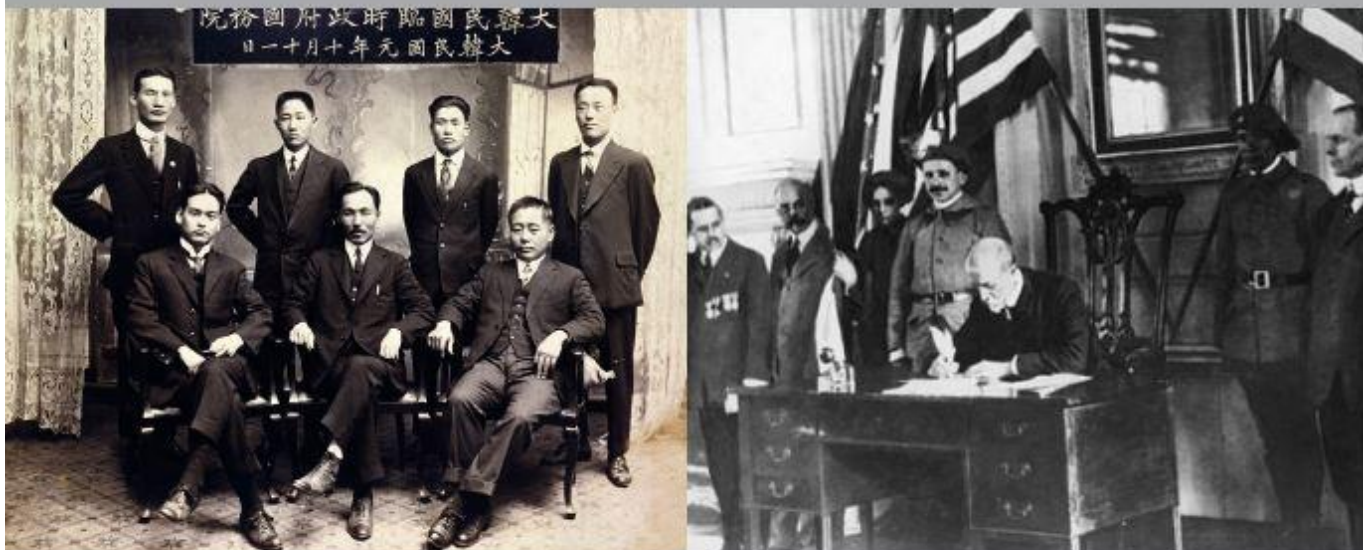


Korea and the Czech Republic:

Retracing the Path to Independence



1990–2020
Czechia–Korea

By George Hays II.
and Milada Poliřenská (Eds.)

Korea and the Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence

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Proceedings

George Hays II. and Milada Poliřenská (Eds.)

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Pictures on the front cover

Members of the Korean Provisional Government (1919).

Picture provided by the Independence Hall of Korea.

T. G. Masaryk signing the Declaration of Common Aims of the Mid-European Nations in Philadelphia on 26 October, 1918.

Pictures on the back cover

Members of the Korean Provisional Government in Chongqing, China right before their return to Korea (1945).

Picture provided by the Independence Hall of Korea.

T. G. Masaryk escorted by the Czechoslovak Legions on Wenceslas Square after his arrival in Prague, 21 December, 1918.

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Foreword from the Editors

The symposium *Korea and the Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence* was organized to mark the centennial of the 1918/1919 period, which was such an important time for both countries. Although the Korean Peninsula and Central Europe seem distant, distinct, and isolated from each other (especially a hundred years ago), this work aims to highlight the unexpected similarities shared between these two peoples struggling for independence from foreign imperial domination.

A central theme running throughout this work is why and how the Czechoslovaks managed to gain independence and international recognition a hundred years ago, while the Korean people have had to struggle much longer through many more conflicts. Both had active governments in exile. Both had proud expatriates spread throughout the world supporting the return of sovereignty to their respective homelands. Both shared in the revolutionary spirit of the times, seeking to put an end to imperialism and war through the very declaration of their independence. Though far from providing a complete account, the following papers try to shed light on both the uncommonly similar origins as well as the tragically diverging paths of the Koreans and the Czechs.

It is a great honor to present the proceedings from the symposium *Korea and the Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence*, which took place in April 2019, at Anglo-American University. We would like to express our deep gratitude to the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Prague, especially H. E. Ambassador Seoung-Hyun Moon for initiating this event. We would also like to thank the Embassy Consul, Mr. Dong Gyu Lee and the Embassy Researcher, Ms. Jieun Park. Without their efforts, as well as the financial support of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, neither the symposium nor this publication would have been possible.

George Hays II and Milada Polišenská
December 2019

Welcome Speech of H. E. Ambassador of Republic of Korea Mr. Seoung-Hyun Moon



Good morning, Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you very much for coming to symposium “Korea and the Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence.”

As the year of 2018, the 100th anniversary of Czechoslovakia, was very memorable to Czech people, so is this year to Koreans in another sense. March 1st, 1919, 100 years ago, Korean people expressed their strong desire for independence in a peaceful manner, which ultimately led to the establishment of the Korean Provisional Government in China in the same year. Though we did not gain independence at that time, we have set the path for the independent Republic since then, through various means including diplomacy as well as military struggle.

Before preparing for this symposium, I wondered why Czech succeeded in gaining independence while Korea failed to do so in around 1918. We, of course, were under a different situation, but I do believe that there are some lessons for Korea to learn from Czech in that regard. This is one of the reasons for this symposium to be organized.

Interestingly, there were some interactions between Korea and Czech sides around 1920 when Czechoslovakia army in Vladivostok sold their advanced weapons to the Korean independence army. With that help, Korea could beat the Japanese imperial army in the Battle of Cheongsanri. Today, in this conference, I hope that I can hear more of such stories, which indicated how Korea and Czech interacted each other, directly or indirectly, in their journey to independence.

