

What sounds like a didactic benediction to the children among *Tracing Karl May's* visitors is itself a trace of Karl May's potential to inspire his readers to pursue social justice in earnest. The identification of Central Europeans with imaginary Indians articulated the potential for a variety of alliances. Karl May's novels positioned their German-turned American hero in a latently Christian alliance with the Apache that he had earned through the performance of frontier feats, and which was based on mutual sympathy and a blood brotherhood that practically meant adoption into the tribe. This alliance, however, precluded mass organized ethnic resistance. Central European hobbyists asserted their guardianship and authority over North American Indian cultures (again, primarily Plains Sioux in the late nineteenth century) through their "research-based" replication and performances of "authentic" representations of these societies. In their turn, the popular *Indianerfilme* portrayed American Indians as a group in a potential class-based international coalition against U.S. imperialism in the past and present. These tropes of playing Indian enabled the building of a Transatlantic network for Native sovereignty in the Late Cold War.<sup>91</sup> As Lakota medicine man Archie Fire Lane Deer explained about his travels in Central Europe in the 1980s, "I have to thank this man called Karl May, even though it was a world of fantasy that he had written about, never seen Lakotas, and made ridiculous things like Navajos with Mohawk haircuts – but he still raised the consciousness of the people, about the Indian people."<sup>92</sup>

While this latter alliance between live Indians and Central Europeans across the iron curtain awaits its own exhibition, to some extent it was definitely inspired by Karl May's oeuvre. And *that's* no small thing.

György Tóth

Francis D. Raška, **The Long Road to Victory: A History of Czechoslovak Exile Organizations**. Boulder, CO: East European Monographs No. DCCXCIX, Distributed by Columbia University Press, 2012. 251 pages. ISBN 978-0-88033-706-9

The political collapse of the communist system in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 and the demise of the Soviet Union continue to attract scholarly attention. A number of studies have been published on the subject. Much remains to be done, especially due to the fact that there are many documents in Russian archives that are still waiting for

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<sup>91</sup> For a history of this alliance, see György Tóth, "Red Nations: The Transatlantic Relations of the American Indian Radical Sovereignty Movement of the Late Cold War." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. The University of Iowa, 2012.

<sup>92</sup> Box 135, Folder 631. "Archie Fire, Tape 3; Wolakota." Audio recording, 1/2. March 2, 1986. Richard Erdoes Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

declassification. Thankfully, the sources on Czechoslovak exile organizations active during the postwar decades are accessible, although some of their archives may suffer from a lack of funding.

Francis D. Raška has studied Czechoslovak exile for many years. His book under review follows his earlier publications devoted to Czechoslovak political exiles: *Opuštění bojovníci: historie Rady svobodného Československa 1949–1961* [Deserted Warriors: A History of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia] (2009) and *Československý exil v boji za lidská práva* [Czechoslovak Exiles' Struggle for Human Rights] (2011). His books are based on meticulous research of published sources, archives, (e. g. at the Palacký University in Olomouc, which hosts the largest collection of materials relevant to Czechoslovak exile), and last but not least on interviews with surviving participants. The interviews are especially valuable as almost a quarter of a century has passed already since the end of the communist regime.

In his latest book, the author focuses on Czechoslovak exile organizations in the period between the suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968 and the collapse of the communist dictatorship in 1989. There were several waves of exiles of varying motives and persuasion in the four decades between 1948 and 1989. The post-February 1948 exiles were of a different ilk from those leaving for the West in 1968 and later. Many of the former were political opponents of the communists, often members of the prewar elites, wartime heroes who had participated in the Battle of Britain as RAF airmen or fighting the Germans in North Africa. By 1968, the regime had “mellowed” quite significantly, with many communists becoming reform-, i. e. liberal-minded. After the Soviet-led invasion in August 1968, there were reform communists, many of them prominent in the 1948 coup, in the repressive regime in the 1950s, and in subsequent purges, who decided to go to Western democratic countries, some of them hoping to return after the Soviet occupation had ended. Another category of exiles consisted of so-called economic emigrants, people who lost hope for personal advancement in Czechoslovakia and headed for a “better life.” However, it would be too much of a simplification to claim that they strove for a better standard of living only. The social atmosphere in Czechoslovakia during “normalization” was quite stuffy and oppressive, and soon after August 1968 it became obvious that there was no end of the regime in sight as the communist system received a new lease on life by the Soviet-led invasion.

The post-1968 exiles included some communists who had participated in post-1948 purges; e. g. Jiří Pelikán was a member of the vetting commission which, in 1948, expelled pro-democracy students from Charles University, Prague. Pelikán, whose career in the 1950s and 1960s included prominent positions in the communist-dominated International Students' Union, also worked as the director of the Czechoslovak [State] Television. In the latter position, he supported the reformists in the Communist Party. In 1969, he became a political exile. The fact that both the persecutors and the persecuted of the 1950s found themselves in the same situation – in exile – led to discord within the Czechoslovak diaspora.

