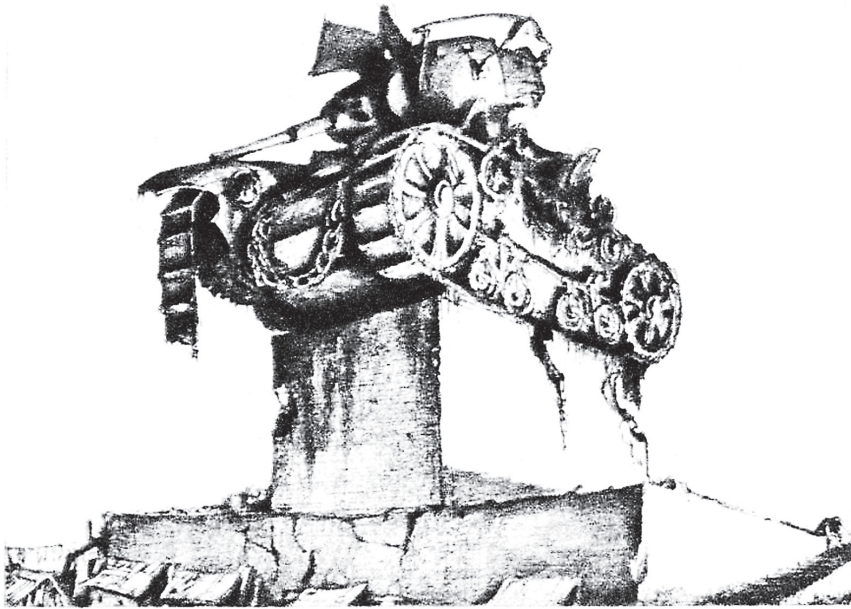
People live with livestock under one roof and feed almost exclusively on sunflower seeds. The washing looks more or less like this. The use of our most ordinary items is totally unknown. Delousing is the most enjoyable Sunday treat.



**RUSSIAN PICTURES**

The Shroud—that's how A.P. Weber entitled the picture above, which is one of the strongest in the Russian section. But one day there will come the advent of spring for the victims of Bolshevik atrocities.

A.P. Weber, *NS-Frauen-Warte*, 1944, no. 10.



**RUSSIAN PICTURES**

The Tank—the quantitative advantage of material should, as the Bolshevik regime suggests, roll over Europe. The bravery of the German soldier will withstand the pressure of the colossus of the Bolshevik mass and the amount of material.

В г. Дубно Ровенской области Дом пионеров находится в одном помещении с залгом. Работу детских кружков вести негде. (На письма в редакцию И. Вайнштейнбойма).



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PIONEER HOUSE

A pioneer house in Dubno is situated in a registry office building.

There is no place left for children.

I. Semenova, *NS-Frauen-Warte*, 1942, no. 13 [original picture from a Soviet newspaper].

## Images of the Enemy from Both Sides of the Front: The Case of Estonia (1942–1944)

### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the negative images of the enemy as published in the Estonian-language press and wall newspapers simultaneously on both sides of the front that swept across Estonia during and after WWII. In the years under study, 1942–1944, Estonia remained, as many Eastern European countries, in the heart of the struggle between the two forces battling for supremacy in Europe. Although during these three years the country was occupied by Nazi Germany and this decided the main tone of the local Estonian-language newspapers, there were also obvious influences coming from the Soviet side of the war. This was first and foremost because of the thousands of Estonians serving in the Red Army, whose divisions were strongly recommended or even forced to publish their own Soviet-minded propagandist newspapers and wall newspapers.

We will analyse the portrayal of the political and ethnic Other, as these two categories—the political and the ethnic—are closely intertwined in the caricatures of that period. We are interested in how the two sides (the Nazi and the Soviet powers as grounds for the corresponding different stereotyped ethnicities present in the visual material), as active concepts in the minds and powerful forces in everyday lives of people in Estonia during that period, were visualised in the caricatures that were published in the 1942–1944 period. Moreover, we will describe which cartoons were left unpublished and why it was so.

The material for this study draws mainly on the newspapers and wall newspapers that are stored in these two archives, and also from print matrices from the National Archives of Estonia in Tallinn filed under the archive of the newspaper *Postimees* ('Postman'). What we intend to discuss is the fact that there are more pictures in these archives than the press actually circulated. The almost non-humorous but fairly aggressive propaganda caricatures were left unprinted even when the matrices had already been prepared, while the depictions of simple soldier life was accepted for print. This might be supportive of some previous studies which claim that towards the end of WWII, the general audience was tired of evasive propaganda (Stokker 1997; Merziger 2007, 2012; Kessel 2012b etc.) and the unreliability of humorous means in achieving serious aims (Davies 2002; for aggression in humour, see Oring 1992). The audience's need for entertainment as an escape from the hardships of daily life is reflected in the choice that editors made about publishing caricatures. Decisions like this must also have been influenced by the unstable political situation and rapid changes in society.

### **Propaganda, Humour and the People**

Estonian history between 1942 and 1944 is complex and troublesome. Estonia's political situation at the end of WWII was largely decided by the Soviet and Nazi struggle for the territory. Historians have estimated that a total of about 100 000 Estonians served in the Red Army and German armed forces. Of these men, one third was recruited by the Soviets to the Red Army. The remaining two thirds served in the German armed forces. This often divided families and friends who fought on different sides of the same battlefield, turning brother against brother and friend against friend regardless of their ideological convictions. This significant detail is also reflected in Estonian life histories (see for example Kõresaar 2011) and present-day public discourse when talking about the history of the twentieth century, as well as in personal memory and cultural "deep memory" (Wertsch 2009). More subjective accounts of history, for instance in the form of folk stories, add another perspective to written history. For example, the rumours of a human sausage factory that were common at the end of WWII reflected upon the wartime Other by attributing cannibalistic tendencies to them (Kalmre 2012). However, as our main question here is the nature of the caricatures printed on two sides of the front, audience reactions in the form of stories and memories fall outside the scope of this article, although they offer an important backdrop to the study.

### **Propaganda on the Two Fronts**

Already after the failure of the Beer Hall putsch in Munich in 1923, Hitler had stated, "Propaganda, propaganda, propaganda. The only important thing is propaganda" (cited by Taylor 2011: 280) because he realised that although he had failed to achieve his immediate goal of seizing power, the event gave the Nazis their first exposure to national attention as well as a propaganda victory. The importance of different forms of propaganda was increasingly valued by all countries as WWII approached, and it peaked during the last stages of the war. The distribution of news was regulated by local censorship in order to deliver only the kind of news that would be suitable for the government. It was considered best to censor important news before it was published (Ibid.: 248). Apart from leaving some information out, accounts of reality were tailored to fit the aims of the countries at war by deliberately adding false details. This does not mean that people were successfully fooled by doctored news items: in Quisling Norway, the subversive Jössing movement distributed jokes and stories that portrayed the Nazi occupiers as liars and the official newspapers as lies (Stokker 1997). Taking all news as truth was impossible also because of the changeability of the politics of the period. The truth of one day could become the untruth of the next day. For example, as seen in an analysis of the main topics in the Soviet press between 1939 and 1941, the prevalently anti-Fascist tone was abruptly replaced by National Socialist-friendly articles and remarks shortly after the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in September 1939 (Thompson 1991: 389), changing the tone completely within just a day. After that

event, Hitler's speeches were often quoted in a positive and favourable context by the Russian press until 1940 (Ibid.: 390). Even the word Fascism was replaced with more neutral "Hitlerism" in Soviet newspaper articles from that short period.

In a similar vein, Stalin famously described artists as "engineers of the human soul" and considered political posters a significant force in agitation work (Aulich & Sylvestrova 1999). Visual propaganda was valued highly because of the high level of illiteracy. On the whole, both oppositions believed in the power of propaganda and practiced it actively in order to create an imaginary world subordinated to their often contradictory (although sometimes surprisingly similar) ideological claims. The routine and repetitive elements in this propaganda reveal the its performative ambitions, as effectively described by Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska (this volume).

Studies on the history of film propaganda have shown that the audiovisual medium was considered the most influential weapon in propaganda war. Political messages were hidden in fiction movies and—a more obvious choice—in the compulsory newsreels before movies in cinemas. Historical drama was considered the most influential genre in changing and constructing public opinion. At the same time, film did not reach more remote places but remained primarily an urban phenomenon. The rural environment—but not only that—is where posters, placards and wall newspapers were used to spread the message, often doing so in a humorous way. It is thus fairly natural that caricatures and comics were recognised as powerful propaganda tools (see Merziger 2012; also Aulich & Sylvestrová 1999 on poster art under the Soviet Union).

### **Humour as Propaganda**

The proponents of propaganda appreciated the role of humour as a facilitator for successfully delivering the message to the audience. Talking mainly about visual propaganda, it goes without saying that much of it (apart from heroic posters to encourage the soldiers in their own army) was targeted against the enemy, belittling and mocking them. The enemy was depicted in a ridiculous way, as if looked upon from the superior position of 'us'. WWI had already taken advantage of the media, and this trend definitely grew during WWII. Verbal and visual denigration of the enemy was part of warfare, and caricatures functioned as a means "to whip up emotions at home, offer visions about continuing social order, and denigrate the opponents" (Kessel 2012a: 5).

Humour can be used in propaganda for many reasons. First of all, it is capable of reaching a wide audience, as people (especially in a long-lasting stressful situation like a war) seek out humour to alleviate the seriousness of their daily lives. As many previous studies on war humour (as well as political humour) have shown, people use this humour to cope in stressful situations (for an overview, see Martin 2007: 303–305). In a similar vein, it is an effective commentary on everyday events, as shown in a number of studies on disaster/topical humour (Davies 1999; Kuipers 2005; Laineste 2003). Humour has the capacity to entertain and educate at the

same time, so the effect of the message is indirect and unobtrusive, but nevertheless existent. Humour is expected to persuade mainly via an indirect route: the use of humour will create a pleasant feeling in the recipient, which will be attributed to the advertised object (Martin 2007: 104, 105). Hence humour will generate a favourable response to the attitudinal object, which is a mechanism that works similarly in both propaganda and advertising.

In the stressful historical period we are addressing in this study, two opposite uses of humour can be delineated according to the source of the message: official propaganda in the form of published (comical) newspapers, posters, wall papers, films etc. vs. the unofficial, subversive messages distributed by those in opposition to the official politics through the channels available to them. The first of these, official propaganda and its use of humour, was discussed as early as the 1930s by Ralph Haswell Lutz (1933). He sees humorous propaganda as the most effective way to control and direct public opinion during emotionally uncertain times. Visual material particularly can yield the best results (Ibid.: 496). Humour in official propaganda usually involves incriminating the enemy, and it is expected that through visual othering people will identify themselves with the author of the (sometimes humorous) message, whereas the target of derision will be increasingly perceived as strange, negative or even repulsive. Official Nazi propaganda actively sought the right visual representations for different audiences. For example, the main visual stereotype in pro-Nazi posters in Norway, emerging directly after Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, depicted Norwegians as true Vikings helping to fight the evil grip of the communists (see the posters reprinted in Stokker 1997: 105–124). Posters were the main vehicle for the simple reason that radios had been confiscated by the ruling authorities, the Nazi puppet government (Ibid.). The conventionality of the images used in wartime caricatures (or even during the Cold War), stressed in numerous chapters of the present volume (see Baraniecka-Olszewska, Limanskaya, Tamás, Żakowska, and others), relies on the assumption that difficult times call for easily digestible images. As Chris Murray says in his article about American propaganda in WWII (Murray 2000), simple moral oppositions, known also from pre-war novels and popular culture, conform to the expectations of people living in war-torn societies.

On the other hand, humour was an (even more) important part of the unofficial discourse. Lutz (1933) stresses the importance of describing visual imagery of the Other in unofficial channels because this (as with all humour) gives a true insight into the attitudes of the people, into public opinion. Resistance movements often used humour in their subversive attempts to turn the tables in a political situation (see Stokker 1997).

Apart from studies that underline the importance of humour during periods of political tension in both official and the unofficial channels, there are researchers who claim that neither humour as a form of political agitation nor as a means of resistance has been the deciding force or even prevalent in political struggles,

and that their importance has been exaggerated (Merziger 2007, 2012; Davies 2008). Instead, people's preferred humour was independent or even deliberately distanced from the political battle and sought to serve the need to forget the difficulties of everyday life. Furthermore, they claim that humour does not function in a straightforward fashion in the first place. The sociologist Peter L. Berger (1997), discussing humour as propaganda and resistance, stated that even if humour can be used as either for a tool to convincing people or as a means of opposition against propaganda, there is also benign humour, which is the most frequent type of all. Christie Davies (2002 and elsewhere) has argued that all humour is basically non-functional—i.e. it cannot be used efficiently to achieve serious aims, which is best done through non-humorous means of communication.

### The Material and its Context

The material for this study is taken from sources that can be divided broadly into two, i.e. it comes from the two sides of the front. In the following discussion, we will first describe the comic pictures from the Soviet side, focusing on both their content and general tone. We will then move on to the caricatures printed in Nazi newspapers, and finally to the unpublished caricatures in an attempt to tackle the mystery of their unpublished state. Altogether, the material consists of ca. 95 Nazi and 42 Soviet caricatures from 1942–1944, which includes all the caricatures from the archival funds of the Soviet-minded newspapers *Tasuja* ('Avenger', published between 1942 and 1946) and *Punaväelane* ('Red Army Soldier', 1942–1947), and wall newspapers from (1) the 354<sup>th</sup> fire team of the 7<sup>th</sup> rifle division, (2) the 86<sup>th</sup> medical-sanitary battalion of the 7<sup>th</sup> rifle division, as well as (3) the political section of the 7<sup>th</sup> rifle division. By way of comparison, the material for the second part of the study comes from the Nazi-minded newspaper *Postimees* ('Postman') and *Rindeleht* ('Front Newspaper', issued from May 1943 until September 1944).

The political and social context of the sources plays a role in deciphering the data. Most of the caricatures describing the Soviet side originate from the Estonian 7<sup>th</sup> Rifle which consisted of about 30 000 Estonians originally called for military service in the Red Army on December 18, 1941. This division came under the Red Army and was compiled mainly of Estonians or those speaking Estonian. Most soldiers were recruited from men mobilised in Estonia in 1941, Estonians living in Russia, reservists, rear regiments and soldiers returning from war hospitals, who thus had experience in warfare from their service in the Estonian Army. Due to mistrust of the ideological preparedness of the Estonian soldiers, the division also admitted Russians and other nations, appointing them to higher military positions to report on the Estonians' anti-Soviet sentiments. This is a telling detail relating to the Estonians' motivation to participate in "somebody else's" war (cf. Kõresaar 2011: 20).

The Nazi-controlled publishing houses in Estonia printed dailies that brought to the local audience verbal, and sometimes also visual, anti-Soviet propaganda.

The daily newspaper *Postimees* delivered (ideologically doctored) news, stories from the front, memoirs of soldiers who had escaped from the Soviet Army etc. It was the biggest newspaper of that time (and still remains one of the biggest today). The newspaper *Rindeleht*, however, was a less political mirror of military daily life, with entertainment meant for the soldiers (crosswords, stories, caricatures etc.). Most of the caricatures portray the everyday lives of soldiers in the German Armed Forces, and their main preoccupation: girls.

## Discussion: The Politics of Propaganda and Humour

### *Estonian Caricatures from the Soviet Side*

First of all, let us take a look at the Estonian caricatures from the Soviet side, mainly authored by soldiers serving in the Red Army and displayed as part of wall newspapers. It is obvious that these wall newspapers were not widely publicised. They were meant for use within one section or team in the 7<sup>th</sup> rifle division, which consisted mainly of Estonians. Men in the 7<sup>th</sup> rifle division were quite infamous for their “low political attachment”; however, the caricatures from the first group of sources give a Soviet-minded picture of wartime. In addition to this, material from the newspapers *Tasuja* and *Punaväelane* complements the more unofficial wall newspapers. These two official publications were read by Red Army Estonians, but occasionally (strictly as underground reading material, through special editions published as leaflets) they did reach the rear.

The main trends of depicting the Other in the Estonian caricatures from the Soviet side are (1) using opposition (visual juxtapositions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ that offer support to the ideological opposition), (2) showing the enemy from the enemy’s point of view, as if through a shift of perspective, and (3) negative portrayal of some stereotypical features of the enemy (for example through the ironic notion of *Kulturträger*, ‘carrier of culture’). The first of these, stressing binary opposition between two groups (between ‘us’ and ‘them’, coming and going, strong and weak, sane and insane, good and bad) is one of the most powerful and often-used ways of othering, of creating distance. Contrasts gain significance in times of conflict, becoming more basic and more ontological (for example pointing out the difference between humanistic ‘us’ and cannibalistic Others; see Laineste 2010). In addition to this, depicting contrast offers a very useful visualisation of the strong impulse to binary thinking in society. It is a simple and effective tool—after seeing the good and the bad, ‘us’ and ‘them’, side by side in a single picture, the viewer will surely understand the opposition and what it entails. Depicting the state of the enemy ‘then’ and ‘now’ (or ‘before’ and ‘after’; see Fig. 86) is a vivid way of showing the downfall of the German armed forces when they left Russia having been decimated by to the clever Soviet master plan.

Secondly, instead of pointing directly to the superiority of ‘us’ over the Other, the onlooker may shift perspectives. Within this discourse of mock empathy, war is

depicted through the inept or otherwise disillusioned eyes of the Other. Figure 87 shows concern—or, seen from the viewer's perspective, happiness—about the danger personified by Soviet snipers.

Thirdly, specific vices of the enemy can be stressed in the images. Visually, the enemy may be shown as ugly, with exaggerated proportions (very small or gigantic), crooked, deceitful, cannibalistic etc. Although the conventions applying to how the enemy is drawn may vary between artists, some symbols permeate the caricatures (for example using animals from coats of arms to stand for the entire country; see also Tamás, this volume). In addition, it has been argued that some targets lend a ready set of visual stereotypes for use by cartoonists: a study that describes German and British mutual depictions in caricatures claims that British cartoonists often had easy recourse to imagery connected with twentieth century military conflicts and the experience of National Socialism, and that such imagery come to the fore particularly during periods of tension between the two countries. On the other hand, German cartoonists had a much less colourful palette at their disposal when depicting the British (see Moyle 2004). A typical motif throughout the period between the world wars and later is that of the bloody claw-like hand of the enemy. By way of visual opposition, this homicidal hand is sometimes seen as being stopped by the strong, sane and courageous hand of 'us', in this case symbolising the Soviet Red Army.

228 One particular motif needs closer examination here in the Estonian context—the notion of *Kulturträger*. This is the figure of the Nazi official who, on the pretext of carrying culture to Estonia, instead spreads an alien and threatening 'culture': the culture of dread, poverty, punishment etc. In Figure 88, entitled *Kultuuritreegerid* (which is a home-spun version of the German word), the Governor General Karl-Siegmund Litzmann sits with his local right hand man Hjalmar Mäe and sells 'cultural goods' like handcuffs, weapons, spades for the labour camps etc. The same motif is also present in other images: German soldiers 'carrying culture'—leaving Estonia, taking local goods, etc. with them. Propaganda leaflets printed by the Soviet side included short comic verses, with probably the most popular one also published in the press: "Who said that Litzmann doesn't carry culture? See, he can carry like a dromedary, just give him something to carry!"<sup>1</sup>. Side by side with specific imagery like that of the *Kulturträger*, globally understandable motifs as described in the previous paragraph are used.

As a side note, it is worth mentioning that the verbal part of the Soviet (wall) newspapers carried much stronger stereotypes and spread considerably more subversive propaganda against the enemy (thus also causing more extreme othering) than pictures. *Tasuja* from February 17, 1944, reports in article: "Hitler's followers murder Estonians on a large scale. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, all Estonians were forced to go to their barracks and were given poisoned coffee. About 2000 Estonians, among

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<sup>1</sup> *Rabva Häääl* ('The Voice of the People'), no 25, September 2, 1943.

them women and children, died after suffering terrible pain.”<sup>2</sup> News texts like this one were frequent and complemented the images that portrayed the enemy as irrational, aggressive, disillusioned etc. Accusations of inhuman behaviour alternate with verbal jokes, for example the following one from *Tasuja*, December 17, 1944:

Hitler and Göring disguised themselves and fled. They entered a pub on their way and Hitler ordered a beer. The girl serving the tables called out at once: “A beer for Hitler!” The same happened with Göring. After drinking up, Hitler and Göring asked the girl how she had recognised them, and the girl replied: “I’m Goebbels!”

### *Estonian Caricatures from the Nazi Side*

The Nazi caricatures mainly come from one published source, *Rindeleht*. For the editorial of the first number of this newspaper, the editors state that their aim is to tighten the connection between the front and the rear, using the newspaper as an information channel for mutual concerns, and also to offer light-hearted entertainment during leisure time. The other source, *Postimees*, was less military, and concentrated on bringing the daily news to people living in Estonia. The number of caricatures published in *Postimees* was considerably smaller than in *Rindeleht*. The main trends in depicting the enemy in these Nazi-minded sources are (1) describing the daily life of the unambitious soldier, displaying only mild ridicule of the enemy, with frequent use of puns and verbal jokes woven into the caricatures, and (2) portrayal of general negative stereotypes with parallels in ethnic humour: above all dirtiness, but also promiscuity, uncultured habits etc.

Typical examples target girlfriends or female acquaintances (Figs 89 and 90) who are referred to as lousy cooks, good-time girls, or just as objects/decorations. A rather blatantly although cheerfully sexist cartoon (Fig. 89) states that the best flowers are the ones growing on the ground and not on the trees, whereas another one combines two important topics, food and women, into a comic depiction of army life (Fig. 90). Of course, caricatures are not only about women, they also tell us about the relationships between soldiers and officers, the boredom, and the food—the highlight (or disappointment) of the day. All in all, the main character in the popular caricatures was a working class soldier who never questioned his position in the army or the aim of the war itself.

Several caricatures depict the recurring motif of dirt and poverty in Russia, tying this to the inferiority of the enemy. Attributing negative characteristics like dirtiness to the Other is a common practice (also in jokes, see Davies 1990). As with the Soviet-minded sources, this attitude towards the enemy is supported by textual material in the newspapers, for example: “I saw children, men and women

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<sup>2</sup> *Tasuja*, February 17, 1944: *Veri ihkab vere hinda! Vihka ja tasu!* (‘Blood must be repaid with blood! Hate and pay back!’).

digging in the dirt and garbage every day in the ‘red paradise’. Soviet officials were not interested in their life or death. They have masses they don’t care to count. (...) The bodies of people who had died of hunger were laying about, uncovered, until dusk. (...) Once when I was waiting my turn at the barber, an old shabbily dressed woman entered. Her hair was as dirty as her hands, face and clothes. I thought she was a beggar, but to my surprise she had come for a manicure. Because this is *kulturna* (‘cultured’).<sup>3</sup> This can be visualised through images, for example the giant cockroaches that supposedly lived in Russia, referring to the low level of ‘culture’ in hygiene in general, or by advising train passengers coming from Russia to wipe their feet after exiting the train station so that the streets will not get too dirty (Fig. 91).

As already mentioned, the number of caricatures in *Postimees* was smaller and the topics less varied than elsewhere. This marks the start of a detective story: why were some matrices that we can see in the *Postimees* archive prepared for print, but not published after all? When we take a closer look at the images in this archive, the first thing to notice is that they are quite unfunny; instead, their tone is sinister (Fig. 92). They focus on political matters (cf. the light and largely non-political tone of *Rindeleht*), depict the pragmatic marriage of the unionists and Soviets, and its (hopeful) failure, describe the dilemmas and point of view of the allies (Figs 94 and 95), refer to Soviet brutalities in war. The images do not use opposition as a visual strategy but prefer a straightforward derogation of the enemy or allow their alleged crimes to speak for themselves (Fig. 93; opposition was common, as we witnessed, in the Soviet caricatures). They do, however, try to assume the point of view of the enemy, for instance in caricatures that depict Stalin’s discontent and even rage at unfavourable political developments. References to the Jewish conspiracy behind politics (see also Davies, this volume) are frequent, evident already at the visual level, for example in the physical features of the depicted enemy (Fig. 95). The unpublished caricatures all follow a similar style and might be the work of one or two different authors (the author is not identified in the archive). Content-wise, they are carried by a remarkable enmity towards the Soviets and launch a bitter, almost desperate attack against them. Although it is not possible to name with full certainty the reasons why these pictures were not chosen for print, some hypotheses based on previous studies of war propaganda and humour can be proposed here.

First and foremost, historical sources and the writings of ideologists from WWII tell us that (humorous) propaganda was a highly valued channel for distributing the ‘correct’ political sentiments. Nevertheless, as history proves, the propaganda function of humour was strongly overrated both by the Soviets and the Nazis. Studies of humour and advertising, for example, have shown that although a humorous message helps to pave the way to audience understanding, it does

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<sup>3</sup> *Postimees*, August 27, 1943: *Päike tõuseb idast* (‘Sun rises from the East’), a newspaper column where a soldier mobilised in the Red Army but having deserted afterwards shares his impressions of life in Russia.

not affect the outcome—it does not cause attitude change (for a meta-study on the effect of humour on the persuasiveness of advertising, see Weinberg & Gulas 1992). Various topics were effectively covered in humorous visual format, although this seemed to have had certain limits: the tone of cartoons and caricatures supported lightweight topics and was less functional, and perhaps even purposefully avoided, when addressing more serious matters (see also Kozintsev, this volume, for a thought-provoking discussion on the relationships of humour and the invective). This shows humour as an unreliable tool for shaping opinions and creating change. This might have been the verdict of the editors of *Postimees* when they stopped printing propagandistic caricatures depicting the Soviets and the Allies and started to put more stress on verbal propaganda.

Another hypothesis is based on studies on the preferences of humour style and content from that period. The production of lightweight humour during both world wars was huge: joke collections, funny postcards and humour magazines were printed in huge quantities (Kessel 2012b: 82). This was the kind of reading material the people liked and publishers tried to cater for this preference. Martina Kessel has pointed out a telling detail: funny posters and other war humour products clearly matched reading habits, as most soldiers preferred light entertainment. Often the front libraries had run out of humour books while Goethe remained on the shelves (Ibid.: 86). Patrick Merziger (2007, 2012) states that towards the end of WWII, Germans no longer enjoyed the sharp, almost bitter sarcasm of wartime propaganda humour and preferred what he calls all-embracing, harmonious ‘German humour’ (*Deutscher Humor*; see Merziger 2012: 144). People started to dislike humour and propagandistic satire that overtly expressed aggression. Instead they favoured the preferred benevolent, even silly kind of humour. As a counter-reaction to the despair and casualties of the prolonged war, people desired a harmonious world free of satire, as satire builds tension and causes exclusion. The party functionaries, however, tried to keep the genre of satirical caricatures going for some time after the decline in interest (a clear sign of this was the classic satirical journals such as *Kladderadatsch* (‘Tumult’) and *Simplicissimus* (‘Simpleton’) which in the 1940s sold only a third of what they had been selling in the 1930s, see Merziger 2012: 143). There were attempts to re-establish the popularity of the genre, for example Merziger (Ibid.) describes how *Deutsche Presse* tried quite unsuccessfully to boost the reputation of caricature by launching pro-caricature campaigns (for example The Good Political Caricature in 1939). The decline of interest in satire did not mean, however, that people distanced themselves from humour altogether; this effect is primarily evident only as it relates to propaganda humour. Humorous resistance (or guerrilla humour) still bloomed, as we can see from Kathleen Stokker’s book *Folklore Fights the Nazis* (1997), in which she describes with multiple colourful examples how the Nazi regime was met with contempt displayed through humour, exemplified in jokes like, “Do you know the difference between the Nazis and a bucket of manure?—The bucket” (cited in Stokker 1997: 24).

This leads us to the question of what the functions of the caricatures, and humour in general, were for the wider audience during WWII. If humour was too ambiguous to deliver propagandistic messages and people preferred lighter entertainment than satire, what was it used for? We should note that, apart from humour being a channel of passive resistance, an outlet of frustration and a source of entertainment, it has always been an important means of communication. During the early 1940s (but not only then) it helped to make sense of the war and everything that this entailed. The cognitive function of humour is difficult to point out in hindsight, but often humour's full colours tend to show during difficult times: totalitarian regimes, for instance, have given birth to more jokes than any other periods in human history (Graham 2009: 4–5). We can speculate that the bitter sarcasm and desperate non-humorous caricatures left unpublished in the *Postimees* archive no longer fulfilled this function. People needed to find a justification or explanation for the atrocities of the war, although these particular caricatures probably only caused more confusion than clarity of mind.

### Conclusion

Having analysed the caricatures published in press and wall newspapers in Estonia between 1942 and 1944, we can say that although much stress was put on verbal propaganda (with high hopes for the quickly developing film and radio industry), there were plenty of visual images depicting the enemy. Estonia, being on the frontline of WWII, also switched enemy according to changes on the front: when seen from the Soviet side, the enemy was Nazi Germany, and vice versa. The main topics in visual othering during these years included opposition, pointing out particular vices and personifications of the enemy (e.g. *Kulturträger*), depicting the life of an average soldier, or shifting the perspective to a mock emphatic way of depicting events.

There were some small differences between the ways of depicting the enemy from the Soviet and the Nazi side; however, similarities were obviously greater. Both warring sides believed in the force of humorous propaganda and published caricatures to ideologically sway their audiences. The main differences lay in the fact that the published cartoons originating from the Soviet side were more numerous, covering a wider range of topics and moods and focusing on an imaginary character of the Nazi *Kulturträger*, whereas the other side published milder entertainment (depicting life in the army) and used traditional (ethnic) stereotyping to depict the enemy (e.g. dirtiness).

There were also caricatures on the Nazi side that were prepared for print, but were left unpublished. One explanation to the puzzle of the missing caricatures is that towards the end of WWII, caricatures were considered not to have a visible outcome in changing people's attitudes and behaviour. Secondly, some studies point out that sarcasm had lost its appeal to ordinary people, who preferred lighter humour than the biting and often unfunny political commentary of caricatures.

## Acknowledgements

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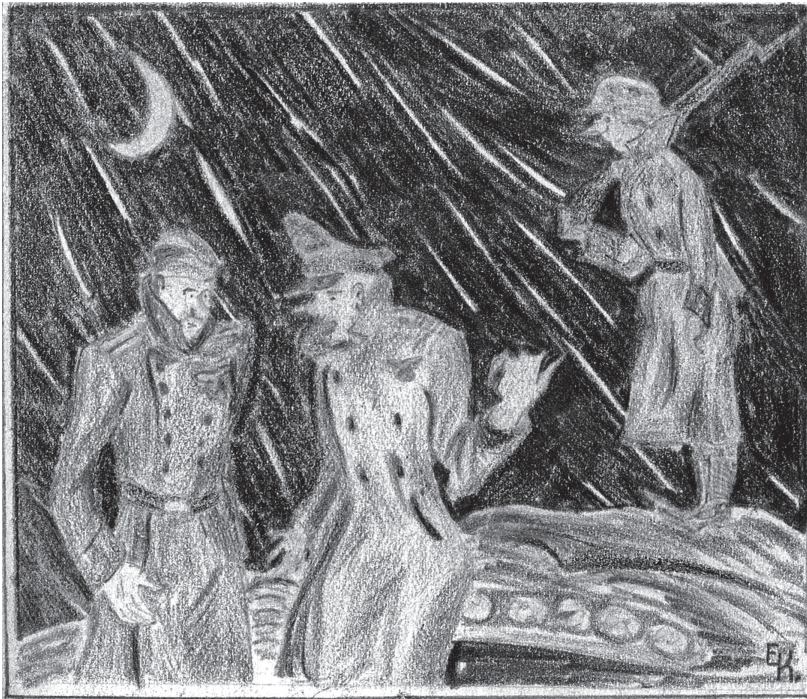


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**THEY CAME HERE PROUDLY, THEY LEAVE NOW CRYING** .....

From a wallpaper of Red Army 1942, ERAF f.78 n.1 s.191 l.110. 86



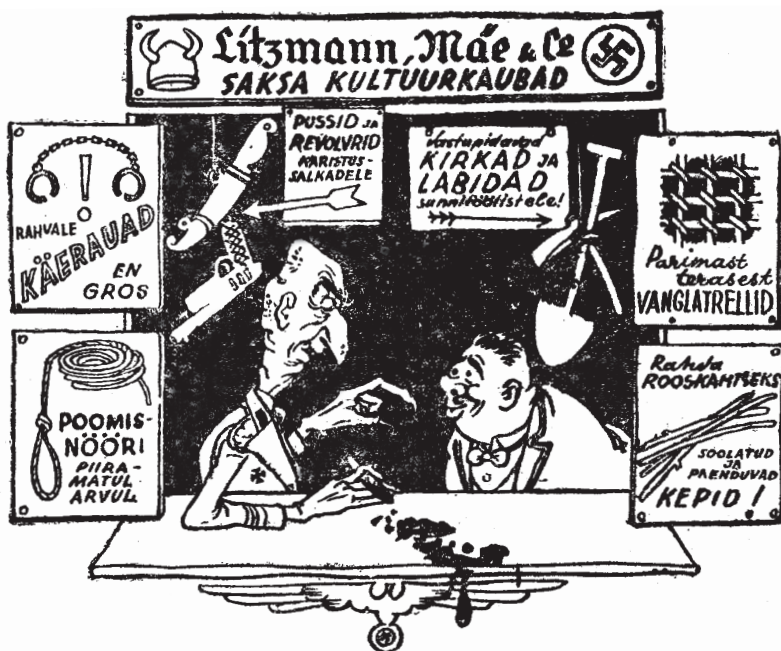
**CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE**

Oberleutnant: "New guard again? Why do you change them so often?"

Corporal: "I would not change them, but see the Russian sniper..."

E.K., from a wallpaper of the 354<sup>th</sup> fire team of the 7<sup>th</sup> rifle division,

87 ..... between 1942–1944, ERAF f.78 n.1 s.193 l. 71.



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#### KULTURTRÄGERS

“Kulturträgers” Mäe to Litzmann: “Nobody can say that we haven’t brought a plenty of culture to Estonia.” [On the signs: “German goods of culture”, “Handcuffs”, “Halter”, “Knives and Guns”, “Pickaxes and spades”, “Bars”]

*Tasuja*, 1944, June 10. 88



**FRIEND OF FLOWERS**

“Which flowers do you like, Ruudi?”

“Everything that can be picked from the ground and not from the trees!”



**GIRLFRIEND'S PIE**

“You have a suitable tool at hand—be a good sport  
and cut the pie that my girlfriend sent me into slices!”

*Rindeleht*, 1943, May 22. 90



**DIRTY RAILWAY STATIONS**

A street sweeper to a passenger:

“Before you enter the street, please clean your shoes—otherwise you will dirty the street”.



**SWINGING ON THE MASS GRAVES**

GPU founded a public park with swings on the Vinnitsa mass graves.

Unpublished material from the newspaper *Postimees* archive,

from 1942–1944, ERA f.4416 n.2 s.1063.

93 MURDERERS AMONG THEMSELVES

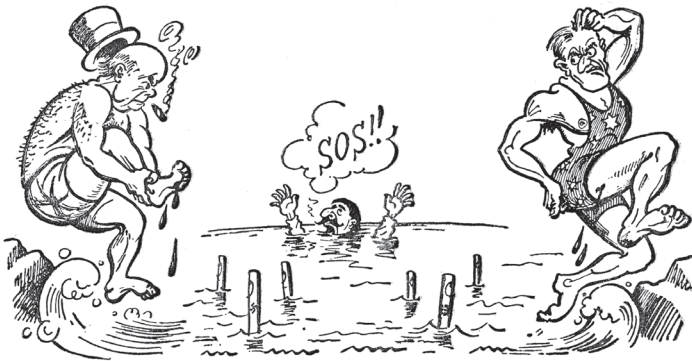
[Conversation between a US air pirate and the violent Jewish-Bolshevik murder]

“So, comrade gangster, things are really quite simple. First get your victim on the knees and then—bang!” “I have banged often but I cannot force my victim on its knees!”

Unpublished material from the newspaper *Postimees* archive, from 1942–1944, ERA f.4416 n.2 s.1061.



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UNCOMFORTABLE SWIMMING PLACE

Father Stalin, Mr Churchill and other war inciters don't have a single swimming place left, because the periscopes of the German and Allies' submarines are damaging the ones causing the unrest.

Unpublished material from the newspaper *Postimees* archive,

94 from 1942–1944, ERA f.4416 n.2 s.1062.



**THESE ARE THE USUAL JEWISH CAPITALIST BUSINESS SCHEMES,  
BUT THEY WILL NOT GET LUCKY THIS TIME**

Unpublished material from the newspaper *Postimees* archive,  
from 1942–1944, ERA f.4416 n.2 s.1058.

# Images of the Traitor and the Enemy in Humour and Political Cartoons in Wartime Slovakia: Analysis of the Magazine *Kocúr*

## Introduction

The Second World War brought to Central Europe not only significant changes in the geopolitical arrangement, but also a release of the tension left over from earlier years for various groups. The fragile status quo created in the Czechoslovak Republic as a successor state of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was increasingly attacked by feelings of dissatisfaction not only among supporters of the defeated states, but—mainly due to the later economic crisis and deepening poverty in the 1930s—also among some political representatives of the so-called state-forming nations.

Social tensions driven by the effects of foreign and domestic conflicts and culminating in WWII were, among the broad masses in Czechoslovakia, ventilated through several popular comic magazines that were created either in the period of the monarchy, or were established after the creation of Czechoslovakia.

This article will continue mapping Slovakia's humoristic journalism, which had its roots in the magazine *Černokňazník* ('Wizard'), published between 1864 and 1910 (Krekovičová & Panczová 2013). Its successor, *Kocúr* ('Tomcat') magazine (1919–1945) was published in that period combining several ground-breaking milestones in the socio-political organisation of Central Europe.

Apart from jokes and anecdotes, regular parts of the magazine's content were dedicated to political commentaries in the form of feuilletons and political cartoons. In terms of detecting various levels of ethnic or ideological differences, and also of different forms of self-images, it is precisely this 'political' component that is the most prolific source of material. In my analysis, I use visual as well as a written form of imaging of the Others that had emerged throughout the whole period the magazine was published.

In addition to the visualisation of these images within the historical context the study also focuses on the influence of editors and caricaturists in the magazine's development.

## Historical Context

The first years that the magazine was published were marked partly by euphoria surrounding the formation of Czechoslovakia, and also by preservation of a traditional self-image as an underprivileged and undervalued 'shepherd' of Upper Hun-

gary (Fig. 96) (Krekovičová & Panczová 2013: 465). The feelings of satisfaction and victory were mixed with suspicion and fears of the culturally and historically different partner the Slovaks gained in the Czechs. In addition, the new state was forced to deal with large German and Hungarian minorities (at that time there were more Germans in Czechoslovakia than Slovaks) with the creation of an artificial ‘Czechoslovak nation’ (following the idea of so-called of ‘czechoslovakism’). This, however, evoked memories in many Slovaks of the recent magyarising efforts to deny their ethnic identity. Direct confrontation happened especially in connection with the activity of Czech teachers, doctors, officials and policemen who were relocated to Slovakia to compensate for the lack of these professions after their mainly pro-Hungarian orientated colleagues had left. Later, however, an image of a Czech as a usurper of jobs was created among the Slovaks (Fig. 97). This was associated with a typical statement used by Czech employers in communication with Slovak applicants: *Nelze vyhověti* (‘Cannot satisfy’ or ‘Not suitable’), which became a slogan.<sup>1</sup>

Despite many positive sides of the union, the domestic policy of Czechoslovakia in the area of ethnic relations was becoming increasingly tense. The idea of Slovak autonomy (also labelled Slovak ‘autonomism’ by historians<sup>2</sup>) was promoted in particular by the officials of the Slovak People’s Party represented by Andrej Hlinka (1864–1938), a Catholic priest and charismatic public activist and speaker.