Since I came to Prague as Ambassador in November 2016, I have tried to find out similarities between our two countries. Both countries are strategically located, suffered from neighboring powers, sometimes invaded and occupied, but proudly maintained its own identity and industrial strength. On top of that, they also shared values. I believe that the bond based on universal values is the strongest indicator of our long-lasting friendship.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Velvet Revolution for Czechs and the 100th year of the establishment of the Korean Provisional Government for Koreans. Independence, democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights, these are the values we have struggled and fought for in our modern history. I think these are also the values to bind us together.

Before I conclude, I would like to offer my special thanks to the distinguished speakers from the Czech and Korea sides, and highly appreciate all the help from the Anglo-American University. Without your dedicated support, this symposium would not be possible.

If you allow me, I would like to finish my welcoming remark with a quote from the March 1st Declaration of Independence of Korea in 1919.

The independence of Korea will make it possible for its people to flourish as they should and allow Japan to renounce its wrongheaded path and take responsibility for its role in the East. [The independence of Korea] will (...) secure a footing for peace in the region, which plays an essential role in world peace and the happiness of all humankind.

Thank you.

Welcome Speech of the President of Anglo-American University doc. Lubomír Lízal, PhD



Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Guests,

It is a great honor and pleasure to welcome you to Anglo-American University at the symposium entitled “Korea and the Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence.” This is actually already the second event on Korean history hosted recently at AAU.

I am an economist and not a historian, and thus it is not surprising that I have very limited knowledge of the topics that are going to be covered during this symposium. I expect I will learn many new facts myself. Yet I am persuaded that we both – the Czechs and the Koreans – share a common theme, a common historical experience of fighting for freedom, self-governance, and independence that occurred at a similar time, but on almost opposite sides of the globe.

This history is one hundred years old, and I am too young to have any personal connection with these events. Yet I would like to share a personal recollection that is related to the symposium with you.

About 12 years ago, I took part in a visit to South Korea organized by the Korean Foundation for young European leaders. During that visit, we also took a trip to Panmunjom. I do remember how moved I was at that moment – since it reminded me of a more distant past when I was still a small child. I remembered how my parents and I had visited the natural preserve of moorland lakes in south-west Bohemia, which was close to the Iron Curtain at the time. There were the moorlands and there were also armed soldiers several kilometers before the Iron Curtain, making sure citizens of Czechoslovakia would not go further to the border. Then, in South Korea, on the other side of yet another Iron Curtain, I remembered this almost forgotten experience from my early age. I had remembered the times when I was a child and lived behind the Iron Curtain.

As a person that has personal experience with our past regime, I believe it really is important to learn from our historical experiences and to remember that the democracy and freedom we enjoy today is not something that has always been granted.

Thank you for attending this event, and I wish you a fruitful academic exchange of ideas stimulating both new findings and further intellectual curiosity.

Charles Pergler – Spurned Patriot

Ivan Dubovický

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

“The successful revolutionary is a statesman, the unsuccessful one a criminal.”
Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*, 1941.

Introduction

The study deals with the first, but most stormy part of the life of an extraordinary man – Charles Pergler; the part inseparably linked to Czechoslovak and Czech-American history. Pergler, a socialist by conviction, great patriot, journalist, diplomat, politician and university teacher, contributed immensely during the Great War to the fight for independent Czechoslovakia. He was one of the most eloquent speakers and writers on behalf of the Czech and Slovak independence movement in the United States. He was one of the few Czech-Americans who managed to unite diversified groups of Czech immigrants – socialists, freethinkers, Protestants, and Catholics. He made tens of public speeches, wrote several booklets, pamphlets, memoranda, and articles to explain to the American public what was really going on in Europe. He also made a great effort to form a unified front between the Czechs and Slovaks under the leadership of Thomas G. Masaryk, all this with just one purpose: to create an independent democratic Czechoslovakia. Pergler was a man who – as one of the very first in the United States (!) – fervently disseminated Masaryk's program among American political leaders, among American Czechs and Slovaks, all at a time when most political leaders at home were still hesitating to do so. It is also not to be forgotten that he sacrificed part of his professional career for this. Pergler served as a personal secretary to Masaryk during his last stay in the United States, from May to November 1918. After Masaryk's departure to Europe, he appointed Pergler his official representative on U.S. soil. Since September 1918, Pergler served in the “Czechoslovak” foreign service, first as the so-called Commissioner of the Czechoslovak National Council and later as “Commissioner of the Czechoslovak Republic in the United States.” In 1920, he became the first Czechoslovak Minister to Japan.

Beginning with his diplomatic career in 1918, his life started turning to personal tragedy. This was a result of his controversy with the two most influential figures of interwar Czechoslovakia, President Thomas G. Masaryk, and Foreign Minister Edvard Beneš. After the “Tokyo affair” of 1922, in which Pergler, the first Czechoslovak minister to Tokyo, was made responsible for the fraud of one of his employees, Foreign Minister Beneš completely dismissed him from the diplomatic service. Pergler felt this as a lack of gratefulness for his previous merits and became a sharp critic of the political maneuvers of these two political figures and their followers. Convinced that the only safeguards against the dangers inherent in democracy were in opposition, and unable to find any other opposition platform, Pergler, former ardent socialist with even Marxist inclinations, made the crucial mistake of his life joining the coalition of the most extreme-right parties, the Czech fascists. A prefabricated trial, carefully supervised by his former boss, Foreign Minister Beneš, finally led to Pergler's loss of his parliamentary mandate. Then he was deprived of his Czechoslovak citizenship rights and literally expelled from Czechoslovakia, the thing he viewed as Beneš's act of personal revenge. Pergler returned to the United States and dedicated the rest of his life to legal practice and teaching, being occasionally involved in the political affairs of his old homeland or his new American home. But one of the topics he still frequently addressed in his public writings and speeches was explaining the “true forces” that had led to Czechoslovak independence, thus suppressing the importance of Masaryk's and Beneš's diplomacy during WWI.¹ Last but not least, he also became a critic of Beneš's foreign policy. These activities culminated in 1932 in

¹One of the first public speeches in which Pergler somewhat discredited the role of Masaryk and Beneš in the fight for Czechoslovak independence (although not mentioning their names), and vice versa strongly emphasized the role of the Czechoslovak Legions in Russia was his public speech at the “Conference on Public Opinion and World Peace” in Washington, D.C., on December 7 to 9, 1922. Pergler's address can be found in the Archives of the T.G. Masaryk Institute in Prague (AÚTGM), Edvard Beneš Papers – folder Karel Pergler R 176, 1919–1933.

