

Abstract

The proposed dissertation analyzes and interprets media images of American and Soviet society in the press of interwar political parties that identified themselves as representatives of the working class. The research is based on a qualitative discursive analysis of the daily newspapers of the three major left-wing political parties active in the period under study, i.e., an analysis of the *České slovo* published by the National Socialists, *Práva lidu*, the organ of the Social Democratic Party, and the communist *Rudé právo*. However, other party periodicals and materials addressed to the public involved in the creation of the politically structured discourse of individual party subjects were not omitted. The basic hypothesis that the project tests is: The binary discourse evaluating American society as structurally unjust, cruel and ruthless and the Soviet Union as a place of equality, openness, progress and justice, which was established in the early Cold War period after the rise of Stalinist media hegemony, had taken shape in the environment of the Czechoslovak left over the previous thirty years. Sources in the form of individual texts relating to American or Soviet politics, everyday life, or culture were interpreted on the basis of analytical categories of justice, prosperity, or friendship and alliance, which amounted to individual components of a basic contemporary shared notion of the ideal society. The interwar media content was confronted with the post-war and early Stalinist media adoration of the USSR and the growing criticism of the USA in order to expose the roots of such a polarised symbolic system. Nor could the developments during the Second World War be left completely aside. Through an examination of the official and illegal Protectorate press, linked to the pre-war leftist media, it was possible to identify the mechanism of the inflation of public criticism of Soviet Stalinism, as well as the actualization of symbols of Slavic mutuality that complemented the images of decadence of American capitalism and the promising, good core of Soviet socialism long produced by the left. The work thus defends the thesis that the emergence and further deepening of the Cold War binary discourse built on the unilateral adoration of the USSR and the outright rejection of the US was directly related to shared leftist ideas about these modern civilizational circuits taking shape since the end of the First World War.

key words

Interwar Czechoslovakia – political left – media analysis – USA – USSR – Cold War