The international politics at the end of the 1930s significantly accelerated the dynamics of inter-ethnic relations in Czechoslovakia. Autonomy was finally declared in November 1938, but Czechoslovakia was significantly weakened politically with the signing of the Munich Agreement in September 1938. Under the pretext of protecting the Sudeten Germans, Hitler forcefully annexed border areas of Czechoslovakia to the German Reich under the threat of using the military. This act, together with the Vienna Award,<sup>3</sup> was perceived by the inhabitants of Czecho-

<sup>1</sup> In the autonomistic (see the following footnote) press in 1937 we can find for example the following description from the Slovak poet Martin Rázus: “The days of big migration have come. People with brotherly zeal surged from behind the Morava and from all regions of Austria, with and without qualifications. We welcomed all of them kindly like brothers. They occupied offices; we enjoyed it. They were democratic, willing and grateful. But the first *nelze vyhověti* appeared, then the second and the third. The capable workers were leaving the country. With bitter disappointment in their eyes and increasingly with utter indifference renouncing all power were the Czechoslovaks” (Rázus 1937: 2).

<sup>2</sup> The Slovak autonomist movement (changed form—autonomism) in the context of the first Czechoslovak republic represented an ideological opposition towards the political system of state centralism as well as against czechoslovakism as a form of official cultural policy. This policy was already formed at the end of the 1920s within the political programme of the Slovak People’s Party. Autonomism extended the main effort of nationally oriented politicians in Slovakia towards cultural and constitutional recognition of Slovaks as a sovereign nationality and not only as a local branch of a single Czechoslovak nation. Representatives of political autonomism demanded fundamental constitutional changes and the creation of Slovak political and territorial autonomy.

<sup>3</sup> As a consequence of the Vienna Award (November 2, 1938) Hungary gained the southern and eastern parts of Slovakia.

slovakia as a betrayal by the British and French allies in the interest of appeasement. The existing Czech–Slovak schism also helped Hitler to divide Czechoslovakia and to create a model satellite state. In the spring of 1939 Hitler offered the then Slovak People’s Party leader Jozef Tiso an opportunity to implement the full autonomy of Slovakia under the tutelage of the German Reich. This started a controversial era in Slovakia of enthusiastic state-building, but at the cost of an unconditional acceptance of the German political ideology and political, military and economic control. Abroad, however, the Resistance was formed, which consisted on the one hand of the supporters of the former president Edvard Beneš and Slovak Democrats in London, and on the other (after 1943) of the Communists, who worked directly under the influence of Soviet policy in Moscow.

In connection with ethnic policy, a substantial change after 1939 came, naturally, in relation to Jewish citizens. The so called ‘Jewish Code’ issued on September 9, 1941 legalised and specified the unequal status of the Jewish minority in the territory of the wartime Slovak Republic. Jews were defined on the basis of racial and religious criteria, were required to wear a yellow star, were excluded from public office and deprived of the most basic civil rights. (For more on the anti-Jewish persecution in Slovakia during WWII and the ‘Jewish Code’ see Kamenec 2007.)

After 1939 the Czech minority in Slovakia was also exposed to hostile propaganda: most of the Czech civil servants were made redundant and were forced to leave Slovakia.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, for example the German minority in Slovakia, concentrated mainly in big towns or enclaves in various parts of Slovakia, was in a different position. The advent of Czechoslovakia was not welcomed among Germans in Slovakia because of their loyalty to the previous regime, the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Horváthová 2002: 109). Later, in the 1920s this minority was reconciled with the new sociopolitical system. Nevertheless after 1933 the influence of Nazification increased among members of this minority. The privileged status of the *Deutsche Partei* (The German Party in Slovakia, reorganised after 1939 to follow the pattern of the NSDAP in the German Reich) within the Slovak political system<sup>5</sup> significantly strengthened the position of the German minority (Gabzdilová & Olejník 1998).

### **Ideological Profile of the Magazine**

In the period after WWI a few more humorous magazines featuring political cartoons appeared in Slovakia, but their publishing did not last for more than a few

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<sup>4</sup> The number of members of the Czech minority in Slovakia decreased from 77 448 in 1938 to 31 451 in 1943. The number of Czech state employees in Slovakia decreased from 20 541 in 1938 to 1174 in 1943 (Rychlík 1989: 410, 423; Bystrický 1997: 611).

<sup>5</sup> In 1940 the *Deutsche Partei in der Slowakei* had around 60 000 members—almost all of the adult male Germans in Slovakia (Gabzdilová & Olejník 1998). The party was allowed to have an organisational structure independent of state administrative bodies, including its own military units (*Freiwillige Schutzstaffel*) (Gabzdilová 2004).

years.<sup>6</sup> *Kocúr* was a humour magazine dealing with topics from domestic and foreign politics, to everyday life. In terms of the visual means, there are quite clearly distinguishable categories in the magazine. As Thomas Milton Kemnitz has defined, there are two main types of cartoons: “cartoons of opinion” as “visual means of communicating opinions and attitudes or of ‘summing up’ situations; humour may be present but is not a necessary part of a cartoon of opinion” and “cartoon jokes” which are “designed to communicate humour” (Kemnitz 1973: 82). “Cartoons of opinion” are, as in other journals, and in particular *Kocúr*, shown on the title page or last page.

The *Kocúr* sense of humour became a mirror for the times, especially in the field of political satire (feuilletons and cartoons), driven by the views of its chief editor, Pavol Halaša (1885–1969). Halaša belonged to the conservative supporters of the Slovak National Party associated predominantly with the Protestant electorate. The party on one hand welcomed the creation of Czechoslovakia and (especially in the beginning) rejected the harsh anti-Czech focus of the People’s party’s autonomism, while at the same time increasingly promoting its autonomy and criticising expressions of Czech cultural superiority and the ideology of ‘czechoslovakism’. The object of satire was also ‘czechoslovakism’ among the Slovaks, which was considered to be renegade and a national betrayal. The image of the ‘Czechoslovak’ bore similar feature to the image of the ‘Magyarone’: distorted language and arrogance. Within international politics in the magazine we encounter criticism of the expansionist policies of Germany and Italy; however, under pressure of the events of 1938 and 1939, understandably, the ideological profile of the magazine changes.<sup>7</sup> This was reflected not only in the attitude towards Germany, but also in internal attitudes allowing the persecution of Jews, Czechs or political critics. This change, however, came to fruition in 1940 when Július Silnický,<sup>8</sup> a member

<sup>6</sup> The magazine *Jež*, which supported the politics of the Agrarian Party, was published in Bratislava between 1922 and 1926. The magazine *Koza* (1923–1925) spread the autonomist and anti-Czech views of the Slovak People’s Party (from 1925 it was part of Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party), while the faction led by Juraj Koza Matejov had the magazine *Dereš* (1925–1927), see Švec 1988: 38–41.

<sup>7</sup> Despite the change imposed on the magazine’s profile, Halaša presumably did not identify with the state ideology, and as with many other Slovak intellectuals he joined the anti-Nazi Slovak National Uprising in 1944 (Archive of Literature and Art of Slovak National Library, Fund of Andrej Halaša 37 AD 4).

<sup>8</sup> Július Silnický (1907–?) was the owner of the *Kompas* (“Compass”) publishing house, which in 1940, took over the publishing of *Kocúr* magazine. Silnický was also a member of the Hlinka’s Guard paramilitary organisation, which helped consolidate the authoritarian regime of the wartime Slovak state and actively participated in the repression of the Jews and other “enemies of the nation”. After the outbreak of the Slovak National Uprising in August 1944, which split the official state army (part of it, together with their commanders, joined the armed resistance against Germany) and armed forces alert squads of the Hlinka Guard were created in Slovakia. They helped the German army and the German special forces to combat the insurgency. Silnický became a division officer in Turčiansky Svätý Martin. After the war he was supposed to be tried for war crimes, and was ultimately convicted in absentia because he managed to flee to Argentina in 1948 (Archive of the Nation Memory’s Institute, KS Fund ZNB S—ŠtB Banská Bystrica, shredded decisions, inventory number: Július Silnický).

of the paramilitary Hlinka Guard Squad, became editor-in-chief and the magazine became a direct disseminator of official propaganda. It was the only officially authorised satirical magazine and its importance as a propaganda channel during the war was probably closely related to the increase in its frequency of publication.<sup>9</sup> The success of the humoristic magazine within society was confirmed by a remark in Július Silnický's private correspondence from 1941, where he noted that it is *Kocúr* and its supplement *Kocúr* Calendar that were the best-selling titles within the Kompas publishing house, which he owned.<sup>10</sup>

Through the lens of official state propaganda, international events (the alliance and later war with the USSR, the bombing of England, etc.), as well as home affairs (the economic consequences of the aryanisation of Jewish businesses, the Slovak National Uprising and the bombing of southern Slovakia by Allied forces) were presented in caricature.

In its visual presentation, *Kocúr* used the talents of known artistic personalities (Andrej Kováčik (1889–1953), Jozef G. Cincík (1909–1992), Janko Alexy (1894–1970), and others). In the context of political cartoons it could not always be established that the artists believed in the messages their cartoons bore.<sup>11</sup> Especially in wartime the authorship of the political cartoons had, understandably, become a sensitive issue—evidenced by the fact that after 1939 political cartoons often did not have an author, or the authors used pseudonyms, for example *Ciklon* ('Cyclone'), *Vichor* ('Storm').<sup>12</sup> According to the available sources, between 1927 and 1942 the preeminent artist of the magazine was Jozef G. Cincík. After 1942 he mainly just edited the work of other colleagues, since he was involved in many other cultural activities (Sabov 2009).

After the outbreak of the Slovak National Uprising in August 1944 the war reached the territory of Slovakia. This event also affected the publication of the magazine, which in 1945 finished its activities with a last double issue. It is a shame that within the editorial management the documentation relating to the publication of this magazine is, probably irretrievably, lost.

<sup>9</sup> From 1942, the monthly magazine again became biweekly while keeping the same number of pages: 12; from January 3, 1944 it was even published once a week with the same number of pages.

<sup>10</sup> In the letter Silnický noted a general decline in interest in buying books, and that the publishing house appeared to have given away more than before (Archive of Matica slovenská, AMS II 18CV3).

<sup>11</sup> In the interwar period, for example, A. Kováčik drew political caricatures as a professional caricaturist for several magazines that were in direct political opposition.

<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, to date we have failed to find out from the available sources how these artists coped in private with moral dilemmas—if they had any—while drawing propaganda caricatures. Often even their colleagues became victims of ideological attacks, for example Jewish painter Arnold Peter Weisz Kubínčan (1898–1945), who drew caricatures for the magazine *Kocúr* in 1936. It did not help that he was christened and in November 1944 he was deported to a concentration camp where he died under unclear circumstances.

## Inner Enemy

### *The Image of the Jew*

Jews were the most frequently pictured ethnic or social group in *Kocúr* magazine. During the pre-war period apart from anti-Semitic insinuations there were regular jokes made about Jews, so-called *šmonces*. In accordance with Jewish stereotypes Jews are depicted primarily as arbitrageurs, businessmen and lawyers who cunningly tried to enrich themselves at the expense of others. It should be noted however, that both hetero- as well as auto-stereotypes based on traditional Jewish humour are represented here. Within the humour based on auto-stereotypes the Jewish characters act in parts that can be grouped under the heading ‘witty outsmarting of a member of the majority’, which is similar to jokes about gypsies (see for example Krekovičová 2006). Among the traditional anti-Semitic images the pictures based on the physical repulsion of the Jews as well as the concept of a Jew as a traitor dominated. These images naturally escalated after 1939.

In the war period, especially after the release of the ‘Jewish Code’ in 1941, however, the burning issue in society became the question of legitimising and trivialising violence against Jews and their later deportation to concentration and extermination camps (Figs 98, 99). In addition to them being held responsible for unleashing the war, we encounter ruthless humour attacking the Jewish ‘race’ as such. Jokes, anecdotes and caricatures mock the efforts of the Jews to gain exemption from transportation or to hide their identities through marriage with Christians, conversion to Christianity or changing their names. The magazine also created the means by which they would publicly indicate hostile categories of non-Jews. These were so called *ziskožravci* (profit-guzzlers)—the nouveau riche from the ranks of disloyal aryanisers (administrators of confiscated Jewish property) who complied with the Nazi term *weisse Juden*, ‘white Jews’. In between the polar division of the discursive category of ‘white’ and ‘black’, there was also an intermediate category of “traitors” and “renegades”<sup>13</sup> which had substantially negative connotations (Fig. 100) similar to ‘Czechoslovaks’, or in *Černokňazník* magazine the dominant *madaróni*<sup>14</sup> (see Krekovičová & Panczová 2013). ‘White Jews’ either helped, or at least sympathised with, the Jews any way they could (for example aryanisers who secured exemption from transportation for former Jewish business and property owners), or they were labelled Jews because of their negative character traits (for example greed, cunning).

<sup>13</sup> An example is an evaluation of the medieval category of heretic, who, from the moral aspect, was often attributed with more negative connotations in comparison with the category of pagan or faithless. For more about the category of a heretic see Košťálová 2012: 81.

<sup>14</sup> A Slovak term used for people who declared themselves to be of Hungarian nationality although they were born of Slovak parents, or people whose Slovak origin was supposed. The term *madarón* was a frequent term in the anti-Hungarian discourse of Slovak national patriots, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, and in *Černokňazník* it belongs to the most popular topics and objects of satire.

### *The Image of the Czech*

Czechs became popular objects of satire from the very beginning of *Kocúr's* publication. The images of Czechs derived mainly from the 'otherness' that arose from their historical linguistic, religious and cultural background. It is particularly the comical figure of naïve Czech tourists, who from the perspective of Slovaks are seen as naïve townsmen unable to understand the Slovak historical and cultural background. The speciality of the 'Czech image' broke discursive rules applied by the 'common' Slovaks against the socially excluded groups: for example the use of the polite form to Roma and Jews when talking to them. The image of a Czech as someone foreign is present for example in the stereotype of Czechs crossing alimentary taboos by eating dog or cat meat.<sup>15</sup>

Of the Czech politicians, Eduard Beneš (1884–1948) was the most popular subject of caricatures. He was a minister of External Affairs and later also the second president of Czechoslovakia (1935–1938) (Fig. 101). After 1939 the Czechs acted as an open enemy to Slovak statehood and the exiled Czechoslovak government was perceived as conspiring with other enemies. *Kocúr* in this context mediates a visualisation of a popular conspiracy theory, also known today, about the shooting down of General Štefánik, a Slovak hero of WWI, during his return home in 1919. While the official cause of the aircraft accident was attributed to a technical malfunction, rumours started to spread that the plane was shot down on the orders of Beneš during the official gun salute.<sup>16</sup> The caricatures draw parallels between Beneš's treason against Štefánik and another betrayal perpetrated by Beneš against the Slovaks, supposedly carried out as a leader of the government in exile in London—the Allied forces' bombing of Slovakia in 1944 (Fig. 102).<sup>17</sup> Moreover, attempts to legitimise hostility against representatives of the joint Czechoslovak period by creating associations with the historic enemy—Hungarians—are found in the cartoons. The artist also depicts the figure of a militant Slovak shepherd who leans not on a stick but on a rifle (Fig. 103).

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<sup>15</sup> In *Kocúr* from 1932 there is a rhymed anecdote called Gypsy—a member of *Rodobrana* (Home Defense / National Defence), which talks about a Czech guest in a pub who unpacks a roast leg from his bag, and before he starts, the pub-owner's dog named Gypsy attacks it, because he recognised his son in the roast. The anecdote is probably also an allusion to the anti-Czech-oriented paramilitary Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, which is called *Rodobrana*. It operated between the years 1923 and 1927, but was officially banned in 1927. The poem in fact ends with the verses: "Rodobrana or the dog / no one ever stops; / all the paragraphs fall / until only one dog will be left" (*Kocúr*, 1932, no. 9, p. 136).

<sup>16</sup> E. Beneš is pictured in *Kocúr* as a small comic character "Ben Ešedu", which is probably a reference to his Masonic and supposedly pro-Jewish ideological orientation.

<sup>17</sup> Also the satirical poems in *Kocúr* blamed Beneš (because of his cooperation with Allied forces), as well as the Jews (universal culprits) for the bombing in Slovakia in 1944 (*Kocúr* 1944, no. 24, p. 279; *Kocúr* 1944, no. 26, p. 306).

### Enemies in the East

‘Bolshevism (or more specifically the brutal practices of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union) as a threat was significantly present even in the contemporary discourse of political elites. Bolshevism was presented not only as a system that enforced violent atheism, but also a collectivisation that led to the collapse of agriculture and famine among the domestic population of the USSR. The satirical poem “Trotsky writes to Slávik” in *Kocúr* in 1932 contains in one stanza a reference to a violent “theft” of seeds from the peasants:

Stalin became in the Kremlin  
an autocratic tsar  
and Commissioners  
are becoming fat with caviar.  
They take the barley  
Even from the peasants’ eyes  
and others also eat  
just the dry grass (*Kocúr* 1932, no. 3, p. 42).

Spreading “Bolshevism” (along with the intransigence of the states that denied German minorities the right to join the Empire—i.e. mainly Czechoslovakia) was, in pro-Nazi discourse, labelled the true cause of WWII. It is therefore understandable that among the ideological enemies in *Kocúr*, an image of Bolshevik is clearly visible—whether in combination with the attributes of Judaism (Jew-Bolshevik), or in connection with Stalin and his purges. After the signing of the famous Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact between Hitler and Stalin in August 1939, an ironic cartoon appeared in *Kocúr* showing the shock the pact had produced within the enemies (Fig. 104). In 1941 after Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union, the treaty was broken and an alliance between the Soviet Union and the Western powers was signed, the “thug Stalin” and “Jew Molotov” once again becoming part of the image of the enemy (Fig. 105). The paradoxes of this alliance became popular themes of satire in *Kocúr*, the common denominator being, naturally, a Jewish conspiracy. Stalin is in these caricatures shown as a bloody dictator whose indiscriminate ways and at that time strong opposition to aristocracy and Western liberalism make him a highly incompatible element in the anti-Hitler coalition (Fig. 106).

### Germans as Between Aggressors and Allies

As mentioned previously, Germans in Czechoslovakia belonged to the most numerous ethnic group, which was particularly true for the Czech lands, where Germans formed politically and economically a significant part of the population. In *Kocúr* of the interwar period, images of the German occur relatively infrequently; when they do, he is put into the category of privileged ethnic group which, naturally, flourishes at the expense of the Slovaks (Fig. 101).

The image of Germany is foregrounded in *Kocúr* only in the context of Hitler becoming Reich Chancellor. It is not, however, the image of ethnic Germans, but a political satire commenting on the action of President Hindenburg and the arrival of Adolf Hitler. The reaction to Adolf Hitler gaining the post of Chancellor, in addition to a small ironic undertone in *Kocúr*, was depicted mainly in connection with his anti-Semitism; between 1932 and 1933 we can find a number of anecdotes that create a fictitious personal confrontation between Hitler and the Jews, for example:

And once again Hitler. Hitler fell into the river and was drowning. By coincidence two Jews went by. (Everything is a coincidence: that Hitler came into the world is a coincidence, the fact that he became Chancellor is coincidence; why should it not be a coincidence that two Jews walked on the riverbank, exactly at the time when Hitler was drowning?) So the Jews pulled Hitler out of the water. When they pumped his stomach and he began gasping for air, he saw Kohn and Roth, and said: "Well, Kohn, you have saved my life; ask for whatever you want, I'll give it to you."—"Hitlerleben," Kohn said, "since we have unfortunately already pulled you out of the water, we ask only one thing of you: do not tell the other Jews that it was us, because they will kill us!" (*Kocúr*, 1933, no. 6, p. 86).

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Up until 1938, the magazine is clearly tuned against Hitler's and Mussolini's policies, disapproving of the increasing aggression especially in their international operations. In 1936 "Jano from the shed" (the editorial sketch, impersonating the voice of the Slovak common man in the character of *Jano* (John), who is a representative of the in-group) sharply criticised German "arrogance" and "blasphemy against God" by the "Hitlerised pack". Already in the first issue in 1939, however, the same *Jano* celebrated the foundation of the Slovak State in a spirit of gratitude to Hitler, approving of the fact that Slovaks may no longer live in slavery (*Kocúr*, 1939, no. 1, p. 3). That year's caricature of Hitler makes him look like a powerful blacksmith, who in front of the surprised and astonished politicians forges a new war weapon on the results of the Versailles Treaty (Fig. 107). The next period is dominated by images of an intrepid German soldier who vigorously expels a hostile pack of "dogs"—i.e. a Jew, Churchill and Chamberlain (Fig. 108).

### Greedy and Fake 'West'

The countries outside Central and Eastern Europe were rarely depicted in *Kocúr* in the interwar period. For example the image of an American and an Englishman much overlap, with features of a rich, scheming businessman who uses 'our' poverty and honesty (the category of our included other countries in Central and Eastern Europe) (Fig. 109). There is a similar feel of resentment towards the financially successful Other just as with the image of the Jew.

The proximity of these two images is explicitly present not only in caricature but also in written texts, the Jew once again playing the role of kingmaker and controlling world politics or the politics of war opponents (Fig. 110). The moral rectitude of the image of the American is discredited by the arms trade (Fig. 111), while the image the Brit (or the Englishman) is connected with the attribute of the coloniser who has no moral right to pretend to be a defender of human rights (Figs 112, 113).

Who is what? One Frenchman—midinet<sup>18</sup>; Two Frenchmen—fashion exhibition; Three Frenchmen—threesome. One Italian—singer; Two Italians—stonemason company; Three Italians—fascism. (...) One American—Yankee; Two Americans—business; Three Americans—world trade. (...) One Englishman—Gentleman; Two Englishmen—club; Three Englishmen—world supremacy (*Kocúr*, 1931, no. 10, p. 147).

### Conclusion

The cartoons and jokes in *Kocúr* presented not only a reflection of the contemporary socio-political situation but also a clear reflection of images of 'self' and Others.

In the self-perception of Slovaks after 1939 there is a shift from the stereotype of the oppressed unequal peasant or 'younger brother', to pretence of heroic militarism, especially in contrast to the nation's treacherous enemies.

Images in the category of 'foreigner' are depicted through the eyes of 'us' from a distance. These are forces that remain distant even though they affect us (Germans, Soviets, British/Englishmen, Americans) and there is no direct cooperation with them. Their images are quite simple and mainly represented only by the best-known political figures or stable personified symbols (Michl, Hitler, John Bull, Churchill, Chamberlain, Roosevelt, the Russian bear, Stalin, Molotov). A slightly different category is the closely related Others, such as the Czechs and Jews. They oscillate between 'us', 'others' and 'enemies', depending on the political circumstances, although because they stem from direct contact their characteristics are, understandably, more diverse. Jews as the power behind the throne in domestic and foreign policy, and as a fifth column threatening society from inside and out, are as always a stable scapegoat in chauvinistic political discourse. The image of the Jew thus became an understandable feature in wartime propaganda explaining the moral background to the actions of the distant 'foreign' forces—evil spreading from the 'East' and from the 'West' had a common familiar denominator.

In the context of this magazine, however, it is obvious that political satire and caricature reflecting current events do not put so much emphasis on the ethnic diversity of the enemy, but rather on their ideological convictions: in the case of the

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<sup>18</sup> From the French word *midinette* (young Parisian saleswoman or seamstress).

Czechs it is czechoslovakism and liberalism, in the case of the British and Americans it is imperialism, with Soviets it is bolshevism and with Germans Nazism. Unlike these ethnic groups, the figure of the Jew plays the role of universal enemy in these cartoons.

Similarly, as with the analysis of the magazine *Černokňažník* in the context of Slovak-Hungarian ethnic tensions at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Krekovičová & Panczová 2013), there is an additional category apart from the clear-cut categories of ‘us’ and ‘them’: the category of ‘renegades’, or ‘traitors’, in this particular case ‘Czechoslovaks’ and ‘white Jews’. It is this category that is usually presented as morally the worst, since it is associated with the betrayal of one’s own kind. Perhaps an additional factor is the denial of the ‘natural’ order as well as the element of betrayal.

The magazine *Kocúr* presents interesting material for the study of history of Slovak social and political satire, as well as for a study of the visualisation of various kinds of Others. In spite of the interwar period, after 1939 the humour of the cartoons and jokes became even more dedicated to mobilisation against enemies, and sometimes even went beyond the boundaries of humanity. The trivialisation of violence against a country’s citizens, the mockery of suffering people and threats were new motifs that marked the last years of the magazine’s history.

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AN INCURSION OF THE SLOVAKS INTO PRAGUE

96 ..... J.G. Cincík, *Kocúr*, 1932, no. 6, p. 81



**THE POOR LITTLE SLOVAKS**

Minister Dostálek: "We assign the public contracts to whom we want to.  
For public opinion we have the police!"



Vyvezú, nevyvezú, vyvezú...

..... **THEY WILL DEPORT ME, WON'T THEY, WILL THEY...**



– Preboha, neberte mi môjho jediného dojiča kráv...!

FOR GOD'S SAKE, DON'T TAKE MY ONLY MILKER AWAY...!

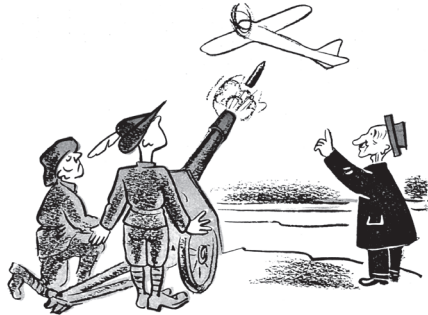


**THE WHITE JEW AND HIS SHADOW**

100 ..... *Kocúr*, 1943, no. 23, p. 276.

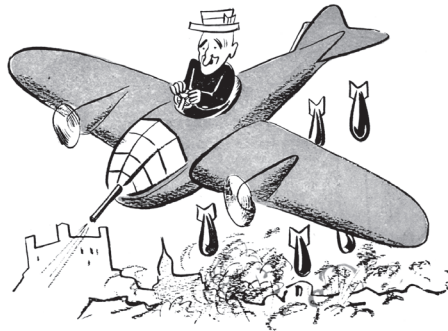


**MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS IN THE ROLE  
OF WET NURSE OR BENEŠ'S POLITICS**



**Beneš roku 1919: -- Tož, braťri, sundejte mi toho Slováka Milana.**

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**Beneš roku 1944: — Nandejte tím Slovákům, ať vědí, zač je toho pět!!!**

**BENEŠ IN 1919: WELL, BROTHERS, SHOOT DOWN THAT SLOVAK MILAN.**

**BENEŠ IN 1944: TRASH THOSE SLOVAKS TO SORT THE MOUT!!!**



264



THE CONSEQUENCES OF GERMAN-RUSSIAN BOMB



265

**HARVEST IN THE USSR** .....

J. Alexy (?), *Kocúr*, 1941, no. 16, p. 192. 105



## Spiritus movens.

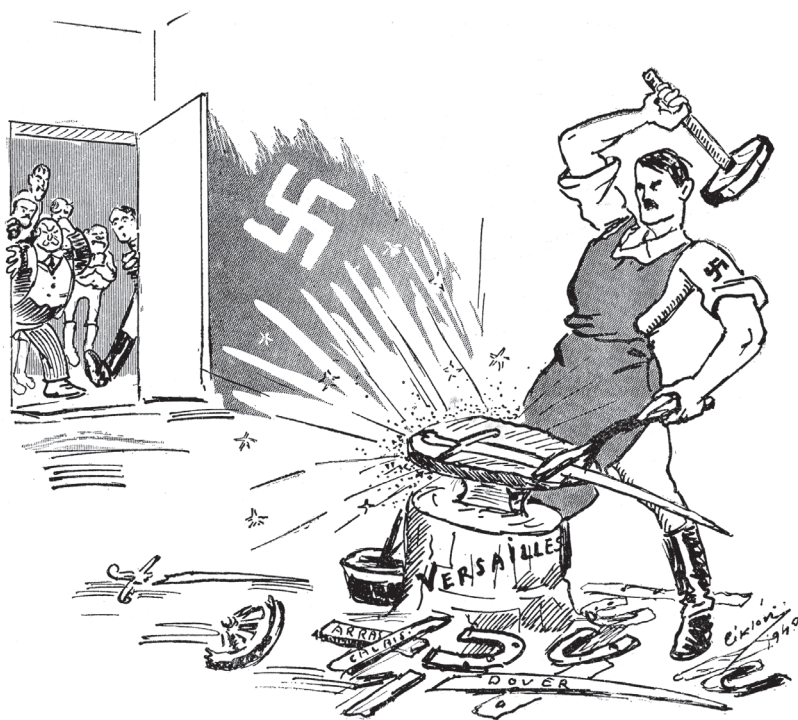
*Roosevelt, Churchill a Stalin:*  
„My bojujeme za demokraticko-  
boľševickú pravdu, bratskú lás-  
ku a slobodu!“

„Prečo tak chladno, excelencia,  
veď sme my príbuzní: ja som sa  
roku 1918 „postaral“ v Jekate-  
rinburgu o vášho pána ujca...“



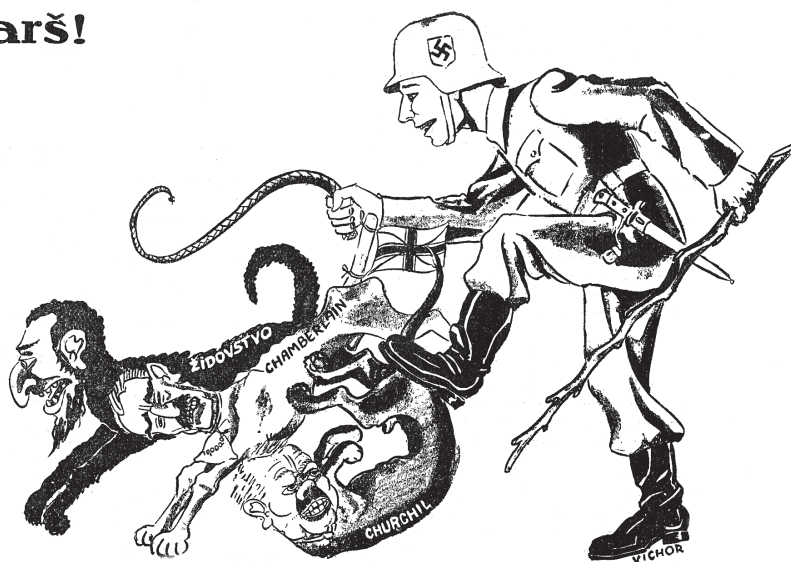
### SPIRITUS MOVENS

Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin: “We are fighting for the democratic-bolshevik truth, brotherly love and freedom!” “Why so cold, Excellency, we are, after all, relatives: I ‘looked after’ your uncle in Yekaterinburg in 1918...”



# Marš!

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MARCH!

108 ..... Vichor, *Kocúr*, 1940, no. 7, p. 64.

### Sklamanie kramára.



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#### THE VENDOR'S DISAPPOINTMENT

John Splendid: "Please arm yourself. I have everything. If you don't have money, I'll gladly lend you...If you don't want it, at least accept a guarantee from me."

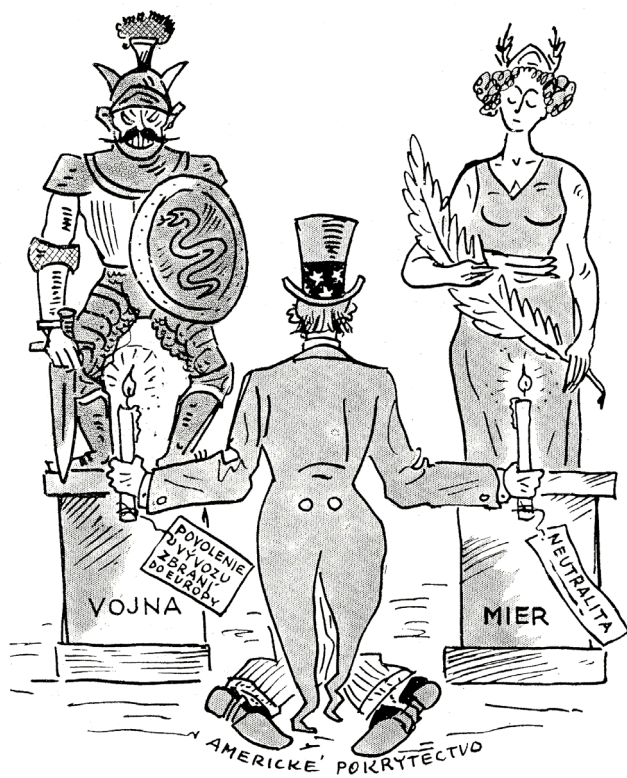
Central- and East-Europeans: "...we don't want it. We've already paid our blood and money for the world trade in 1914–1918. We are poor but self confident."

All: "Hey, Macek! Don't buy it... The business with John doesn't pay..."



**„Tancuj, tancuj, vykrúcaj . . .“**

ROOSEVELT AS A CIRCUS BEAR.  
DANCE, DANCE, TURN AROUND...



**HE IS BURNING THE CANDLE BOTH TO GOD AND TO DEVIL**

American Hypocrisy. [On the signs] War—permission to send arms to Europe. Peace—neutrality.

*Kocúr, 1939, no. 9, p. 72.* 111

## ANGLICKÁ HUMANITA.

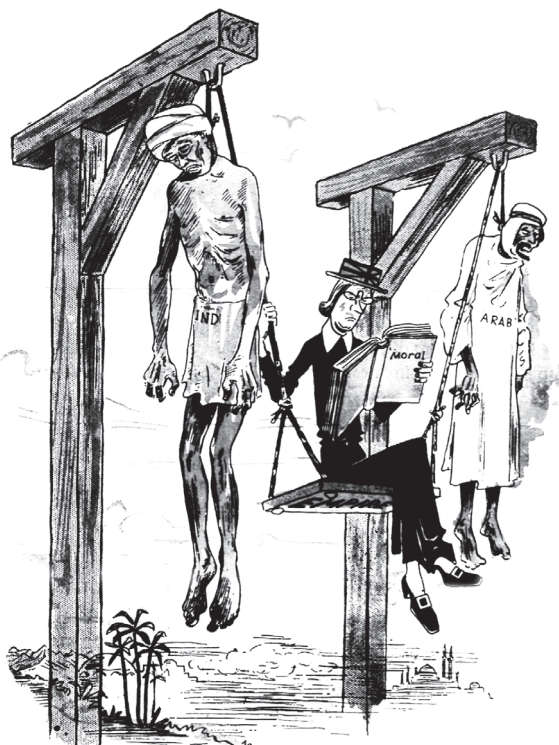


Smrť je hladná, ješť si pýta,  
poľutuj ju, Humanita!  
A nakŕm ju, nech je sýta  
vraždou detí... —  
Humanita-ta-ta-ta-ta...

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### ENGLISH HUMANITY

Death is hungry, he wants to eat, have mercy on him, humanity! Feed it, let it fill up the stomach with the enemy's children! Humanita-ta-ta-ta...



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**THE WORLD RULER:**  
“...THE EXISTENCE AND POWER OF ENGLAND DEPEND ON THE BALANCE.”

*Kocír, 1941, no. 14, p. 168.* 113

# Performing the New Enemy: Images from the Cold War in the Communist Polish Newspaper *Trybuna Robotnicza*

## Introduction: *Trybuna Robotnicza*

In this chapter I am going to analyse cartoons dating from early Cold War period (1947–1953) published in the newspaper *Trybuna Robotnicza* ('Workers' Tribune'). The period I have chosen is not one usually described in similar analyses: it is neither the exact Stalinist period (1948–1956), very often referred to in texts on communist propaganda in Poland, nor the time between the end of WWII and the end of the Stalinist era (1945–1956)—the era of crucial changes and of establishing the new political and social order. I have decided to take into account cartoons from the beginning of the Cold War<sup>1</sup>, and also those dating from the seizing of power in Poland by the communist party (1947) up to the signing of the peace treaty in the first military conflict into which two sides of the Cold War were involved, that is the Korean War (1953). I believe examining data from this period will allow me to discover whether the threat of war, although a distant one, coming true, changed anything in representing the 'new enemy'. My material is taken from the daily newspaper published, irregularly at first, in the Silesia region (see also Sztandara; Baniowska-Kopacz this volume) from 1945; the first few issues were published as *Trybuna Śląska* ('Silesia's Tribune') and publication continued until 2004. It was one of the largest Polish newspapers of the time<sup>2</sup>, published under the auspices of the Polish United Workers' Party, and thus presenting the official standpoint of the Polish communist government and taking great advantage of communist propaganda techniques. In this sense it is exemplary for studying how the image of an enemy is performed in the post-war era.

In the case of *Trybuna Robotnicza*, the articles were sometimes accompanied by cartoons and caricatures. A few pictures and photos appeared in every issue, but then their role was secondary; the main focus was always on text. Cartoons, however, summarised the main discussions present in the newspaper, and also gave a kind of an additional, precise propaganda commentary to the on-going events. In

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<sup>1</sup> For the Cold War analysed from another angle see Riabov this volume.

<sup>2</sup> I chose this newspaper for my study because analyses of the communist propaganda present in the main daily newspaper of the time, *Trybuna Ludu* ('The People's Tribune'), have already been done (Witkowska 2009). However, I wanted to examine a newspaper with a big circulation that presented the official, government, standpoint; hence I focused on *Trybuna Robotnicza* cartoons. Moreover, the subject of the depictions of the Cold War in this newspaper has not been analysed yet.

addition, cartoons were commentaries to national or international affairs; they very rarely referred to local, Silesian problems. Their authors (at least those about whom we have some data, as most of the cartoons were not signed) were not related to the region either. Moreover, in the discussed case the contents of cartoons were not their authors' personal messages, but were dictated by ideology (see Alichnowicz 2006a: 71).

### Communist Propaganda in the Polish Press

As stated by Janusz Kaźmierczak, any study of the Polish press in the period under study “has to become a study in propagandistic distortion” (2011: 201), and so my own study to some degree became the same. In it, I observe how a particular political ‘alternative reality’ was performed and evoked. Propaganda is an instrument for changing the interpretation of on-going events, for writing new history (Jarecka 2008: 50; for more on propaganda techniques see Laineste this volume). Visual propaganda together with the official message of the communist authorities inscribed in cartoons from *Trybuna Robotnicza* are my main interest here<sup>3</sup>. This approach, of course, makes this article biased as it lacks the presentation the Cold War from the other side. This, however, is the general idea of this text: to analyse only one type of source, produced by only one side of the conflict, and, moreover, to touch only one layer of possible analysis of visual data. Thus this text is more about what was meant to be seen, about the visual language of propaganda, and about who designed it than about who was looking at these cartoons and other images, what could be seen in them and how. In other words, this article to some degree ignores the whole branch of visual studies focusing on the process of seeing, perception of the content, etc., focusing mainly on the context and purpose of preparing the image and its assumed performative potential, as well as describing the aims of propaganda and agitation underlying it. This text is more about cartoons as a source of new images of the enemy than about the ways of perceiving this image. My goal is to answer why the described cartoons were composed in a particular manner, why they used particular symbols, and what the role ascribed to them by the Polish communist government, or—more generally—by the communist authorities was. In this way I want to grasp the pattern of constructing the new enemy in a post-war order: an enemy born from the war context and from the communist dreams and delusions.

The anti-Western propaganda in the communist bloc has not been examined as thoroughly as the anti-Soviet propaganda in Western countries, especially in America (Fătu-Tutoveanu 2013: 239); some studies, however, make it possible to place an analysis of a single newspaper and its cartoons in the wider context

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<sup>3</sup> In the article I present only a select few cartoons, which in my opinion is the best way to reflect the type of illustration published in *Trybuna Robotnicza*. The chapter, however, seeing to the whole visual content of this newspaper in its treatment of the Cold War in the period under discussion.

of communist propaganda (Fătu-Tutoveanu 2013; Kaźmierczak 2009; Lipoński 1990; Witkowska 2006, 2008, 2009). In the period discussed here, the agitation machine seemed to have been internally coherent, although, as some scholars point out, unsuccessful (Fătu-Tutoveanu 2013: 249; Lipoński 1990).