Chicago when he organized one of the largest anti-Masaryk and anti-Beneš protests ever. How can it be explained that Masaryk and Beneš expelled from the diplomatic service and ousted from his old homeland such a man, a man who rendered excellent service to both of them and to his old homeland?

Many times, people have posed the question about what were the most important factors that enabled some nations to form their independent states while others were not allowed to do it. Was it simply a decision of the world powers and their leaders, such as the Big Four, at the Paris Peace Conference (in accordance with their national interests)? Was it the pressure of masses of people on the streets calling for the right of self-determination, democracy, and freedom of the oppressed or the pressure resulting from their horrible social and economic conditions? Did hundreds of petitions, memoranda, and claims play any substantial role? Was it the diplomatic ability of only some national leaders (while others failed) that contributed to the success? Or has the decisive factor always been the heroic casualties on battlefields? Surely, all these factors were taken into account during the postwar settlement at the peace conferences, and the position of individual states at such conferences, too, did matter. As Margaret Macmillan noted – the petitioners came from countries that existed and ones that were just dreams. *“A few arrived too late; the Koreans from Siberia set out on foot in February 1919 and by the time the main part of the Peace Conference ended in June had only reached the Arctic port of Archangelsk.”*² All politicians rushed to Paris and everyone put a lot of trust in Wilson and his decisive word. But Wilson's decision was not based on the mere moods of this respected political thinker. As he was known, it was based on the careful evaluation of all the previous war events, on long-thought-out alternatives to ensure future peace and stability in the world. The case of Czechoslovakia could serve as a perfect example. When Charles Pergler thanked Wilson for his support in the fight for Czechoslovak independence and his recent recognition of the Czechoslovak National Council as a de facto government during their meeting on September 9, 1918, Wilson remarked: *“We have merely recognized an accomplished fact.”*³

The truth is that the case of Czechoslovakia was rather atypical: its independence, or at least its independent army and belligerent government, had been recognized by the Allied Powers long before the armistice and the Peace Conference in Paris. The Conference, it is true, did play an important role in approving the territory of a new state, but it was the previous recognition of the world powers that gave the newly created states or territories their legitimacy. Who or what is to be credited for this “accomplished fact?” An army of Legionnaires? Masaryk? The movement abroad or at home? After WWI, the returning Czechoslovak Legionnaires were cordially greeted at home, but soon their merits were forgotten and everything was supposed to look like there would be no independence without the three leaders abroad: Milan R. Štefánik, Edvard Beneš and especially Masaryk (and of course Woodrow Wilson). Therefore, we may agree that there has always been a combination of a variety of factors and sometimes even lucky coincidence. In this study, I want to use the case of Charles Pergler to illustrate which of these factors were in play in the successful Czechoslovak path to independence in 1918.

It is odd, to say the least, that until now Pergler has been left forgotten in the Czech Republic. During the communist period of Czechoslovakia, this was quite understandable – an American, anti-communist and promotor of Thomas G. Masaryk's ideals could hardly be a hero for a totalitarian regime and its official historians. During the short period of socialist liberalization in 1968, Karel Pichlík published the first critical evaluation of the creation of independent Czechoslovakia, and – contrary to the official Marxist line – positively praised the resistance movement abroad, including the role of Charles Pergler.⁴ Besides him, it was just a few exiled historians who correctly pointed to Pergler's role. Among them, the work

²Macmillan, Margaret. *Peacemakers. The Paris conference of 1919 and Its Attempt to End War*. London: John Murray 2001, p. 4

³Pergler, Charles. *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*. Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company Publishers, 1926, p. 56.

⁴Pichlík, Karel. *Zahraniční odboj 1914–1918. Bez legend. Zápas o československý program /The foreign resistance of 1914–1918. Without legends. The fight for Czechoslovak program/*. Prague: Panorama 1991 (originally published in 1968).

of Czech-American historian George J. Kovtun deserves special attention. He was probably the first who rated Pergler as “*apparently the strongest political talent among American Czechs, excellent lawyer, and journalist.*”⁵ But even after the political changes of 1989 in Czechoslovakia, the situation did not change much. In a few studies and books published in this period, he was usually mentioned in connection with those who opposed Masaryk and his protégé, Foreign Minister Beneš, later Masaryk’s successor in the presidency. Strangely enough, Masaryk himself in his work dedicated to the Great War⁶ only occasionally mentioned Pergler’s name. It is true that Masaryk acknowledged his contribution to the “Czech cause,” as the fight of the Czechs and the Slovaks for independence during WWI had been coined, but it seems as if he was not fully aware of all of Pergler’s activities in this respect, though the two knew each other very well (Pergler served twice as his personal secretary – during Masaryk’s sojourns to the United States in 1907 and in 1918). In spite of Pergler’s intense lobbying efforts, especially through Senator Medill McCormick of Illinois and Senator William S. Kenyon of Iowa and others, in spite of the fact that he was one of the handfuls of Czechs who came in direct contact with the highest U.S. political circles, and in spite of Pergler’s extraordinary role in spreading propaganda for the sake of Czechoslovak independence, namely in the Slav (later Czechoslovak) Press Bureau,⁷ a very important instrument in promoting Masaryk’s program, Masaryk never mentioned Pergler when speaking on who was helping him to get acquainted with the U.S. congressmen and ministers or who promoted his ideals, although it was Pergler who served as a chairman of the Bureau, and although other members of its board were praised by Masaryk.

