

Abstract

This thesis examines the portrayal of the 1953 Berlin protest events in contemporary Czechoslovakian press. Utilizing readily available primary sources, the research analyzes the following newspapers: Rudé právo (the central press organ of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia), the Slovak daily Pravda, the magazine Svět práce (published by the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement), and the regional newspapers Pravda (Plzeň) and Průboj (Ústí nad Labem). The thesis compares how these printed media depicted the anti-regime protests in Berlin, and more broadly in the entire German Democratic Republic (GDR), in June 1953. For the print media, with the exception of the regional press, these events were not merely a marginal topic. A key aspect of the research is how these media portrayed East Germans. The contemporary press published articles that depicted the anti-regime protests in the GDR in a manner similar to hostile fascist provocations. The threat of "Western" fascism appeared in various forms in virtually every article. This work analyzes the ideological interpretation of the protest events from a Czechoslovak perspective. When analyzing the portrayal of the Berlin protests through the lens of the Slovak daily Pravda, a similar interpretation of events is evident in both Bratislava and Prague. A significant difference in the presentation of the Berlin revolt was apparent in the analysis of the mentioned regional newspapers, which provided virtually no information about the events. This contrasted with the considerable publicity given to the anti-regime protests in the GDR not only by Western media but also by domestic "national" press. The uprising in East Germany in June 1953 was a significant event during the Cold War. Triggered by increased work quotas, it quickly escalated into widespread protests against the East German government and the Soviet occupation. While brutally suppressed by Soviet tanks and the East German police, the uprising became a symbol of resistance against communist rule. It highlighted the economic hardships and lack of freedoms in the GDR, contrasting sharply with the relative prosperity and liberties of West Germany. The event also exposed the limitations of Soviet control and foreshadowed later uprisings in the Eastern Bloc.