### The Communist Propaganda Project

As has already been mentioned, cartoons published in *Trybuna Robotnicza* were one of the means of communist propaganda and as such focused on constructing a negative vision of the capitalist world, embodied above all by the United States as the main adversary, and its mainly European companions: the United Kingdom, France, West Germany (see also Witkowska 2008: 124). This kind of agitation can be described in short as anti-Western propaganda (Kaźmierczak 2011; Witkowska 2008: 124), but it fanned a particularly strong anti-American sentiment. All the evil forces of capitalism were personified by the rulers and authorities of these countries, which were shown as acting not only against the communist bloc, but also against their own peoples, since—as the communist propaganda stated—in Western countries there was a silent crowd of people waiting to achieve self-awareness and to start the revolution (Alichnowicz 2006b: 96). In the 1940s and 1950s, the press was one of the most successful means of spreading propaganda, especially the daily newspapers (Fătu-Tutoveanu 2013: 240; Witkowska 2006: 164). It was a tool which allowed the authorities to “maintain ideological control” (Witkowska 2008: 123) and hence it was a beloved medium of communist political propaganda at the time (Witkowska 2006: 164–165). This propaganda used both linguistic and visual means, which corresponded with each other in harmony to a certain degree. Verbal expressions of so-called newspeak<sup>4</sup>—a particular language used by communist authorities and official media (see Głowiński 2009; Kuchta 2012)—were depicted in cartoons.

After the WWII, Soviet propaganda needed to adjust to the new situation: both to new opportunities and problems (Pechatnov 2001: 1). This challenge embraced propaganda actions not only in the USSR but also in other countries, since communist propaganda was a total project of the Soviet authorities and its forms and contents were spread to other countries of the bloc (see Nadzhafov 2004; Pechatnov 2001: 8). The same messages and topics appeared in all channels of propaganda; hence the same themes were infiltrated into pictures and in literature. Propaganda was an organised system (see Alichnowicz 2006a: 52). Karol Alichnowicz analyses, among others, communist propaganda posters, although in my opinion his observation is also valid in reference to pictures published in the press: “The poster always includes its viewer into the ideological continuum, into the campaign actually conducted by authorities” (Ibid.: 76). Consequently, political

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<sup>4</sup> Originally this expression was coined by George Orwell in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* published in 1949.

cartoons must be considered an element of the whole system of propaganda. Pictures, even those without additional verbal expressions in the form of captions and titles, similarly referred to the whole set of ideological clichés and to particular expressions of newspeak. Even if a particular cartoon contained no catchwords, and thus presented no ambiguity between such catchwords (a normal function of newspeak) and the drawings, an ambiguity between iconic and verbal expression was nevertheless evident because of the newspeak phrases and labels that were omnipresent in all media and in public broadcasts (see *Ibid.*: 72). In addition, this game increased the power of the message inscribed in the cartoon. Newspeak and its labels, catchwords, etc. determined the interpretation of particular depictions. The Other had also earlier been presented as an ugly, small, bloodthirsty man or as some obnoxious animal: a dog, pig etc.; but it was newspeak that related those images to particular language expressions and their fixed meanings. The significance of symbols changed due to the new context of their interpretation. Newspeak was an element of this context.

### **An Enemy in Propaganda**

Propagandist cartoons focused on depicting the enemies of the communist bloc. The main way of depicting an enemy was presenting its “devilish actions against the peace-loving nations of the world” (Witkowska 2008: 124). This short sentence reveals the condensed assumptions of communist propaganda in the Cold War reality, as well as the main way of constructing the image of the new enemy as a threat to post-war peace. This image was deeply rooted in the system of war metaphors, in the fears caused by the (not entirely imagined) possibility of the outbreak of third world war, etc. The post-war world presented in communist propaganda was monochrome (Witkowska 2006: 167), with a clear demarcation line between good and evil, between ‘us’ and ‘them’: “the enemy and his infernal land in opposition to the home paradise” (*Ibid.*: 237). The image was built on tension between the two opposing forces: the capitalist West and the communist East. According to Andrada Fătu-Tutoveanu, in the period under analysis, the American media defined American society in contrast to Russian society, whereas Russia mirrored this process by defining its own society in contrast to American society (Fătu-Tutoveanu 2013: 238). However, this can be said to be the feature of all propaganda—it is constructed on binary divisions. In my opinion, what can enrich the study of propaganda and is worthy of analysis here is the post-war character of the new order and the constant presence of symbols, references and images of war in depictions of the new era. As Vladimir Pechatnov notes, communist propaganda in the second half of the 1940s was an ideological struggle that “maintained considerable continuity of wartime practice” (Pechatnov 2001: 5). Propaganda “was reconstituted as an instrument of psychological warfare” (*Ibid.*: 23). The new era was defined in terms of another war, the Cold War, one

demanding a new enemy and shown by means of old symbols which, however, sometimes evoked new meanings and created new political order.

The cartoons analysed here seldom referred directly to the Cold War as such or seldom used this term, but they commented upon its particular events, or, mainly, upon political actions confirming the Cold War rationale. The way of depicting the two sides involved in this political conflict was based on certain stereotypes present both in visual means and in textual descriptions (Alichnowicz 2006b). Communists—defenders of peace—were elevated, morally pure and physically larger than the small, ugly and often dehumanised capitalists. There is nothing particularly new in such a presentation of ‘us’ (communists from all over the world) vs. ‘them’ (greedy capitalists). The enemy is usually presented as barbaric, amoral, deceptive etc. while ‘we’ are pure, strong and heroic. In the described case, however, this pattern is saturated with symbols and metaphors deriving from the previous era—the period of WWII.

However, this new, cold, war was a conflict of ideologies, not of states or nations. And equally the new enemy was ideological. Although he is shown as having a national identity—American, French, English etc.—he above all has a class identity. It was, after all, not nations who threatened the peaceful post-war existence, but capitalist rulers acting against the communist bloc (and also against their own peoples). War alliances were reversed; brothers in arms became enemies because of ideological differences. Although there are some studies which—I would say ‘classically’—undertake the subject of the national or state Other in the communist propaganda in the Eastern bloc, for instance the picture of America or of Great Britain (Fătu-Tutoveanu 2013; Witkowska 2008), in my opinion the ‘West’ should be considered as a collective, although to some degree internally diversified, ideological enemy (see also Pechatnov 2001: 12–13). The wartime order was being questioned, new conflicts arose and new alliances emerged, yet the new face of the enemy was constructed from old components. The fresh memory of WWII and the awareness of the fragility of peace put depictions of the new enemy into a particular context.

Few authors mention the relationship between people’s experiences of WWII and the influence that anti-capitalist propaganda (which presented the rulers of Western countries as warmongers) may have exerted on them (Lipoński 1990: 82; Witkowska 2008: 125). Symbols of the just-ended military conflict (for example those equating the West with the Nazis) are present in the cartoons referring to the Cold War, and although it was an imaginary war, it seemed to be quite possible in those representations that it could come true. It is, however, represented as a new kind of war, and not only because there was a new—ideological—enemy; above all it was because of new technology, the nuclear bomb, which had been in the hands of the Americans since 1945, and in 1947 became part of the Soviet arsenal as well.

## Cold War Cartoons from *Trybuna Robotnicza*

### *The New Enemy versus the New Man*

The communist Cold War propaganda could be described by the dichotomies which it contains: communism vs. capitalism, war vs. peace, morality vs. degeneration and, as one of those dichotomies, the New Man vs. the bourgeois. And so the times are new, the enemy is new, and there is also the New Man—one who builds socialism (Alichnowicz 2006b: 94–96). The New Man opposes evil forces and is ready to defend peace—the peace which is threatened by the evil, greedy warmongers. This tension between the communists who love and defend peace and the capitalist West aiming to wage war is implicit in almost all cartoons commenting upon international relations in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The New Man appears, of course, not only in political cartoons; he is the hero of posters, literary works, art etc. Always presented as dominating the horizon, he looks at his enemies from above (Ibid.: 94–95). He embodies the masses, the people, since there are (or should be) masses of New Men, not a single individual (Ibid.: 95). Moreover, as clearly shown by Figure 114, the New Man is international (Ibid.: 96). He is presented as strong, young, well built, healthy, moral and with the inherent power of being able to eliminate the rotten and the degenerate (Fig. 115). The barbaric, primitive and brutal force is in these illustrations opposed to pure strength of character; the New Man is able to defeat the enemy even barehanded (Fig. 116). He is never presented with a military weapon (he is, after all, a peace lover); his weapons may only be tools, such as shovels or hammers, since he is a man of work, building socialism and a just world, not destroying it. Similar depictions were characteristic of the entire art of Socialist Realism—an icon of a strong, well-built worker or farmer was transferred to the Cold War propaganda from older representations and older ideas (see Cheng 2009).

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### *Peace Defenders versus Warmongers*

Communist newspeak was full of offensive and depreciating expressions referring to capitalists, which became food for anti-Western propaganda. These were also visual, since such expressions were illustrated or used in the titles and captions of pictures. Wojciech Lipoński stated that “in this black-and-white propaganda phraseology and language labels played a dominant role” (Lipoński 1990: 85). One of such language labels defining Western rulers was “warmongers”. The threat of a new war appeared in many cartoons and was constantly present in anti-capitalist propaganda of the time (Witkowska 2006: 165). According to anti-capitalist propaganda, this label was a direct consequence of actions undertaken by the Western powers, the mean warmongers who disregarded the communists’ efforts to maintain world peace (Fig. 117). In cartoons, the East became a bastion of peace, while the West was preoccupied with nothing but plotting how to wage war and thus to take over the world. The American president Harry Truman, general

Douglas MacArthur, governor James Byrnes, British prime minister Winston Churchill or French president Charles de Gaulle were shown as immoral, devilish, greedy and irresponsible men who childishly wanted to play in another war, profit from it, and in this way to return to the tragedy of the previous war.

According to propaganda, they partially succeeded in doing this in the Korean War, and the peace treaty which concluded it was the cause of dissatisfaction for Western rulers. The representation of the Korean War in the communist Polish press was univocal—British and American soldiers were taking part in a crusade against communism (Witkowska 2008: 124). In *Trybuna Robotnicza's* cartoons, this war was presented as a military conflict, from which America was profiting, craftily caused by American forces, while the communist bloc made every effort to reinstate world peace, its peace-furthering work causing mass panic amongst the warmongers, especially in the US (Fig. 118). In the period of the Korean War, illustrations of the East defending peace were numerous (Fig. 119). In this vein, communist countries were shown as the only ones that took care of the whole world and were not as short-sighted as the West, which was obviously leading the world from one war to another.

#### *Old Symbols of the New Enemy*

Although the order of alliances in the post-war world had been reversed, the symbols of the enemy partially survived. The most evil forces of the present reality were branded with the mark of the most evil force of WWII, namely with the Nazi swastika, while the figure of Adolf Hitler was shown as the spirit inspiring Western acts (Fig. 120) (see Kaźmierczak 2009: 128–137; Witkowska 2008: 125). Old ideologies were reborn in new forms; now the West, previously fighting against Nazism, acted as a spring of its revival. However, the ‘new Nazism’ had also at least one new symbol and a new objective, focused on money-making: the swastika was equated with the dollar sign, which became a symbol of new oppression of the masses (Fig. 121).

#### *New Symbols of the New Enemy*

The dollar sign, strongly associated with Wall Street as a source of this evil, was one of the most frequent visual labels of all Western forces, not only, although prevalently, the American ones (see Lipoński 1990: 87). The cartoons show how the greed of Western rulers made them blind to the misery of their people and how this greed ruins their countries. Moreover, America was often presented as bribing other nations to cooperate with it (Ibid.). Similarly to the nuclear bomb, the dollar sign became a symbol of a contemporary and—from the then-current perspective—realistic threat (Fig. 122).

The nuclear conflict was the main axis of the Cold War, so the symbol of it appeared on both sides of the conflict (see Gamson & Stuart 1992), another kind of competition between two hostile forces. Both sides were in possession of nuclear

arms (the East, according to propaganda, only in order to defend itself against the brutal and aggressive West). The image of the bomb that appeared in cartoons was visually archaic, as if it did not refer to the idea of technological development and progress, but to the threat of the old war. The visual design of this bomb was well known from older cartoons or posters, but it contained a new death-dealing power: it became a new threat. The atom bomb was presented as a favourite toy of the Western rulers and an attribute defining their anti-peace attitude towards the communist bloc. At the same time, the nuclear bomb was a symbol meant to expose the flaws of the West, which had only weapons and no morality, no heroism, etc. The implied meaning was that a war the West could have waged would be as defective as it was, and would without any difficulty be won by the New Man, who would fight (when forced to) a just war.

### *Construction of the Enemy War Camp*

Communists would also win the war because of one more trait that they possessed. The East, as shown in *Trybuna Robotnicza*, was democratic; equality of the people reigned supreme, there were no national or private interests of the greedy, only care for the common good, while the West was presented as dominated by America forcing its foreign politics on subordinated countries (see Kaźmierczak 2009). The newspeak expression “chained dog” was coined to refer to a government in the service of America (Lipoński 1990: 84); this term described the relations between capitalists and their ‘puppets’, another newspeak language label. There were allusions to America and its adherents trying to increase their influence over other countries, and only the united communist bloc could stop their nasty plans.

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### *Here and There: A Polarised World*

Cartoons about the Cold War show two camps, two different worlds; one is ‘ours’, the other is ‘theirs’, and each is depicted by using different means and different symbols. The world in propaganda is divided, and the pictures also present two separate worlds using different visual codes, with only the ideological fight as their common denominator. ‘Here’ is safe; it is the home of the New Man, governed by peace, work and joy, while the land over ‘there’, in contrast, is ruled by war, brutality and slaughter (Alichnowicz 2006a: 81). ‘Here’ people are safe, but ‘there’ remains a threat, because the enemy residing there wants to come and destroy ‘here’. This threat was constantly inscribed in communist propaganda.

### **Building the New Enemy out of Old Clichés**

Icons, figures and symbols appearing in *Trybuna Robotnicza*’s propaganda cartoons were mainly not original images but borrowed from the pre-war and war period. America and its rulers were often presented through the figure of Uncle Sam—a label and a sign of Americanness (see Ketchum 1990). In turn, John Bull (see Taylor 1992) represented the United Kingdom and its authority. Those stereotypical de-

pictions were forced to carry the message of propaganda, which used existing easily recognisable icons. In addition, the 'New Man' as a symbol of socialist change was recruited from representations from the pre-war period. Other elements present in the pictures analysed here derived from the WWII world order. The swastika, the figure of Adolf Hitler, the omnipresent bombs referred directly to the recent memory of the war and to visual representations appearing during wartime. All those elements were transformed and included in the language of propaganda of a new, ideological, war.

This propaganda functioned within a wider system of socialist ideology, a system that elaborated its own language, newspeak, describing, judging, and, most importantly, performing the contemporary world. According to many scholars (Głowiński 2009; Kuchta 2012), newspeak had an unusual performative power of creating reality. It described a reality which (according to socialist goals) should be in the way as if it already existed. However, as Anna Kuchta notes, this kind of language or speak does not change things directly, as Austinian speech acts do<sup>5</sup> (Austin 1962); instead, it aims to modify attitudes and beliefs (Kuchta 2012: 29). This particular kind of performativity was also meant to create a particular reality, which was both performed by and mirrored in the language. This was also achieved directly through newspeak expressions and through their visualisations present in cartoons. Moreover, images themselves can be perceived as performative and may be treated as visual acts (Łukaszewicz-Alcaraz 2013). This perspective, however, also entails the viewer of an image and his or her experiences being present in the analysis (Ibid.: 328–329). However, as I mentioned at the outset, I focus mainly on the image and the system that stands behind it, so the performative potential inscribed in the cartoons themselves is most important for me. This potential was assumed for propaganda pictures, as well as for the newspeak, as they were both supposed to create a certain reality, describing it as pre-existent. Such an understanding of performativity, assumed for the structural level of propaganda, can also be analysed without testing it on the viewer. This is propaganda's performativity, deriving from the construction of the whole propaganda system, which concerns both images and words. In this respect, pictures from *Trybuna Robotnicza*, being as they were an element of the whole system, also had this performative potential of creating reality. The presented reality was supposed to be true. Thus propaganda cartoons were not mere representations of the world, but performative acts supposed to create a world identical to the one they depicted.

This world was created by the whole communist ideology. It was a reality presented to people, and within this reality there was an enemy from the opposite war camp. The performative power of cartoons is especially evident regarding the image of the enemy in propaganda. The cartoons helped to create, and in a methodical

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<sup>5</sup> John L. Austin understands performativity in terms of actually changing the status of things or constructing a reality through language expressions i.e. 'I promise you', 'I pronounce you man and wife'.

way, created the new, class enemy and its image. However, as I assumed at the beginning of my analysis, this enemy, as presented in the cartoons, did not change in any particular way before and after the Korean War. The enemy was depicted in the same manner; in practice, the Korean War just confirmed the existing image and only the geopolitical context (peace/war) changed. It appears, therefore, that communist propaganda used routine forms not only in language (see Głowiński 2009; Kuchta 2012), but also in visual representations. Propaganda as a whole, and among its various means also pictures, repeatedly presented the enemy constructed from the same symbols and elements, which were almost identical in all parts of the communist bloc. Communist propaganda was permeated with routine (Fătu-Tutoveanu 2013: 247). Such was also the case with the image of the Other, which did not change visibly in the investigated period in *Trybuna Robotnicza*, which upheld the vision of the enemy inscribed in general communist propaganda.

Some believe that routine propaganda would not have been successful (Ibid.: 249). But such is the life of performed things—they are ephemeral (see Schieffelin 1998: 198), and the meanings and things evoked within them do not have to change social reality, although they have such potential (see also Schieffelin 1985). The world created by propaganda, and within it the image of the new enemy, remained on the level of ideology which, although imaginary, was also a part of the social reality of people living in Poland. The image of the enemy constructed within propaganda, visible in cartoons from *Trybuna Robotnicza*, reflected ideological assumptions about the vision of the world, but also geopolitical changes that occurred after WWII; these, however, were—again—perceived through the prism of ideology. The image of the new enemy was performed in all the channels of propaganda. The enemy became the one who, by trying to wage a new war, impeded the New Man from building a new, peaceful, post-war world. In the pictures described herein, old symbols were interwoven with expressions of newspeak. Figures and signs from the pre-war and war order appeared in a new reality—a reality that was trying to construe its own ways of expression. Those, in turn, were used by propaganda along with old ones, already rooted in the imagery of the people and in earlier propagandistic actions.

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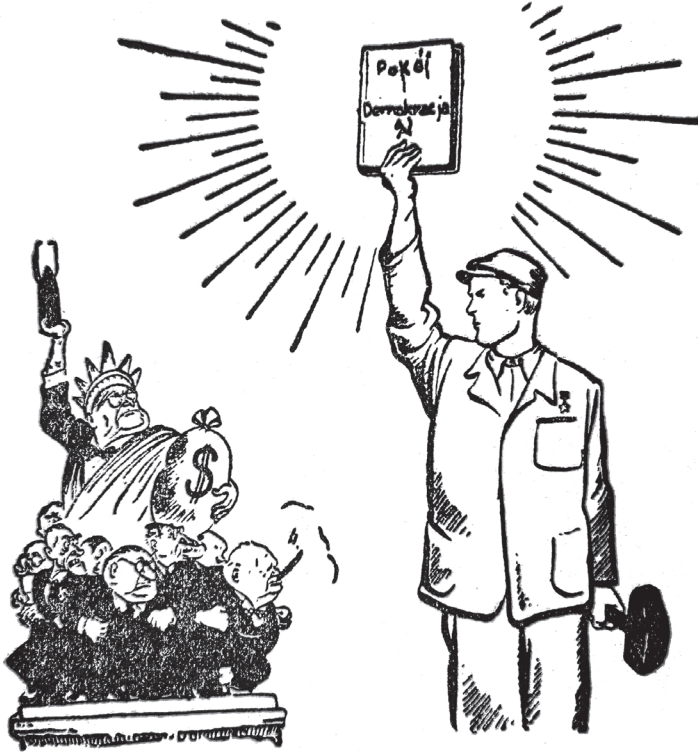
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**THE PEACE OFFENSIVE** .....

## Dwa światy



286

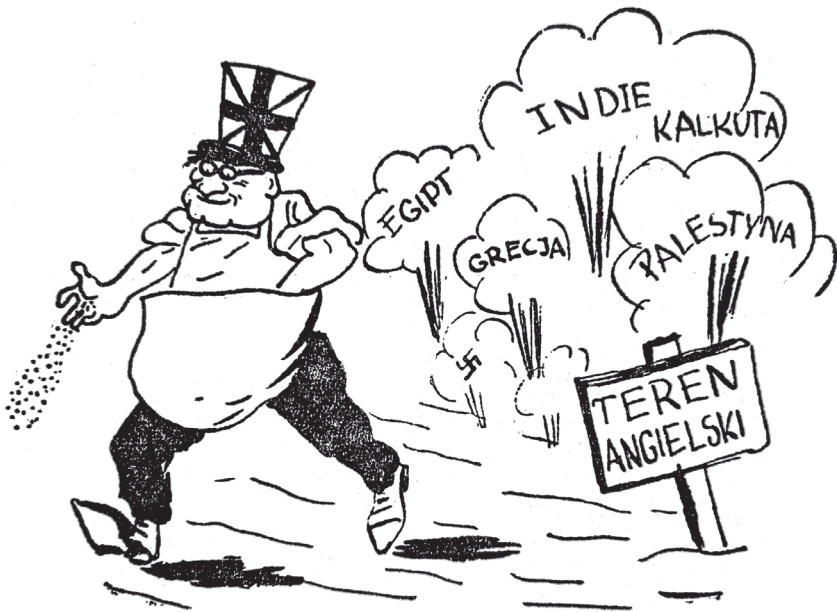
### TWO WORLDS

115 *Trybuna Robotnicza*, 1947, November 26, no. 325 (996), p. 2.



**THE 'THIRD POWER' IN PRACTICE**

288



**THE SOWER OF PEACE**

India, Calcutta, Greece, Palestine! English territory.

117 *Trybuna Robotnicza*, 1946, October 23, no. 291 (575), p. 5.

## WALL STREET

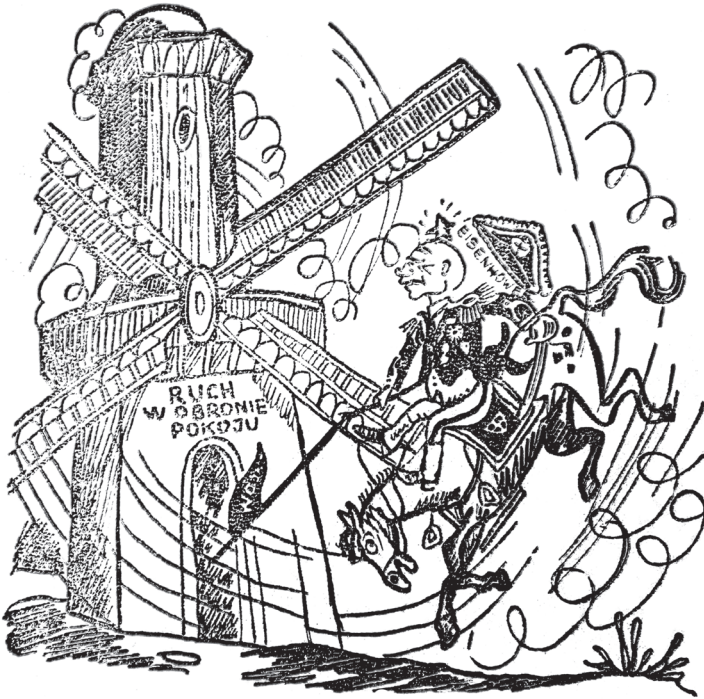


289

## WALL STREET

News on the peace agreements in Kaesong.

*Trybuna Robotnicza*, 1951, July 17, no. 193 (2282), p. 2. 118



**Peace protection movement.**

*Trybuna Tygodnia*, 1951, March 24–26, no. 12 (46), p. 4,

119 ..... supplement to *Trybuna Robotnicza*, no. 82 (2171).



291

*Byrnes — Czego pragniesz dai mi znać. Ja ci wszystko mogę dać!...*

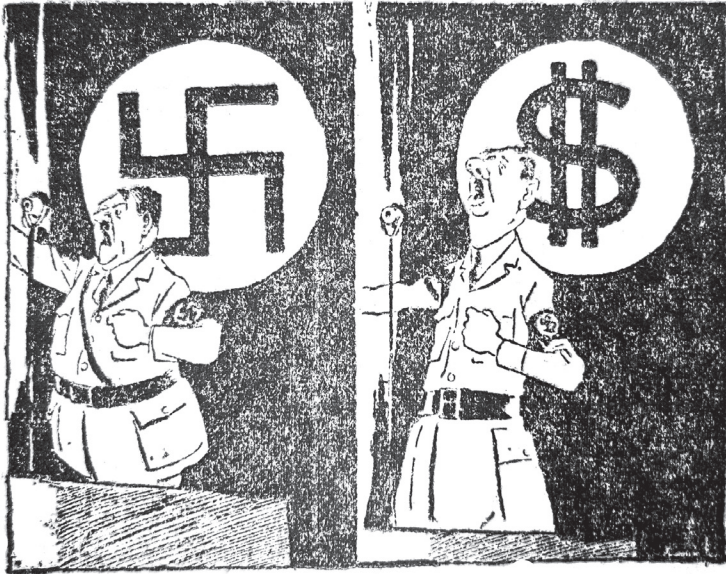
*— Wujku James, daj mi bombkę atomową.*

Byrnes: "Whatever you wish, let me know, I can give you everything!..."

— "Uncle James, give me an atom bomb."

KAO, *Trybuna Robotnicza*, 1946, September 11, no. 249 (561), p. 3. 120

## Antybolszewizm



Wczoraj...

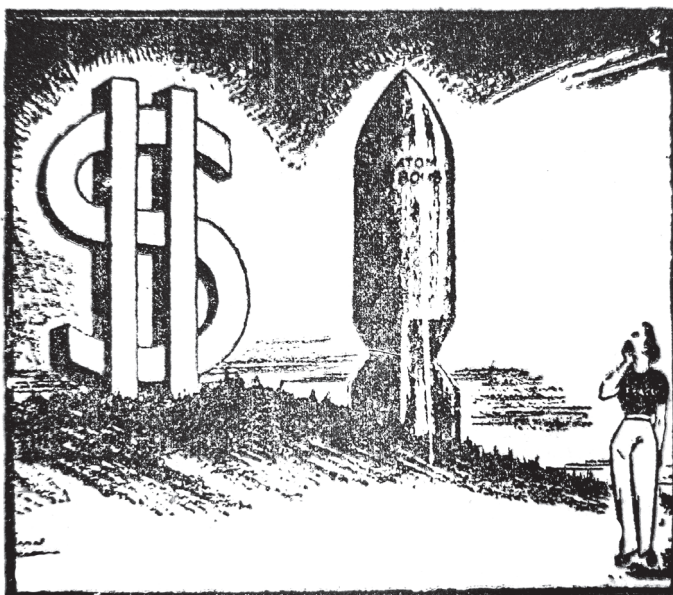
...i dziś

292

### ANTI-BOLSHEVISM

Yesterday... ..and today.

121 ..... *Trybuna Robotnicza*, 1947, November 20, no. 318 (990), p. 2.



— Która z nich jest straszniejszą bronią?

Which of them is the more terrible weapon? .....

*Trybuna Robotnicza*, 1947, November 19, no. 318 (989), p. 2.. 122

## American Femininity in Soviet Films during the Early Cold War (1946–1955)

“Greta Garbo Wins Elections”, proclaimed a conservative newspaper commenting on the defeat of the Italian Communist Party in the parliamentary elections of 1948 (Shaw 2007: 26). The results of the vote were one of the turning points of the Cold War in stopping the spread of Communism to the West. The re-release of Ernst Lubitch’s *Ninotchka* (1939) starring Garbo was among the efforts made by the CIA during the election campaign—at the same time, it could be seen as nothing but a love story between a Western man and a Soviet woman. This fact immediately allows us to suppose that gender discourse served as an effective weapon in the Cold War, which was used actively in cinema.

The intersections of gender and national discourses in American cinema during the Cold War have been intensively explored over the last two decades. This research shows the mutual influence of collective identity and gender rhetoric, investigates the role of the cinematic representations of the two superpowers’ gender orders in constructing the Soviet enemy, in creating Americanness, and in legitimising and delegitimising social order in the US (Jackson 2000; Heller 2005; Kackman 2005; Laville 2006). As for Soviet cinema, its study has a long history, and some remarkable works are devoted to films of the Early Cold War (Kenez 1992; Turovskaya 1993; Gillespie 2002; Dobrenko 2008; Rollberg 2008; Norris & Torlone 2008; Beumers 2009; Fedorov 2010, and others). Several researchers have analysed how the films created images of Soviet gender order (Haynes 2003; Steans 2010; Shaw & Youngblood 2010; Riabov 2012). However the exploration of cinematic representations of American femininity is just beginning.

The present chapter concentrates on some questions which are yet to receive attention. How did Soviet cinema represent American femininity? What means were exploited to represent its specific traits? How did these images relate to cinematic representations of Soviet femininity? The first section of the study is devoted to clarifying the methodological approaches used to research gender discourse as a Cold War weapon employed by cinema. The next section deals with cinematic images of American women as victims of capitalist society. Then the study focuses on representations of women as part of the enemy’s world. Finally, the chapter demonstrates how these representations of American women varied depending on characteristics of their class, race, and political beliefs. Four Soviet films, which centred on picturing the American way of life, form the main material of this study.

### Discussed Movies

*The Russian Question* (Mikhail Romm, 1947) is an adaptation of Konstantin Simonov's play of the same name. The film depicts New York in 1946: MacPherson and Gould, owners of reactionary right-wing newspapers, send their correspondent Harry Smith to the Soviet Union. His task is to write a scaremongering report about "Soviet expansionist intentions" in order to further a campaign of anti-Soviet propaganda. However, having returned from the USSR, Smith writes the 'truth' about the Russians. His bosses fly into a rage. Harry is deprived of everything: job, money, home, and his wife Jessie deserts him. But Smith keeps on fighting against media tycoons and their bosses on Wall Street and becomes a mouthpiece for the opinions of progressive Americans.

*Meeting on the Elbe* (Grigori Aleksandrov, 1949) is set in the immediate post-war period and describes relations between the population of an imaginary German town, Altenstadt, and Soviet and American troops. Major Nikita Kuzmin and Major James Hill meet each other on the Elbe in April 1945 and become friends. Later they are made commandants of the Soviet and American sectors of the town respectively. The Nazis, with the help of an American journalist, Janet Sherwood, hatch a plot in the Soviet sector. Hill tries to fulfil his duty to his Soviet allies and fight against the Nazis hand in hand with Kuzmin. The conspiracy is unveiled, but Sherwood turns out to be an emissary of the CIA. Because of his prevention of her efforts Hill is fired from the American army and awaits summoning before the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

*Farewell, America!* (Aleksandr Dovzhenko, 1950) describes American diplomats' activity in Moscow in the late 1940s. One of them, Anna Bedford, an idealistic American girl, discovers that practically the entire staff at the embassy is engaged in espionage and slandering the Soviet state. Speaking at a discussion of the script at an artistic council, Dovzhenko announced his intention as "to represent Americans as our opposites" (Trybmach 2002).

*The Silver Dust* (Abram Room, 1953) is an adaptation of a Soviet Estonian playwright August Jakobson's play *The Jackals*. It shows life in an American city where the Steal family lives. Professor Steal invents a radioactive silver dust, a weapon of mass destruction, and tries to test it on six African Americans who were falsely accused of the attempted rape of a white woman. His stepchildren, Ann and Alan, together with other American champions of peace ruin this plan and fight against the invention. In 1953 *The New York Times* called this film "probably the most venomous anti-American movie in the history of the film industry" (quoted in Caute 2005: 158).

### The Cinematic Cold War from a Gender Studies Perspective

The post-war confrontation between the USSR and America became a unique event in world history largely due to the important role of culture, convincingly

shown by works concerning “the cultural turn” in Cold War studies (Griffith 2001; Johnston 2010). On one hand, culture actively shaped international affairs. On the other, it is difficult to understand many aspects of cultural life during the era, such as Westerns, the Barbie doll, the space race or ice hockey, outside the context of the contest between the two superpowers.<sup>1</sup> Cinema was one of the main arenas of the cultural Cold War. On both sides of the Iron Curtain the leading directors, actors, and scriptwriters were involved in producing the films.

The Cold War divided mankind into two opposing camps, producing a Manichean picture of the world according to which each superpower was believed to be the main enemy of the other. There were several stages in the Soviet efforts to represent American imperialism as the primary enemy. This move was reinforced by a 1949 decree, *The Plan on the Reinforcement of Anti-American Propaganda in the Near Future*. It recommended underlining thirty-seven themes in anti-American propaganda, including “Propaganda of amorality and bestial psychology in the USA” (*Plan meropriyatii* 2005: 324). The idea of the moral decline of the Western world served as one of the cornerstones of Soviet propaganda, which necessitated the creation of pictures of deviant gender order in America.

Cynthia Enloe points out that the Cold War was, apart from the superpowers’ rivalry, a series of contests over the definitions of masculinity and femininity (Enloe 1993: 18–19). Indeed in any war gender discourse is a weapon for imposing upon the audience the modes of masculinity and femininity that are to be considered exemplary and normal. According to the methodological principle of intersectionality, cultural patterns of oppression are bound together and influenced by intersecting systems of society, such as race, gender, class, and ethnicity (Collins 2000: 42; see also Crenshaw 1991). It explains the way in which socially constructed categories of differentiation interact to create a social hierarchy. A number of factors make it possible to consider gender outside of relations between the sexes proper.

Fredrik Barth, developing his theory on his study of interethnic markers, showed that social boundaries between communities are established with the help of ethnic markers or elements of culture selected by group members themselves in order to emphasise their difference from those around them (for example, in their clothing, language, lifestyle etc.) (Barth 1969: 14). Based on these ideas, Nira Yuval-Davis suggested that gender symbols should be interpreted as “symbolic border guards”, which, along with other markers, identify people as members or non-members of a certain community (Yuval-Davis 1997: 23). Images of men and women serve as markers enabling the process of inclusion and exclusion in the formation of collective identity, in separating ‘us’ from ‘them’.

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, Uta Poiger’s book demonstrates that the West German perception of rock ‘n’ roll, jazz, gangster movies, and consumerism influenced their attitudes towards the US in the context of the Cold War confrontation. These cultural phenomena were perceived as deviant both in national aspect (they were alien to Germanness) and gender aspect (they demasculinised Germans) (Poiger 2000).

Another important factor is the inclusion of gender discourse in power relations: gender markers also produce a system of evaluations and preferences. In the first place, this concerns social relations proper between men and women that are characterised by the privileged status of men. However, the hierarchical relations between the sexes are used as a matrix, which legitimates other forms of social inequality. Culture's androcentrism, that is, the presence of a value hierarchy of masculinity and femininity, also influences the ranking of social subjects, the marking of which as feminine or masculine involves attributing to them some particular qualities and an appropriate position in the social structure. Thus, the use of gender metaphors serves as an effective mechanism for the production of power hierarchies. Interpreting the feminine as something second-rate and subordinate determines the main form of exploitation of gender metaphors in political rhetoric: 'us' are represented as being masculine and 'them' as feminine (Verdery 1994: 228; Eriksen 2002).

Due to the role that gender discourse plays in producing social borders and hierarchies, it is widely used in international politics. Competition in international relations is often represented as a competition in masculinity. In turn, the discourse on international affairs serves as a means of shaping and reshaping gender orders (Hooper 2001: 84–88). Ann Tickner points out that "the historical construction of the state, upon which the unitary-actor model in international theory is based, represents a gendered, masculine model. In the West, the image of a foreign-policy-maker has been strongly associated with elite, white males and representations of hegemonic masculinity" (Tickner 2001: 54). This was especially visible in the Early Cold War: on both sides of the Iron Curtain the cold warriors were expected to possess stereotypical masculine qualities to a high degree (see, for instance, Goscilo & Lanoux 2006: 11–15; Kaganovsky 2008: 1–6).<sup>2</sup>

### **American Women as Victims of Capitalism**

As for the Cold War issues of femininities, the female question featured prominently in the ideological confrontation. The tenet of Soviet ideology that women held high positions in Soviet society played a significant role in arguing for the superiority of socialism over capitalism (May 1988: 18; Rikhter 1997). The ideal image of Soviet femininity combined stereotypical feminine features (kindness, mercy, compassion, submission, selflessness etc.) with traits of 'New Soviet Man' (collectivism, comradeship, learning, professional achievements, self-respect, proletarian internationalism, love for the Soviet Motherland, and devotion to Communist ideals). The female ideal was constructed against the background of a negative image of women's status in Western society, which was based on Marxist criticism of the bourgeois family. For instance, one film critic wrote that, "in bourgeois

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<sup>2</sup> This masculinisation of representations of international affairs was reflected in particular in the popularity of sexual images and metaphors in Cold War discourse (May 1988: 98).

society woman is a slave” (Grachiov 1950: 11). This displayed itself in attitudes towards woman as a sexual object, which led to the devaluation of her humanity, reflected particularly in her working conditions: her boss was in command not only of her working time, but also of her body.

Let us examine how cinema elaborated on this tenet. For instance, *The Russian Question* begins with a scene in which the journalists Parker and Hardy are discussing Jessie’s return to the post of MacPherson’s secretary. Commenting on Parker’s characterisation of MacPherson as a “dirty old man... he is sixty-two years old, and so tactless”, Hardy says: “If I had his money I’d be tactless too”. In response to Jessie’s words that her relationship with her the boss is strictly business, Gould makes a cynical comment: “And is it strictly business? Then the boss has grown old indeed”. As a Soviet film stressed, “it’s impossible to be employed by MacPherson and not be his girlfriend” (Abramov 1948: 16).

“Why do Russians have common wives?”, a barber in New York asks Harry Smith, “I can understand anything. But how people live in a country where they can’t have their own bicycle or a wife—this I cannot understand”. Apart from ridiculing the ignorance of American philistines, who blindly believed the myths of anti-Soviet propoganda, this scene from *The Russian Question* also aimed to demonstrate that women in capitalist societies were perceived as a commodity. As, in 1946, the Secretary of the Central Committee Andrei Zhdanov said, “In America one can buy everything. One can buy women, the title of mayor, honour, and respect” (Zhdanov 2005: 725).

This tendency of American society to turn women into commodities showed itself in prostitution, which had been represented as an inherent vice of Western society since the beginning of Soviet gender discourse, with significant support from cinema (Kenez 2008: 105). The prostitute Flossie Bate in *The Silver Dust* exposed the amorality of ‘respectable Americans’, their dissoluteness and dissimulation, disclosing that even a local pastor had harassed her.

### American Women as Enemies

While picturing American women as victims of the capitalist system, the propaganda simultaneously portrayed some of them as a component of the enemy world that possessed all its vices. This was important in order to convince the audience that the vices of American femininity (heartlessness, mercenary spirit, narrow-mindedness, profligacy, racist and anti-communist prejudices) were not accidental: they were engendered by the very essence of bourgeois society.

The capitalist system deprived women of qualities that should be inalienable to female nature, including compassion. The audience of *Meeting on the Elbe* was able to judge the heartlessness of women of the enemy through a scene where white American soldiers beat up a black compatriot: whereas the German women’s faces express horror and compassion, the American women watched proceedings with an almost sport-like passion. Doris Steal in *The Silver Dust* had no compassion for

an African American boy Ben Robinson, sending him to death even though his mother Mary had worked as a housemaid in the Steals' house for twenty years.<sup>3</sup>

Another personification of cruelty—Mrs. Dodge, a journalist—from *They Have a Motherland* (Vladimir Legoshin, Aleksandr Faintsimmer, 1950) was characterised by a film critic as a “Nazi storm trooper under the guise of a representative of the free press” (Kokoreva 1950: 31). The question of the primary opponent's closeness to Nazism occupied a very important place in the propaganda of both of the main Cold War adversaries. In 1946 Stalin, reacting to Winston Churchill's Fulton speech, was already qualifying Nazi race theory as an ideological basis for the idea of Anglo-Saxon race supremacy (Stalin 1946).<sup>4</sup> *The Russian Question* illustrated this point with Gould's words: “The Germans made only one mistake: it's not them but us, the Anglo-Saxons, who are the highest race”.<sup>5</sup> Film criticism also stressed the proximity of American imperialism to Nazism (Solovev 1951: 22).