Today, besides those few works mentioned before, there are only a handful of recent studies that have tried to critically evaluate Pergler’s immense activity. The first one, by Světlana Rysková, is focused on the so-called Pergler’s case, his conflict with Edvard Beneš and Thomas G. Masaryk.⁸ The study of Ladislav Vojáček is a legal analysis of Charles Pergler’s case of 1929 – 1932 when he lost his parliamentary mandate.⁹ In a highly appreciative manner, Pergler was described in a chapter of the book by Miroslav M. Hlaváč in which he deals with outstanding personalities involved in the independence movement of 1914 through 1918.¹⁰ Unfortunately, this brief, informative and purely fractographic article is without references. Finally, the most recent book, the survey of Czechoslovak – American diplomatic relations by historian Milada Polišenská, based on the study of vast archival sources both in the Czech Republic and in the United States, is another attempt to highlight Pergler’s contribution to Czechoslovak independence. Logically, in a work covering five decades of mutual relations between the two states, she has only been able to dedicate a short chapter to Pergler.¹¹

⁵Kovtun, George J. *Masarykův triumf /The Masaryk’s Triumph/*. Prague: Odeon 1991 (originally published in Toronto: 68 Publishers, 1987), p. 88.

⁶Masaryk, Thomas G. *Světová revoluce. Za války a ve válce, 1914–1918 /World revolution. During the War and in the War, 1914–1918/*. Prague: Čin, 1925, p. 266. One of the reasons for the rather substantial omission of Pergler might consist in that Masaryk’s work was published after the so-called Pergler affair in Tokyo that brought him into direct opposition to Edvard Beneš, Masaryk’s protégé; and after Pergler had started questioning why Masaryk and Beneš never presented any account on how they handled thousands of dollars received from American Czechs and Slovaks during WWI. The same suspicion of fraud Pergler raised publicly against them later in the 1930 s, both in Czechoslovakia and in Chicago.

⁷Slav Press Bureau was a press agency promoting propaganda on behalf of all Slavic nations and defending their demands for self-determination before the American public as well as to counteract the strong German propaganda. It was organized in May 1917, with the seat in New York. Charles Pergler was appointed its chairman on behalf of the Bohemian National Alliance. The Slovak League was represented by Géza Mika. In connection with Masaryk’s arrival to the United States in May 1918, the Bureau was reorganized to become the official centre for Czechoslovak propaganda; and in April 1918, the seat was moved from New York to Washington. Pergler remained its chairman.

⁸Rysková, Světlana. „K případu Karla Perglera“ /The case of Charles Pergler/. *Český časopis historický*, 1992, no. 4, pp. 571–587.

⁹Vojáček, Ladislav. „Některé aspekty kauzy Karel Pergler“ /Some Aspects of the Case of Karel Pergler/. In *Polemiky a spory v právní vědě*. 1st ed., Olomouc: Faculty of Law in Olomouc, 2010. p. 7–14.

¹⁰Hlaváč, Miroslav M., *Čeští mafianti /Czech Maffians/*, Karviná: Antonín Pavera – PARIS 2008, pp. 182–197.

¹¹Polišenská, Milada. *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA 1918–1968, Part I, Vol. I, Ministerstva, legace a diplomaté /Diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and the United States 1918–1968/*, Part I, Vol. I, *Ministries, legations and diplomats/*. Prague: Libri 2012, esp. pp. 48–52.

The First American Experience¹²

Charles Pergler was born on March 6, 1882, to Frank (František in Czech) Pergler and Josefa, née Zpěváček, in the small village of Liblín near Pilsen, in what would become the Czech Republic, though at that time was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His father and mother met in Liblín. They were quite young when married, the father only twenty-one. For two or three years, his father operated a rather prosperous inn near Pilsen, but later on, venturing upon a larger enterprise in Rokycany, lost everything. The parents, impoverished and almost in want, decided to search for a better life in Prague, but here again, they suffered a miserable living. The impoverishment of the family forced his mother to seek employment, and as a result the family practically broke up: Charles was sent to live with his aunt, whose husband owned a mill near Liblín, while his brother Oldřich was sent to live with their maternal grandfather. The family stayed near Liblín until Charles was eight years old. Here he also attended a Czech school for two years, which was basically the only Czech schooling he ever had.

As hundreds or even thousands of Czechs at that time, in the later 1880 s, some of his mother’s siblings emigrated to America. Emigration to America was the only way to escape poverty in Bohemia. After the Revolution of 1848 that had broken the last bonds of the feudal system and enabled the relatively free movement of people, Czech peasants and farmers, searching for cheap land, originally preferred to settle in the American Midwest. Soon the poorer classes started emigrating, and these concentrated mainly in large cities, such as New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Omaha, Cleveland, and Baltimore. Here, they established rather strong Czech communities with their own schools, theatres, cultural and social clubs and, since 1860, their own press. According to some estimates, approximately five hundred thousand individuals of Czech heritage lived in the United States before World War I. While the core of Czech emigration was caused by poor social and economic conditions in Bohemia, later, especially since the 1870 s, a small but rather influential group of Czech political activists, namely “socialists,” also emigrated to avoid political persecution, thus transplanting their socialist ideology to the U.S.

Evidently, there was also no hope for a better future in Europe for Charles Pergler’s parents, and so it was decided to leave Europe. His father left for the United States in November 1889. He found employment in Chicago with a West Side sausage manufacturing firm. His mother with eight-year-old Charles and his younger brother Oldřich soon followed. From Hamburg, Germany, they sailed on the ship Dania and immigrated via Baltimore to Chicago on May 1, 1890. They lived in the Czech settlement on Chicago’s West Side. Here the Pergler’s American experience began. Charles made rapid progress through his new schools, graduating from the Throop School in 1895, having completed all courses in only five years.

Pergler’s ideological growing-up

Pergler’s inclination to socialist ideology was rooted in his family background and environment as well as his father’s affiliation with the organized labor movement in Bohemia and later in Chicago. His father was keenly interested in politics and public questions generally. One of Pergler’s uncles, who lived in California and who was his father’s close friend, was also active in the labor movement in the 1880 s.¹³ At the time of Pergler’s immigration to America, the people were still under the influence of the Haymarket executions. The Czech socialists looked upon the executed anarchists as martyrs, and every year, on November 11th, they made annual pilgrimages to their resting place in the Waldheim cemetery. As a young boy Pergler, too, participated in one such pilgrimage. As many workmen both in Europe and in America, Pergler’s father shared socialist ideas and believed that justice should be done for workmen, that they deserve real equality, humane working and living conditions, etc.