The body of the text gives a systematic description of individual segments and activities of exile organizations and persons. Chapter 1 deals with the emigration wave following the

crushing of the Prague Spring in 1968. Chapter 2 looks at the Council of Free Czechoslovakia and its activities after 1968. Chapter 3 analyzes the Listy group of reform communists who found themselves in the West. Chapter 4 deals with perhaps the most influential periodical over the four decades of communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia, the Paris-based *Svědectví* [Testimony], published by Pavel Tigrid. Chapter 5 looks at the activities of Radio Free Europe, Chapter 6 at the Charta 77 Foundation that was founded to provide material assistance to Czechoslovak dissidents who stayed in their country (especially support payments to those who had lost their jobs for political reasons). Chapter 7, perhaps the most valuable and revealing part of the book, looks at the Palach Press Agency in Britain and its precarious relationship with the European Nuclear Disarmament campaign (END) as well as the shady person of Jan Kavan, who was to become the Czech Foreign Minister in 1998 [sic]. Chapter 8 focuses on the Documentation Center for the Promotion of Independent Czechoslovak Literature (since its relocation from Scheinfeld, Germany, to Prague, known as the Czechoslovak Documentation Center, ČSDS), and the concluding Chapter 9 gives a survey of exile publishing houses like Sixty-Eight Publishers in Toronto (run by Zdena Salivarová and Josef Škvorecký), Index in Cologne, and Rozmluvy in London (by Alexander Tomský).

The author was able to interview no fewer than ten persons who were among the important players in exile or their close relatives. It goes without saying that they are likely to have colored their responses in their favor. Still, interviews are one of the strengths of the book under review.

Apart from the index of persons, the book provides two lists: a list of organizations and a list of individuals. The List of Organizations contains some errors and imprecisions: for instance, the original communist-dominated Soviet-style ČSM (Czechoslovak Union of Youth) broke up in 1968; its successor, the normalization-era SSM (Socialist Youth Union), a re-incarnation of the ČSM in the period between 1970 and 1989, is not included in the list. The Civic Forum was certainly not active in the “Czech part of Slovakia” (182). “Vlajkaři” (the correct name of the organization was Vlajka – “Banner” or “Flag”) (187) did exist prior to World War II; this fiercely nationalist group was active throughout the 1930s, and during the German occupation it embraced racist Nazi ideology. Some items on the list are out of place, like the “Trotskyists” (187). There are a number of easily accessible sources to give information on this variety of communists. To a certain extent the List of Individuals seems to lack direction and focus. There are persons who have little or nothing in common with the subject of the book and are barely mentioned in the body of the book, like Václav Beneš-Třebízský, Karel Čapek, Fidel Castro, Karel Jaromír Erben, Franz Kafka, Karl Marx, Joseph Stalin, Josip Broz Tito. Jan Lopatka was not a Czech journalist but a Czech literary critic, together with Bohumil Doležal one of the key contributors to the 1960s intellectual and literary monthly *Tvář*. Perhaps the most important omission is that the index and the list of persons should have included the name of Professor Otto Pick, from 1983 the director of the Czechoslovak section of Radio Free Europe. Pick returned to Czechoslovakia in 1991 and played an important role in the revival of Czech foreign policy and education of students as well as diplomats.

It should also be mentioned here that two of the individuals on these lists, Vlastislav Chalupa and Vladimír Škutina, were communist secret police agents, the former a very prominent one.

The author claims that the “critical step in the 1989 changes in Eastern Europe took place in Prague when East German and Czechoslovak officials decided to permit East German refugees [...] to leave for West Germany.” (45) In fact, the unraveling of the block started several months earlier, with the forming of the non-communist government in Poland (August 1989) led by Tadeusz Mazowiecki.

For the sake of disambiguation and to prevent unfair identification with the German Nazis, the Národní socialisté (members and supporters of Česká strana národně sociální) should not be called National Socialists in English but “members of the Czech National Social Party.” It needs to be emphasized that the party had a liberal democratic, center-left ideology.

A final correction is that the top-ranking Czechoslovak communists did not use the Orlický castle as their weekend retreat (80); their retreat was a secret luxurious facility built for the Party at Vystrkov, about 3 miles north of the historical castle.

In conclusion: Francis D. Raška’s new book is based on very meticulous research, numerous interviews and extensive literature. The generally descriptive character of the book may be attributed to the fact that it represents, thankfully, the first attempt to map the subject area in a broader context. Raška should be credited for interviewing many of the surviving exiles who were trying to keep the vision of free Czechoslovakia alive in the difficult conditions of the period.

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Sally N. Cummings, **Understanding Central Asia: Politics and Contested Transformations**. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012, 240 pages. ISBN 978-0-415-29703-5

Central Asia is a region that has gained in importance rapidly since the demise of the Soviet Union due to the complex political, economic and security challenges. Despite its importance, it is quite difficult to portray this rather remote region in academia, partly due to the fact that not many high-quality introductory publications exist. Sally N. Cummings with her latest work, *Understanding Central Asia: Politics and Contested Transformations*, is striving to reverse this trend and open the academic treatment of Central Asia to a broader public. This is why it is worth to pay this textbook close attention.

Sally N. Cummings is a professor in the School of International Relations at the University of St Andrews where she also serves as the Founding Director of the Institute of Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Caucasus Studies. Her principal research fields are security, politics of identity, nation- and state-building, and international politics with geographic