One more remarkable trait of American women was the hollowness of their life goals; as Soviet propaganda emphasised, since bourgeois society did not create opportunities for women's self-realisation and equality of the sexes, American women were narrow-minded (Rikhter 1997: 40). Moreover the capitalist system aimed to narrow women's life goals. *Silver Dust* ridiculed bourgeois women's piety as well as their racist and anti-communist prejudices.

A mercenary spirit was another feature prescribed to American women. One of the most remarkable American female characters of Soviet Cold War cinema was Janet Sherwood, whose role was performed by Soviet movie star Lyubov Orlova. The actress described her heroine as “well-groomed, beautiful, stylish, and at the same time spiritually empty, without lofty aims, without sincere feelings and affections, cold, selfish, ambitious, who believes only in bank accounts and worships only the dollar” (quoted in Aleksandrov 1976: 297). Indeed the cult of money was believed to be the most important trait of Americans, both men and women. That is why commercial gain allegedly was the main reason for marriage for Americans. For instance, Gould openly told Jessie that he had married a “really unattractive but very rich woman” only for the money. Inasmuch as marriage has class nature, individual preferences in love cannot be achieved due to social barriers. The tragedy of love in a bourgeois society was a recurring theme of Soviet propaganda reflected in many movies of this period.

In American society as seen by Soviet cinematographers, the role of a love substitute was sex. Sexual profligacy served as an important marker to distinguish

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<sup>3</sup> In the Jakobson's play *The Jackals*, which underlies the film scenario, Doris expresses a wish to attend the execution in person (Jakobson 1952: 89).

<sup>4</sup> The propagandists actively exploited the legacy of evoking Nazism. One could find analogous ways of representing the Enemy on the opposite side of the Iron Curtain (Clark 2000: 37).

<sup>5</sup> On the role of picturing the ties between US and the Nazis in creating cinematic representations of American Enemy see Turovskaya 1993: 100.

Americanness.<sup>6</sup> This theme was actively exploited in various forms of propaganda; it was important to emphasise that profligacy was an inherent and regular part of the American way of life. Soviet movies had to demonstrate, apart from the chastity of ‘us’, the profligacy of ‘them’. *Meeting on the Elbe* depicted the American occupation zone as a den of vice. The Soviet audience’s moral sentiment was shocked by an announcement at the entrance to an American soldiers’ club, Paradise: “Girls of any nationality are welcome! You must provide evidence of political reliability and an STD certificate”.

One more dimension of representations of the enemy’s sexuality was the exploitation of the motif of the honey trap, i.e. using sexual seduction in espionage. In Early Cold War cinema the idea that sexual seduction was a weapon in the hands of the class enemy was most fully expressed in female characters from several movies, for example in *Meeting on the Elbe* Sherwood tried to seduce Major Kuzmin. His rejection of the beautiful spy-journalist in favour of the love of Vera, a Russian girl from the Volga River region, allowed the audience to believe in the superiority of Soviet femininity over American femininity.

### Two Americas

The images of the enemies created by two propaganda machines has been termed “mirror images” in academic literature since the 1960s (Frank 1967: 26). Soviet representations of the United States can be seen as somewhat parallel to the image of the Soviets in American Cold War cinema, which also tried to depict the gender order of the primary enemy, first, as contrary to its own, secondly, as unnatural and opposite to human nature, and thirdly, as an inevitable consequence of its unnatural social and political order. At the same time one should take into account the differences in the identity politics of the two superpowers reflected in cinema. The very essence of Soviet ideology, with its prioritisation of the class principle over the national principle, implied the creation of images of not only ‘bad Americans’, but also ‘good Americans’—including communists, representatives of the working class, ‘the champions of peace’, and African Americans. In *The Russian Question* Smith, declaring himself a successor of Lincoln and Roosevelt, spoke about “two different Americas”, blaming his opponents, warmongers from Wall Street, for being the enemies not only of Russia but also of America.

In compliance with the idea of ‘two Americas’ films showed female characters’ biographies, social origins, political beliefs, and social status. For instance, a ‘good American’, Ann Bedford, was a farmer’s daughter; among the ‘bad American women’ one can see female spies, corrupt journalists, and wives of capitalists and militarists. These two groups of Americans are also different with regard to gender norms, with the ‘good’ American women resembling the Soviet female characters in this aspect. In particular, they tried to free themselves from the rules of the

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<sup>6</sup> On the issue of sexuality in picturing ‘us’ in Stalinist cinema see Haynes 2003: 82–83.

narrow world of bourgeois femininity, defending not only female but also human dignity.<sup>7</sup>

### Conclusion

Cinematic representations of American gender order were a weapon in the Cold War. Gender discourse played an important role in othering the US, serving as one of the ways to prove that the victory of socialism on the world scale was inevitable: portraying the superiority of Soviet over American gender norms aimed to convince the audience of the superiority of the Soviet social system in general. American gender norms were represented as determined by the very nature of the capitalist system, and consequently could only be eradicated by destroying capitalism. Soviet women embodied normal femininity, while American women expressed deviant femininity. American women were portrayed with a lack or excess of stereotypical femininity: either cruel, hard-hearted, and incapable of love, or dependent on husbands, narrow-minded, and profligate. In addition, women possessed all the negative traits of capitalist society, including egotism, worshiping money, racism etc. The most evident display of ugly gender order was the submission of women and their conversion into objects.

At the same time in the eyes of Soviet cinema, a homogeneous American femininity did not exist: it varied depending on class, race, and political belief. The vices of American femininity were determined not by American national culture, but the essence of the capitalist system per se. The prioritisation of the class principle over the national principle demanded the creation of the images of the ‘good American women’.

Cinema targeted not only international but also both local audiences. The rhetoric of international relations served as a tool to build symbolic boundaries and hierarchies within Soviet society. Since the Soviet system was perceived as the ‘natural’ form of social order, its opponents were proclaimed abnormal in the gender dimension too: sympathy for the Americans politically and “grovelling before the West” resulted in their gender deviancy. In its turn, departures from Soviet gender norms were believed to be evidence of political disloyalty. Thus, the image of American femininity served as a factor in shaping and reshaping Soviet gender and political orders, clearly defining norm and deviation, and reasserting the boundaries of proper femininity in the USSR.

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<sup>7</sup> In this aspect the image of Cynthia Kidd, a character from Boris Lavrenyov’s play *The Voice of America* (1949) is significant. She protested against submission of women in the American family, confessing to her husband: “I want to be your friend and comrade; I want to be a human being. That is not customary in America. But I want that” (Lavrenev 1952: 39).

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POSTER TO *MEETING ON THE ELBE*

124 Grigori Aleksandrov, 1949, Mosfilm studio, USSR.



***A SCENE FROM FAREWELL, AMERICA!***

From left to right: Liliya Gritsenko as Anna Bedford;  
Nikolai Gritsenko as Armand Howard, an American diplomat;  
Grigory Kirillov as Walter Scott, US Ambassador to the USSR.

Aleksandr Dovzhenko, 1950, Mosfilm studio, USSR. 125



**A SCENE FROM *SILVER DUST***

From left to right: Sofiya Pilyavskaya as Doris Steal;  
Valeriy Lekarev as Gideon Smith, a pastor.

126 ..... Abram Room, 1953, Mosfilm studio, USSR.



**A SCENE FROM *MEETING ON THE ELBE*** .....  
Lyubov Orlova as Janet Sherwood.  
Grigori Aleksandrov, 1949, Mosfilm studio, USSR. : 127



### **3. Old Enemies, New Faces**

## Symbolic Migration to the Super-West in the Polish Pomeranian Press of the 1930s

Most of the photographic material that gave the basis to this article comes from the 1930s and 1940s<sup>1</sup>. The pictures were selected from the Pomeranian daily press from both electronic and traditional sources. The choice of period was determined by the formal criteria of the research project. Furthermore, it was assumed, based on general knowledge of the history of culture and literature, that a transitional period, the Polish interwar period in this case, might be abundant in anthropologically valid material. The period between 1935 and 1939 was treated as a ‘decadence’ period in the style of the periods of decline between succeeding epochs. During such times, collective consciousness abounds in numerous images of Others. The psychological condition of communities in a decadent era, according to Curtius, fosters the creation of strange images (Curtius 1997: 89–113).

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In Poland, this was a time of recently regained independence and fear of losing it again. On the horizon increasingly more aggressive political actions by the nearest neighbours, Germany and the Soviet Union, both under dictatorship, became apparent. The foreign policy of the Second Republic of Poland, led by minister Joseph Beck, was formulated to maintain political balance with the Third Reich and the USSR. This direction brought satisfactory results, as long as dictators fought each other on political and ideological grounds (Dybowska, Żaryn & Żaryn 1998: 264–265). However, since Western countries, convinced of the effectiveness of the appeasement tactics, began to accept numerous concessions to Hitler’s demands, the defence of Polish national interest required more decisive action (Gałęzowski 2010: 89). Polish society understood these actions well and approved of them, reacting to the anticipated threat with anti-German and anti-Soviet attitudes. The press, especially of the nationalist shade, warned against the communist or fascist dismantling of Poland, which after long captivity had entered the path of rapid development. The media warned against the “communist epidemic” and the dissolution of the Polish state. Concern about totalitarian neighbours was expressed, inter alia, in satirical texts and caricatures<sup>2</sup>.

Considering the hostility of the neighbouring states and the geopolitical situation at that time, Poland can be seen as a buffer. This buffer space, the concept

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<sup>1</sup> Mainly from the journals *Dziennik Pomorski* (‘Pomeranian Today’), *Słowo Pomorskie* (‘Pomeranian Word’), *Kurier Bydgoski* (‘Bydgoszcz courier’) from 1935–1939.

<sup>2</sup> This topic has been widely discussed and illustrated, among others, in: Demski & Baraniecka-Olszewska 2010.

of 'between' in anthropological and philosophical reflection, is the cultural inter-space. In this inter-space, 'the self' very often encounters the Other. This phenomenon can be illustrated, for the sake of this article, by the images of America as the land of desired strangeness and symbolic migration towards it.<sup>3</sup>

### Hunting the Other

Encounters with Others in Europe became obligatory, especially after WWII, when victims started to be listened to, and their perspective started being accepted in scientific and literary discourse. However, Others had already been present in European culture for a long time, although with a different shade of meaning. Throughout the ages, the Orient used to be an ideal Other. Europe in contact with this Other dominated diverse areas in different ways, controlled them (also politically), expanded its own awareness (by learning about foreign lands and people). Over the centuries Europe entered numerous relationships with Others. These contacts had grown in importance by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the European seeker and explorer cemented his privileged status with the development of science. His presence in the arena of history aimed to arrange and subdue the world. This operation was accomplished by presenting, in the form of the accumulated knowledge, countless examples of the reality of Others. This was the realisation of the guidelines of eighteen according to which Europe was expected to make a significant contribution to boost the progress of sciences and skills by sharing old art works and curiosities of nature (Pomian 1990: 96). The cult of science during the Enlightenment era made quasi-priests to be its representatives, announcing the victory of Western culture. Europe methodically appropriated the Others and Otherness, believing that "what gives the oriental world the rational order and identity, is not its own work, but rather a long series of cognitive operations by the West; thanks to this the Orient received its personality" (Said 1991: 74).

Exercising authority over Others materialised the hegemonic aspiration of Europe to its ultimate extent. Possessing Others politically and showing their culture consolidated European self-centeredness (Waldenfels 1995: 23–24). Common opinion about humans (Europe) and non-humans (the rest) was given scientific seriousness, treating the confrontation and subordination of Others as the standard of conduct because the West, as it was thought, was predestined to both the intellectual ordering and political management of the non-West, as noted

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<sup>3</sup> For the sake of clarification, when reference in this article is made to the West, it means the Western world, Europe as such, as opposed to the Oriental East. Poland was considered to be part of this West, as it largely adopted a European viewpoint. It resulted from both the nature of nation-building processes and the history of Polish foreign relations. Until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Polish national identity was formed according to the Western model, i.e. democracy. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, due to wars and partitions it was Western Europe where the Polish would find refuge and seek support for the Polish national interest. The US is beyond our definition of the West, being referred to as the super-West.

by Edward Said: “As a result, the Orient seems to be not so much a vast area beyond the known and tame European world, but a limited space, theatre stage open only to Europe (...), a stage, on which the whole East has been closed” (Said 1991: 105).

The super-West was becoming no less attractive than the esoteric East. For many observers in 1930s, Americans were superheroes. Capitalists from across the ocean seemed as adept at financial and technological matters as Hindu gurus were at spiritual ones. America was the country of technological wonders, whose charm seemed even intensified during the Polish interwar period by those two contrasting realities: on one hand there was America, almost untouched by wars, enjoying plenty of constitutional freedom; on the other hand there was Europe, hardly recovered from one war and facing the imminence of another. Desire for the new world was also prompted by the mass media. The printed word and photography facilitated consumption on the symbolic level. The Pomeranian press of that time functioned as a communication channel (Schindler 2002: 236) that facilitated encounters with Others in the domestic space. Newspapers, to increase their attractiveness and gain more readers, published photographs more and more often. These images often excited people’s imaginations and, in a way, materialised the idea of the super-West. This phenomenon confirmed Susan Sontag’s opinion when she stated that she sees addictive behaviours in photography, intrinsically linked with the state of contemporary societies characterised by a constant desire for goods (Sontag 2009: 33). Sontag in her deliberations perceives photographers as poachers continuing imperialism by ‘shooting’ pictures of people: “Taking photos of people is to rape them—to see them the way they never see themselves, to gain knowledge about them, which they will never have, and this way to make them objects, which can be symbolically taken over” (Ibid.: 22).

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### The Other from a Distant Country

*Because every place without us is America...*  
(Myśliwski 2008: 334)

The analysis of press material from 1935–1939 shows an increasing interest in the world of Others. Although confrontational concepts of ‘Others as enemies’ prevail, we can observe the emergence of other ways of presentation. The Pomeranian press from the interwar period presents strangeness as the ‘anti-world’, although in doing so it was not devoid of a fascinated tone. It is an example of strangeness manifesting itself, as pointed out in numerous studies, in a bipolar fashion: *tremendum et fascinans* (Otto 1993; Caillois 1995).

In the Polish interwar press, the world of Others and the Others themselves are misfits who undermine fundamental beliefs of social groups (Perzanowski 2009: 48–49). Normal cognitive categories fail in the attempt of their clear definition.

On the pages of the journals we can find various Others. The photographic material which was analysed exhibits a lack of a dominant subject. However, it seems possible to distinguish a large group of photographs that can be reduced to two groups, specifically presenting close and distant Others<sup>4</sup>. Because the subject of 'close Others' has been covered extensively in many studies (war caricature, the images of fools, beggars), I focus my attention on the analysis of visual representations of distant Others, i.e. the super-West. For this purpose I discuss the selected images of the New World. America is described as a land of pragmatic inventions, sophisticated ideas and peculiar people. Selected images of America exemplify how evolutionary desires of Europeans and their sentiments towards the Antipodes materialise (Węglarz 1994: 85).

Approaches to America at that time in Western European countries were ambiguous, making the New World resemble the bipolar face of the Other. Writers such as George Orwell or Matthew Arnold openly criticised America's hypnotising influence on European society. In their opinion, the weirdness of American thought was dangerous to European countries. The democratisation of life was perceived as backwardness. They claimed that equality of all ideas and attitudes was not the key to modernity, but efficient management by state administration was the way to success (Arnold 1932: 6). Aldous Huxley, on the other hand, had a totally different view of America. During his first trip to the States, the writer, spellbound by the view of shopping malls and skyscrapers, praised the victory of wisdom over superstition. The metropolitan architecture of American cities, with the diminishing dominance of churches, gave him hope for a scientific and rational future that would be universally worth imitating (Johnson 1979: 50).

In the analysed photographic material critical images of America are close to non-existent. It appears that Pomeranian journals share Huxley's optimistic viewpoint. The concept of America built upon printed images had culturally important functions. Compensation was certainly one of them. The comparison of such areas of life as Pomeranian and American economy, technology or industry prompted Polish readers to migrate symbolically to the super-West. Photographs by Pomeranian photojournalists show the interfusion of basic aspects of strangeness—the remoteness of the territory, the high affluence status (Waldenfels 2002: 157). These images contribute to the Polish fascination with the modernity of the far-away land from across the ocean. Geographical remoteness is associated here with a presumption of the mental distinctiveness of the people of the West—it is usual to assign supernatural features to strangers (Ibid.: 161). The strangeness of Americans is caricatural, to some extent. Their innovativeness and pragmatism, in line with the 'do it yourself' rule, created peculiar ideas. A sunbather in an alligator leather swimsuit (Fig. 128), a roadside shrine in the airport next to the images of a sad millionaire, a prisoner living a comfortable life and a birdman (Fig. 129) can all evoke cogni-

<sup>4</sup> See different ways of defining and perceiving Others, in: Demski 2013: 70–73.

tive dissonance, being awesome and embarrassing at the same time. This confirms the theory of the ambivalent character of the Other (Benedyktowicz 2000: 134).

Affluence and progress, symbolising the ‘far-away Other’, i.e. the super-West, question the status quo of our own world, not leading, however, to its disassembly. American progress fascinates, although its constructors are relegated to being merely intriguing geeks (Fig. 130). Thus, Western imaginativeness with its comical aspect makes possible a comparison in which a less affluent country (Poland, in this case) is at a higher level of humanity—its inhabitants are not so strange or comical. *Normales*, according to Erving Goffman, are those who are positively distinct from ‘strangers’ in their own eyes (Goffman 2007: 36). It is typical that strangers are presented in opposition to ‘normal’ people, and the presentation of America in the Pomeranian press is the exemplification of this rule (Benedyktowicz 2000: 124). The photographs assure us that we are dealing with a country that is close and distant at the same time.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, Americans had lived in a world of wonders. “The United States have risen up high as the world superpower” (Postman 2004: 62). The bravery and ingenuity of New World entrepreneurs superseded initiatives of European capitalists. At the turn of the twentieth century, the atmosphere in the US contradicted the existence of any possible limits. Any hindrances to technological progress were negated and rejected immediately. Modern inventions were making American society comfortable and affluent. Technology, about which Francis Bacon had dreamt, was changing reality into a dream:

For each conviction, belief, custom or tradition of the Old World, there was, and still exists, an alternative technological facility. Prayer was replaced by penicillin; family roots replaced by social mobility; reading replaced by television; absolution replaced by psychotherapy (Postman 2004: 71).

The civilised West was trying to convince people that even nature was on its side. Post-war economic growth in Poland, as well as intense growth in other areas of life did not seem as interesting as Canadian quintuplets, pictures of whom were widely published in the press (Fig. 131). They seemed to be praised to the same extent as the efficiency of Afro-American ovaries in Huxley’s *Brave New World* (Huxley 1988: 12). These images of cute babies appeal not only to ‘soft’ emotions, but also make us admire the *arête* of the American type. The New World, with charming quintuples, appears to be an extraordinary place where better results can be achieved. The West cannot be measured with standard instruments. The measuring line is moved either below or above the average, which is shown by the photographs of giants and dwarfs (Figs 132, 133).

Other factors that encouraged exploration of the super-West were natural climate and social conditions in America. While the Baltic Sea was freezing, and people were spending most of the winter at home, sunny California was tempting

European readers with the shapely silhouettes of sunbathers. Most photographs show people smiling and fit. Life there seems to be better, brighter, easier (Figs 134, 135), even in prison, which is exemplified by an image of a prisoner, dressed neatly, with a radio in his cell (Fig. 137). In comparison, a Polish prisoner seems to look like a dull, savage, human being of a second category (Fig. 138). America triumphs because it can make even evil look better. A civilised man has no need to bear what is really unpleasant (Huxley 1988: 245).

The superiority of Americans was also manifesting itself in architecture. The dominance of church towers in the urban milieu was now supplanted by that of skyscrapers. Not only was the height of modern buildings astonishing, their creators' imagination were too, for example some were installing swimming pools on their roofs (Fig. 136). Heaven seemed closer to people in the West, and God was blessing them all the time. Thus, there was no need of looking for Him in temples, as technological progress was the place of his residence. Photographs show people getting married on running tracks or in roadside shrines.

The New World was in constant, multidirectional motion in all areas of life. The American dream was a total negation of all the limits that the rest of the world had to put up with. A birdman, thanks to technology, managed to tame the law of gravity, unlike ordinary people. In traditional understanding, man was elevated by his erect posture and ability to walk. The alliance of *homo sapiens* with technology had given him new abilities.

The concept of America as a paradise materialised, as well as a myth, inclines towards excessive self-justification. Mythical excess, in the case of twentieth-century America, is the omnipotence of man and technology, which leads to the preliminary stage of robotisation (Bostrom 2007). This phenomenon, accompanied by the development of film and television, results in images of numerous superheroes, admired by Europeans. The way they dress, their behaviour and abilities are the intersection of the human world, the animal world and new technologies. Hybrid superheroes are rescuers from social or cosmic catastrophes.

### The Other for Personal Use

*The self-image is only a reflection of these contrasts,  
on the basis of which some ethnic groups  
define the distinctiveness of other groups*  
(Obrębski 1936: 187)

In socio-cultural life, nationalism, affirmation and self-manifestation, resonate with the adaptation of the espied external patterns. This phenomenon is well illustrated by the example of folk culture in Polish territory from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Peasant conservatism, focusing the group on a positive valuation of own image (which took the form of megalomania (Bystroń 1995; Ro-

botycki 1980: 78)), permitted cultural imitation. Generally, peasants were reluctant to accept Others. However, relatively often, they adopted for example Prussian technological innovations (Styk 1999). The isolation of consciousness, although generally true, was not absolute, and therefore the reality outside a person's own boundaries was at the same time assessed as morally and aesthetically low, though materially better.<sup>5</sup>

The symbols of another reality that fill everyday life make it possible to, somehow, interact with this reality (Burszta 2013: 55). If it is not possible for a perfect world to exist, the super-West in this case, one can at least resort to its representations. The desired goods, namely the technological inventions present in the images, contain a mythical aspect. The images are attributed mythical status, which makes these goods metonymically present (Sontag 2009: 164).

The confrontation with 'Otherness' fosters the building of cultural awareness (it is even essential in this process), therefore cultures agree to bear things that to some extent destabilise them. Encountering them shapes meta-awareness (Burszta 2013: 76). Their lives are an alternative to the mainstream of culture. The area of familiarity expressing the domesticated world accepts to some extent the elements of anti-structure represented by difference (Turner 2010). The Others both exist as part of an anti-structure, and at the same time construct structure. With regard to the Other, whose humanity is generally considered weaker in relation to the 'self', the group, on the principle of antithesis, confirms its own image: "Therefore the image of 'the self' becomes derivative from the perception of the Other and, as a negative, dependent on it" (Obrębski 1936: 187–190).

Locating Others on the outskirts of the mainstream does not weaken their cultural impact (Perzanowski 2009: 201). In the case of Others, we are dealing with a paradox of ostracising an individual from the society (or some of its fields) and also a particular interest in it. The individualism of misfits draws attention to the individual, emphasises the issues of autonomy and diversity and constitutes an important element in the discourse of modernity. The lonely creativity of people at the margins (often appreciated after a time) fits into the realm of innovative activities. Voluntary or forced withdrawal from certain areas of life evokes an impression in the people critically assessing the present state (Makowiecki 1996: 135).

National cultures, in shaping and expressing their character, use the potential of the 'self–Other' dualism no less than traditional cultures. Since the nation became a substitute for the owned land, its members identify themselves with the country as their homeland, opposing themselves to other nations. Action of the categories of self and Other was moved from the material dimension to the symbolic. The borders of the world and culture defined on the basis of 'we—our territory—our

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<sup>5</sup> The testimony of such an ambivalent reaction to the world had the form of peasants' statements describing America as an ugly and at the same time vast land (Oleđzki 1971: 185). See also Myśliwski 2004, and Stomma 2002: 160–184.

culture', were supplemented by 'our nation—our country'. In Poland, the process of the formation of national awareness occurred in the interwar period. A multitude of Others present at this time in the Pomeranian press confirms the role which they play in building Polish identity—they are the negative of a community portrait (Stomma 2002: 73–83). Their images are not static, but are subject to socio-cultural and historical conditions. Strangeness is not only an objective state, but is conditioned—among other agents—by the perceiver. A significant impact on its perception is found in the humanistic coefficient, i.e. culturally conditioned beliefs and the current social situation of the social group (Znaniński 1930–1931). Journals, constituting the exemplification of the phenomena of social life, partly allow us to become familiar with its contemporary condition.

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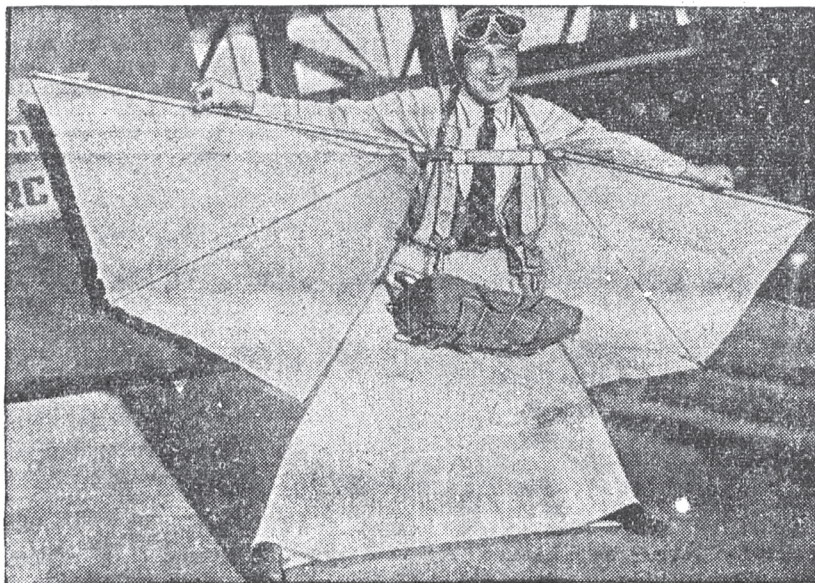


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**ON THE BEACH! IN THE ALIGATOR COSTUME! THE LATEST MIAMI FASHION** .....

*Słowo Pomorskie*, 1937, January 14, no. 11, p. 6. 128

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#### **FLYING MAN**

This one is playing a flying man. An American, Clem Son, who, while using such a peculiar instrument, got killed during a show in Paris, has found his imitator, Morgan.

The latter jumps off the plane using his 'wings', until he breaks his neck.

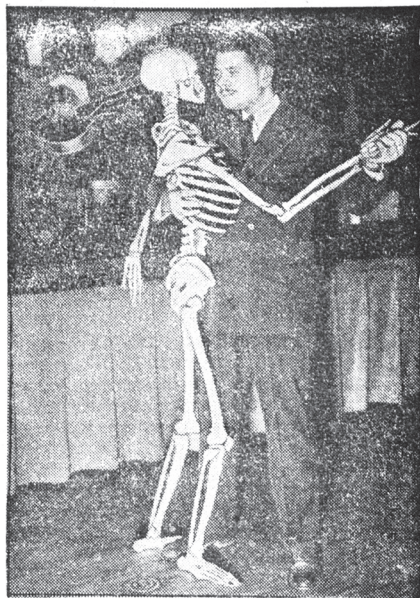
For flying, there are better instruments available.

129 *Slowo Pomorskie*, 1937, December 19, no. 291, p. 16.

**A SKELETON WALTZ**

This peculiar couple of dancers was showing off during a medical conference in Philadelphia, in order to show the doctors which of the bones are used while dancing. 130

*Ślowo Pomorskie*, 1939, January 18, no. 14, p. 1.



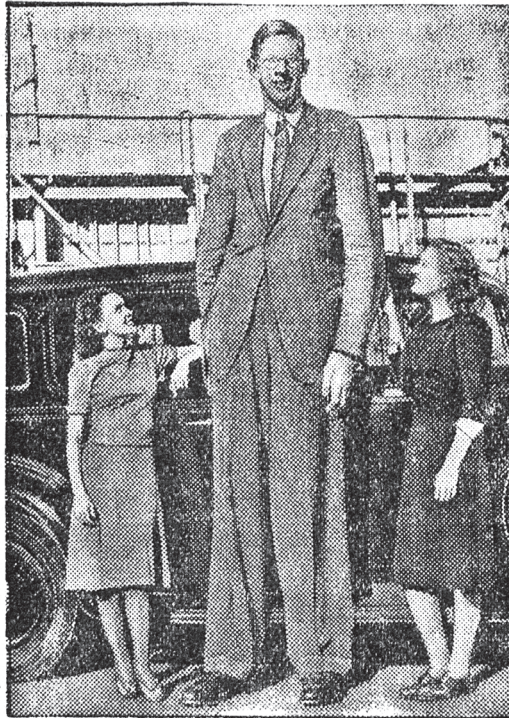
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**CANADIAN QUINTUPLETS EATING BREAKFAST IN THE FRESH AIR**

*Ślowo Pomorskie*, 1939, January 6, no. 5, p. 7. 131

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**MR WADLOW, AS THIS IS THE NAME OF THAT TALL MAN,  
WANTS TO MAKE IT TO THE MOVIES. WE CAN SEE HIM IN HOLLYWOOD,  
ACCOMPANIED BY TWO LITTLE ACTRESSES**

132 ..... *Słowo Pomorskie*, 1938, October 28, no. 248, p. 6.



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**THE SHORTEST MAN LIVES IN CHICAGO.  
PAUL DE RIO, AGED 13, IS ONLY 45 CM TALL**

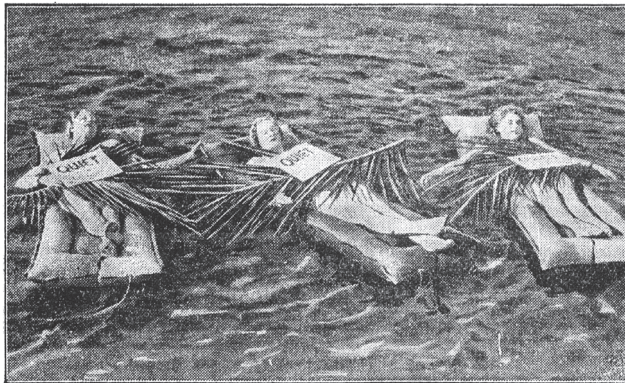
*Słowo Pomorskie*, 1937, February 5, no. 28, p. 5. 133

- 134 : It's always sunny and warm there... Eccentric Americans spend winter on perpetually sunny Florida, sporting new designs of 'Tahiti' swimsuits, made of patterned, colourful fabric, mostly used by the inhabitants of southern seas' islands.

*Dzień Pomorski*, 1935, January 22, no. 19, p. 4.



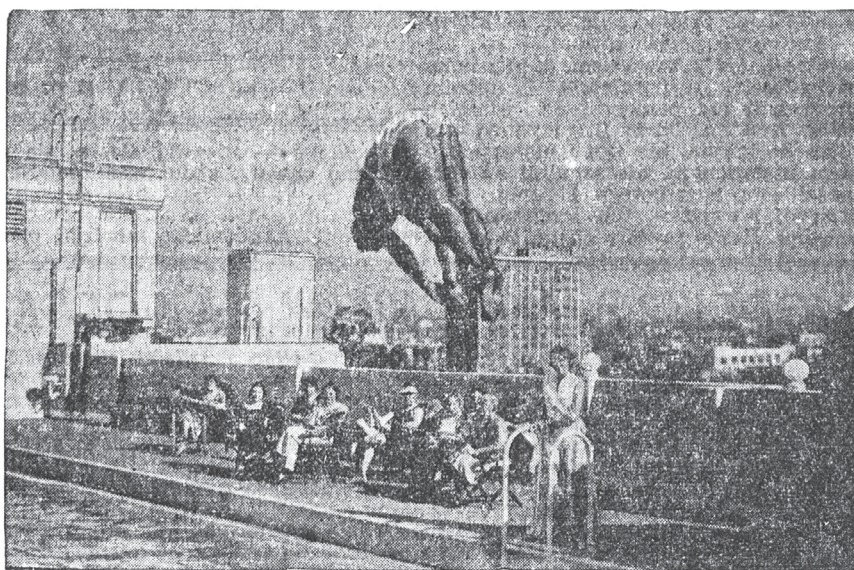
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**ON THE OCEAN WAVES**

American mermaids in Miami are having their afternoon nap in the water, floating on air-filled cushions.

- 135 : *Dzień Pomorski*, 1935, April 5, no. 81, p. 4.



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A creative entrepreneur has installed a beach and a swimming pool on the roof of a skyscraper, which, considering the hot climate, turned out to be very popular.

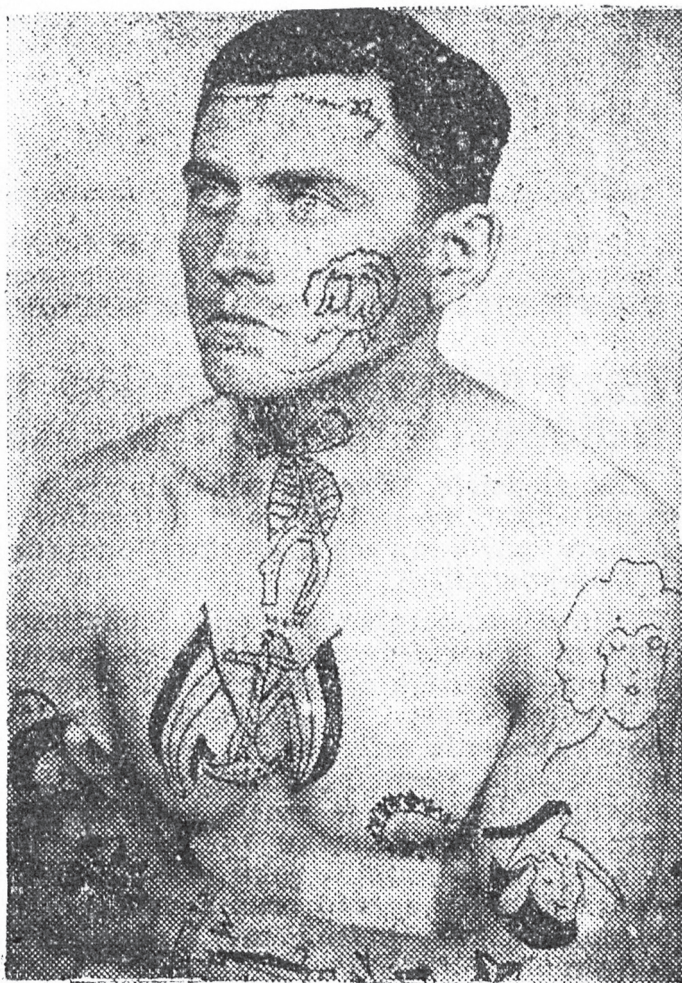
*Słowo Pomorskie*, 1937, June 20, no. 139, p. 6. 136



**A COSY PRISON CELL**

In Jackson Prison in Detroit radio headphones were introduced for the prisoners.

137 ..... *Słowo Pomorskie*, 1937, January 10, no. 7, p. 8.



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**SACRILEGIOUS MICHAŁ PROSIŃSKI** .....

*Dzień Pomorski*, 1935, May 7, no. 106, p. 9. 138

## Competing Visions of Landscapes, Cultures and Peoples. Survey Photography in the Western Borderlands of the Russian Empire during World War I

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The cultural phenomenon defined by Elizabeth Edwards as the “survey movement”, that is the photographic recording of buildings, art works, ethnography and landscapes deemed valuable, was an important collective and transnational effort pursued across Europe in the late nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century by numerous local amateur civic societies (Edwards 2012a; Edwards 2012b). This activity—linking interests in photography, tourism, monuments, the historic past—aimed at the visual description and salvage of the traditional cultural landscape. Moreover, the output of the surveys, organised in photographic archives and popularised in albums, postcards, exhibitions or during lantern lectures—formed an appealing vision of the specific local culture and patrimony and was seen as an important basis for local cultural identities. Importantly, such local visions produced in distant European centres were apparently very similar. Accordingly, on the one hand accurate instructions and examples published throughout the continent in amateur photography periodicals fixed universal picturing conventions, while on the other, the surveyors across Europe shared the same concepts of culture and patrimony. Notwithstanding, the survey movement followed different dynamics and was grounded within the specific political, cultural, social, religious or ethnic contexts. Arguably, while in England and Germany, as observed by Elizabeth Edwards (2012a: 244–248) and Christin Joschke (2014) respectively, the outbreak of WWI marks the reformulation, fracture and finally the disappearance of many civic survey endeavours, in the contested areas of the Western borderlands of the former Russian Empire the movement in this period was at its peak.

In this article I will present three examples of WWI photographic surveys in the Western borderlands of the Russian Empire. Undertaken by different actors—an official German scientific institute (the *Landeskunde Kommission*) and two civic associations (a Jewish and a Polish one)—they produced and popularised three different and contradictory visual descriptions of the same multi-ethnic territories. My main argument is that in this period surveys were institutionalised both by the imperial powers and nations and by ethnic groups struggling for independence as a potent visual tool of territorial claims. Accordingly, in order to ‘Polonise’ the lands

of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, a visual description cleared of Lithuanian or Jewish elements was produced, while in the process of extending imperial (Russian/German) authority, their cultural inferiority was visually stressed. Importantly in this process, conflicting and competing visions of the cultural landscape were formulated. Seen separately they show a Polish, Jewish or imperial vision of the same place; while analysed together they reveal its cultural complexity and richness.

### **Survey Photography and the German *Landeskunde Kommission* Scientific Project**

In 1915, with the Great Advance on the Eastern Front, the German and Austrian army took under its control a huge area of the Western provinces of the Russian Empire. This Eastern Front experience on the lands of Congress Poland, today Lithuania, part of Latvia and the Western parts of Belarus, turned the German perceptions of the East and of Russia upside-down (Liulievicius 2000). Accordingly, the Russian Empire was commonly perceived in the West as distant, homogenous, and barbarous. Yet the advancement of the Front revealed a complex cultural landscape, a patchwork of peoples, languages, religions, cultures and identities scattered on vast, poor, often unurbanised, even desolate areas strongly devastated by war.

These impressions, of thousands of German soldiers penetrating unknown lands as the Front advanced, were promptly organised into an official, unitary and coherent vision. For example, in early 1916 in Warsaw, the capital of *Generalgouvernement Warschau* (the German administrative unit in the former district of the Polish Kingdom), the office of the *Landeskunde Kommission* was established. It was a research group made up of 14 German scholars from a variety of disciplines, who were to produce scholarly and popular overviews of the occupied lands (Górny 2013).

The research group, from here referred to as the *Landeskunde*, was a specifically German variant of regional geography, linking physical and human geography through the medium of space with the aid of specific geographic concepts and ideas, in an attempt to delimit particular areas and to portray them in the totality of natural and human relations (Wardenga 2006). Among the *Landeskunde's* experts were geographers, ethnographers, biologists, geologists and historians. The first and main output of the *Landeskunde* was a collective effort produced in just a year. The *Handbuch von Polen* (Wunderlich 1917), a handbook encyclopaedia of Poland using *Landeskunde* methods (Fig. 139), offered a total vision through mapping and description of the region of Congress Poland within its geopolitical borders, geological construction, climatic qualities, botanical and zoological peculiarities, ethnographic distribution, in the specificity of its settlements, in its agriculture and industry, in its mineral resources, in the distribution of its forests, etc. It was a kind of descriptive atlas in which were numerous appealing maps and photographic illustrations. The main visual instrument of *Landeskunde* was undoubtedly cartography (Górny 2013), a potent rationalising and ordering tool (Fig. 140).

However, significantly, survey photography played an analogous role. Arguably, the complete visual representation of a territory in a photo archive organised scientifically and geographically—the parallel with a map is not accidental—and popularised through albums and handbooks was considered in this period a *sine qua non* of civilisation and of statecraft. Moreover, the *Handbuch* was grounded in the direct contact with the occupied spaces, that is *Landeskunde* surveys and photography were among its main tools. It employed a professional photographer and its members were always equipped with a camera during fieldwork expeditions. The photographs were organised into an archive which, within the course of a single year, numbered over 2500 catalogued prints. This collection played a fundamental role in *Landeskunde*'s activities. Its output was an impressive publishing enterprise: consisting both of professional articles issued in scientific journals and multi-copy popular editions addressed to a wider public. The latter attached equal importance to the written and to the visual (maps and photographic) description. They took the form of plain photographic albums or of richly illustrated handbooks, whose layout and structure originated from the choice of the photo archive.