¹²The data about the family of Charles Pergler, his early childhood and youth were excerpted from his own unpublished memoirs deposited in the Georgetown University Library, Washington, D.C. See Georgetown University Manuscripts, Charles Pergler Papers, box 1, folder 33. If not quoted otherwise the quotations refer to these memoirs. The author would like to express his thanks to the Georgetown University Archives authorities for kindly providing copies of these materials, and to my colleagues at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, D.C. for helping to obtain them.

¹³Georgetown University Manuscripts, Charles Pergler Papers, box 1, folder 33. p. 7.

Among Pergler's father's closest friends in Chicago was Gustav Haberman, an outstanding Czech socialist leader, efficient agitator, and, at that time, a labor journalist. After 1918 he became Minister of Education in the Czechoslovak cabinet. Pergler had warm memories of him: "He used to hold me on his knees. Little did he dream, and little I dream, that years later we would meet in Prague, he as a member of the cabinet, I as a minister of the Czechoslovak Republic." Pergler's father also aided in establishing *Právo lidu* (*The People's Rights*) in 1893, a Czech socialist radical daily, of which Haberman was one of the editors. As a boy, Pergler helped to circulate the very first issue, "thus becoming a propagandist very early in life."

The second important root of Pergler's political inclination was his deep love of reading. Both of his parents were keen readers, and there were all sorts of literature in their house, particularly of a non-religious and frequently of an anti-Catholic type and, of course, patriotic Czech fiction. Pergler recalled that while living with his uncle near Liblín, "there were always books and papers; indeed, there was quite a substantial library of patriotic Czech authors. Thus, fortunately, books and literature came into my life early. Everybody around me read, and that could not fail to be an influence, at least so I imagine."

Pergler's love for reading continued after the family moved to America. Here he enriched his knowledge of American history.¹⁴ Undoubtedly, this period deeply shaped Pergler's worldview, although he was still a young boy in his teens. "I read everything I could lay my hands on, even such things as popularized accounts of Darwin, Ingersoll's lectures, Thomas Paine, etc. I could not have been much more than twelve years old when one day I informed my mother that I had ceased to believe in the Deity. Though quite indifferent herself in a religious way, she was shocked." Pergler read many French authors (P. Bourget, works of the Goncourt brothers, É. Zola, G. de Maupassant), the Scandinavians (A. Strindberg and A. Garborg), Russians and Italians. He loved patriotic Czech fiction, as well as everything about the French Revolution and Napoleonic literature that led him to a rather strong fascination with Napoleon. However, his chief hero in those days was the great Hussite warrior Jan Žižka, a military hero of the Czech Protestant revolution of the 1420s – 1430s. All this was rather strange literature for a young boy, and Pergler admitted that he was "somewhat more mature than my age and appeared older than I was." In this respect, he also later noted that had never had any boyhood, a fact he considered to be one of the tragedies of his life.

As can be seen, his reading at that time was very miscellaneous and lacked any system, but it did leave permanent benefits and substantial knowledge and had a profound influence upon Pergler. Strangely enough, he emerged from his American schooling and other surroundings as an ardent Czech nationalist. The reasons were the influence of Czech literature, the home environment, and the "immigrant factor." As with other immigrant boys, he was also considered a "greenhorn" and was the subject of ridicule, especially before he obtained his perfect command of English. Sometimes, immigrant children were even physically abused and taken advantage of only because of their foreign birth. It is understandable that under such conditions his process of americanization went slowly, and only later would he become a "thoroughgoing American," in a spiritual and mental sense, as a practicing lawyer in Cresco, Iowa.

Another source that enriched Pergler's world-view after the family moved back to Bohemia was theatre. In May 1896, Pergler's father died of a complication of diseases, not quite 37 years old. Before his death, Charles had graduated from the Chicago public schools. When his father died, Charles had to go to work and found employment in a drug store. Then, suddenly, the family decided to go back to Bohemia, having in its possession one thousand dollars from the dead father's fraternal insurance. They returned to Bohemia in the fall of 1896, first to Pilsen and then to Prague. This sojourn gave Charles broad knowledge of Bohemia and Czech public life and deepened his nationalist convictions that he later, during the Great

¹⁴Pergler, in his memoirs recalled: "American history was intensely fascinating to me. Lincoln was one of my heroes from the very first, as I suppose he is to most youngsters. Undoubtedly it is his humble beginnings that so impressed young people. I read a good deal of Jefferson too, and remember looking upon him as the great exponent of democracy. Washington, I admired, of course, but I suppose the austerity the books surround him with did not make him as dear to me as some other figures of American history." Georgetown University Manuscripts, Charles Pergler Papers, box 1, folder 33, p. 7.

War, applied in political practice in the struggle for Czechoslovak independence. For many Czechs of the time, the theatre was not merely a place of amusement, it was a national and educational institution inseparably bound up with the national renaissance. Czech theatre and opera enabled the Czech language to be heard publicly after centuries of cultural oppression. "So, usually on Sundays, both afternoons and evenings, I listened to Czech drama and Czech opera, my nationalist convictions becoming firmer than ever."

In Pilsen, in Winter of 1896–1897 Pergler was apprenticed to a large clothing firm. He was to learn how to judge men's furnishings and how to sell them, but without any financial compensation. He very quickly found out that in those days an apprentice was little more than a slave. Moreover, "the long term without pay did not appeal very much to my American spirit. The rebellion came without much delay. At the ripe age of fifteen I threw up the job, my act horrifying all my relatives and friends, and without consulting anybody set out for Prague..." where he found employment as a "practitioner" for a period of three years. His main work was to collect installments.

Here, Pergler for the first time experienced direct contact with Czech political movements. Originally, his sympathies went towards Czech national socialists who challenged the internationalism of social democracy. But after about one year, in 1898, he cut loose from them because he "felt instinctively they were not quite clear as to the methods and program." Finally, about a year later, he joined a union of social democratic business employees (clerks) and ultimately became a member of the Social Democratic Party.

Very early on, Pergler came into conflict with the Austrian authorities. As a true Czech patriot, he took part in the struggle for equal rights for the Czechs. In 1896, Austrian Prime-Minister Count Badeni's cabinet issued the so-called language ordinances, which granted certain rights to Czechs in courts and public offices. Austrian Germans protested, organizing huge demonstrations in opposition, and, as a result, Badeni fell. The Czechs felt that his measure would fall with him, as it ultimately did. During the famous "December 1897 demonstrations," thousands of people gathered in the streets of Prague, expressing their anti-Austrian sentiments, and they were attacked by the police. On November 30th, the first day of these events, Pergler was struck by a policeman's sabre in his right elbow. He was rather seriously wounded and in danger of losing the arm. The surgeons saved the arm, but it was never straight again.

Other than personal experience and political activism, the crucial role in Pergler's ideological growth was played by several outstanding individuals. As he recalled, "I was always unusually fortunate in the men I met and under whose spell I came." The most prominent among them was prof. Thomas G. Masaryk, later the first president of the Czechoslovak Republic. Especially important was his work *The Social Question*, which made its appearance in 1898. The work was a profound criticism of the sociological and philosophical foundations of Marxism, an attack on economic determinism and historical materialism. Pergler admitted that it was the study of Masaryk that made it impossible for him ever to accept the mechanistic philosophy of Marx. Pergler, too, never agreed with Marx's idea that some social, political or economic order – in Marx's opinion, communism – is to be the last stage of evolution. Also, for Pergler there was no antithesis between nationalism and internationalism.

In 1898, just as he was drifting from the national socialists, he met Antonín Pravoslav Veselý, "to whose example and inspiration I owe very, very much." Veselý accumulated a large fund of knowledge very early and developed a clear and forceful style, for which he became famous. He was one of the founders of the so-called "progressive socialist movement,"¹⁵ more

¹⁵The so-called "progressive socialist movement" of the 1890s in Bohemia had a deeply anti-Habsburg, national and liberal-democratic character. Among its best-known proponents there was, besides Antonín Pravoslav Veselý, the future Czechoslovak Minister of Finance, Dr. Alois Rašín. It aimed at the rapprochement of the Czech intelligentsia, urban and farming classes with workers. It did not form any political party, but its followers joined the newly created National Radical Party, which soon broke-up. Its legacy continued with the National Progressive Party around the paper *Samostatnost* (*Independence*). Another large proportion, namely workers, entered the Social Democratic Party, while a minor portion joined the National Social Party.

nationalist than the social democracy and never really Marxist. Veselý belonged to the famous movement of the Czech youth, both intellectuals, and workers, called "Omladina" (Youth). In 1893, the Austrian government persecuted its followers, and many were sentenced for treason. Pravoslav Veselý received eighteen months in the penitentiary near Pilsen where he contracted tuberculosis, of which he died in 1904. Shortly after leaving prison, Veselý, only about 24 years old, and his fellows became affiliated with the Social Democratic Party. Veselý became editor of the popular workers' weekly *Zář (Flare)*, which during his editorship enjoyed tremendous circulation. It was in this period Pergler met him. Veselý recommended books and started directing young Pergler's reading. "If I have done anything worth while, and still hope to accomplish anything, it may be entirely due to the start he gave me." At about the same time, Pergler met another leading socialist figure, František Modráček. After he returned from Paris in 1898, Modráček had developed into a theoretician of socialism, and Pergler was among his most ardent students. All this period was later described by Pergler as the time of his "real intellectual ferment."

Now he was ready to start his own political activism. His apprenticeship had come to an end. In 1900, because of his knowledge of English, Pergler managed to find new employment with a firm importing and dealing in agricultural implements, mainly harvesting machines from Canada. During this time his real public activity began. Pergler and his fellow business employees sought shorter hours of labor and a Sunday free from work. Frequent meetings were held, various resolutions passed, and sometimes this agitation really did bear fruit. At these meetings, Pergler soon developed into a keynote speaker together with Vlastimil Tusar, the president of the trade union, who later became the prime minister of Czechoslovakia. Pergler served as the secretary of the organization. Pergler and Tusar went to Brno to assume editorship of the social democratic organ *Rovnost (Equality)*. The union also published its own paper, and here began Pergler's first real ventures in journalism. He soon was made one of its editors, later having the paper almost entirely in his hands. He obtained valuable experience.

Through the trade union organization, consisting wholly of Social Democrats, Pergler came into close contact with the affairs of the party; and after he had been made representative to the trade union council, he started directly participating in political affairs. The party soon began tapping him to address political meetings, so he spent literally all Saturdays and Sundays somewhere at meetings outside of Prague. He spoke on the necessity of organizing workingmen, on increasing taxes, on the general political situation, militarism, etc. "In short we sought to rouse the Czech workingmen by pointing out all the abuses of the Austrian regime and all the injustices he was subjected to under the prevailing system. Particularly important were mass meetings demanding universal suffrage and insurance against accident, sickness, old age, and unemployment." This was a time of real intellectual ferment; these were influences that gave definite aim to the lives of a number of men who would go on to become factors in the life of their nation.

For Pergler, socialism was not only a program, a pure instrument of political and social reconstruction; for him, it was a complete philosophy, a new view of life and the world. He refused doctrines, including the socialist one, and admitted the weaknesses of methods, measures, and tactics, admitted criticism, but only with other philosophy, one that would stand the test of time: "Thought must meet thought." In brief, the late 19th century socialism was a logical result of his early-life experience and was best qualified for his sense of morality, justice, equality, and democracy.¹⁶ "My socialism always was very sincere. The background of my life was such as almost inevitably to lead me into the socialist movement. One could almost say

¹⁶Social democracy in the multi-national Austria-Hungary underwent a process of radical differentiation. Its original orientation towards the proletarian internationalism of Karl Marx soon conflicted with the emancipation demands of the Czechs. Here, an important role was played by prof. Thomas G. Masaryk. His democratic project attracted a portion of the Czech workers movements. After the formation of the Third International (Comintern) in 1919, Masaryk's philosophy rather successfully paralyzed its impact, and led social democracy to deepen liberal democracy from the left, thus eliminating the radical attempts of the Communists.

that I became a socialist by heritage and environment. That, of course, would be an incomplete explanation. I was one by conviction, too."