The *Landeskunde* was mainly concerned with the *Generalgouvernement* territory, however its surveys also extended to the *Ober-Ost* (the military administrative unit established on the lands of today north-eastern Poland, western Belarus, Lithuania and part of Latvia), where their project was archived by the army (Liulievicius 2000). The survey pictures were taken not by the official press photographers present on the front lines (Holzer 2012: 13–14), but rather by amateur photographers among the soldiers or the members of the accompanying staff. They used a camera to capture their own experiences, and most of these pictures, illustrating handwritten diaries or kept in private albums, were never published. Bernard Bardach, a physician and an Austrian officer who fought on the Eastern Front is a good example of this. As Jay Winter says of his war albums, kept today in the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, they reflect how the Eastern Front was a space of encounter between the modern, urbanised world to which Bardach was accustomed and the rural and poor landscape of the borderlands of the Austrian, German and Russian empires (Winter 2006: 79–102). Such amateur pictures formed a true expression of the sentiments endangered in the German soldier by an encounter with the unknown. They were particularly devoted to the visualisation of the multicultural and multiethnic character of these lands: a revelation to the German and international public. This sense of encounter with a different world is well reflected in the official *Ober-Ost* albums, like the *Bilder aus Litauen* (Schlichting & Osman 1917), which organised these amateur efforts in an official and complete vision (Fig. 141).

Both the impressive scientific *Landeskunde* surveys and the amateur ones undertaken in the *Ober-Ost*, which aimed at a complete description, visualisation and popularisation of the occupied territories, must be seen as an important element of war tactics and of German imperialism. They constituted one of the central elements of a large scale 'Kulturmission' in these lands. The German surveyors were

symbolically appropriating the described and photographed lands and claiming their civilising and cultural role as first scholars of the region, bringers of order, conservators etc. Moreover, through the mapping, visualising and describing activities of the *Landeskunde*, the German Empire was preparing the ground for territorial claims and expressing its imperial ambitions. It exploited scientific surveys and expeditions on the Eastern Front in an analogous way to that in which Western Empires used it in colonial expansion. Thus, *Landeskunde* formed a potent propaganda tool whose accessible narration could be widely used in social communication through the visual means of photography and cartography.

The German *Kulturträger* were, however, not the only ones to cross the paths of the Eastern Front equipped with a camera. Similar, interweaving surveys were undertaken in this difficult period by other national and ethnic groups who claimed their rights to these territories.

### **The Civic Associations and Their Photographic Reconstruction of Poland**

In 1905, after over forty years of exile, cultural heritage and cultural landscape were reintroduced in Russia as a public, social and national affair. The tolerance edict, one of the tsarist concessions after the 1905 Russian Revolution, restored religious freedom and the freedom to associate into national, religious or ethnic organisations. Among the numerous associations established in the centres of the Polish Kingdom and the Western Provinces, an important role was played by societies dealing with the discovery, salvage and description of cultural heritage. Arguably, the year 1905 also marks the advent of the great survey projects undertaken in the Western Borderlands of the Empire. Two Warsaw societies established in 1906, the *Towarzystwo Opieki nad Zabytkami Przeszłości* ('The Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments') and the *Polskie Towarzystwo Krajoznawcze* (somewhere between a tourist club and a geographical society, best conveyed by the German word *Heimatschutz*) used survey photography as an important tool (Manikowska 2011). Importantly, the activity of both societies not only intensified drastically during the period of the Great War, but also held similar tasks and produced similar images, archives, photo books, exhibitions etc. Moreover, this activity, which until then had been limited to the local territories, gained at the time of the Great War the most ambitious task of visually documenting the cultural landscape of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as a whole, an enormous territory under the dominion of three Empires (Russia, Austria-Hungary and Germany). Such a task, for practical and financial reasons, was impossible to accomplish by surveys alone and was complemented by immense collecting activity and countless donations following press appeals.

These wartime photographic initiatives, which intentionally crossed the partition borders, formed an all-encompassing vision and a national statement and must be seen as a strong national and political statement equivalent to the *Landeskunde* project. These initiatives aimed at capturing, creating and popularising a purely

national (Polish) vision of the former lands of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. This however, meant the purposeful marginalisation of other nationalities or ethnicities inhabiting the same cultural landscape. Such a process of erasing and omitting is well reflected in the 1916 catalogue of the *Wieś i miasteczko* ('Village and the country town') exhibition organised during the war by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments (*Wieś i miasteczko* 1916). This album, through a deliberate choice of images from the survey archive, built a narrative that aimed to present through the chosen examples the peculiarities of Polish rural architecture as distributed through ancient regions within the borders of the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (Fig. 142). The short ideological introduction was capped with a verse from the *Rota* (a patriotic song popular throughout the whole of partitioned Poland), which made clear allusions to Polish hopes for independence endangered by the course of the war. The album was to form a choice of examples, the 'ABC of Polishness', to be followed in the post-war reconstruction and in the forming of a future national architecture. Accordingly, through the choice from the survey photo-archive it was postulating a return to a national, pre-partition architectural landscape. Particular stress was attached to rural architecture, firstly because in its primitive character one could still find living and truly Polish techniques and ornaments, secondly because it formed the most peculiar element of the cultural landscape. Finally, by labelling the rural landscape Polish a national consciousness would be awakened in the lower social strata. What is striking about the album is firstly the fact that most of the photographs are depopulated (and this is rather unusual both for survey photography of the period and more specifically for this survey archive); and secondly, the marginal space given to non-Polish architectural examples (synagogues, orthodox churches etc.), which seem generally integrated into such a 'Polonised' cultural landscape. The authors of the album and of the exhibition, by leaving aside the ethnographic richness and variety available, omitted the complex national and ethnic questions of the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth's lands, thus forming a clear national statement: a unified 'Polonised' vision based on wood and brick.

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### **Shloyme An-ski, Salomon Yudovin and the Visualisation of Jewish Culture**

The expedition of 1912–1914 organised by the Jewish Historic-Ethnographic Society (founded in St Petersburg in 1908) and its most active member Shloyme Zanvl Rappoport, alias An-ski, was certainly the most impressive pre-war survey project in the Western Provinces of the Russian Empire and has to be seen as a perfect counterpart to the Polish survey projects. This famous Yiddish writer and political activist envisaged a modern ethnographic expedition with the use of phonogram and photography and the most elaborate ethnographic questionnaire to be produced in the Empire, with the aim of documenting all aspects of Jewish culture in the vast territory of the Pale of Settlement as a whole (Safran 2010: 186–224). An-ski was the first to propose that the Jews of the Russian Empire were

worthy of study by a professional team of researchers who would take scientific and modern technology with them into the field for several seasons. Before the outbreak of the war he had managed, with a photographer, a musicologist and several folklore specialists and volunteers, to visit ca. 60 out of 300 selected places in Volynia, Podolia, and the Kiev provinces and by penetrating the local Jewish communities had documented customs, tales, music, artistic heritage etc. as well as collect precious artefacts for a planned Jewish museum. These field trips should be seen as a heroic mission undertaken with the enormous cultural task of rediscovering the essence of a nation's culture and distinctiveness preserved in the provinces and to form the groundwork for a contemporary Jewish cultural self-definition and renewal. Among the main accomplishments of An-ski's project were more than 2000 photographs (Fig. 143) of Jewish types, scenes, historical places, monuments, old and famous buildings, taken by the expedition's photographer, Solomon Iudovin (Yudovin). They were intended to be published in a monumental 5-volume work: *An Album of Jewish Artistic Heritage* (Sokolova 2007). This never-accomplished project, through its overview of synagogues and their interiors, the gravestones of famous people, objects of religious and daily life, ethnic types, religious and daily life scenes, was supposed to be the first visual statement of the existence of a Jewish artistic cultural heritage. Importantly, the photographic albums were to form a visual documentation of both a specific cultural landscape and of an extraterritorial and timeless culture. The artistic quality of Yudovin's photographs was to reveal the beauty of traditional Jewish culture and form premises for the future of thousands of assimilated Jews until then alienated from their cultural heritage.

### Photographic Intersections

By juxtaposing the three—German, Polish, Jewish—parallel large-scale survey initiatives I argue that the Great War was a pivotal moment for the emergence of authoritative and competing photographic visions of the cultural landscape in the lands of the former Western Provinces of the Russian Empire. Importantly, the Jewish, Polish, Lithuanian or German surveyors and state-builders were portraying the same territory, in the same way, through the same universal media of photography and science. Paradoxically, these competing visions are often very similar, even making use of the same photographic images. Their interweaving analysis reveals the complex cultural process of such an ethnic/national/imperial definition through the tissue of culture. I will give a few examples.

The first springs from the comparison of two (Polish and German) wartime photographic albums. *Das Polnische Bauernhaus*, issued in 1918 by the *Landeskunde* (Grisebach 1918), is an eyewitness account based on surveys, drawings and photographs made by the engineer Helmuth Grisebach as he moved with the German army through the territory of Galicia and Congress Poland. A close analysis of several from among its photographic illustrations reveals that they have been

published beforehand in the exhibition album, *Wieś i miasteczko. Das Polnische Bauernhaus*, mentioned above, is just one among the many examples of the re-use in the *Landeskunde's* publications of the survey images produced by the national civic societies active in the occupied lands (Fig. 144). But how did this Polish survey picture fit in with German visual propaganda? Arguably, it was through the distribution of the illustrations and the accompanying text that the universal language of survey photography 'spoke' in completely different Polish national and German imperial languages. While the photographs in the Polish exhibition album were distributed geographically in order to stress the territorial distribution of Polish culture, in Grisebach's book they are organised according to building element (walls, roof, interior etc.) presenting the features of a kind of exterritorial homogeneous rural house defined as *russisch-polnisch Bauernhaus*, a name that introduces doubts as to the national affinity of the numerous examples shown in the pictures. Moreover, its affinities with the German *Bauernhaus* and the claimed superiority of the latter are continuously stressed.

The second example refers to the surveys of the roadside wooden crosses, one of the most peculiar elements of the cultural landscape of the region of Samogitia inhabited by Lithuanians and Poles. The construction of new crosses and the care, preservation and survey of the existing ones—strictly prohibited by the tsarist ban of 1867—was reintroduced with the 1905 tolerance edict. Not surprisingly, in the following years both the Lithuanian and Polish civic societies launched surveys of the crosses, seeing in them a true expression of both the Lithuanian and Polish spirit. Arguably the texts of the survey albums produced at around the same time by Antanas Jaroševičius (1912) and Bronisław Piłsudski (edited posthumously: Piłsudski 1922) made contradictory claims to the lands of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth by referring to the images of the same cultural landscape (Fig. 145).

The third example comes from analysis of the photo archive of An-ski's Jewish surveys, which interestingly contain for example pictures of Polish historic castles and Catholic churches. Such buildings were elements of the same cultural landscape, inseparably interconnected with synagogues or cheders, for centuries present in Jewish legends and tales. However, in the planned publication such photographs were omitted because it was felt that they disrupted the purely Jewish vision of these lands.

Arguably, the strong competing visions of a 'nationalised/imperialised' cultural landscape were created in the process of conscious ideological appropriation, choice and obliteration both of elements of the cultural landscape and of pictures from the photo archive.

## Conclusion

Certainly, the power attached to the survey photographic image and to the survey photographic archives was particularly strong at the time of the war and of the fol-

lowing peace treaty negotiations, when they were widely used to support territorial pretensions and political statements. Nowhere is this better evidenced than in the popular geography handbooks published to express national or imperial geopolitical ambitions. Paweł Sosnowski's geography of Poland in its pre-partition borders (1919) and Stefan Rudnyćkyj's *Ukraina. Land und Volk* (1916) make the same use of the survey photographic illustration as does the above described *Handbuch von Polen*.

Importantly, the reason for the existence of the survey photographic archives analysed in this article did not cease with the final establishment of the new geopolitical order in Eastern Europe. Each of them had its own peculiar continuation. The collection of the Warsaw Society for the Protection of Ancient Monuments was soon institutionalised as the main core of the photo library of the *Centralne Biuro Inwentaryzacji Zabytków* ('Central Register of Monuments'), an important branch of the Polish Ministry of Culture. An-ski's project was continued by several Jewish organisations active in Poland: the Jewish Historic-Ethnographic Society and the Institute for Jewish Research in Vilnius, and in particular by the Warsaw based *Jidysze Gezelschaft für Landkenntnis*, which had numerous regional branches in Poland.

The photographic archives of the *Landeskunde* were revived only at the time of WWII. Arguably, the Nazi cultural appropriation of the East—just as in the years 1916–1918—was expressed through the means of photographic exhibitions and richly illustrated publications. The Nazi scientific institutions—in particular the *Institut für Deutsche Ostarbeit* (the IDO, established in Cracow in 1940), and the *Reichsuniversität Posen* (the Nazi University, established in 1941)—just like the *Landeskunde* formed their own survey photo archives from the East as an essential tool of cultural control and appropriation. Interestingly, at this time the *Landeskunde*'s photo archive was moved to Cracow (today kept in the Ethnographic Museum in Cracow) in order to form the basis of the IDO survey collections, which were to be expanded by way of carefully planned professional surveys.

The survey photographic archives, just as at the time of WWI, served as a repository for propaganda exhibitions and publications, although they bore a much more straightforward message than the one expressed in the *Landeskunde* handbooks and albums: they were to be a proof of the superiority of the German culture and spirit present in such works as the main altar of the St Mary's Church in Cracow (Arend 2013; Zadrozny 2008). However, the IDO propaganda journal *Die Burg* ('The City') with astonishing pictures of the Weit Stoss altarpiece, unveiling its timeless beauty, reveals the complexity of wartime survey visions (Fig. 146). Arguably, the pictures bear strong propaganda messages, while at the same time they spring from the practice of science and from the intersection of feelings endangered by the work itself and by the Front and the political situation. This includes even such propaganda survey images as the anthropological pictures of "racial types" shot in the German prison camps (Evans 2010: 155–188), of which several examples are

also present in the *Landeskunde's* archive (Fig. 147). As Andrew D. Evans argues, the 'racial' approach, which was to play such a significant role in Nazi ideology, was at the time of WWI by no means a tool of state-controlled propaganda, springing rather from the general political atmosphere and from the new setting of anthropological research: the prison camp (Ibid.).

Importantly, the WWI survey photographic archives hold a strong appeal to the contemporary viewer. In recent years their holdings served as a material for numerous popular photographic exhibitions organised in Poland, Russia, Germany or Lithuania (see for example Sokolova 2007; Jamski & Manikowska 2006). In the 'rough', un-retouched visions produced at the time of WWI there is still a strong feeling of the complexity of this Eastern European landscape. Such are the first impressions of the German soldiers; such are the most touching photographic collections of the period—the war archives (Fig. 148). They were formed as a response to the pleas addressed by Polish, Jewish, Lithuanian salvage organisations to their co-nationals living in the endangered Front zones to send photographs of anything and everything in their neighbourhoods—which, due to war operations, might disappear forever—to document themselves and their traditional way of life and how it and they were being destroyed. These never retouched Jewish/Polish/Lithuanian photo archives of everything and everyone are strikingly similar and probably form the last vision of these cultural landscapes deprived of the filter of national and state propaganda.

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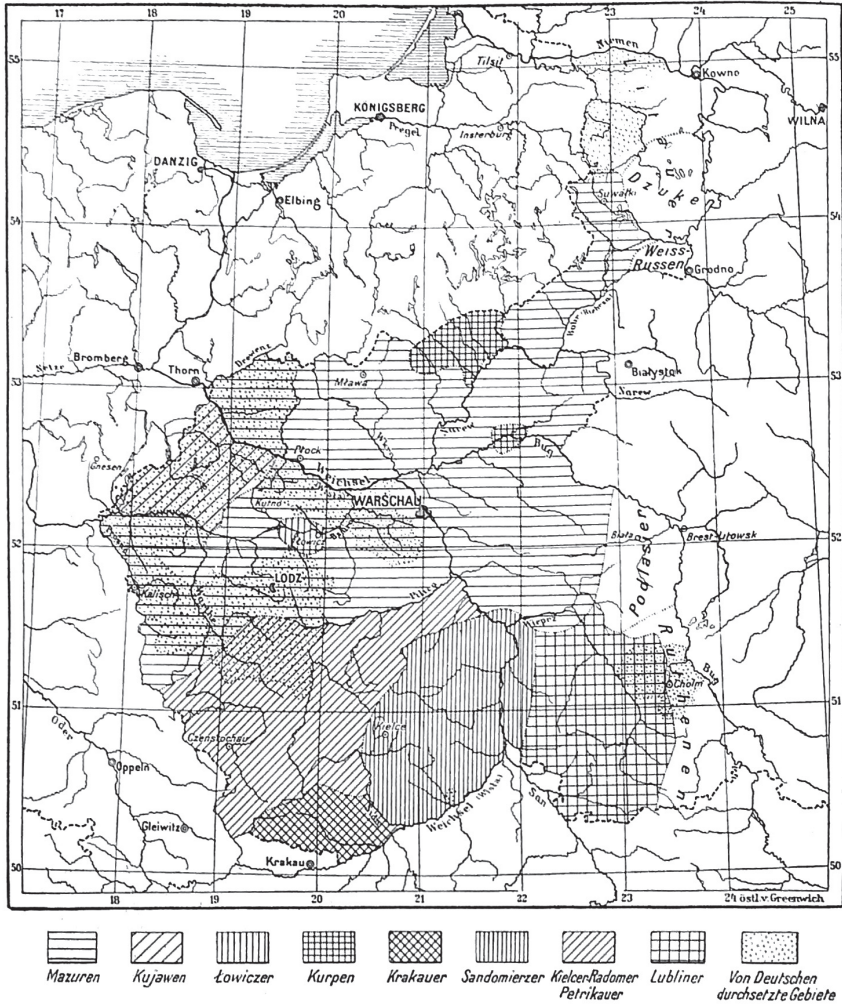
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**HIGHLANDERS FROM ZAKOPANE IN THE TATRAS**

139 ..... A. Schultz, *Ethnographischer Bilderatlas von Polen (Kongress-Polen)*, 1918.



THE ETHNOGRAPHIC MAP OF THE KINGDOM OF POLAND

A. Schultz, *Ethnographischer Bilderatlas von Polen (Kongress-Polen)*, 1918.



Ein altes ruffisches Ehepaar



Ruffische Bauertypen aus Odonowo



Ruffische Bäuerinnen bei Prozinewitsch



Landchaft bei Komarowitschi

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..... PICTURES OF LITHUANIA

141 ..... R. Schlichting & H.A. Osman, 1917.

KUJAWY,

pow. koniński.



319. KAWNICE, KOŚCIÓŁ PARAF. p. w. W. W. ŚWIĘTYCH, Z R. 1774.

KUJAWY,

pow. kolski, turecki.



321. BORYSŁAWICE KOŚC., KOŚCIÓŁ PARAF. p. w. WNIEBOW. N. M. P., Z R. 1773.



320. KAWNICE, KOŚCIÓŁ PARAF. (porówn. 26 319).



322. KOWALE PAŃSKIE, DWÓR

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..... **A PICTURE FROM THE JEWISH ETHNOGRAPHIC EXPEDITION**

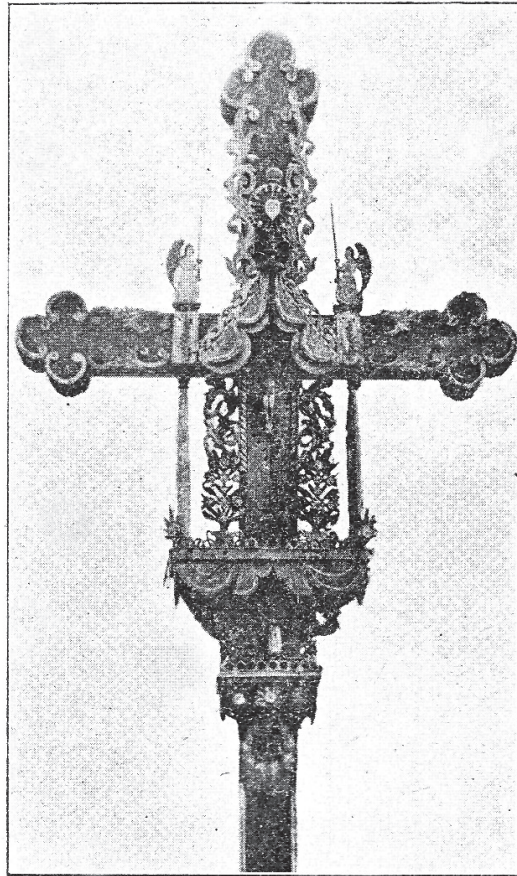
143 ..... S. Iudovin, 1912–1914.



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**A POLISH FARMHOUSE** .....

H. Griesbach, 1917. .... 144



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**CROSSES AND ROADSIDE SHRINES**

145 ..... B. Piłsudski, 1922.



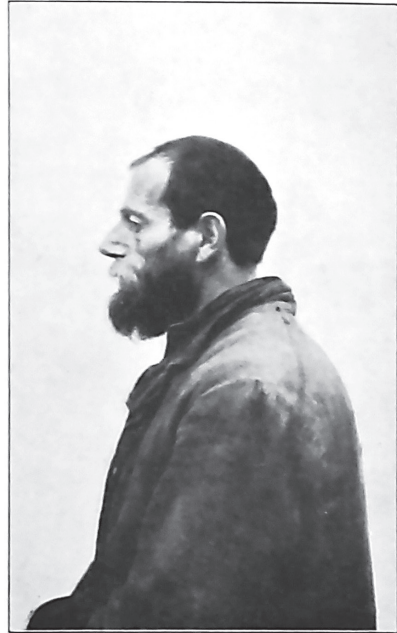
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**THE CRACOW ALTARPIECE OF VEIT STOSS**

**Fragment.**

S. Kołowca, ca. 1944 (IS PAN). 146

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.....  
**A JEW FROM WISZNICE**

147 ..... A. Schultz, *Ethnographischer Bilderatlas von Polen (Kongress-Polen)*, 1918.



**A ROADSIDE CHAPEL ON THE EASTERN FRONT**

Ca. 1915–1918 (IS PAN).

## The Meaning of Photos in the Context of Memory and Remembering

Photos visualise our memories of places, people, and historical periods. I first contemplated the role that historical photos play in keeping our memories when I was selecting photos and caricatures to illustrate my research about a local post-war rumour. My first book on this topic dwelled also on this issue and was published both in Estonian and English (Kalmre 2007, 2013). The book describes one specific rumour, according to which there was a factory that made sausages out of human flesh in the ruins near the open-air market in the centre of Tartu.

After the Second World War, two different cultures and ideologies faced each other in Estonia. One of these, representing the position of the foreign rulers, had clear political, economic and social advantages. Since physical conflict was out of the question, the other, oppressed group had only a linguistic and cognitive arsenal at their disposal. Spreading rumours gave the Estonian population the opportunity to safely release their discontent and distrust towards the foreigners who had come to power. For this reason, people were eager to spread and believe the sausage factory rumour (Kalmre 2013).

The sausage factory story was silenced in Soviet period (which lasted from the end of WWII until the 1990s)—it was one of many memories that could only be talked about later, in independent Estonia<sup>1</sup>. Today, the rumour is still significant for the pre-war generation, and many believe it to be true as it pertains to their personal fate and empiric experience from the time. During my research I interviewed more than 30 people who were children or adolescents shortly after the war, most of whom had visited the place near the market in the ruins. In the interviews, they described the rumour as originating among people who visited the open-air market beside Emajõgi river in the centre of Tartu. Thus, the post-war city with its buildings, streets and bridges became part of the rumour my interviewees reminisced about.

Looking for suitable photographs for my publication, I worked in several archives and browsed my informants' personal photo collections. My primary goal in choosing the photos was to visualise the distant past for the present-day reader. In selecting historical pictures of Tartu I tried to emulate the manner in which my informants remembered and described the city: before the war, and later, when it was in ruins. To achieve this, the majority of photographs are positioned between chapters in threes, and each triplet tells its own story about a place important for

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<sup>1</sup> Estonian independence was re-established in 1991.

citizens of Tartu. The photos tell the story of a beautiful city marred by war, of how war changed it, how Vanemuine Theatre, the Stone Bridge, churches, streets, and entire quarters of the city centre were turned into ruins.

Towards the end of my research I conducted several additional interviews focusing specifically on the historical photographs of Soviet era Tartu. In addition, I searched for further information on this issue when conducting research for the present chapter. In recent years I have followed memory and identity discourse in several Facebook communities and personal blogs dedicated to exhibiting and sharing historical photographs. This led me to the insight that there are many converging aspects between people's post-war memories and the discourse of historical photographs.

In this chapter I am going to discuss the role of historical photos of Tartu both during the Soviet period and today, with a focus on relating and distorting memories, truth and reality, and mediating the discourse of power and identity.

### **A Few Theoretical Anchors for the Following Discussion**

Estonian professor of photo-semiotics, Peeter Linnap, notes in his monograph *Fotoloogია* ('Photology'; Linnap 2006: 123) that all pictures acquire meaning within a context—either in the one in which they were created, or in which they are interpreted. This accounts for the interpretative frame of an image. The interpretation, but even more so the production of photographs, is influenced by power relations in the society.

Michael Foucault (1980: 109–134) emphasised the aspect of power in (any) human activity. From this point of view, photos and other images are a manifestation of political power relations which purport to establish and petrify beliefs, convictions and ideals. Contemporary theories of photography claim that “any kind of pictorial presentation promotes someone's interests, be they personal, based on belonging to a social class, visual or chrematistic—not to mention political and ideological interests” (Linnap 2007: 17).

Photographs also function as narratives that maintain and guide memories. Historical photos are watermarked with the intent of their author. At the same time, they also help us to understand the past from a more general perspective. Cultural historian Peter Burke has noted that “images may help posterity tune in to the collective sensibility of a past period. At the moment the photographer selects the subject, he takes the position of the historian, immortalising the selected moment on behalf of history, i.e. the future” (Burke 2001: 31 ff). This means that similarly to oral narration, visual representations including photos have a most important role in retaining and guiding memories. Accordingly, they also play a role in creating shared community identity.

Peter Burke has also noted that, “even the artistic style known as ‘realism’ has its own rhetoric. They [historians] have pointed out the importance of ‘point of view’ in photographs and paintings in both the literal and the metaphorical senses

of that phrase, referring to the physical standpoint and also to what might be called the ‘mental standpoint’ of the artist” (Burke 2001: 30–31). Talking about the wartime or post-war photographers who documented their surroundings, we have to keep in mind that they must be seen both as individuals and also as members of their communities, sharing the life and destiny of their people, acting in their time. What surrounds the photos at the time they are taken is important, as are the meanings attributed to them by their contemporaries and the meanings they acquire in the future. In the following section, I point to a few aspects of dealing with documentary photos in the official Soviet information channels, and how the inhabitants of Tartu saw the historical photos: what meanings they gave to the images and what their practices were with regard to them.

Photos create their own reality and truth, and the relation of both photos and narratives to social reality and truth are complicated. Nevertheless, images play an important role in marking the truth-value of things. It has been said that “on the linguistic level, ‘truth’ appears to spontaneously want to take the form of an image or picture” (Linnap 2007: 39). Juri Lotman has written about photography as a stand-in for reality (Lotman 1992: 72–73). Depicting public reality construction in news and their visual formats as bidirectional, Linnap finds that the standardised “menu for recording life events”<sup>2</sup> recreates reality itself and our comprehension of reality is composed, in the end, of what we see (Linnap 2007: 41)—and also of what we hear as, for example, rumours. Post-war rumours based on stereotypical imagery had similar leverage: they were both a reality as well as a way of describing reality, and the world described in these stories was so powerful that it still has an influence on people’s memories, feelings and attitudes (Kalmre 2013: 134).

### Forbidden City, Forbidden Photos

After the war Tartu city centre was practically in ruins, as more than half of the residential areas and about half of the industrial buildings had been destroyed. Many buildings that bore symbolic value to Estonians after their 20 years as an independent nation state (1918–1939) had been demolished by Nazi or Soviet troops, among them Vanemuine theatre, St John’s Church, St Maria’s Church, the Stone Bridge, the Trade Yard (symbolising the success of the first ethnic Estonian businessmen), and the then modern Market Building that had been completed just before the war (Fig. 149).

The majority of these edifices stood in the vicinity of the open air market and the place where the alleged sausage factory—the crime scene—was situated. These buildings functioned as backdrop to the stage where the events described by my informants took place. As typical to war memoirs<sup>3</sup>, the particular reality created

<sup>2</sup> Peeter Linnap uses the term “menu” to denote images and series of images that record life events.

<sup>3</sup> In analysing the literary treatments of the First World War, Paul Fussell describes an approach that is based on a similar opposition (Fussell 2000).

by the narrators anchored in the present time juxtaposed the ruins, fear and lack of food of the post-war Soviet Socialist Republic of Estonia to the abundance of merchandise, safe life and well-tended bridges and buildings of the pre-war Republic of Estonia.

One popular symbol of the former security, permanence and prosperity was the Stone Bridge, destroyed by the retreating Soviet troops in 1941, which had magical connotations in folk tradition. The bridge was dedicated to Empress Catherine II, built in the eighteenth century at one end of Tartu's Town Hall Square, and opened to traffic in 1784 (Figs 150, 151). The blowing up of the Stone Bridge was always described as a very dramatic event. The narrators talking about this showed compassion with what happened, because they had either in a direct or indirect way seen it, and now, more than 50 years later, have become eye-witnesses to the event. Narrators described where they were at the time, where the debris fell, and what they had felt at the time:

I remember when the Stone Bridge was blown up. My father took me to town, and I saw it, when there were great piles of birch logs on the bridge, and the Russian soldiers kept bringing more. That was the day before, and my father said that they were going to blow it up, and that he wanted me to see it so that I would remember it. He liked the bridge so much. And now I do indeed remember it. I also remember that in the countryside everyone knew that the bridge would be blown up at four in the morning. No one dared to sleep. Then all of the windows shook. The ammunition was so powerful, and then (...) well, they blasted the bridge. And there were a lot of them throughout the city, for a long time, the stones.<sup>4</sup>

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In the Soviet period, Tartu became a 'forbidden city' that was closed to outsiders because of the local Soviet army air force base; foreigners were not permitted to visit the city without a special permit. The totalitarian system's control mechanisms also forced people to maintain silence about everything that had ever happened in the city.

Verbal communication in the Soviet period was not only divided into private and public, but was based on mutual trust and the guarantees provided by social networks. The same applied to photographs—people lived in a two-faced pictorial world. The Soviet public menu of images lacked post-war photos, especially photographs of destroyed towns. Everything was expected to appear neat, progressive and proper. The Soviet public rhetoric spoke of the "restoration" of the city of Tartu, which in actuality did not involve any reconstruction, but instead only the

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<sup>4</sup> Told by Laine Haamer (b. 1930). The interview was made in 2001 and is kept in Estonian Folklore Archive manuscript series EFA I 82, p. 27.

demolition of ruined buildings. At the time, many architecturally valuable houses that could have been repaired were pulled down.

The ‘menu of images’ in Soviet times also lacked pre-war photographs, as in Estonia the ideology of the Soviet regime was entirely built upon the denial of the independent first Republic of Estonia (1918–1939). Everything connected with the first Republic was prohibited and condemned, from insignia to photographs and literature published in the 1920s and 1930s. No photo book was published on even a remotely related topic.

It could be said that during and after the war, photos of ruins became a weapon of propaganda (see also Demski, this volume). Both warring sides tried to show destruction caused by the other as more extensive. Some publications from that time provide evidence for this. For example, in 1941, under Nazi German occupation, a collection of ten photographs was published, called *Tartu. Bolševikkude poolt hävitatud linnaosi. / Dorpat. Von den Bolscheviken zerstörte Stadtteile* (“Tartu: City Parts Destroyed by Bolsheviks”; Kriisa 1941). Under the Soviet regime no photo book was published with either pre-war or post-war photographs; however, the photos existed in private collections taken mostly by amateur photographers.<sup>5</sup>

Soviet-period documentary photographs have been called ‘the cultural sign of fear’ (Linnap 2007: 63). This referred to the prohibition on taking photos of certain objects (bridges, monuments, military personnel, and also accidents and catastrophes, because “nothing of the kind ever happened in the ideal Soviet Union”, etc.) but in a sense it included the whole of Soviet photographic culture.

Under the Soviet regime, not only photographs but also film and video chronicles of towns destroyed by the war were strictly controlled and used for propaganda purposes. Pearu Tramberg of the Estonian Film Archives reminisces:

In this respect, the post-war time was tough: in addition to the usual Soviet Glavlit<sup>6</sup> censoring of feature films, military censors reviewed everything produced on film until the mid-1950s. For example, the wreckage caused by the bombing in Tallinn could not be filmed. If, accidentally, some ruins had been caught on camera, it was removed during film montage. The exception was the

<sup>5</sup> The interpretation of post-war destruction may still be a question of politics and power in Estonia. The capital of Estonia is Tallinn. Recently, an article about the bombing of the Old Town of Tallinn in 1944 caused much furore. The article was published in the newspaper issued by the Central Party (*Keskerakond*), which enjoys the support of the majority of Russian-speaking voters. The party-minded editor had omitted from the historian’s article the paragraph stating that Tallinn Old Town was bombed on March 9 and 10 by Red Army air forces (Ranne 2014; Abiline 2014).

<sup>6</sup> The official purpose of *Glavlit* was to prevent publications of information that could compromise state secrets in books, newspapers and other printed matter, as well as in radio and TV broadcasting. In effect it tried to curb the publication of any ideas that deviated from the official standpoint. The methods used included pre-censorship, entailing proofreading drafts of publications before they were sent to print, as well as post-publication censorship which entailed proofreading printed publications, and destroying or limiting access to runs deemed eligible for censorship ([www.Estonica.org/et/Glavlit/](http://www.Estonica.org/et/Glavlit/)).

depiction of single short clips about renovation works produced for newsreels in the late 1940s, showing residents of Tallinn “voluntarily” working and enthusiastically clearing up the ruins (the voiceover does not mention the cause of the destruction). In the summer 1945, movie amateur Max Reikter filmed the fields of ruins in Tallinn, and must have done it in secret early in the morning as we can see only a few people moving about. Unlike Tartu and Tallinn, the ruins of Narva were not a taboo topic, because before the decisive battles the Germans evacuated from the town all civilians, and therefore there were no citizens to witness the destruction of the city. This provided the opportunity to blame the destruction of the city on the “German fascist invaders”. Of course, it remains inexplicable why the German forces defending the city should have destroyed it. My former colleague who was evacuated from Narva as a child, was convinced that the destruction of Narva by Soviet forces was an action meant to intimidate Estonians (not Germans) rather than a military necessity.<sup>7</sup>

In comparison, the Soviet regime in Estonia was more closed and hypocritical than elsewhere in Eastern Europe. For example, photographer Richard Peter senior’s (1895–1977) photo book of Dresden in ruins (*Dresden, eine Kamera klagt an*) was published as early as 1949 in the then German Democratic Republic in a run of 50 000 (!) copies. The album, which inspired much discussion, included superimposing photos of bomb-wrecked Dresden destroyed by the British in 1945. As Hans-Michael Koetzle (2008: 58) noted: “Richard Peter’s photograph was indisputably the first of an entire series of similar motifs—an image that bequeathed the world a valid pictorial formula for the horror of the bombing in general and of the destruction of the Baroque city of Dresden in particular.”

In Estonia, there was no publicly endorsed way to access photos of Tartu in ruins, although they proliferated in private circles. These photos became an important part of a private tradition and practice. They were present in the homes and photo albums of very many local residents. They told the story of the past that had shaped the identity of Estonians. My informants owned photos of many important pre-war objects, for example a grandiose photo of the Stone Bridge, as well as photos of war-devastated Tartu.

I found many of the photos used in my 2007 monograph in the photo collection of my husband’s parents. They were life-long inhabitants of Tartu and they, as many other people living there, had a small collection of historical photos of Tartu. Some of them had been acquired before the war. According to family memories, post-war photos were bought from Eduard Selleke who had sold the pictures to them at their workplace. They had photos of the market hall, the Stone Bridge and Vanemuine Theatre, etc. I saw a photo of my husbands’ grandfather standing in the ruins of his home, with the Market Hall visible in the background (Fig. 152).

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<sup>7</sup> Letter from Pearu Tramberg to the author, September 19, 2014.

Anyone leafing through a similar family album or photo collection could mentally compose a unique pictorial narrative by arranging photos of objects taken at different times.

In general, photographs of Tartu have played an important role in preserving local memories. The lively and detailed description of the town provided by my informants relied in part on their personal photo collections. After a few decades of Soviet rule, photographs of pre- and post-war Tartu, particularly those taken by photographer Eduard Selleke (1895–1976), and similar ones taken later by Ilja Pähn (1915–2006), Karl Hintzer (1895–1967), and Elmar Kald (1898–1969), etc. became a special point of interest among many local residents who were interested in collecting such material. During the Soviet period, these photos were exchanged among collectors at the Tartu Philately Club and elsewhere.

During the course of my research I came to know the phenomenal extent of photographer Eduard Selleke's work in taking documentary photos and distributing them during the Soviet period. Selleke was a professional photographer. During Estonia's first independence in the early twentieth century he had been a scientific photographer at Tartu University and fulfilled multifaceted photography-related requests. He worked on reproductions of old photos, documentary photography, pictures of WWI and the Estonian Liberation War (Fig. 153). However, he became nationally renowned for his photos of the city of Tartu, both pre- and post-war. During Soviet period he continued working as a photographer focusing mainly on portraits, studio, and document photos. Although he was under constant KGB surveillance, and also had to perform some jobs to their specifications, working in an artistic team (*artell*) allowed some independence and even business opportunities during the Soviet period. Practically until his death he and his wife visited companies in Tartu, offering his photos for sale. One could also order photos from him directly. In fact, he had acquired the works of many photographers who had fled to the west during the war (including Karl Hintzer), which he also sold (under his own name). Consequently, Selleke is today credited for pictures that he did not take. In the museums and archives of Tartu the ratio of originals and copies of these photos is still unresolved. As a side remark, one of my informants, Kalju Leib, the owner of a large private photo collection focusing on the history of housing in Tartu, had had personal contacts with Eduard Selleke, and reminisced that Selleke was a good story teller, often accompanying the transaction, i.e. selling of a historical photograph, with a story concerning the pictured object. This provided prompt conjoining of memories to visual pictures.

Another interesting although more marginal means of bringing post-war forbidden photos of Tartu to public circulation—to homes, in front of the viewers—was if the photo followed an artistic and heroic format of depiction (for example if the image represented restoration). Graphic artist Richard Kaljo, for example, drew a series of graphic works of Tartu in war ruins in the 1950s. Several of the graphic

pictures were most probably inspired by photos that Selleke had taken of the pre-war objects and the war-ruined city (Figs 154, 155).

In fact, even more impressive, conducive of a feeling of emptiness and silence, are the photos from the 1950s depicting the cityscape after it had been cleared of ruins. This is what people would have felt after losing their homes and loved ones, after the deportations and installation of foreigners in power. Wolfgang Kil once described Richard Peter's completely subjective images, which were intended as affective warnings, as "landscapes of the soul". He states that "in these pictures, an entire generation found their experience of the war visually preserved" (cited in Koetzle 2008: 63; Figs 156 and 157).

The views of Tartu, documented by Eduard Selleke after the WWII, with fields of ruins in the earlier pictures and the cleared-up desolate panoramas seem ideologically neutral, taken just for recollection, but on the other hand they express the photographer's connectedness with his nation—a nation characterised by the impotence of the conquered.<sup>8</sup>

### Conclusion

The same objects—the destroyed Stone Bridge and Vanemuine Theatre, individual buildings, and entire parts of town that had been hit by bombs, the downtown area that had been cleared of rubble—that remained frozen in people's memory through photographs, became a part of visual history that confirmed the personal and popular memories of the inhabitants of Tartu.

Over time these photographs documenting Tartu's sad reality acquired an additional significance, because they metaphorically expressed one community's—Estonians'—view of history. Over time, the connotations of power and protest emerged alongside their initially documentary value. In this respect, the contemporary anchor in expressing attitudes towards historical photos resembles biographic narratives and memories. Anniki Kaivola-Bregenhøj has admitted that in the case of life stories, the personal and the collective merge into a single memory, taking voluntarily the role of societal memory as well as conscience (Kaivola-Bregenhøj 2000: 44). One of my informants, Kalju Leib, said that the damage recorded on the photographs did not necessarily have point out was responsible for it, although every time a person looked at a picture, that thought came to mind. Thus every photograph of Tartu in ruins that has become widely known has had the semantic function of preserving memories and supporting opinions concerning historical events. Thus, the photos carried more than the period-documenting dimension for the viewers—they acquired an evaluative dimension when looked at from a certain point in history. It was a judgement on the war that Estonia had been wrested into, evaluation of the conquerors and the invaders (the Others). But the photo

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<sup>8</sup> Peeter Linnap has made the same observations when regarding the battlefront photographer Donald Koppel as the visualiser of community emotions (Linnap 2002).

narratives presented in private circles (family albums etc.) also expressed a nostalgic yearning for secure life and success of an independent nation state.

As mentioned before, Linnap (2007: 41) states that photos both reflect reality and construct it. Our understanding of reality is shaped by the 'standardised menu of recording life events', also affecting the way we see and hear this reality. My own views tie in with this. Specifically, as I was closely involved with post-war rumour and memory during my research, I noticed how powerful the rumour-elicited world was. It was powerful to the extent that after the war it created a social setting that is still extant and influencing people's memories, feelings and values (Kalmre 2013: 131–134). Clearly, historical photos of Tartu had a significant role in creating this setting.

Peeter Linnap has expressed the opinion that Estonians are still living in a fairly limited world of public images, especially with regard to their history. It seems that the public 'pictorial menu' is still ashamed of the past and the topics related to identity (Linnap 2006: 240). Could the reason be that some aspects of the past that have significantly shaped our identity have been suppressed in the "collective subconsciousness" as so traumatic that we lack the will/courage to tackle them even now? Or is this "the cause of our blindness the previous KGB and *Glavlit* era with their total bans on pictures?" (Ibid.: 241). Actually, it is possible to argue against this claim since my observations indicate that the topics related to the past, memory, and the truth of photos were actual in the private sphere during Soviet times, although they are rather related to personal photo collections than public ones.

In the contemporary increasingly photographed and image-centred culture there is ever more reason to conduct research that lies at the crossroads of memory and remembering, and the visual and perceptive worlds. One reason for this is that the technical possibilities of the Internet allow a marked proportion of the population to participate in the processes. Pre- and post-war photos are increasingly accessible to interested parties. For example, many dedicated communities on Facebook are engaged in presenting historical photos (*Tiit KuMa*, *Nostalgiline Tartu* ('Nostalgic Tartu'), *Vanad asjad* ('Old things') etc.), with members posting historical photos and identifying the edifices depicted and swapping personal memories related to these locations and historical events. Probably the biggest special digital heritage of old photos is *Ajapaik*<sup>9</sup>, which is specialised to collecting historical photographs and their metadata. The photos that the photographer Eduard Selleke took of Tartu are, still, among the most popular ones in these groups. In addition, very popular and simple computer programs can be used to create photo narratives that unite the historical and current city of Tartu.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://ajapaik.ee>, see also <https://www.facebook.com/ajapaik?fref=ts> (last accessed on: November 10, 2014).

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**A VIEW OF TARTU, FROM VANEMUINE HILL  
TOWARDS MARKET HALL IN AUTUMN**

149 ..... E. Selleke, 1941, photo archive of the Tartu City Museum.

**THE STONE BRIDGE IN 1939** 150

E. Selleke, 1939, photo collections of the Estonian Literary Museum.



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**THE VIEW FROM TARTU TOWN HALL SQUARE  
TO THE DESTROYED STONE BRIDGE**

1941, private collection. 151

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**EDUARD UUSEN SITTING IN THE RUINS OF HIS HOME.  
IN THE BACKGROUND LIE THE RUINS OF THE MARKET HALL**

152 E. Selleke, private collection.



Kaubahoov      Vendejaro      Tartu      Eesti

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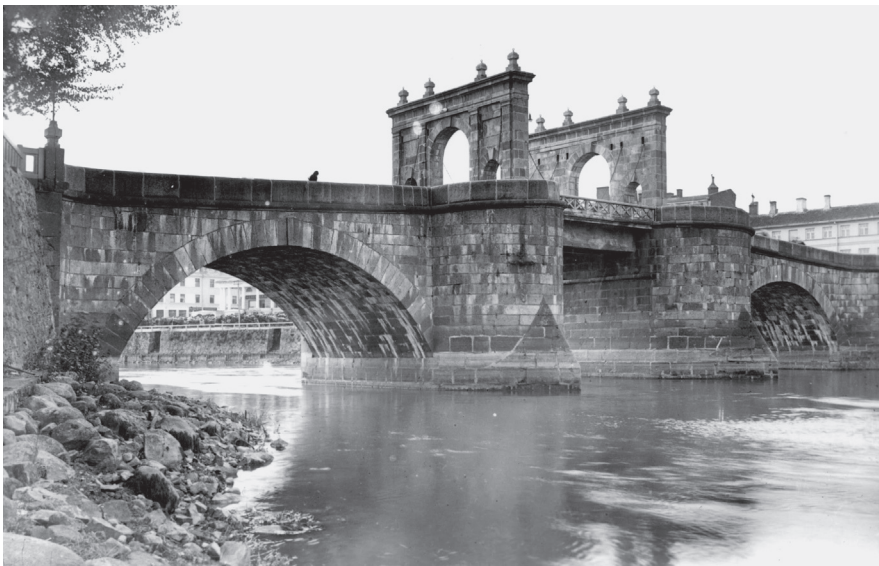
**THE TRADE YARD BEFORE THE WAR**

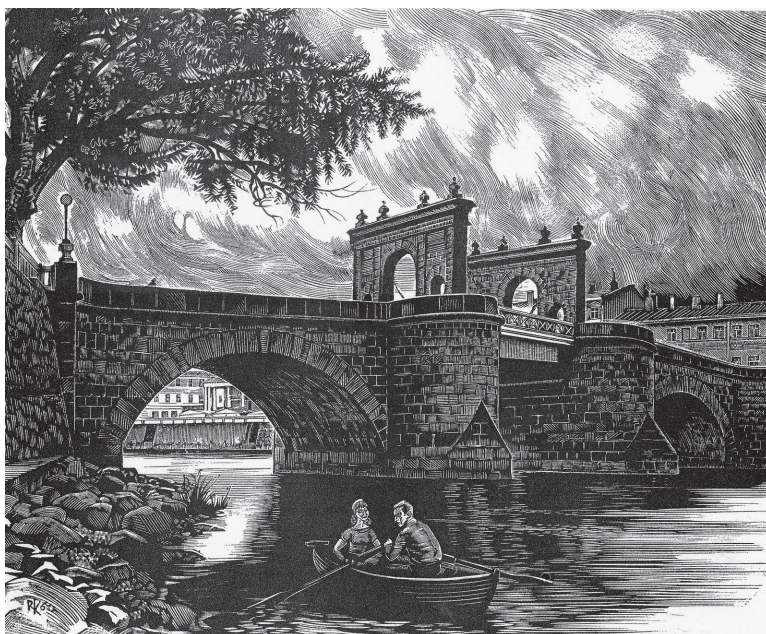
Eduard Selleke was fascinated by Esperanto, and the majority of his pictures are equipped with captions in Estonian and Esperanto.

E. Selleke, 1929, private collection.

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Photography by Eduard Selleke of the Stone Bridge from 1939 .....  
was the model for Richard Kaljo's graphic piece, 1945. .... 155

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.....  
**“LANDSCAPE OF THE SOUL”**

Graphic piece by Richard Kaljo, 1945, depicting the centre of Tartu,  
on Promenaadi street and its vicinity in ruins.

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**“LANDSCAPE OF THE SOUL”**

Photography of central Tartu in the 1950s,  
Promenaadi street and its vicinity, private collection.

# The Familiar Converted into the Other: Constructing Otherness Through the Monumental Representations of the Red Army in Poland (1940s–1950s)

*All societies produce strangers;  
but each kind of society produces its own kind of strangers,  
and produces them in its own inimitable way*  
(Bauman 2000: 35)

From 1945 Polish communists began to “perpetuate in stone” images of Red Army soldiers on a mass scale, continuing to do so until the end of the 1980s. These images form pretext for a more in-depth discussion of the meaning and power of monumental statues within urban space. They also give a possibility to construct within this discussion—and with its help—the category of Otherness.

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It may seem an outright banality to claim that the basic function of every monumental statue (Lat. *monumentum*) is to commemorate a person or an event. Contrary to this popular definition, however, the role of the monument’s image is not one-dimensional because every monument tells us about “the community, and not only the community it is to commemorate, but also the one which founded it; thus, a monument is a *signum temporis*, it bears witness to the social, political, state-related, national and generally human values of the era in which it was erected” (Grzeziuk-Olszewska 2003: 5). I would like to add one more element to this list. The monuments not only relate to the past and the ‘present’ of the time in which they were constructed, they also relate to the future. Monuments are erected with future generations in mind, and these generations’ representatives perform renewed interpretations of the meanings of objects, re-evaluating their status.

The present article is an attempt to provide answers to a few questions that oscillate around the features and functions of monumental representations. It is a rather subjective, though by no means accidental, measure to refer to in the process of explanation and interpretation of a group of monuments to Soviet soldiers—there are several dozen such objects—that were erected in Poland within its post-war borders in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>1</sup> The analysis covers only those memorials that

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<sup>1</sup> During the first years after WWII a total of over 400 Red Army monuments were erected in Poland in central localities. Not all of the monuments were sculpture art—the obelisk presented the simplest and

were erected in central locations in Polish towns (in the market squares, plazas, and main streets), excluding the monuments erected in permanent cemeteries.<sup>2</sup>

William John Thomas Mitchell claimed that the word ‘image’ is “notoriously ambiguous” (Mitchell 2005: 2). He also arrived at the conclusion that there is “(...) the wide variety of things that go by this name. We speak of pictures, statues, optical illusions, maps, diagrams, dreams, hallucinations, spectacles, projections, poems, patterns, memories, and even ideas as images (...)” (Mitchell 1986: 9). This text describes the images of Soviet soldiers preserved in stone, bronze or sandstone, in a material that becomes the carrier of these images. Therefore, the monument appears as a material representation of images of Red Army<sup>3</sup> soldiers in a real physical space and at a given time. This is significant inasmuch the type of carrier does not remain ‘invisible’, i.e. neutral, in the context of its influence over viewers and their interpretation of the messages transmitted with the carrier’s help. “Material forms create very different embodied experiences of images and very different affective tones or theatres of consumption” (Edwards & Hart 2005: 5).

The images perpetuated by the monument will differ from those that circulate as various types of photographs of the very same monument. Every medium possesses its own unique abilities to present and distort reality, which is why it is not without significance that the subject of the discussion is monuments in the true sense of the word, and not their images repeatedly copied and multiplied.

### **The Familiar and the Other: Indelibly Divided, Irrevocably United**

Before 1944 there were no monuments to Soviet soldiers in Poland. Rather, negative stereotypes of the Red Army soldier—a Bolshevik—and strong anti-communist sentiments prevailed. Long before WWII broke out monuments formed a powerful tool for propaganda and conflict for the Russian—and later Soviet—authorities in the territories they controlled. In the nineteenth century, Polish territory was the most explosive region of the Russian empire and the monuments erected by

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the most often-used form. A separate group is formed of monuments whose creators made use of readily available wartime props (for example tanks, cannons, planes). The present analysis is concerned with sculptured monuments.

<sup>2</sup> In the Polish People’s Republic, apart from Red Army monuments in central urban locations, several hundred such objects were erected in permanent cemeteries. These objects are not covered by this analysis. On the one hand, there are differences as to their perception and treatment by the Poles, due to the character of necropolis space. On the other hand they were, in a similar way to the monuments in central localities, employed for the purposes of communist propaganda, yet their influence and function in the social imagination was, in principle, weaker.

<sup>3</sup> The Red Workers’ and Peasants’ Army (RKKK, *Raboche-Krest’yanskaya Krasnaya Armiya*) officially came into existence in February 1918, but was formed very slowly. Until the autumn of 1919 it practically existed on paper only (Pipes 2010: 15). The RKKK was the full name of the Soviet armed forces, and in use until 1946, although the name was popularly shortened to the Red Army. From March 1946 its official name became the Soviet Army.

the invader triggered extremely strong emotions among the Polish community.<sup>4</sup> According to Tazbir's report, German historians claimed that, it is "our [Polish] history that provides an extreme example of national identification with (...) monuments. In no other country was there such a unique sphere of struggle surrounding them, a sphere within which patriotic sentiments had to battle against the brutal violence of the partitioners" (Tazbir 2000: 20). A sacred national space was taking shape around monuments (for example Sigismund's Column in Warsaw). Demonstrations were organised near them and the speeches delivered during such rallies became something like sermons which helped maintain belief in regaining national independence. The monuments erected by the invaders, recognised by the Poles as memorials of "national shame and derision", were spat upon and jeered at as the symbols of the Polish nation's enslavement and of Russian imperialism.<sup>5</sup>

After WWII, the monuments became an important element of communist propaganda, both in the Soviet Union itself, and in all the countries of the Eastern Bloc. In the 1940s, as a result of ineffective policy of the Allied Forces towards Poland and adverse actions on the part of Stalin, Poland was subordinated to the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union took over more than a half of Poland's pre-war eastern territories. Hostile attitudes towards the USSR presented by a part of Polish society deepened as a result of the economic exploitation of the country, the ban on the return of the legal Polish authority from war exile, terror against members of the Polish Underground State, and unauthorised stationing of a foreign army on Polish territory. In effect, until the 1950s, when the communists finally managed to establish influence, Poland witnesses a period of certain diarchy. The communists, and those who stood behind them, functioned on the basis of an alliance with the Soviet Union, using the support of the Soviet army and secret service, spreading terror among the opposition and those who were deemed enemies of the Polish People's state. On the other side of the barricade were those in Polish society who did not accept the post-war status quo and which accepted as legal the Polish authorities remaining on emigration in London. They condemned the communists' policy, treated the Soviet Union as a hostile country and the Red Army as an occupying force.

After the WWII, the Soviets initiated in Poland a nationwide monument campaign, the aim of which was to erect several hundred monuments glorifying the Red Army. Its executors, apart from Red Army soldiers, were the communist authorities. The costs were charged to the Polish state without asking for consent. No

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<sup>4</sup> The Partitions of Poland took place at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (1772, 1793, 1795). They ended the existence of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, resulting in the suspension of sovereign Poland for 123 years. Three partitions were conducted by the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Prussia and Habsburg Austria.

<sup>5</sup> In 1832 the Russian tsar issued a strict ban on erecting public monuments. The ban was a consequence of the November Uprising. After the ban, monuments were solely erected after authorisation from the partitioner.

public debate took place when it was most necessary, i.e., before the Soviet monuments were officially unveiled. Naturally, every new object was commented on in the media, but as a result of censorship the comments were exclusively positive, with no polemical voices.

The majority of the Red Army monuments in central locations in Polish towns were erected during the first decade after the war, especially in the late 1940s (the year 1945 holds the record in that respect). It does not mean that in the following decades no more such monuments were erected, although the number of such initiatives decreased over time. This was for numerous reasons, one of the most significant being the fact that within the public space hundreds of such objects already functioned (Fig. 158).

It is extremely hard to establish—if it is possible at all to establish this fact—when the process of othering of the Soviet monuments started. In my opinion, this moment came in 1945, with feelings deepening gradually over the next several years, something that was not unrelated to the quickening sovietisation of the country. In 1944 the first, then still rare, monuments to the Red Army were erected in Polish territory, connected, as a rule, with soldiers' graves. Despite hostile actions already then undertaken by the Soviet army against the Poles in the eastern regions of the Second Polish Republic, Red Army monuments were not attacked and Soviet soldiers were, at least officially, accepted as allies in the battle against the German occupying forces. It does not alter the fact that at that time many communities in Poland were already afraid of Stalin's plans. In 1945, contrary to Polish hopes of gaining full sovereignty, Stalin managed to establish fully subordinated communists in Poland, creating an illusion of autonomy and independence for the sake of the international arena. The "liberating" Red Army, instead of withdrawing from the "liberated" areas after the German armies were defeated, turned into yet another occupying force. In June 1945, the Soviet authorities decided to create and station the Soviet Army's Northern Group of Forces in Poland. The major action of erecting monuments to Soviet soldiers was officially initiated in the summer of 1945. Almost simultaneously, the attacks against the Soviet monuments began. It happened that they took place on the same day the monuments was officially unveiled, or even before that. This would suggest that the process of othering may start even before a monument statue begins to function in the public sphere as a rightful monument. The process of othering depends not only on the characteristic features of the material representation (although these may reinforce or weaken it), but also on the totality of social and political conditions. The otherness appears as a certain type of evaluation. For the communists, from the moment of their construction, the monuments to Soviet soldiers represented the monuments of the familiar. For the anti-communist opposition and a significant part of Polish society, the monuments to the Red Army very soon started to function as monuments to the occupiers, propagating images of the Other.

During the period of the Polish People's Republic communist propaganda presented the Red Army solely in positive light, always in the context of "liberation". Officially, the Soviet soldiers were presented as "heroes", "the glorious dead", the victors, always shown as "friends", never as enemies and occupiers. In post-war monumental art the stone statues were marked with pride, self-confidence, solemnity. Red Army soldiers were supposed to appear not only as fearless but also as fear-inducing. Despite the multinational character of the Soviet army, monumental sculptures represented only the white man with European facial features.

The great campaign of the glorification of the Soviet Army through monuments was combined with a ban on commemorating any people, groups and events significant for the socio-historical consciousness of the Polish nation that could, in any way, slight or endanger communist interests. The new authorities very much needed an 'enemy'<sup>6</sup>, and not only an external one, but also an internal one. The right to any commemoration (and not infrequently the right to burial) was refused to members of the Polish Underground State, soldiers of the Home Army, and victims of deportation to the Soviet Union. After all "(...) mourning is all about representation" (Etkind 2013: 14). Directly after the war the communist authorities began to destroy extant Polish monuments that did not suit their policy (for example monuments to Józef Piłsudski and the Polish-Soviet War), while employing the losses wreaked as a result of the conscious policy of the German occupiers to their own purposes by blocking the rebuilding of pre-war memorials. In the past, the Other was not commemorated: no monuments were erected to honour the Other. The communist authorities in post-war Poland were no exception to that rule. They placed on the pedestals those figures which they considered familiar. Among them were Soviet soldiers. The crucial question here is what mechanisms caused (in my opinion, very swiftly after the monuments were erected), part of the Polish society to at some point transform the monumental representations of the familiar into representations of the Other.

### **Monument in Service to Ideology: On the Danger of 'Multiple Voices'**

The above information provides an outline for undertaking a discussion related to political and ideological functions of monuments, and thus, also for the creation of images of the familiar and the Other in the context of monumental statuary. This is because the monuments perform numerous functions within each of three fundamental systems that permeate and supplement one another: ideology, art and space.

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<sup>6</sup> Reference to the text of U. Eco, who noted that "(...) when there is no enemy, it is necessary to create one" (Eco 2011: 11) and that "(...) inventing an enemy must be an intensive and continuous process" (Ibid.: 35).

Le Chevalier de Jaucourt noted in the eighteenth century that “In every period of history, those who have governed people have always made use of paintings and statues, the better to inspire the feelings they wanted them to have, be it in religion, or in politics” (cited by Warner 1996 (1985)). The issue of fundamental significance is the category of subjects, which have at their disposal the real power enabling them to initiate and realise projects of monuments at a given time and in a given place. This directly translates into a possibility to ban, withhold or reshape the concepts of commemoration undertaken by the groups that are hostile, unaccepted or subordinated (in practice often those who are ‘invented’ as Others). The monuments are the reflection of the existing relations of power and inequality throughout the country, or even throughout the whole region. “(...) it is because images are used to express, impose and legitimize a power that the same images are misused in order to challenge, reject and delegitimize it” (Gamboni 2007: 27). Creating images with the help of monuments never appears as an abstract problem, rather it always seems to be an ideological project. This aspect is especially clearly visible in the context of totalitarian and authoritarian systems. The aim of the monument founders is to commemorate the familiar. However, these images can undergo the process of othering, against the will and intention of their founders.

Monuments serve certain groups in their attempts to reach specific goals in suiting their interests: “Symbolic rule over a given territory requires the construction of material group signs, such as plates with names in the mother tongue of a given group, monuments (...) etc. (...) Symbolic rule allows, then, to rule *sensu stricto*. Arbitrariness of such a rule is hidden behind the symbolic rule, which appears to people as rule over things only” (Nijakowski 2006: 109). Monuments serve to emphasise and propagate certain concepts, ideas and values. Ideological influence of material representation consists in this case of marking and stressing differences and in transforming social, political and cultural heterogeneity into a cohesive homogeneity. Monuments, in comparison with other artistic representations, emerge as the most powerful ‘tools’ for power and inequality within the public space, since only those groups which possess real power, without necessarily having social support, are capable of establishing them, and, which is even more important, capable of providing them with the relevant rank and protection—and thus, the possibility to last. Such groups also decide on the formula of visual representation, the patterns of which are later on repeatedly reproduced.

It is necessary to stress that all images and their visual representations are created and function within a given time and space, and that this influences how they are socially and culturally experienced. “This point makes us aware that the proper reading of a situation, the recognition of the point, can be accessed only by those who belong to the cultural collective” (Demeski 2013: 73). It would be naïve to think that the monuments to Red Army soldiers erected on the order of the authorities under conditions of a totalitarian system reflected the will of the com-

munity's majority. Apart from anything else, monuments as a rule always present somebody's vision and interpretation of the past.

In the context of the monuments to the Red Army during the post-war period, special attention should be paid to the fact that although all Poles observed the same material representations created in a real physical space, different groups perceived them as different images. Against this background, the 'multiple voices' of the monuments are revealed. There is a peculiar paradox in this, or perhaps a kind of perversity which finds its reflection both in the title of this article and in the analysis presented in it.

Constituting and interpreting messages of monumental art depends not only on those who are empowered to erect monuments but also on those to whom monuments are to speak. Only in this context, related to the process of permanent formulating and contesting the category of Otherness and familiarity through the manipulation of signs and images, does it become clearer why a significant majority of Poles perceived the figures on the pedestal as the Others instead of Soviet "heroes". In the context of the reception of monumental art, we can clearly note that the process of "(...) othering expresses the insight that the Other is never simply given, never just found or encountered, but *made*" (Fabian 2000: 208, original emphasis). Those who decide about the possibility to erect monuments do not place Others on their pedestals but propagate the images of those who for some reason serve their interests. These images are not, then, images of Others from the point of view of the monument founders. They may, however, become such images on the level of the viewers. In this context it is the audience that has decisive influence over the creation of an image of the familiar or the Other on the pedestal.

The distance between the founder of the monument and the observer of the finished work of art does not, however, provide a satisfactory answer to the question of why the same pedestal in the opinion of some elevates the familiar and in the opinion of others, the Other. The doubts run deeper and force us to wonder whether the sources of the difference lie, perhaps, in the essence of the materialised image (in this case, the monument), or perhaps in human activity, and thus in the ways of looking and seeing. There is no simple answer to this question. The material representation comprises certain properties and symbols, and, which is more, is entangled in certain relationships, for instance, spatial. While the properties remain, as a rule, constant (for example shape, size, texture), the meanings and relations may change over time.<sup>7</sup> It is not the material representations but the images they carry that undergo disparate interpretations and transformations in the context of changing socio-political conditions. The images are alive because we make them

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<sup>7</sup> This corresponds to the premises of Marshall McLuhan's communication theory, according to which monuments belong to cool media, forcing the recipient of the message to become highly involved in decoding their meaning: "(...) cool media require more active participation on the part of the user in determining the transmitted meaning" (McLuhan 1975: 61).

live through our activities and social relations; let us add that the images of the familiar and the Others are not, in that respect, an exception.

In contrast to a sculpture or a painting the identity of a monument's creator does not significantly influence its evaluation, value or reception (Wallis 1985: 315).<sup>8</sup> However, the problem of the "multiple voices" of the monuments may be related to the "surplus value" of the images<sup>9</sup>, since this value leads to unintended consequences, surrounding monuments with newly created meanings and values, at variance with the original intentions of their creators and founders. In the case under discussion here, it would denote not only the conversion itself of the image of the familiar into the image of the Other, but the very possibility of such a conversion.

### **The Figure of the Red Army Soldier on a Pedestal**

What visual elements could, then—ignoring for the time being the political circumstances—justify the fact that the figures on the pedestals were perceived by some as Others? The most characteristic features of monuments to Red Army soldiers were monumentality and realism, which resulted from their affiliation to the specific period and artistic tradition called socialist realism. There was no room for any experimentation. The changes that took place in Eastern Europe after the twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956 held no greater influence over the form of the monuments.

It appears that one of the significant mechanisms responsible for the process of othering in the context of monument art was creating specific spatial relationships between the objects and their observers. The most important variable was the distance measured both horizontally and vertically. The size was also not without significance. From the point of view of an observer, distance is always measured from that person, from his or her own bodily person, placed at a certain point in space. "Distance' denotes a level of accessibility, but also a level of interestedness" (Tuan 1987: 66). Figures of the Red Army soldiers were often placed on high pedestals. The monuments were constructed on top of plinths, often with steps leading towards these plinths. These measures ensured that Soviet monuments, as a rule, were not the 'everyday' monuments. The statues were not placed at the eye level of passers-by, they could not have been touched with an outstretched hand, the viewers were divided from the monument by certain architectural 'barriers' which increased the distance between the viewers and the objects. This lack of physical proximity between the observers and the objects widened the physical distance,

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<sup>8</sup> Naturally, there are deviations from this rule. For example, in the case of the monument of Red Army soldiers in Olsztyn, it was the person of the artist—Xawery Dunikowski—and not the aesthetic value of the concept that was decisive for the inclusion of the monument in the register of historic monuments in 1993.

<sup>9</sup> "Surplus value" is created when the image gains value that seems disproportionate in relation to its actual meaning. An object may be overvalued or undervalued (Mitchell 2005: 76).

which could have influenced the process of othering of the monuments. All that appears to be further away is seen as less known, more unapproachable, and, consequently, increasingly Other.

The height at which the statues were placed was also of some significance. It was a completely novel solution to situate statues of Red Army soldiers on high pedestals. It was the elevation reserved earlier for saints and national heroes, while soldiers used to be commemorated by modest, nonfigurative memorials, not infrequently related to tombs.<sup>10</sup> ‘Upward movement’ modelled on the solutions coming from “the homeland of the proletariat” was a conscious allusion to the power of empires, but it was also related to the spatial patterns worked out by most cultures, in which the vertical axis always played the most important role: “Whatever is superior or excellent is elevated, associated with the sense of physical height. Indeed ‘superior’ is derived from a Latin word meaning ‘higher’. (...) Of monuments this is perhaps invariably true: a tall pyramid or victory column commands greater esteem than a shorter one” (Tuan 1987: 54–55). On the one hand the height reflected the relationships of power and subordination, and on the other hand constituted an effort directed at endowing visual representations with an element of the sublime. The figures of Red Army soldiers placed on high pedestals could only be seen from below. In this mutual relationship between the viewer and the object, a sense of elevation of the object was created alongside a sense of belittling the role of the viewer. The viewer took the position of one who sees less and thus knows less, which in practice denotes someone of lesser importance. Emphasising a viewers’ hierarchy of importance could have influenced the othering of the monuments. It also appears that the size, and consequently, the monumentality of these statues held some importance. The more the size of the object exceeds the normal size of the human body, the more alienated such an object appears (Fig. 159).

Statues of the Red Army soldiers were always presented with the soldier in Soviet army uniform. The uniform, on the other hand—often inspired by folk and historical motifs—is often seen as a specific visual message, the basic aim of which is to manifest the fact that a soldier dressed in this particular manner is the protector of a given country (Rotter 2013: 419). Foreign uniform might have been evaluated as one of the signs of Otherness. The affiliation to the Soviet Union was additionally emphasised by other signs, such as the hammer and sickle, the red five-pointed star (for example on soldiers’ belts and hats), the USSR’s national flag. The figures of Red Army soldiers were ‘armed’, most often with Soviet-made Papashas, although communist propaganda promoted these monuments (or figures) as “symbols of peace”.<sup>11</sup> Gun barrels were most often pointed upwards, in a gesture of victory and triumph, or pointed forward communicating both power and readiness

<sup>10</sup> This was related to the popularisation of the idea of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which emerged after WWI (Skiba 2004).

<sup>11</sup> This is why certain conceptions used the motifs of a child, a dove or an olive branch.

for battle. In this context the Soviet soldiers appeared as representatives of a foreign army, protecting the interests of the USSR (Fig. 160).

Initially, one or more figure of a Soviet soldier was placed on the pedestals; over time, the artists began to add the figure of a Polish soldier, a child or a worker (Fig. 163). The introduction of Polish elements was one of the ways to widen the subjective scope of Soviet commemorations. Owing to this, the monuments of Red Army soldiers were to become more acceptable to Polish society. The communist authorities might also have been concerned with (at least partial) adjustment of the quantitative disproportions between the number of monuments of Soviet soldiers and of monuments commemorating the Poles. When observing the spatial relations between the figures on the pedestals, their placement against one another, their poses, gestures, facial expressions, it is possible to notice that on the basis of the monumental art the images of Soviet soldiers were created as victors, 'protectors', leaders of Polish soldiers, and, finally, as 'heroes of the labouring classes' (Figs 161, 162). The resulting representations often perpetuated the relationship of superiority of Red Army soldiers over other subjects, something that was not without significance for the process of the othering of the images of the Red Army soldiers by some observers. The Other never remains in a relationship of equality with the familiar.

Analysing how the category of familiarity was converted into the category of Otherness in post-war monumental art, it is worthwhile mentioning the linguistic sphere. The inscriptions written on the commemorative plaques were most often written in Russian or in both Polish and Russian. These formulas did not have an informative character; instead, they served to glorify the Red Army and to falsify reality.<sup>12</sup> The communist propaganda, with regard to the Soviet monuments as a whole, introduced the phrase "monuments of gratitude", which was supposed to allude to the alleged "gratitude" felt by Polish society for its 'liberation' by the Red Army, which in fact was an occupying force. In this context, the process of othering was not infrequently performed via the use of irony. Thanks to certain intangible manoeuvres on the linguistic level, for example by giving the monuments derisive names, a spiritual transformation of the monuments was performed.

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### In the Spatial 'Grip'

The last of the three fundamental systems, which it would be impossible to ignore when discussing monumental art, especially in the context of creating the category of familiarity and Otherness, is space. Monuments always appear as elements in space, in its three-fold meaning (Wallis 1971: 105; see Fig. 164).

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<sup>12</sup> A striking example of such manipulation may be found in the formulas which were used to praise Red Army soldiers for dying while fighting for Poland's 'freedom' in the 1939–1945 period, while from 1939 to 1941 the Soviet army, along with the German army, occupied Poland.

As a part of the urban composition, the monuments directly belong to their surroundings. They become a focal point of a given space, the complement to architecture, or even the highest chord of the surroundings, while the space in which the monument is situated has fundamental significance for its rank and poignancy; it elevates a monument or degrades it. The urban composition has a significant influence over the process of creation of Otherness, especially when the new monument is erected without general social consent, within an urban structure that has been well established over the centuries. The process of othering is intensified when the monument is erected in a place where previously another, commonly accepted, monument stood. If this previous commemoration have played a significant role for the local or national community, and if its place was perpetuated not just in a given space but also in social memory, the figure which replaces it against the expectations of a large part of the society is perceived as an alien element, wrongly located and violating the unity of urban composition. In this sense Otherness is a type of evaluation that is influenced by locating the figure in an improper place. The monuments to Red Army soldiers were often erected in places where before WWII other, important from the point of view of Poles, national symbols functioned. "Symbols are what unite and divide people. (...) Symbols (...) determine the kinds of stories we tell; and the stories we tell determine the kind of history we make and remake" (Whelan 2005: 62). The communist authorities intentionally abstained from rebuilding these old, destroyed national memorials and instead attempted to appropriate their accumulated symbolic potential (for example in Katowice, Warsaw; see Fig. 165). "If a monument has its own place, sanctified by tradition, in the town landscape (which is proved in the graphical and painted messages) and if it fulfils an important role in its panorama, then moving, and much less removing it, is felt as undermining the established order, as a disturbance to the surroundings which we perceive as precious, as a change which encounters the resistance of our customs and notions" (Wallis 1971: 108). In a slightly altered version, the monuments of Soviet soldiers were erected as objects competing with Polish monuments that had survived the war, and which the communist authorities did not dare, for propaganda reasons, to destroy (for example in Lublin).

A considerable role in the othering of the monument can be played by the space that immediately surrounds the monument. This space creates a specific semantic context and can also emphasise or diminish certain features of physical representation, actively contributing to triggering and strengthening the process of othering. The space around a monument accentuates its dimensions, the special relations in which it is involved with regard to neighbouring buildings and transportation routes, and, finally, its symbolism. The Otherness of a monument may be caused by an exaggerated monumentalism—in comparison with its surroundings—which upsets the hierarchies of value and importance perpetuated in a given place. This Otherness may also occur when the monument intersects the established or rep-

representative communication routes. In such a case the new monument appears as a certain 'obstacle', an element improperly located. The process of othering may be deepened by such a localisation of a monument, which will place it in a certain opposition (for example by placing the monument with its back towards the main entrance to a temple) to other objects, deemed significant by the community for historical, religious or national reasons. Finally, if the symbolism of the monuments drastically contradicts the symbols that construct its surroundings (for example, opposite the Red Army monuments, there were often religious symbols, or symbols related to the pro-independence traditions of the Second Polish Republic), then it will reveal itself as a foreign element. Concerning the monuments to Soviet soldiers, all of the cases of surrounding space creating Otherness mentioned above took place, although they did not necessarily appear jointly.

A different, but related, issue was the process of the othering of the space surrounding Red Army monuments that took place due to the effect of the Otherness of the monument in the urban space. The monuments "(...) transform otherwise neutral places into ideologically charged spaces" (Whelan 2005: 63). The space that surrounded the monuments to Soviet soldiers was specially arranged and rebuilt by the communist authorities. It was the Red Army monuments that initiated the process of the othering of the surrounding space, not the other way round. There was not a case in which urban space was changed or adapted to the monument before it was erected. The othering of urban space as a result of the influence of the Otherness of Soviet monuments occurred in a couple of ways. More often than not, the premises of the most important communist authorities (party offices, courts, the militia—the apparatus of repression), which undertook the construction of "a better world on the Soviet example", were located around new monuments to Red Army soldiers. This caused the monuments to be seen as a kind of a cosmic axis, around which the national sanctities (communist in spirit) were to concentrate. The ideological project of the authorities, however, assumed that these would be 'local sanctuaries', directed towards 'the East', and thus, subject to a certain superior structure, with the Kremlin as the *axis mundi*. The initial purpose and décor of the buildings situated near monuments to the Red Army were not infrequently changed (for example in extreme cases former places of worship were turned into warehouses); alternatively they were obscured by new structures. The communists gradually filled the spaces surrounding the monuments with the symbols of the new rule, not only not restoring the pre-war symbols, but also removing those that had survived the war. The othering of space was reinforced by the new toponymy. The Otherness of the Soviet monuments influenced the changing of street and square names where the monuments were erected.<sup>13</sup> In this way the com-

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<sup>13</sup> In Toruń, a monument to the Red Army was officially unveiled on May 9, 1946. In February 1950, the present Theatre Square was renamed Red Army Square—the name survived until the end of the Polish People's Republic (Golon 2003: 177).

memoration was doubled, the rank of the object became reinforced and the ideological message intended by the authorities was made even more audible. Finally, the process of othering the space surrounding monuments to Soviet soldiers was influenced by the celebration of new political rituals in their vicinity.

During the first post-war years there was a change in the so-called ideological layout of Polish towns. This was achieved to a significant extent due to new monuments, among other devices. “The ideological layout is a kind of interpretation of history—sometimes radically different from the preceding one—and it assumes being read through a specific prism. It denotes shaping the social memory, but also shaping the social oblivion as to the symbols recognized as alien and hostile. The town teaches us what is our and familiar, and what is foreign. About what is worth remembering, and what should be struck out from the past. The town is a symbolic scene, on which certain symbols are inscribed, while other become destroyed” (Zieliński 2007: 11). In this context, the monuments are seen as an integral part of the socio-historical structure of the town, of its history and culture. The Otherness of the monuments of the Red Army was deepened by the fact that they were imposed on the Polish society by the Soviet Army and the communist authorities on the basis of a top-down approach. The Soviet monuments, as the new symbols, not only did not gain common social approval, but they were also used by the communists to create ideologised and falsified memory. “By creating spaces for memory, monuments propagate the illusion of common memory” (Young 1993: 6). The monuments to Soviet soldiers replaced and contributed to the removal, and, finally, eradication from social memory of material representations of the former familiar (i.e. the monuments from before the Second Polish Republic), which embodied important national values and traditions.

### Conclusion

There are many reasons why man requires monuments. The fundamental question does not lie in what these monuments are like but in what they represent and why they are able to represent so differently, depending on when, how and who is looking at them. Images in their tenacious relationship with materiality possess the ability to constantly create and transform the world. In post-war Poland monuments to Red Army soldiers were supposed to provide a ‘tool’ with which to construct a new reality, to revise the pre-war order, to create new stereotypes; finally, to shape new categories and images of the familiar and the Other.

It is certain that monuments ‘speak’ to viewers in a coded language. The ambiguity and multidimensionality of the language constitute its richness, while at the same time possessing power that is not entirely predictable. “Images are active players in the game of establishing and changing values. They are capable of introducing new values into the world and thus of threatening old ones. For better and for worse, human beings establish their collective, historical identity by creating around them a second nature composed of images which do not merely reflect the

values consciously intended by their makers, but radiate new forms of value formed in the collective, political unconscious of their beholders. As objects of surplus value, of simultaneous over—and underestimation, these stand at the interface of the most fundamental social conflicts” (Mitchell 2005: 105).

The Otherness in monumental art and the othering process itself differ from the ways of creating the familiar and the Other in other media. As a rule, monuments do not serve to create and propagate images of the Other. In this sense, the Other is ‘invisible’ within monumental art. The places on the pedestals are reserved (or at least used to be reserved) for the familiar. Only at a certain moment in time is process of othering triggered, gradually advancing over time. Monumental representations in stone do not change, but rather a transformation occurs in the images they perpetuate. As a result, the familiar becomes converted into the Other. This process takes place on the level of the consciousness of the viewers. No small role in the process of othering, in the context of monumental art, is played by, among others, the physical space in which a monument is situated. What is significant is that the process is bipolar. Not only does the space influence the monument, the monument can also influence the othering of the space. The physical relationships taking place between the object and the viewer are also important. This is the characteristic that singles out monumental art from among all other types of representation.

Images of the Other in the context of monumental art do not need to be perceivable directly and by all. However, this does not mean that they do not exist or that they do not function within social imagination. This is what the specific perversity of the monumental images of the familiar and the Other consists in: the fact that they are divided and, simultaneously, inextricably connected.

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**MONUMENT OF BROTHERS IN ARMS**

Erected in 1949, Katowice, Freedom Square.

D. Czarnecka. 158

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**MONUMENT OF GRATITUDE TO THE RED ARMY**

Erected in 1968, Częstochowa, Biegański Square.

159 ..... K. Jabłoński, fotopolska.eu.



**MONUMENT OF GRATITUDE TO THE RED ARMY**

Erected in 1951, Aleksandrów Kujawski, 3<sup>rd</sup> May Square.

K. Jabłoński, fotopolska.eu. 160

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**MONUMENT OF GRATITUDE TO THE RED ARMY**

Erected in 1951, Legnica, Słowiański Square.