Journalist of Socialism – Back in America

During all this time, Pergler had never given up the idea of returning to America to study law. It developed that the Czech socialist weekly in Chicago, *Spravedlnost (Justice)* might need another editor. Also, Pravoslav Veselý urged him to return to America for the sake of the experience. Pergler did not need more convincing and was immediately determined to go. In August 1903, he informed his manager that he was resigning, and shortly thereafter sailed for Baltimore on the German steamer *Rhein*. After arriving in Chicago on September 18th, 1903, he set out to the office of *Spravedlnost*. The letters of recommendation from Veselý and other prominent Czech socialists helped. He was immediately engaged as an associate editor and became a full-fledged journalist.

He commenced writing articles for the Prague paper *Právo Lidu (People's Rights)*, and his prime interest was in the life of the Czech community in Chicago. At the same time, with all his "ardor and fire of the reformer and crusader," he decided to improve what troubled his conscience – a poor standard of Czech journalism in America. However, he did not realize that the Czech press in America was published under different conditions than in Bohemia. The settlements consisted mostly of working men, and their wives demanded not only current news but wanted their paper also to amuse them. As a result, many papers published a disproportionate amount of fiction, sometimes of very poor quality, and Pergler immediately attacked this as demoralizing. It was no surprise that he ended up "thoroughly disliked by the newspaperdom of Czech Chicago."

In 1904 he decided to retire from journalism and political activities in order to dedicate himself to the study of law and his family. However, the situation did not permit the "undisturbed private life" he had dreamt of. The Czech socialists in America aiming to transform their newspaper *Spravedlnost (Justice)* from a weekly into a daily, offered him the position of editor-in-chief. Pergler, initially hesitating, finally accepted. Thus, at the age of 23, he became the editor of the first Czech socialist daily in the United States.¹⁷ At the same time, 1904 was a presidential election year; and Pergler, already well known inside the American Socialist Party, was asked to lead the campaign among the Czech-Americans on behalf of the socialist candidate Eugene V. Debs. He made exhaustive tours of the Eastern and Mid-Western states, which also caused a postponement of his legal studies. Soon, however, overburdened by editorial and political activities and by simultaneous evening courses at Kent College of Law that he had enrolled in the fall of 1905, he broke down physically and nervously and had to quit the position of editor-in-chief. He did, however, continue working on the editorial board until his admittance to the bar in 1908.

This "journalist period" of his life undoubtedly contributed much to his ideological and political maturity, and also to a better knowledge of the situation inside the Czech-American community. This was made possible through everyday contact with American and Czech-American socialists, as well as through frequent polemics on a variety of social and political issues with his opponents, be they Czech freethinkers or Catholics. Also, this made him better known and respectable among many Czech-Americans, a fact that later, during his Great War activities, proved to be immensely fruitful. This, however, does not mean that this "Demosthenes of the Czech socialists in America," as he labeled himself, had no critics or opponents. But even they admitted the strength of his arguments, his rhetoric, and the logic of his speeches. But his sound "socialist" or even "Marxist" eloquently proved later, during WWI, a weakness, because his opponents did not trust in the sincerity of his nationalistic feelings.¹⁸

¹⁷Pergler recalls in his memoirs that he always preserved the very first copy of this daily, issued on July 4, 1905.

¹⁸See, for example, Alois Richard Nykl, *Padesát let cest jazykozpytce a filosofa. /Fifty years of travels of linguist and philosopher/*. Ed. by Josef Ženka. Praha: Karolinum, Národní muzeum 2016, p. 48.

In 1907, Pergler had a unique opportunity to meet prof. Thomas G. Masaryk, his source of political inspiration and ideological formation. Masaryk was invited by the University of Chicago to deliver a series of lectures, namely on social issues. During this stay, Masaryk lectured also at Princeton University (where he also got acquainted with prof. Woodrow Wilson). As was mentioned before, Masaryk's works were not unknown to Pergler: he heard his lectures in Prague, and he studied most of his works. But this was his first occasion to meet him in person. "I was the first journalist he came in contact with upon his arrival. It was a great privilege that I was able to accompany him almost every day of his Chicago sojourn," Pergler later recalled. He also decided to report about every one of Masaryk's speeches in *Spravedlnost*, a fact that gave him a truly in depth knowledge of Masaryk's philosophy and political ideas. Masaryk always supported the right to self-determination of the peoples oppressed by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. "Masaryk's lectures have strengthened my general attitude as far as purely Czech questions went." Also, it was during this stay in America when Masaryk realized that, in spite of his young age, in Pergler he could have an intelligent and already well-respected follower among the Czech-Americans. As we will see later, it was no surprise that when Masaryk came to the United States in 1918 in order to convince President Woodrow Wilson of the cause of Czechoslovak independence, he had chosen Charles Pergler as his personal secretary and later, after Masaryk left the United States, as his officially appointed representative.

On March 25, 1905, Charles Pergler married a Czech-Croatian girl named Ella Maria Strunc in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, with whom he had three children. On January 1, 1906, he was naturalized as a U.S. citizen. After receiving his LL.B. from Kent in 1908, Pergler moved to Howard County, Iowa. As a result of his editorship, studies of law and making speeches, he finally broke down. Physicians diagnosed him with total exhaustion and with organic heart disease. He had to cease working, but still was determined not to abandon the study of law, and went to the University of Wisconsin in Madison to prepare himself for admission to the bar. One can ask why he decided to end up as a lawyer in the relatively small, to him absolutely unknown city of Cresco in Iowa. Pergler explained that this was due to practical reasons: he knew that the State of Iowa had some law positions open. Therefore, in June 1908, he took the Iowa bar examination and started an entirely new chapter of his life in Cresco, where he practiced law until 1917.