161 ..... fotopolska.eu.

**MONUMENT OF GRATITUDE TO THE RED ARMY** ..... 162

Erected in 1951, Legnica, Słowiański Square.

D. Czarnecka. ....



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**MONUMENT TO THE HEROES OF THE RED ARMY** .....

Erected in 1952, Jelenia Góra, Bankowa Avenue.

fotopolska.eu. .... 163

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**MONUMENT OF VICTORY OF THE RED ARMY**

Erected in 1946, Częstochowa, Daszyński Square.

164 ..... E. Falkowski, fotopolska.eu.



**MONUMENT OF BROTHERS IN ARMS** .....

Erected in 1945, Warsaw, Wileński Square.

## ‘A Woman from a Newspaper’: A New Face for Ideology and Old Habits

### Problematizing the Photograph

The chapter follows the assumptions that the history of culture (i.e. a particular socio-cultural reality) can be told by employing photography as a vehicle for interpretation. When describing photographic images (both contemporary and from the past), one can attempt to recognise the patterns and standards of depiction of socio-cultural changes. Thus, photography includes not only the process of documenting the world, but also of seeing and conceptualising it. In other words, when interpreting photography one should consider its crucial cognitive value, which is its ‘ethnographicness’ (cf. Pink 2007). It is the ethnographicness that gives photography the status of performed imaginaries, which are entangled in particular contexts and meanings. The emphasis put on the ethnographicness of photography means that we move beyond its conventional understanding as merely an illustration and underlines the interpretative aspect of its usage (cf. Sztandara 2006). Consequently, photography implies something more than solely representing the subject or object; it is a vehicle that allows us to explore the concealed layers of cultural significations. Photography may be seen as one of many possible (visual) stories about the cultural world, its inhabitants and their everyday lives. The images depicted in photographs are the messages from the past determined by conventionalised cultural codes (cf. Olechnicki 2000). Therefore, photography is not a source of knowledge of the past, but rather it is a source of performed imaginaries and representations of the past. It gives us the possibility to look at the particular past narratives and can therefore be a vehicle for better understanding of the history of ideas and imaginaries.

In this context, it is important to acknowledge the dependencies between the popularisation of photographic ways of perceiving the world and the process that we may define as theatricalisation of social life (cf. Magala 1978). Photographic images seem to be one of its crucial elements due to activities such as arranging the reality that it entails. In addition, the ways and rules, which are applied in the interpretation of photographic images, launch the intricate endeavours that include various theatricalised scenarios embedded in social contexts. Therefore, the relationship of model–photographer–camera–receiver is translated here into the relationship of social actor–director–viewer (cf. Sztandara 2006). Along these lines, the costume and decoration that complete the scenery serve as signs that help to situate, recognise and name the places and people. Therefore, this allows us to identify the subject in front of the camera with the elements of a wider

representational program. In this sense, almost all photographs are taken for the same 'gaze' suggesting the objectified and authenticated record of reality, whereas the subject of the photograph is just another piece of decoration.

The aforementioned interpretative trails, the ethnographicness and the theatricalisation of photographing, may be employed to deconstruct the visual image of the women depicted in daily newspapers in the 1950s in the Polish region of Opole Silesia<sup>1</sup>. Obviously, one cannot discuss the complex gender relations displayed on an Opole Silesian 'press-stage' in the times of socialism without touching upon the very specifics of the region. Its history was largely shaped by various socio-political events and the significant context of separation from Polish territory. The region's long-lasting period of being situated outside the state borders resulted in "self-enclosedness", an "instinctive tendency to defend internal socio-cultural values" and the "self-preservation of national and class character" (Górniewska-Zwolak 2000: 83). Such circumstances, eventually, influenced the construction of specific gender roles within the social community.

Interestingly enough, according to contemporary historians of the Silesia region, the woman's socio-cultural position before the war is described as pivotal and satisfactory. In such historical accounts, one can however notice a concealed and problematic idea that there was no reason for a Silesian woman to change and transform her living conditions since the circumstances and gender relations were sufficient, if not better than in any other Polish region. Such conclusions are at odds with ethnographic descriptions that depict women as subordinated to the existing patriarchal patterns, with a main role of maintaining the continuity of indigenous cultural heritage. The idea of the Silesian family was rather an authoritarian and hierarchic one based on the system of economic distinctions, which attributed to a woman solely the tasks of caring and nurturing (cf. Marek 1996). Moreover, it was rather difficult for a woman to summon the will to change gender values and relations, since they were strongly fortified by tenacious traditional convictions preserved in aspic by male guardians. In other words, a woman's position was determined by such values as virtue, faithfulness, religiosity and righteousness, which limited her roles to the figure of a wife and mother (see *Ibid.*: 15–19). Thereby, the advocates of traditional patterns accepted the employment of women only reluctantly; after all, a working woman was endangering the existing dichotomy of the public and private spheres (cf. Korfanty 1927).

Importantly, such social, cultural and moral positioning of women for a long period of time restrained the emancipatory possibilities and progress in Silesia. It

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<sup>1</sup> In this case the dailies and weeklies seem particularly interesting. I have analysed three newspapers regularly published in the 1950s: *Trybuna Opolska* ('Opole Stand'), *Kalendarz Ziemi Opolskiej* ('Opole Region Calendar') and *Głos znad Odry* ('The Voice of the Odra River'). In my opinion, the photographs published in popular newspapers are of particular interest to researchers who are tracking the stories of mundane life. It is precisely in such images that one may find both dependencies and contradictions between official state ideologies and the assumed social and cultural roles of *the woman* in the post-war Polish society.

was an ideal ground for post-war socialism, which although ideologically introduced gender equality, in practice rather used the existing Silesian gender dichotomies and substituted their cultural content. In other words, all the socialistic ideologist had to do was to silence the hitherto religious morality and deploy a new one—the civil duty of building a new state. The male and female distinctions, with all their socio-cultural connotations, remained unchanged.

Therefore, looking at the photographs of ‘a woman from a newspaper’ and analysing them in relations to media discourse allows us to discover models that have produced specific messages, meanings and social attitudes. Such models may therefore be perceived as patterns of ‘thinking’, ‘watching’ and ‘describing’ the society and have a strong linkage and associations with politics, aesthetics and the mainstream ideologies of these times.

### **Silenced Voices: How Should One Read Newspapers?**

When we say ‘a woman from a newspaper’ it might seem that we have a potentially confusing topic that is rather open to a range of interpretation. Thus, we should first ask what we will discuss when exploring both the widespread and prevailing imaginary representations as well as their contraries and alternatives. At first glance, one may think about a wide spectrum of topics, starting from the banal and commercialised popular images of women, and ending with the images that make us, the viewers, more involved and engaged interpretation-wise. However, the proposed analysis of the representations of femininity also reveals that the ‘figure of woman’ has its own significance and role in the history of culture and social practice. If we follow Catharine MacKinnon (1982) and assume that the term ‘a woman’ in a common-sense understandings and popular view means “content/substance of women’s lives”, then the analysis of the aforementioned images gives us the possibility to take a closer look at everyday life from the feminine perspective. The ways of presenting ‘a woman’ in daily newspapers in times of socialism resembled the staging scheme, the specific mise-en-scene transferred to the ‘public theatre’—first, imagined and constructed, and only secondly given as truth.

Reading newspaper photographs poses interesting research inquires, such as: What were the condition and circumstances of women’s lives during this period? What were their social and cultural roles and how were they constructed, and how were these roles given to, or perhaps even forced onto, women? What representations of women were the most common and what was the relationship between women’s roles and the ideological context of building a new socialistic society? Was the initial promise of women’s emancipation in socialism even possible? And, last but not least, what did the emancipation really mean for socialistic ideology?

When browsing the pages of 1950s newspapers, one can notice that many include photographs of women depicted as workers, knitters, tractor drivers, intellectuals, shop assistants, or workers in stocking factories and as trade union delegates. All of these press images attempt to faithfully render the thought of the time,

in which women, as patriotic citizens greatly committed to the new Polish state, are placed as a model of duty and socialist work attitude (*Trybuna Opolska* 1954, vol. 56, p. 4). In other words, the images imply the first probable purpose and meaning of women's presence: a 'contractual' inclusion of women in the country's life and, ipso facto, in its system of production and political realms. The mere 'visual presence' was, supposedly, an indication of the progress and improvement of women's position in society. It did not however mean that the individual histories of women and their personal achievements would be 'on the cover' of the new agenda. Yet, the photographic representations do not say much about the very implementation of the new promises made not solely for the women, but for the society as a whole.

The specific *imago mundi* of socialism presented in daily newspapers was rather about the great expectations than about reality itself, although it was nonetheless dominated by particular codes, rules and conventions. Even though the press illustrations cannot be used as evidence and testimony of past times, they carry a great interpretative potential. When reading such images, it is crucial to remember not so much Peter Burke's (2001) 'problems of interpretation', but rather the interpretative opportunities that emerge and which are usually located in specific and relevant contexts that reveal people's cultural worlds. Moreover, photographs perceived as a sort of wholeness allow us to glance into the everyday life of idealising actions and dominant conventions characteristic of a particular time and place. The images of 'a woman' seem to be largely dependent on media representation, which is a useful vehicle for analysing the construction of cultural meanings. The foundations of such construction lie in the connecting 'things', 'images', 'concepts' and 'signs' that subsequently constitute a meaningful wholeness presented to others.

Photographs published in press identify a name and determine the symbolic reality (cf. Milivojević 2004), and, due to the necessity for short, simple and unambiguous forms, the media models are reduced to representing solely essentialised 'types'. Therefore, instead of an affirmation of diversity and heterogeneity, media produce and propose oversimplified and uncritical patterns of thinking and cognition. In other words, the presented reality is a simple version of the world's complexity and a 'woman from a newspaper' becomes an actress on an imagined (built) theatrical stage. One may presume that such a performance will constantly be re-enacted; however, in different configuration and stage design. The press, by employing such a theatralisation, produces, recycles and preserves certain images of the women's socio-cultural roles in order to reach a contextually desired performance.

While analysing the available visual materials, one thing seems obvious: "Gender relations are the relations of power. There is always someone who dominates, and someone who is dominated, there is a role of the active and the passive" (*Wściekłość Bojany Pejić* 2010). One may argue that the media constitute and strengthen the gender/power inequality by numerous symbolic actions such as silencing, ignoring,

neglecting and misrepresenting. Thus, what kind of future is promised (and what kind is concealed) for women in press photographs?

The attempt to answer this question should be based on the analysis of different ways in which the history of culture and customs has constructed the social strategies of female oppression. Ideology and stereotypes are usually involved in this and are understood here as habits. It might seem that the 'socialistic promises' (not only the visual ones) include the redefinition of women's roles in society as well as their emancipation (a phrase commonly used in many countries of the Eastern Block); however, in reality they did not entail any significant changes or transformations. Their aim was rather to maintain the existing institutions and plans. The media, as an element of hegemony, transfer and form the constructs of women's existence in a way that both the patriarchal and socio-economic systems classify as 'normal'.

We may attempt to deconstruct the visual representations of women depicted in the newspapers by pointing out the imposed models of subjugation and limitation. The visual presence of women sends a clear and unambiguous message to the viewer: they are builders of a new society. Hence, it is worth taking a close and interpretative look at the imposed roles of women (a worker, teacher, housewife or mother) as well as the dominant themes presented in press photographs (reading, writing, ironing or spinning). The particularly significant and exposed images were the ones that highlighted the women's presence and participation in society as well as their 'cultural', 'social', 'educational', 'political' and 'economic' development.

Additionally, it is also crucial to analyse the relationship between the 'private' and the 'public', since most of the contemporary feminist theories and practices are focused on the spaces in which "the ideology of natural inequality finds its shelter" (Papić 1989: 41). As the slogan goes, the private is both political and public, meaning that the mechanisms of patriarchal suppression and the silencing of women in the public sphere are closely related to the 'obvious' socio-cultural roles imposed on women in the sphere of the private. Such analysis may be fruitful in two ways. First of all, it allows us to indicate the range of the 'expected' socio-cultural roles, starting from traditional and stereotypical beliefs and ending with the ideological and power-related. And secondly, it introduces different (hi)stories of different meanings, including women's silenced voices and their forgotten legacy.

### **'Forward! For the Struggle for Socialism'. The Media Lives of Women**

The relationship between visual representations in the media and politics, ideology and power is an important element of transformational discourse (see Moranjak-Bamburać et al 2006). The period of social realism is a good example of such discourse, especially when we consider the case of reclaimed lands marked by war, crisis and radical changes of political, economic and cultural systems. It was precisely in this territory that the official redefinition of cultural, ethnic, national and gender values was needed and expected.

In socialism, the images of women leaning over machines, preoccupied with needlework and ironing, as well as in books and daily newspapers, served to strengthen certain messages and meanings. Such images had strong support in the systems of ideology and sociocultural codes of representation. One can argue that the image of a woman is often used as an important vehicle for ideological discourse that produces 'woman's imaginary' (see Pollock 1977) and it is usually reduced to a few distinctive categories, themes and jobs.

Considering the appearance of 'a woman from a newspaper' one can notice the similarity with the fine arts of this period. The female body was regarded as "material that can be freely transformed in order to serve the new socialistic demands" (Kowalczyk 2010: 30). The photographs depict women in new roles in which they are deprived of 'physiognomic femininity' as well as commonly understood standards of feminine beauty and fashion. Women's bodies are just workers' bodies covered under layers of aprons, uniforms and headscarves (Figs 166, 167). Social realism in the newspapers promotes a body that is subjected to the authority of power; it is a strong, muscled and natural body, which is "necessary, if only used to build the socialistic reality" (Kowalczyk 2010: 30) (Fig. 168). As Susan Gal and Gail Kligman (2000) notice "socialist regimes were often characterized by a contradictory goals in their policies toward women: They wanted workers as well as mothers, token leaders as well as quiescent typists" (cited in Pejić 2010: 17).

Interestingly, one can observe a specific kind of 'feminine beauty' that accompanied ideological regime. The workwomen were in a way juxtaposed with the women-as-folk. The former were not even considered in the context of 'beauty' or 'attractiveness', while the latter, attributed with ethnic costume, evoked feelings of enchantment. In other words, there was an ideological 'recipe for feminine beauty' depicted in the newspapers, which had specific meaning (Fig. 169). Traditional costume was a cultural text and had a symbolic value (cf. Turnau 1986; Kossakowska-Jarosz 1996); it was a strong and clear sign that evoked the native, ethnic and national values important in the Regained Territories such as Opole Silesia. Therefore, in this region the discourse of the new socialistic state coexisted with the discourse of regional values. The women's costume, as an ideological element of culture, decoded their social position as well as particular region, circumstances and responsibilities. This way of depicting women in newspapers went hand in hand with ascribed traditional feminine roles and activities such as plucking feathers, spinning, or needlework (*Głos znad Odry* 1956, vol. 2; see Fig. 170). The photographs in the newspapers present a clear idea of state socialism: women have to participate in the social life of the new state, however, only in particular ways and through imposed roles and activities.

Another model of the women's press image was related to the promotion of readership. It usually included a picture of a group of women reading books, newspapers or official documents (for example the state constitution, see Figs 171, 172). The arranged press photographs and themes were suggestive of ways of showing

that the ideas of socialism, such as education for women, solidarity, self-improvement and their active participation in social, cultural and political life, were becoming a reality in the new state. However, the promotion of reading by women actually indicated their (traditional) responsibilities as national citizens: nurturing the nation, preserving moral values of socialism and mothering future generations. When looking at the photographs in Silesian newspapers, one can argue that women's tasks and duties resemble the slogan 'God, Family and the Country' (see Karczyńska 1996) on the one hand, and 'Six-Year Plan' on the other: "the conscientious fulfilment of the obligations to the state does not lie solely in paying taxes or realizing the agricultural supplies, but also in making everything that strengthens the power of the state and helps to execute the Six-Year Plan."<sup>2</sup>

The popularised historical narrative about the times of social realism is often based on the ideological and symbolic violence visible in literature, movies, chronicles and photographs in the newspapers. The images of 'a woman from a newspaper' that we look at are rather idealised pictures that show not 'how it was' but actually 'how it was supposed to be'. Thus, photorealism provides particular narrations that constitute preserved patterns, which in turn allow us to read women's stories from newspapers in a positivistic and historicist perspective.

The media propaganda and the power of imaginaries and representations are nothing new and have already been acknowledged in the humanities. Press photography is a powerful ideological weapon of propaganda due to, inter alia, a "strongly rooted bourgeois conviction" (Sekula 2010: 13), which implies the immanent significance of photography and constitutes its founding myth about its authenticity and truthfulness. The particular, staged, sceneries with photographed women are then transformed as press events, or even, as a "state of affairs" (cf. Flusser 2000). They are not maps, but screens, which instead of 'displaying' the world as it is, rather 'represent' it. The meaning that comes with the image-as-message is determined by specific context and undergoes a transformation that is dependant on different values and codes, particular conditions and assumptions as well as social convention (cf. Freedberg 1989). These aspects constitute the power of photographic images of the women, who thereby are reduced to the "role of visual instruction" (Kociuba 2010: 9).

However, another interpretative trace is also possible. The published photographs contain the world, portraying a narrow perspective that belongs to male photographers. Thus, their (male) points of view are highlighted and refer to dominant (male) ideas about cognition of the world (in a symbolical and metaphorical sense as well). The photograph, as cultural text, implies here the context of play, which is staged by the director, a male photographer. 'He' was the one who designed the stage and controlled the photographed subject (or object). Thus, the

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<sup>2</sup> The commentary was written by Stanisława Rutkowska from Raciszów village (*Kalendarz Ziemi Opolskiej* 1952: 79).

story of the photograph was intentionally arranged and performed in front of the camera producing the image in accordance with a particular idea and vision. Here it is useful to follow Peter Burke's (2001) understanding of the Lacanian 'gaze', which assumes that despite the photographer's intentions, the act of photography is always influenced by dominant patterns of perception. In the case of 'a women from a newspaper' the 'gaze' is ideologically twofold: it is male and it is embedded in the doctrine of building a new socialistic state. It classifies women as objects of narrative conventions, which include images dominated by stereotypical themes and activities needed for constructing ideological foundation of the new post-war reality.

However, most of the visual stories in the newspapers do not destroy either the expectations or the narrations locked in the formula of seeing, telling and producing particular contents concerning women. The narrations connected to the women's images in socialism, solely preserved the visual, as well as the apparent equality and freedom. It is rather difficult to speak about the profound transformation of the situation of women in society, which was based on the principle of 'indispensable commitment' and excluded individual social progress for women as well as their possibilities of self-realisation (see Papić 1989).

#### **'The Working Woman': An Unnecessary Feminism?**

The social roles of women in socialism were controlled and organised in accordance with general expectations and dominant ideology.

One has to agree that ideologies may, and often are, defined as collective representations for social groups as well as axiomatic assumptions about such representations (see van Dijk 2006). Therefore, ideologies structure not only identities, aims, norms, values and practices, but also the internal relations of societies, groups and classes. Additionally, ideologies also encompass gender differences, including their particular socio-cultural interests, imaginaries and consciousness. The category of gender, entangled in the history of socialist realism, played a significant role in the socio-cultural interpretation of the world, in which ideology was a vehicle for exerting pressure on particular individuals or social groups and "a specific form of thinking, which although does not have any cognitive value, rationalizes 'anachronic' practices in particular situation" (Mannheim 1936 cited in Włoch 2009: 34). Indoctrination and mystification, as derivatives of ideology and inseparable components of real life, supported the process of construction and reproduction of meanings, which eventually served the particular interests of specific groups and indicated their social and historical values, simultaneously making them privileged within the social system of power. However, it does not mean that one should reduce the analysis to merely totalising interests of a chosen social group. What is crucial here is the boundary 'visible' in socially situated thinking, solid divisions and durable judgments, which often precludes one part of the society (for example women) from realising their personal aims.

Ideology always entails a symbolic dimension and actions that depict the social and cultural relations in ‘objective’ perspective and ideal conditions. Interestingly, in the case of socialism, the ideological contents were commonly shared by women, who while juxtaposing their personal struggles and achievements, discussing their plans and intentions, incessantly clanged to the Party’s *raison d’État* and expressed their gratitude for living calm and free lives.<sup>3</sup> The official power expressly promised to solve all the burning social issues, such as gender discrimination, and thus, one can ask if feminism was needed at all. Because, according to the state officials of the Polish People’s Republic, every citizen was equal, no grass-roots movement was needed for any emancipatory actions. After all, equality was guaranteed in the state constitution and repeated in media propaganda as the will of the people. A good example of such a correlation was the fact that the descriptions of photographed women in the newspaper *Kalendarz Ziemi Opolskiej* (1953) were literal quotations from the Constitution of the Polish People’s Republic, passed by Parliament on July 22, 1952. The first photograph depicts young schoolgirls, whilst the second shows ‘delighted’ female workers in factories; the captions say, respectively: ‘Citizens of the Polish People’s Republic have equal right to education’ (art. 61) (Fig. 173), and ‘Woman in the Polish People’s Republic is equal to man in all domains of national, political, economic, social and cultural life’ (art. 66) (Fig. 174). Another photograph depicts a woman holding a baby, which instantly implies a stereotypical figure of the ‘Polish Mother’<sup>4</sup>, with a caption stating: ‘Marriage and family are under the care and protection of Polish People’s Republic. Families with many children are under the special care of the state’ (art. 67) (Fig. 175).

One can notice that everyday life, as well as press photographs, still promoted values and beliefs that returned women to their traditional roles. One of the reasons for this might be that women’s obligations were commonly known since they were historically ‘proven’ and preserved by certain social relations as vehicles for understanding the world. Therefore, the exploitation of women as a social group “was presented as both necessary and beneficial to them” (Włoch 2009: 34–35).

Before the war, women’s professional work and employment were considered factors in the decline of family life and the decay of women’s morality. In socialism, on the contrary, the work was a citizen’s duty despite gender identity. In this period, the socialistic government was chiefly focused on implementing ideological plans,

<sup>3</sup> A similar caption appeared in *Trybuna Opolska* (1954, vol. 56, p. 1) in the context of International Women’s Day.

<sup>4</sup> This is a construction created for the purposes of history—the monumental figure who dedicates herself and her children to the good of the country. The myth of the ‘Polish Mother’ originates in the times when Poland lost its independence; its inseparable feature is the need to invoke the victim. This can be found in the literature, various studies and public discourses, both from the socialist period and the contemporary. The socialistic ‘Polish Mother’ needed to be a brave citizen who raised her children in service of the regime (cf. Kowalczyk 2003; Monczka-Ciechomska 1992).

which included a massive women's work activation in order to build a socialistic future.

On the one hand, due to the official emancipatory directions, the state ideology introduced the image of women as being similar to men. However, on the other hand, the same programmatic guidelines depreciated women by indicating that they could not be situated in the same rank as men. Consequently, the ideological aim was rather to create a performance for the public that would give them the impression that equality and harmony played the main roles on the social stage (Fig. 176).

Women's relative economic independence and the possibilities of engaging with the public sphere in socialism, did not, however, make any substantive transformations of their socio-cultural position. The main problem—the lack of emancipatory actions—remained unsolved and it was particularly visible in the sphere of the private, where the patriarchal patterns were strongly rooted (cf. Papić 1989: 37). There was no transgression or transformation of a collective social conscious that could make it possible to abandon the dichotomised categories of the public and the private, the theory and the practice, the knowledge and the politics. In other words, the existing socialist reality differed from the one that was ideologically planned and declared. Apparent gender equality merely put women in 'second class' professions; if they worked in physical jobs, their efforts were rarely appreciated. After working hours in textile factories or grocery shops, they usually had to fulfil their 'natural duties' of housekeeping, which were far from declining.<sup>5</sup> The emancipatory process declared in state ideology and gender equality in access to education, politics and employment was thus based on paradoxes and contradictions (see Toniak 2008). The official and dominating discourse, which was supposed to be 'pro-feminine' unveiled its inconsistencies in various contexts. Thus, the idea of emancipation, although widely used in slogans and programmatic assumptions, was far from its initially ascribed meanings. Rather, the (male) state officials wanted to preserve their power and preferred their own interests over gender equality. When looking at the photographed positions of women in 1950s Poland, one can notice a clear patriarchal pattern of organising social, cultural and political life. After all, the emergence of any new ideology always involves the rooted and well-known signs, images and imaginaries that allow it to function.

The local newspapers in the 1950s in the Opole Silesia region published photographs that imposed a specific image of social life on viewers that was consistent with certain criteria and ideological assumptions. The image of 'a woman from a newspaper' preserved the gendered myth that functioned in the society. Photographic representations, in order to be socially accepted and understood, had to be arranged, directed and staged in ways that blurred the border between reality and fiction.

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<sup>5</sup> The women working in factories were also housewives, or— to use a pre-socialism term—guardians of values and traditions.

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..... **WOMEN AT WORK IN OPOLE**

166 J. Grzegorzewicz, *Trybuna Opolska*, 1954, vol. 56, p. 4.

**DO NOT FORGET ABOUT THE COMPETITION.  
ONE OF THE DISTINCTIVE STORE MANAGERS IS STANISŁAWA KUCOŃ**

J. Grzegorzewicz, *Trybuna Opolska*, 1954, vol. 15, p. 3 (2).

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**THE LEADING PHYSICAL WORKER HILDEGARDA PACUŁA**

J. Grzegorzewicz, *Trybuna Opolska*, 1952, vol. 160, p. 6.

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**WOMAN IN TRADITIONAL COSTUME**

169 ..... A. Śmiateński, *Głos znad Odry*, 1957, February 23, vol. 7.



**WOMEN IN FOLK COSTUME. LONG AUTUMN EVENINGS,  
WOMEN IN OPOLE WOULD OFTEN PLUCK FEATHERS, SPIN, OR SEW**

E. Nagietowicz, *Głos z nad Odry*, 1956, October 20, vol. 36. 170



**WIKTORIA OSZAJCA FROM ŁAMBINOWICE, TOGETHER WITH HER SISTER,  
BECAME AVID READERS OF BOOKS BORROWED FROM THE LIBRARY**

171 J. Grzegorzewicz, *Trybuna Opolska*, 1952, vol. 111, p. 4.

**IN THE VILLAGE OF OPOLE THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION IS DISCUSSED**

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In the photo worker PGR Raczany reads the text of the project in the newspaper.

Photo J. Grzegorzewicz, *Trybuna Opolska*, 1952, vol. 34, p. 1 (2).



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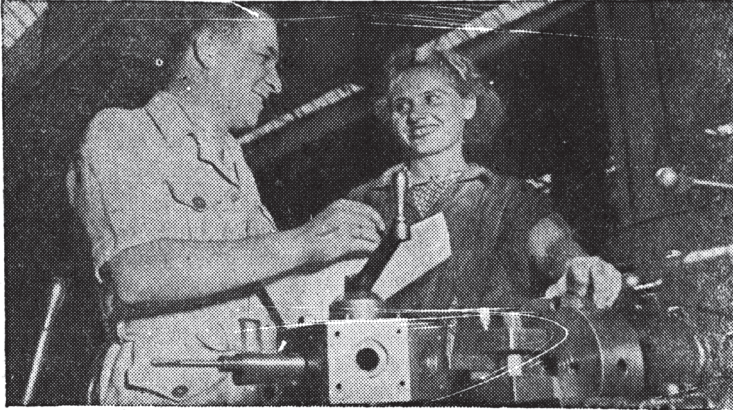
**CITIZENS OF POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC  
HAVE EQUAL RIGHT TO EDUCATION (ART. 61)**

L. Olejnik, *Kalendarz Ziemi Opolskiej*, 1953, p. 77.

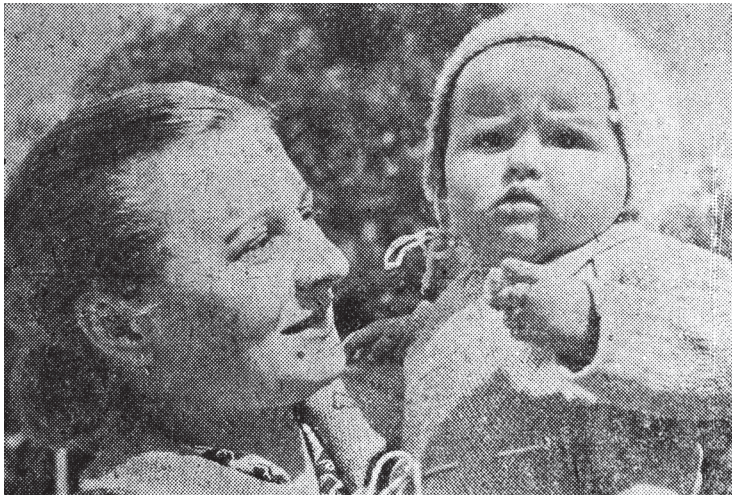
173

174 : **WOMAN IN POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC IS EQUAL TO MAN  
IN ALL DOMAINS OF NATIONAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC,  
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE (ART. 66)**

L. Olejnik, *Kalendarz Ziemi Opolskiej*, 1953, p. 78.



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175 : **MARRIAGE AND FAMILY ARE UNDER CARE AND PROTECTION OF POLISH  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC. FAMILIES WITH MANY CHILDREN ARE UNDER THE  
SPECIAL CARE OF THE STATE (ART. 67)**

L. Olejnik, *Kalendarz Ziemi Opolskiej*, 1953, p. 80.



**THE LEADING FEMALE TRACTOR DRIVER FROM THE POM IN GRODKÓW** .....

*CAF, Trybuna Opolska, 1954, vol. 80, p. 3.* 176

## Silesia—Stranger/Not Stranger. Creating Regional Identity in the Magazine *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*

The paper presents results of analysis of the illustrative material published in the magazine *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany* ('Silesia. Monthly Illustrated', further abbreviated to ŚMI). The first number of ŚMI<sup>1</sup> was issued in March 1946 and the last probably in October 1948.<sup>2</sup> It was conceived as a monthly periodical. In reality it appeared at irregular intervals and often combined two or even three numbers in one. Its illustrative side was of very average quality, with black-and-white photos, according to the standards of the early post-war years. In fact, although the intention was that the magazine would be illustrated, it featured only a small number of pictures. In most cases the photos published in the magazine lack information on their authors and the date. Only very few were signed with the name Jerzy Mańkowski, at that time in possession of a large post-German collection of negatives.<sup>3</sup> It is possible that certain pictures had been taken before WWII by German photographers who after the war left behind their ateliers and their work. In my research I examined all the available numbers.<sup>4</sup>

The magazine focused mainly on the areas of Silesia that became part of Poland after WWII, described by the term Regained Territories. The term Regained Territories appeared after 1945, referring to western and northern parts of Poland incorporated into the state by the decision of the Soviet Union, US, and Great Britain. In historical times they had either been parts of Poland, dependant on Poland, or were in the sphere of Polish influence (for example Szczecin), although they did not belong to the Second Polish Republic (1918–1939).

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<sup>1</sup> The publisher of ŚMI was Śląski Zespół Wydawniczy. The Chief Editor was Stefan Kuczyński, and the Editorial Board included Edward Kozikowski, Kazimierz Majewski, and Ludwik Skurzak, all based in the city of Jelenia Góra. The names were listed in the first number. Typeset and print was done in Jelenia Góra and Wrocław.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot state with full certainty whether it was really the last issue of the magazine, as it does not contain any information suggesting an intended discontinuation. It is evident that financial problems accompanied the publication from the very beginning. It was reflected by its irregular appearance, frequent double volumes (numbers) and a sudden discontinuity of the title, without notice.

<sup>3</sup> Jerzy Mańkowski is mentioned in the works of Paweł Banaś. According to Banaś, Mańkowski came to the Regained Territories from Lvov in 1945 and settled in the town of Kłodzko. There he came into possession of a post-German photo atelier with thousands of negatives. He used this collection for publishing after the war the first postcards with views of Lower Silesia (cf. Augustyn 2009; Banaś 2009).

<sup>4</sup> The magazine is available in the PAU/PAN library in Kraków (8205 III).

The magazine ŚMI was established two years after WWII had been terminated. Life in that period was far from quiet and stable, in Poland and in the whole of Europe. Post-war changes of state borders caused a large-scale migration of people. The Regained Territories were left by inhabitants of (primarily) German origin<sup>5</sup> and resettled by Poles from the eastern regions of the Second Polish Republic, which had become incorporated into the Soviet Union. Today it is difficult to imagine the human drama of that period of having to leave one's homeland. For many resettled people there was a feeling of abandoning the place their ancestors had lived for generations.<sup>6</sup> They experienced the feeling of being uprooted, deprived of everything what was known and understandable to them. Land that would become their new 'Little Motherland'<sup>7</sup> belonged only recently to another people, to another state. The new settlers came to live in cities, villages and houses built by other people. Their surroundings appeared to be alien for them. They took over—not by free will but having been forced to by the tragic consequence of the war—houses and households where the traces of their previous owners were still visible. Without doubt, it deepened feelings of alienation. Moreover, people were afraid that the state borders established after WWII were provisional.<sup>8</sup> This feeling was augmented by the increasing claims to the Regained Territories.<sup>9</sup> In such circumstances was ŚMI created. Here is a fragment of the Editorial credo from the first number of the magazine:

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<sup>5</sup> There have been cases of migration of the Silesian people. Their regional peculiarity (dialects or customs) was often perceived as foreign, that is, German. Their situation was complicated even more by the war. Western and northern regions of pre-war Poland had been incorporated into the III Reich, other regions became the so-called General Government, controlled by Germany. In consequence, people who found themselves in the III Reich were forced to sign the German Nationality List (*Deutsche Volksliste*, the DVL), and, in consequence, become subjects of conscription to the German army. After the war the feeling prevailed that the self (that is Polish) and other people should be clearly distinguished and that Poland should get rid of those who had backed Germany. However, misunderstanding regional specifics and various fates of people in the wartime often led to oversimplified perception of the native Silesians as Germans (cf. Kaczmarek 2004, also *Rozmowa z profesorem Ryszardem Kaczmarkiem* 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Various questions of people's dislocation, repatriation and settling on the Regained Territories, hereby only mentioned, were presented in 2005 in the issue of the Institute of the National Memory, entitled 'The Polish Wild West' (*Polski dziki zachód* 2005).

<sup>7</sup> 'Little Motherland' is a literal translation of the Polish term *Mala Ojczyzna*. Close to the German *Heimat*, it refers to a place towards which one has a strong feeling of belonging, and (usually) a deep-rooted fondness. Most commonly (yet not necessarily) this is one's native region, filled with its particular traditions, landscape, dialect, and so on. It is usually defined by personal emotional ties (cf. Wierzbicka 1999: 450–489; Kossakowska-Jarosz 2003: 35).

<sup>8</sup> The western border of Poland was recognised by the German Democratic Republic on July 6, 1950, and by the German Federal Republic on December 7, 1970. United Germany recognised the border in the Polish-German Treaty of November 14, 1990.

<sup>9</sup> Their reflections are also visible in the magazine used in this study (cf. *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany* 1946, nos 3–4: 32–34; no. 7: 1; nos 8–9: 1).

We have returned to ancient Piast territories on the Odra River. The republic's borders have been set at the Odra and the Nysa. However, years of venomous deceitful Prussian propaganda have grown deep into the minds of European nations. More than that, not all Poles are aware how much Silesia was and is Polish and that, marvellously, it has never ceased to be Polish, that the borders on the Odra and Nysa Rivers are justified and necessary from economic and strategic points of view. The lie about the Germanic past of Silesia should be discarded (...) The objective of the monthly periodical *Śląsk* is a manifestation of elements of Polish heritage and Polish contemporary life in Silesia (ŚMI 1946, no. 1: 1).

The quotation presented above indicates that the editors of the magazine were aware that the Regained Territories were commonly perceived as Other, 'different' and 'forgotten'. In such circumstances the profile chosen for the new magazine ("manifestation of elements of Polish heritage and Polish contemporary life in Silesia"; ŚMI 1946, no. 1: 1) was understandable. The magazine was intended as an illustrated monthly and the illustrations were supposed to play an important role in forming the perception of the Silesian Regained Territories by inhabitants of other Polish regions and new Silesian settlers.

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Illustrations provide a specific kind of evidence that can be read on several levels. The first level is the visual content of the picture. It could be an architectural object, a situation or event, a landscape, a person or a group of people, etc. The conveyance of specific pictures is stronger and deeper if we look at it in the context in which it is presented. Reoccurrence of certain motifs and the context in which a set of illustrations was created also play an important role. Consequently, pictures are not merely a registration of the moment. They exist in their time, but also in their place, in this case in the magazine where they are published. Illustrations should be approached as a text from which we can read more than just who or what is depicted in them. The presented photos of artefacts—sculptures, architectural details and architectural monuments—speak about the depicted objects and their creators, but also about the history of the land where those people lived.

The magazine contains a great amount of material about the past. We can find photos of sculptures, reliefs, or busts of historical personalities on tombs and sarcophagi. Images from old manuscripts also appear. Among the presented figures, members of the Piast family prevail. Among them are Henry II the Pious, Henry IV Probus, Christian of Legnica (1618–1672), and his son, Wilhelm (1660–1675), the last male representative of the Piast line (Figs 177 and 178). We can also find Saint Hedwig of Silesia (Fig. 179), wife of Henry I the Bearded and the patron of the region. Any possible doubts that the reader may have had about the identities of the people presented are dissolved by long captions and the relevant text. The accompanying texts inform us about the time when specific people lived and about

places in Silesia with which they had connections. In addition, people outside the Piast family, such as Piotr Włast, are shown in the illustrations.<sup>10</sup>

The second category consists of photos of architecture. Examples include the Romanesque portal, originally in the Saint Vincent Church in Olbin<sup>11</sup>, now in the Saint Mary Magdalene Church in Wrocław; the tympanum from that portal with relief of Holy Virgin Mary falling asleep (now preserved in the National Museum in Wrocław); and the tympanum from the Holy Virgin Mary Church in the same city, depicting Maria, Piotr Włast's wife, with their son, offering a model of the church to the Holy Virgin Mary with baby Jesus (Fig. 180). With photos of these elements in the magazine, Piotr Włast, a great Silesian nobleman and an important personality in the court of Bolesław Krzywousty (Boleslaus the Twisted Mouth), was also presented to the reader (cf. footnote 8). We can also see interiors of various buildings with significant architectural details, such as the Świdnica Tripartite Altar (Fig. 181) or the winged altar from the Corpus Christi Church in Wrocław. When analysing artistic values of the altars, the editors of *ŚMI* point out their similarity to the Wit Stwosz (Veit Stoss) altar in the Holy Mary Church in Cracow. Into the same category falls the photo of the vault of the Mausoleum of the Silesian Piasts in Legnica, unfortunately of very poor quality.

Historical personalities are in most cases also presented in the architectural context. The location of sculptures (if the place is original and has not changed over the centuries) usually reflects interrelations of man (creator, founder, owner etc.) and place (any kind of architectural creation founded/owned by that person). The editors, showing an image of a particular person, recall at the same time an architectural monument related to him, and in that context present the life of this person, his achievements, role in Silesian and Polish history, etc. This intensifies the message of the photos in the magazine.<sup>12</sup>

The illustrations analysed refer not only to the history of Silesia but also to Polish history. Those objects/architectural monuments underline the fact that people from various regions in Poland share a common history. In that way the editors appeal to the unity and common identity of the Poles. References to the royal Piast family (and people close to Piasts) who built the foundation of the

<sup>10</sup> Piotr Włast (known also as Włost or Włostovic) was a Silesian nobleman who lived at the turn of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. He was probably a descendant of an ancient Silesian prince family. From the year 1117 he was *palatinus* of King Bolesław Krzywousty (Boleslaus the Twisted Mouth), and, after his death, the executor of the king's testament. It is believed that Piotr Włast founded several churches and monasteries, for example in Wrocław the churches of Holy Mary, Saint Aegidius (Idzi) and Saint Michael, and the Benedictine Abbey in Olbin along with Holy Maria church, now no longer existent (cf. Bieniek 1965). In the magazine under analysis we found a great deal of information, including illustrations, on Piotr Włast (cf. *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany* 1946, nos 5–6: 1–4; 1947, nos 6–7: 4–5).

<sup>11</sup> The Saint Vincent Church belonged to the complex of the Benedictine abbey founded by Piotr Włast, who also brought there the Benedictine monks from Tyniec (now a suburb of Cracow).

<sup>12</sup> Obviously, in order to acquire the complete idea, the photos should be viewed together with the accompanied text.

Polish State are very frequent. In general, the illustrations underline the role of the people presented in the photos and the role of Silesia (Fig. 182) in shaping Polish nationality.

The photos in the journal are set in a specific historical context—the time of Piast rule in Silesia. The legendary founder of the Polish State Piast Kołodziej (Piast the Wheelwright) is not present in person on the journal pages, but is referred to many times as the progenitor of the Piast family.

The editors, speaking about the rise of the Polish State<sup>13</sup>, often refer to the deepest layer of the notion of Polishness. They invoke the myth of the beginning expressed in historical figures, derived from the first royal family, associated with the foundations of Polish statehood. The myth throws historical light on the present days and shows the events of today as reasonable, in accordance with God's will, even as necessary and inevitable (cf. Assmann 2008: 93).

Pictures in the magazine refer to the history of Silesia and Poland as a whole. By recalling people and architectural monuments from the past, they underline the similar fates of Poles from various parts of the country and build the basis of common historical memory. To better understand the mechanism of this process, the concept of *lieux de mémoire* of Pierre Nora should be used. According to Nora, these “places of memory” are points where memory crystallises, consolidates and spreads (Nora 2001). They generate similar thoughts and reactions among people belonging to the same group, thus building their identity. Memory builds a common history and tradition, drawing a borderline between that which is ‘ours’ and that which of ‘strangers’.<sup>14</sup> I believe that the recollection of events and people from the past in the journal was intended to create such ‘places of memory’. By presenting these facts and people the magazine intended to develop in the Poles the feeling that they had been one nation, not just from the proverbial yesterday (when the new Poland's borders were established), but always.

As the region of Silesia had been detached from Poland for several hundred years and regained only after WWII, one of the journal's objectives, declared in the editorial credo, was to form a common memory in the post-war Polish population and to draw attention to these values (related to the Recovered Territories), which the Poles were not allowed to forget. Recalling the various advantages of the Regained Territories evidently served that purpose. The editors were aware that common memory might be decisive in the process of developing unity (cf. Assmann 2008:

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<sup>13</sup> Recalling such a distant past was necessary in a certain way. The territories in question belonged to the Polish state (or were linked to it) as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The process of their detachment started in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and was finally completed with the partition of Poland and the fall of the Polish state (1772–1795). Most of Silesia was left outside the borders of the Republic of Poland, as created in 1918 (cf. Popiołek 1976).

<sup>14</sup> Places of memory may form a complex network understandable only to specific groups, a space saturated with emotions and recollections, both personal and shared. This memory–space link consolidates ties between people and the places where they live (cf.: Ricoeur 2006: 537; Poczykowski 2010).

45–47). An attempt was made to include Silesia (and all the Regained Territories) in a chain of association. Silesia was linked with universal Polish symbols from the past and the present, such as the cities of Cracow (the old capital of Poland) with its Royal Wawel Castle, and Warsaw (today's capital) with the Vistula river.

Among the illustrations depicting the past, one photo is remarkable in form and subject. This is the aerial shot of Wrocław Cathedral and its surroundings, i.e. the centre of the city. The damaged spires, the church walls, broken vaults and ruined surroundings can be seen there. This is the only photographic evidence of the war damage in Wrocław published in the journal.<sup>15</sup> It combines the past of the Regained Territories, symbolised by the magnificent structure of the Cathedral, with the post-war reality (Fig. 183).

The majority of illustrations showing the present day Regained Territories are not very dramatic in comparison with the picture described above. The editors avoided images that might evoke memories of recently finished war. They tended to show everyday rural life (Fig. 184) or the work being carried out in the rebuilt industrial facilities (Fig. 185). Pictures of the restored Polish Radio broadcasting station, of the concert hall and a theatre performance fall into the same category. There are also shots of young people in the Aero Club, and children playing in the kindergarten (Fig. 188).

A special meaning can be attributed to the photos showing Polish soldiers at agricultural work (Fig. 186). They can be read literarily—soldiers helping farmers in the crucial harvest period. However, the captions (for example “The Polish soldier who regained Silesia now helps in the harvest and defends the land”) clearly indicate the message they were intended to convey—the Polish Army is ready to defend Silesia. It is in a certain way an editor's response to continuing doubts about the legality of the Polish post-war borders. An important element of the uniform of the officer (Fig. 187) scything the crop is the four-corner cap, always regarded as typically Polish.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the topics described above there are pictures presenting the tourist attractions of the region, for example landscapes and health resort facilities. In most cases they play a decorative role, without references to the texts of the accompanying articles. The most frequent motif is Śnieżka Mt. (1602 m), the highest peak in the Karkonosze range. I noticed that at the beginning the magazine, although intended as illustrated, it contains only a small number of pictures. None-

<sup>15</sup> In the final period of WWII Wrocław was turned into a fortress by the Germans, managing to hold out until May 6, 1945. In consequence, it became one of the most ruined cities within the post-war Poland (cf. Maciejewska 2008).

<sup>16</sup> Perception of the four-corner cap as the national symbol goes back the period of Poland's Partition (1772–1918). During the uprisings against the occupying powers it was often the only recognised element of the national uniform. The contemporary military cap of that type has a peak and squared top. Following restoration of Polish sovereignty in 1918 it became the official headwear of military parades, serving in that role until 1950 (or 1952) and again from 1990 (Wielecki 1985; Żygułski & Wielecki 1988).

theless, those few to be found in every issue show well the beauty of the region, especially its mountains (Fig. 189) and cities. Their role was more than purely decorative, as I will try to demonstrate further.

The significance of landscapes or events situated in a certain time and place (like those presented above) is shown in recollections of people who had lost their 'place'. First of all there is the landscape, in which all its characteristic elements—hills, valleys, and rivers—are depicted, but there are also villages, crossroad crosses and important buildings (most often the church, but also the school or local grocery, and places linked with the family, such as the house, neighbours houses, cemeteries etc.; cf. Kabzińska 2000). All these elements create 'the place', well known, safe and friendly. Landscape picture, combined with scenes from life, natural monuments, or architecture, were intended give an perception of Silesia as safe and 'ours', not alien.

The region presented photographically in the journal was given intimate and friendly characteristics. Firstly, Silesia's historical ties with other parts of Poland were recalled. There were references to the common roots and the common past. The reader got the chance to be acquainted with the topography of the region and its landscapes and views, local place names, traditions, and events from the past. Readers were acquainted with today's reality in the Regained Territories: rebuilding industry and agriculture etc.<sup>17</sup>

416 Aleksander Posern-Zieliński (2005) in his analysis of the regional identity structure has stated that studies on this issue should encompass at least four aspects—territory, the history of the region, the people, and cultural specificity. As already said, the main objective of the journal was to present the Polish specificity of the Regained Territories, i.e. their identity. The illustrations refer to all four aspects listed above, although emphasising the history of the region.

The identity of a land is formed by its people. The concept of identity is closely related to people, inhabitants of the area. Each region is shaped and also perceived through the prism of their inhabitants, who also shape the surrounding landscape. They create the architecture, regional infrastructure, take care of memorials (monuments, museums etc.), shape the picture of their world. Identity, either individual or collective, is linked with space—the land, the area, the region. Marks of the past visible in the space often became strong stimulants in developing a feeling of (regional) identity.<sup>18</sup> The choice of illustrations in the analysed journal was directed to present the Regained Territories to the reader as a friendly, well-known and safe space so that the audience would identify with the area. It was especially important for new settlers in Silesia arriving from various other regions of Poland. Such a per-

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<sup>17</sup> From May 1947 ŚMI more contemporary materials were presented (*Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany* 1947, nos 2–3).

<sup>18</sup> This mutual man–space–place relationship was referred to by Aleksander Wallis as "one of the most important reciprocal dependencies in culture" in Wallis 1979: 13).

ception would help them to develop feeling of being at home. Moreover, the illustrations conveyed the message to voices demanding revision of the new Poland's borders, claiming that the Regained Territories were and are Polish and have the same historical roots as all other Polish regions.

As I already mentioned, the authors of the photos are either unknown or uncertain. Some pictures were probably taken by German photographers before the war. In this situation the interpretation of the photos must be based on their context, that is the magazine in which they were published, and its time. *ŚMI* can be seen as a guidebook to the Regained Territories. Objects presented on its pages can be also found in today's books listing places in the region that deserve to be visited—outstanding architectural monuments or natural attractions. Illustrations with historical commentary would create, according to the intentions of the editors, an atmosphere of objectivity. However, a close look reveals that certain specific historical topics are repeated, all of them related to the Piast Dynasty. In contrast, events of other periods are treated much more superficially. It is especially true of the time when Silesia was within the zone of German political and cultural influence. In fact this process had already started during the lifetime of the last Piasts, what was also omitted. Such a selective narration corresponds with the editors' objectives. They showed only those elements that could be linked with the history of Poland and used to create a Polish identity for the Regained Territories. Today was presented using peaceful landscapes, children playing and people at work, that is, pictures of everyday life. In that way the editors were shaping (or rather manipulating) their readers' perceptions of the Regained Territories. In this respect, remarks by Krzysztof Olechnicki, that creating knowledge and creating photos are "social processes, in the context of which 'reality' and its perception appear as products of a cultural character, i.e. as changeable and ephemeral" are interesting (Olechnicki 2003: 129; translation by E. Baniowska-Kopacz). These remarks can be applied to the photos from the magazine. Each of them was the pretext for telling a story. All of them taken together paint a broad picture of today and past realities perceived through the prism of the editors. In the case analysed here we observe the creation of knowledge through the selection of photos. Therefore, the picture of the Regained Territories in the journal mainly reflects the point of view of its editors, who had the objective of shaping reality according to actual needs.

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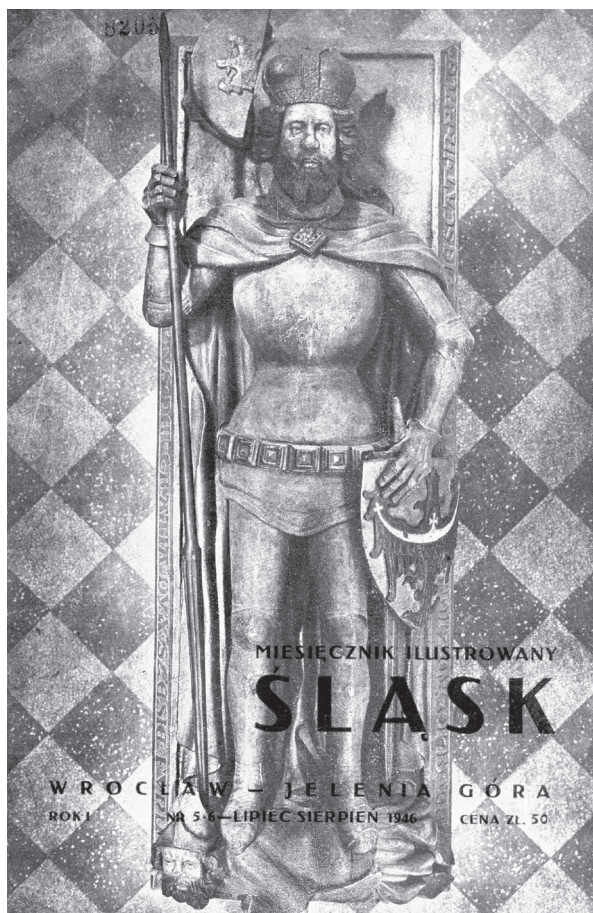
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**TOMBSTONE OF HENRY II THE PIOUS**

177 ..... *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1946, nos 5-6.



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**SCULPTURE OF PRINCE JERZY WILHELM,  
RULER OF LEGNICA, BRZEG AND OŁAWA, LAST PIAST (1660–1675)**

*Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1946, nos 8–9, p. 2. 178



**ILLUMINATION OF THE FIGURE OF ST HEDWIG OF SILESIA (1353)**

179 ..... *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1947, nos 4–5, p. 2.



DOLNY ŚLĄSK



WROCŁAW  
GŁOGÓW - OLEŚNICA



LEGNICA - BRZEG



ŚWIDNICA - ZIEMBICE

GÓRNY ŚLĄSK



OPOLE  
CIESZYN  
I T. P.



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**WROCLAW CATHEDRAL** .....

*Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1947, nos 2–3, p. 24. 183

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**AUTUMN PLOUGHING**

184 ..... J. Mańkowski, *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1946, nos 8–9, p. 9.



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**COAL MINER, LOWER SILESIA** .....

*Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1947, nos 2–3, p. 38. 185



**SOLDIERS OF THE POLISH ARMY HELPING WITH HARVEST WORK**

186 ..... *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1946, no. 7, p. 12.



**GENERAL OF ARMS STANISŁAW POPLAWSKI STARTING HARVEST** .....

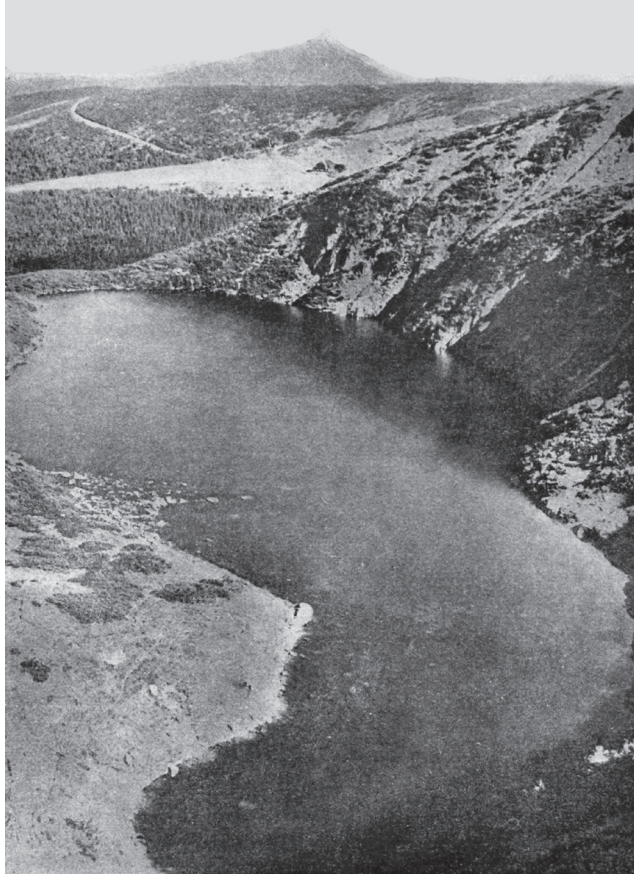
*Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1946, no. 7, p. 13. 187

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**CHILDREN PLAYING IN KINDERGARTEN**

188 ..... *Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1947, nos 4–5, p. 59.



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**KARKONOSZE MTS FROM CIEPLICE** .....

*Śląsk. Miesięcznik Ilustrowany*, 1947, nos 4–5 (supplement). 189

## The Psychoanalytical Aspects of the Deconstruction of Images of Socialist Ideals of the 1930s–1950s in Russian Sots Art of the 1990s–2000s

Building the image of the Other in Soviet art of the 1930s until 1953 was closely linked to the ideological milieu of that time. An understanding of art as a means of forming a new type of personality—a builder of communism—brought about a set of semiotic codes that determined the canon of visual representation of opposing images, materialising in the figures of friend vs. foe. When producing the image of the friend, artists were to glorify peasants and workers, who were the true builders and protectors of communist ideology. The set of visual and semiotic codes was orientated towards reflecting the three basic aesthetic principles of Marxism-Leninism in art: the party spirit, commitment to the people, and specificity. The 1934 Charter of the Union of Writers in the USSR, reads, in part: “The Union of Soviet Writers sets the general goal of creating works of art of lofty artistic significance filled with the deeds of the heroic struggle of international proletariat and the pathos of the victory of socialism; and reflecting the great wisdom and heroism of the communist party” (The First National Congress of Soviet Writers, 1934) (this and other translations by L. Limanskaya).

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Describing the work process of sculptor Nikolai Andreev on the image of Lenin, the well-known art critic of the Soviet era Vladislav Zimenko wrote in 1962:

However, the largest and most productive work from the artistic and documentary point of view was N. Andreev’s great Leniniana. In May 1920, he was allowed to draw Lenin in his study in the Kremlin, where he produced numerous studies and a large number of sketches for sculptures. With great attention, carefully and thoughtfully, the sculptor studied Lenin’s appearance, his habitual gestures and manner to sit, speak and work, trying to capture all the details of the complex inner world of this great man. Numerous albums were quickly filled with both quick sketches and more complete drawings showing Lenin during various times of his intense workday. In one, he is attentively reading a document and in another, he is talking. The artist portrays his kind and, at the same time, keen glance. It is obvious that Lenin is talking to a friend, to a like-minded person. In another drawing, his expression is challenging and sharp. There are alternative studies of his eyes, nose and ear. Another common motif is

Lenin at work, where the artist depicts the leader's bent head, high forehead and the bridge of his nose crossed by a deep line. Once again, he is talking to someone and smiling. This is an amazingly precise, genuine and lyrical drawing that reveals, in its full splendour, Andreev's skill as a graphic artist (Zimenko 1962).

Emphasising the role of the unconscious in the grotesque and in caricature, it is important to point out that the functioning of the iconic signs in different historical contexts is an expression of a certain kind of sensitivity. Deconstructions of ritual meanings of visual semiotic codes reflect the changes of emotional expressiveness. For example, the image of Lenin in the art of the 1930s–1950s had a set of traditional facial expressions and gestures: his smile with a squint symbolising kindness and intelligence, and his pose, in which his right hand is raised and the left is touching his heart symbolising this leader's sincere call for the fight for the rightful cause of the proletariat. Good examples of such an approach to this image are the *Portrait of Lenin on a Rostrum*, painted in 1930 by artist A. Gerasimov (State Historical Museum, Moscow, Fig. 190) and the aforementioned Leniniana, a series of sculptural and graphic portraits of Lenin by N. Andreev. This included portraits from life executed during the years 1920–1930, nearly 100 sculptural and 200 graphic works displayed at the State Historical Museum and the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow (Fig. 191).

Cultural figures and politicians of the 'bourgeois' West served as embodiments of images of the Other in communist ideology—they were criticised using grotesque and caricature. The leading artists of Soviet political caricature were Kukryniksy, a team made up of Mikhail Kupriyanov (1903–1991), Porfiriy Krylov (1902–1990) and Nikolai Sokolov (1903–2000) (see also Kozintsev, this volume). The creative spirit of this trio viewed caricature as a weapon in the struggle against political enemies. The grotesque images of the political opponents of communism in the works of Kukryniksy were regulated by the existing ideological conditions. The collision of two ideologies—the bourgeois and the communist—was portrayed following the rule of stylistic opposition. The images of the fighters for the rightful communist cause were idealised, while the images of their political opponents were depicted grotesquely. The mimicry and gestures of communists symbolised heroism, courage, wisdom and a belief in the bright ideals of communism. In contrast, bourgeois images suggested fear, anger and aggression. Their facial expressions were distorted, proportions were deformed and allegorical comparisons with animals were used (*Goebbels the Monkey*, 1944–45) (Fig. 192); the human body was made to resemble objects and paradoxical details (*Political Geography*, 1944–45) (Fig. 193); and mythological characters (*Deathly Care*, 1944–45) (Fig. 194) were employed. The ridiculed characters were placed in absurd situations stressing the meaninglessness of the military and political events and the grotesqueness of situations (*We Shall Mercilessly Defeat and Wipe out the Enemy!* 1941) (Fig. 195).

Sots Art, which appeared in the 1970s as one of the areas of alternative art, became a form of countering the official ideology of the USSR. By transforming the motifs and images of Soviet art and political propaganda, Sots Art unmasked, in a grotesque and shocking way, their true meaning, trying to free the viewer from ideological stereotypes. The ironic images of Sots Art replaced the stylistic opposition of the caricatures of the 1930s–1950s that was based on opposing the idealised image of the builder of communism to the grotesque image of a Western bourgeois. In the works of Sots Art artists these two opposed sides ironically overlapped, which resulted in a reorientation of the semiotic code. Symbols and signs used to glorify communist ideals became elements of a caricature, a means of deconstructing conventional meanings.

The chapter is devoted to the psychoanalytical issues of the deconstruction of images of socialist ideals of the 1930s–1950s in Russian Sots Art. Sots Art is an ironic title for the artistic movement that used a mixture of signs from the visual semiotic arsenal of the social realism and pop art movements of the 1990s–2000s. By comparing the idealisation of the image of Lenin in Soviet art of the 1930s–1950s, with its grotesque interpretation in Sots Art works of the 1990s, it appears to be interesting to trace the functions of grotesque and caricature in the deconstruction of the canons of socialist realism. Therefore, the role of the regression mechanism in the transformation of the ideals of socialist realism into laughable images becomes of special interest.

In psychoanalytical theory, regression is one of the forms of psychological adaptation in a situation of conflict or alarm, when a person unconsciously resorts to earlier, less mature and less adequate behavioural examples and primitive images which seem to guarantee protection.

The widespread appearance of comic genres in Sots Art during the time of perestroika reflect the reaction of artists to social instability, when the individual and society turn to the language of the less mature, primitive cultures and use shocking genres in art involving forms of deviant behaviour aimed at ridiculing the ethic standards and ideals of the past. An aestheticisation of deviant behaviour and shocking images is perceived as protection from the suppressing canons of totalitarian art (Limanskaya & Shvets 2014: 710).

The use of image simplification and deformation—typical methods of the grotesque and caricature—and recourse to the traditions of primitive cultures indicate a culture's need for psychological regress and the response of art to the conflict of ideologies. In the case of Soviet and post-Soviet ideologies, different comic genres were used in imaginative ways. In the paintings and sculptures of 1970s and 1980s, images of the social and political jokes were widely used; in the 1990s a need for a sarcastic demonstration of a critical attitude towards the ideals of socialist realism were displayed, manifesting in acts of direct aggression aimed at the destruction of the memory and monuments of the past. Actions seen as symbols of a new revolutionary ideology removed or transferred the monuments of the past.

Such deconstruction has led to the destruction, reinstallation or removal of monuments that reflect the Soviet ideology of the 1930s–1960s (see also Czarnecka, this volume). The wave of dismantling monuments swept across the USSR between 1956 and 1962, following the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Monuments to Stalin were destroyed all over the country as zealously as they had been installed just a few years earlier. The next wave, which began in 1991 after the fall of the State of Emergency Committee, involved dismantling monuments to Soviet political leaders. The overall deconstruction of the ideals of totalitarianism, which took place in 1991, included all types of humour represented in the different genres and conceptual directions of the visual arts. Sots Art, conceptualism and pop art aimed at criticising the values of socialist realism. The stylistic canons of realism were mixed with pop art and the traditions of ‘primitive’ cultures.

Artists of the post-Soviet period made use of the traditions of pop art and primitive art, advanced the principles of parody and presented well-known subjects of paintings or popular plays in a laughable, degraded form.

The ironic components of many areas of Russian conceptualism of the 1990s reflected the need for psychological regression in society. The post-Soviet avant-garde undertook those functions, which in previous times were performed by traditional primitive folk art and pop art. The traditions of primitive folk art were always viewed as a sphere that divided ‘friends’ and ‘foes’, a sphere that was filled with its own symbolism and semantics and which possessed a certain measure of mysticism, even mythology. In post-Soviet conceptualism, as in primitivism, “there is a certain delirium, incoherence and alogism, like in a dream” that require an explanation from the creator (Yurkov 2003: 177).

Yuri Lotman noted that primitive folk art and popular prints represented an entire culture, which includes knockabout comedy—performances at markets and fairs with harlequinade and buffoonery—the witty talk of peddlers and the popular theatre and advertising posters (Lotman 1998).

The affinity of popular culture to theatricalisation and game playing is visible in a whole range of conceptual areas of the twentieth and twenty first centuries that are denoted by actions and performances used to construct meaning. It is enough to recall the Moscow radical art (Moscow actionism) of the 1990s, which, from its very inception, positioned itself as the successor of folk primitivism and the continuator of the political tradition of the avant-garde of the twentieth century. The performances of the 1990s became a sensational metaphor for the situation in which the Soviet people found themselves, having become, after the “shock therapy” of the neoliberal reforms, deprived of social safety, much like a dog thrown out into the street. A good example is the 1994 performance of Oleg Kulik and Alexander Brener *Mad Dog or the Last Taboo Guarded by the Lonely Cerberus* (Fig. 196).

Within actionism, accepted standards of behaviour are disrupted by choreographed deviant behaviour aimed at creating a shocking ‘spectacle’ that the public

expects. However, such frivolity carries a serious fundamental intention—its aim is to eliminate the gap, created by mass culture, between the viewer and performer, and to bring them together in a kind of ‘performance’.

From a broader, semiotic and cultural perspective, the theatricalised ‘hooliganism’ of Moscow actionists revived the aesthetics of fools, jesters and travelling minstrels who exposed themselves in order to ridicule social injustice and vice. These qualities of the Moscow actionists were manifest in their appearance, manner of behaviour and shocking actionist gestures which reached beyond the accepted aesthetical limits of the time.

Primitive folk art became an inspiration to street art in the 1990s as artists tried to shock and disrupt the traditions of socialist realism. Images powered by irony and the grotesque lead the way to the change of semiotic codes. The same signs—gestures, poses, mimicry—that had symbolised the revolutionary spirit and heroism, became symbols of deception and trickery and were used to ridicule the characters depicted in the works of art. The image of the ‘builder of communism’, who dominated the art of socialist realism, had become obsolete. But why is there a desire to physically destroy the monuments of the past?

Ernst Gombrich wrote about the special magical status of the visual arts:

Whilst words are easier understood as conventional signs which one can play with, alter and change without affecting the essence of the being they signify, a picture remains for us for all time a sort of a double, which we dare not damage for fear that we might injure the person or being itself. Image-magic is perhaps the most widespread of all spells. It lives on even in modern civilization, and it can regain its old power, partially at least, if our Ego loses some part of its directing functions. For example, revolutionaries burn the pictures of a ruler... (Gombrich & Kris 1938: 339).

In his studies on the history of cartoons Ernst Gombrich focused on the role of the unconscious in grotesque and caricature and pointed out that the functioning of iconic signs in the visual arts in different historical contexts is an expression of a certain kind of sensitivity. An example of this is the change of the semiotic code of Soviet art in the culture of Sots Art: the gestures and poses of the ‘builders of communism’, which personalised the image of the ‘friend’ in socialist realism, were transformed into the grotesques of Russian post-modernism and became a personalisation of the ‘foe’. Mocking the idealised past helps one become free of the pressure of long-standing stereotypes and to oust, with the help of deviant forms of behaviour, the fear of disobeying obsolete standards of behaviour. E. Gombrich explained this by referring to different cultural traditions that operate within their own systems of values and restrict the visualisation of reality through a set of perceptive schemas.

Visual schemas and emotional symptoms of bodily signs vary depending on the context as well as on evolutionary processes in visual perception; “the artist, clearly, can only render what his tool and his medium are capable of rendering” (Gombrich 1960: 64–65). Psychological explanations are a key to understanding how these individual artists ‘saw’ and how they built upon the traditions they had inherited and of which they were a part. With the dialectics of making and matching, schema and correction, Gombrich sought to ground artistic development on more universal truths, closer to those of science, than on what he regarded as fashionable or vacuous terms such as ‘Zeitgeist’ and other ‘abstractions’ (Ibid.).

Claude Lévi-Strauss (2000), who draw an analogy between nature and culture, noted that the formation of types of body decoration and samples of tattoos, ornaments and incisions in ‘primitive’ peoples resemble the natural need for mimicry (protection). Repeated movements, gestures and mimicry, as well as the use of masks in rituals, reflect an understanding of the regularity (invariable frequency) of natural life and phenomena.

The ‘higher’ the level of civilisation, the greater the number of taboos and cultural limitations is. While in ‘primitive’ cultures the semantics of visual codes are based mostly on mimicking totem objects, others apply a more complicated hierarchy of conditional and symbolic limitations to bodily signs. At the same time, Claude Lévi-Strauss has analysed the terminology of kinship, the structural principles of building primeval classifications of the natural and social worlds, rituals, totemisms, myths and masks as sign systems of a special nature. His studies reveal, among the visible versatility of social rules, the general schemas that create conditions for information exchange and, thus, overcome the antinomy between the postulated unity of being and the plurality of the forms of perception: “Any myth or mythological sequence would have remained incomprehensible if each myth was not opposed to other versions of the same myth or myths” (Lévi-Strauss 2000: 47). This statement can be applied to the reorientation of the communist myth in conditions of post-modernism. The masks, movements and gestures of ritual figures perform the functions of signs and they, like words, may be read in a particular semantic space. Despite the apparent semantic diversity of various cultures and graphic traditions, they all have a formal similarity of visual signs. This is explained by the fact that cultural signs reflect the natural human need for a consolidation of sentient experience in the visual arts. For example, the use of similarities in the types of symmetry and related image transformations in different regions and eras is explained as follows: the organisation of forms and colours within (unconscious) sentient experience is, of its own accord, the first level of denoting reality for these plastic types of art.

The findings of structural anthropology are in many ways corroborated by the historical ethology of Konrad Lorenz. He compared the behaviour of animals and humans and viewed their similarity as a “function of the system that owned its existence and its special form to the historical course of its formation in the history

of the species, to the development of the individual and, in humans, to the history of culture” (Lorenz 1998: 5).

The methods of structural anthropology applied by Lévi-Strauss and those of historical ethology applied by Lorenz, as well as Sigmund Freud’s experiments of psychoanalytical reconstruction of a creative personality, attracted the attention of Ernst Gombrich during his study of the grotesque and caricature. In his examination of the history of art as an evolutionary process, Gombrich drew on the experience of ethological anthropology and applied its methods to the history of art. In his fundamental works (1960, 1963, 1979, 1982) he used, as a method of studying the psychology of graphical perception, the experience of observing the development of the individual in a cultural environment and examined the role of cultural standards and rituals in forming genres and artistic styles. He analysed the psychological mechanisms and specifics of nonverbal communication, proceeding from the history of physiognomy, studying the semiotic aspects of masks, mimicry and gestures in the history of caricature. Following Lévi-Strauss, Gombrich affirmed that masks, gestures and movements are plastically modelled signs expressing a psychological symptomology of emotions and cultural mechanisms at the same time.

Thus, referring to the works of Lévi-Strauss, Lorenz and Freud, Gombrich studied the semiotics of the body using materials from the history of physiognomy and caricature.

438 Based on his research into the history of caricature, Gombrich demonstrated that body language is an iconic sign, i.e. a visual code of a culture. This visual code is a perceptual schema based on the apparatus of the central nervous system and is manifested in various forms of mimicry. Mimicry is a physical need shared by humans and living organisms to adapt to the surrounding world, both natural and social. Body language plays an important role in the development of the ability of the nervous system to adapt to the external environment. Gombrich studied the role of movement, mimicry and gesture in the history of physiognomics and caricature and showed that the semantic field of body signs is multidimensional. In his research into caricature, he focused on the functioning of comic genres and showed that they reflect the nature of the human beings as a creature of conflict, drama and anxiety in constant need of psychological release. Caricatures reflect the primal experience of pre-verbal communication. Similar to the images of night dreams, metaphors, jokes, and anecdotes, the iconic images of caricature contain a play of arbitrary associations that help transfer concealed thinking into overt content. The result is an emotional release in laughter and a release of suppressed emotions, similar to an expression of thought in night dreams (Limanskaya & Shvets 2014).

Today’s critics of Gombrich’s ideas point out that mental images induced by iconic signs suppress imagination by calling to memory the momentary image of what was seen (Bryson 1983; Mitchell 1994, 2005). However, we should bear in mind that the objective likeness to the denoted is not the only reason for iconic likeness. In our interpretation of the iconic conception, we transfer emphasis from

the ontological status of the iconic sign to the conditions of visual perception. According to this opinion, the iconic sign deals not with objective reality, but with its specific perception and, consequently, with its mental representation. To perceive visual images, we use visual codes stored in our memory that determine the horizon of our vision (Limanskaya & Shvets 2014: 712).

Gombrich studied the psychology of comic images during 1938–1963 because of his interest in Freud’s psychoanalysis and, in particular, his theory of sharp wit. While studying the link between night dreams, jokes, anecdotes and playful transformation of bodily images in grotesque and caricature, Freud concluded that these are all connected with the unconscious. Comparing the play of words in verbal jokes with the mix-up of visual images in night dreams and caricatures, he linked them with the psychological functions of the unconscious. In the introduction to his *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905) Freud wrote: “The condensing work of a night dream creates images adequate to pictures of reality mixed or modified from another source (...) the analogy of night dreams and sharp wit gives us hope to explain the technique of wit” (Freud 2006: 29). Dreams and imagination play an important role in the process of increasing the adaptability, and stabilising the psyche, of an individual through psychological protection that relaxes intrapersonal conflicts. These conclusions made by Freud and his followers have become the foundation of the study of the psychotherapeutic function of artistic creativity.

Prior to that, in the introduction to his *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), Freud stated: “I will try to show the psychological technique of interpreting night dreams. With this method, any dream proves to be a meaningful psychic phenomenon, which may be included in waking activity. I will try to find out the processes responsible for strangeness and dark meaning of the dream produced by cooperation and rivalry of psychic forces (...)” (Freud 2005: 7).

Gombrich continues Freud’s tradition of studying the roles of the unconscious and the creative Ego in an artistic mind, for which he turned to the creative methods of different artists from the Renaissance to the twentieth century.

The similarity between caricature and night dreams lies in their mixed logic, metaphors, blended images and exaggerated details based on arbitrary associations. Comparing their functions, Freud noted that both proceed from thinking to visual perception (Freud 2006). While researching the specifics of the psychogenesis of sharp wit, Freud and later Gombrich tried to understand why bad logic, hyperbole and transformed images are presented in a comical vein in verbal jokes and caricatures. In Freud’s opinion, the answer lies in the sketchy nature of both, “often calling for filling in” (Freud 2006: 30). Gombrich further developed that idea in his works on the history of the grotesque and caricature. He considered caricature and grotesque to result from an integration of sensation, perception and will in the unconscious sphere, thus gaining an ability to negate the logic of common sense and in doing so freeing the suppressions situated in the unconscious mind. Comparing

verbal wit and the history of caricature, he showed that they have in common the ability to enliven instantly the concealed symbolic codes of language.

Similarly, if we compare the visual symbols that represented wisdom, truth and heroism in art and literature in the 1930s–1950s and their grotesque reinterpretation in Sots Art in 1970, we see that the same symbols have exactly the opposite meaning. As described above, mimicry, gestures and poses canonised in socialist realism as symbols of wisdom and rightness become symbols of deceit, aggression and totalitarianism in postmodernism culture. The ironic layer is present in V. Komar and A. Melamid's *Lenin Candlestick* (1992) (Fig. 197), in the reinterpretation of A. Gerasimov's *Portrait of Lenin on a Rostrum* by V. Komar, and A. Melamid's *Lenin in a Mask of George Washington* (2001) (Fig. 198). The transformation of images of socialist realism into grotesque and caricature reflects the striving of contemporary society for emotional release in order to free itself from tension built up by totalitarian ideology (Limanskaya & Shvets 2014: 715). A socialist realist dislike of the aesthetic values of the avant-garde is ironically presented in L. Sokov's sculpture *Lenin and Giacometti* (1989). This piece presents an ironic and witty comment to the irresolvable conflict of different artistic ideologies.

The socialist realist images of the 'builders of communism' are treated as a utopia-spawned social myth in postmodernism art, much like the myth of consumption in pop art. Sots Art artists used well-known semiotic codes and iconographic schemas from socialist realism and pop art images to achieve collages, such as the work by Alexander Kosolapov, who combined in his works the images of Lenin, the Worker and the Collective Farm Girl with the pop art symbol Mickey Mouse (Fig. 199; see also Kosolapov 2005). Paradoxical combination of traditional images provokes laughter and emotional release, because they are easily recognised.

Mythological images of socialist realism, based on a personified belief in miracles that will happen in the bright future of communism, were subject to reinterpretation and de-sacralisation. Replacement or distortion of elements of visual stereotypes does not prevent the viewer from automatically recognising them.

Ironic experiments of doubling the visual and semiotic codes, which turns the stereotypes of the Soviet and postmodern cultures into interchangeable mass culture products, such as, for example, the hybrid of Lenin and Mickey Mouse demonstrates. The process of doubling semiotic codes is a psychosocial phenomenon, and as such it reflects the individual and society's need for emotional relaxation.

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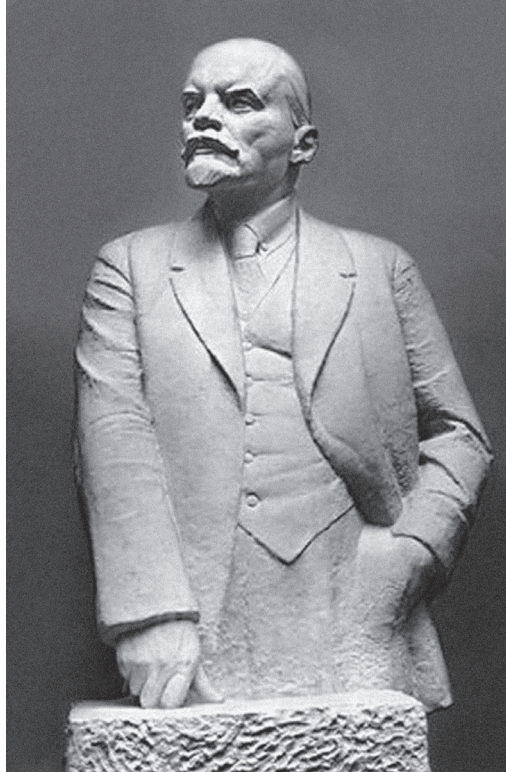
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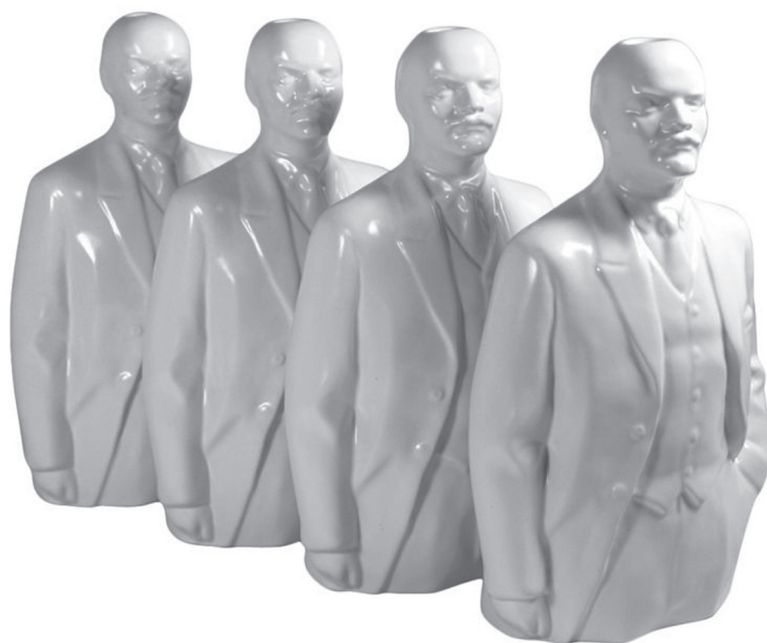


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38. Someone is taking someone for a walk (D. Low, *Picture Post*, 1939)
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41. Joseph Stalin (B. Yefimov, 1924)

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42. Spring succeeds to winter (*Magyarság*, 1940)
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45. This is what “liberated” territories look like... (*Magyarság*, 1944)
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72. “The Latvian people” took to the streets and congratulated their liberators (R. Birzgalis, *Tēvija*, 1941)
73. Vitamīns: “liberators”. During the October revolution celebrations, Stalin promised to soon liberate Latvians, Estonians, Lithuanians and other nations (*Tēvija*, 1941)
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99. For god’s sake, don’t take my only milker away...! (*Kocúr*, 1942)
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