Pergler and the Fight for Czechoslovak Independence during WWI

Charles Pergler's wartime activities were described by himself in several books and articles that, together with archival materials, serve as an excellent source of information, especially about his propaganda and lobbying efforts on U.S. soil.¹⁹

The outbreak of WWI found Czech political leaders unprepared, but soon some of them started developing an idea that the War could effectively serve to change the position of the Czech nation at home.

The so-called Czechoslovak Legions existed since 1914 in France, Russia, Serbia and later in Italy. Many Czech and Slovak volunteers joined them from other countries as well (e.g. cca 2700 from the United States). Those in Russia, whose numbers varied from at least 50,000 to 90,000, started playing an important role in the Allied strategy after the outbreak of the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. The core of these Legions was formed by Czechs and Slovaks who lived in tsarist Russia before the War, and later by soldiers of the Austrian army who deserted and voluntarily preferred Russian captivity. Throughout WWI, they hoped to be

¹⁹For the best survey of Pergler's wartime activities see esp. his works *Za národní stát. Výběr projevů K. Perglera v boji za samostatnost národa* /Building the National State. Selected speeches and articles by K. Pergler in his fight for independence of his nation/. Prague: Památník Odboje, 1923; *Amerika a československá nezávislost* /America and Czechoslovak independence/, Vol. 1, 2. Prague: Český čtenář, 1926; and its abbreviated English version under the title: *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*. Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company Publishers, 1926. On the importance and "techniques" of propaganda on U.S. soil, he presented a rather extensive presentation during the 2nd conference of the Bohemian National Alliance in Cleveland, February 17–18, 1917, later published under the title „Propaganda české věci ve Spojených státech“ /Propaganda of the Czech cause in the United States/, *V Boji*, Vol. I, No. 19-20, Chicago, March 2, 1917, pp. 290 – 294.

transported to the Western Front in France in order to be able to help the Allies in the fight against Germany and Austria-Hungary, thus gaining ground in the eyes of the big powers for the fulfillment of their right for self-determination. With the formation of an independent Czechoslovakia, their main task was accomplished, and they eagerly expected evacuation back home. But even later the Allied intervention strategy seriously counted on them as the most disciplined and effective force on the side of the anti-Bolshevik front of Admiral Kolchak. This involvement in Russian affairs, opposed by Masaryk²⁰ and suspiciously monitored by the Japanese government,²¹ had also become less and less popular among the legionnaires. At least in 1918 and early 1919 they understood and accepted the possibility of their engagement because it could serve as a powerful argument to recognize Czechoslovakia as an independent state at the future peace conference. The fall of the Kolchak regime under the Red Army offensive by the end of 1919 ended the Allied intervention. Evacuating these Czechoslovak legionnaires from Siberia later became the main task for the Czechoslovak representatives in Vladivostok and in Tokyo. When Charles Pergler was appointed the first Czechoslovak minister to Japan, one of his primary tasks was to supervise and assist the evacuation of the legionnaires.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Pergler originally did not consider the creation of an independent "Czech Crown Lands" state. He even ridiculed the reconstruction of as nonsense. Soon, however, he became the most eloquent speaker of the Czech-American community on behalf of independence. There were other outstanding individuals, such as the world renowned anthropologist Aleš Hrdlička, the president of the Smithsonian Institute, then Thomas Čapek, recognized banker and historian of Czechs in America, Czech-Jewish Congressman Adolph J. Sabath, Emanuel V. Voska or Vojta Beneš, the brother of the future Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia, Edvard Beneš. Yet, among all the Czech-Americans, it was Pergler who served as the most important mediator in the political lobbying between the Czechs and Slovaks on one side and the American policymakers, including President Woodrow Wilson, Congressmen, and politicians on the other side; until the arrival of prof. Thomas G. Masaryk on May 5, 1918.

Thanks to his excellent knowledge of English, American history and law, he held numerous speeches in support of Czechoslovak independence not only for the American public but also in front of the U.S. Congress. He belonged among the few Czechs who had realized it absolutely necessary to change primarily American public opinion and attitudes towards the fight of the oppressed European nations against their official governments. Therefore, he frequently published both in the English and the Czech language presses. At the same time, he was one of the few Czechs who managed to gain the sympathies of the high-rank U.S. politicians, Congressmen, and Senators, including the closest collaborators of the White House. Thus, Pergler became the key person in the lobbying efforts to plead the "Bohemian cause."

He helped to organize the first anti-Austrian meeting in New York on July 25, 1914. He was engaged in forming the Czech American Committee for Independence and Aid for the Czech Nation (Českoamerický výbor pro osamostatnění a podporu českého národa). He was active in the establishment of the Czech National Association in Cleveland on 14 March 1915 and was involved in writing most of its fundamental documents.

Pergler collaborated on the Manifest of the Bohemian National Alliance addressed to the American public in which Czechs and Slovaks aimed to repudiate the suspicion that

²⁰Of the three personal meetings of Masaryk and Wilson, the two most important, that of June 19, 1918 and of September 11, 1918, were dominated by the issue of possible Allied intervention in Russia. For details see Kovtun, George J. *Masaryk & America. Testimony of a Relationship*. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress 1988, pp. 56 – 70.

²¹Alois Richard Nykl, one of the few Czechs who spent two war years in Japan, noted that the Japanese government did not much respect the Czech and Slovak legionnaires, and viewed them as traitors who did not defend their emperor – the same way the Koreans stood up against the Japanese emperor. See Nykl, Alois Richard, *Poznámky k revoluční akci v Chicagu (1914–1918)* /Notes on the Revolutionary Action in Chicago (1914–1918)/. Ed. by Josef Ženka. Praha: Karolinum, Národní muzeum 2017, p. 24.

Czech and Slovak Americans were the so-called “hyphenates;” that, similarly to German-Americans they could also form a “fifth column” to jeopardize American freedom and security. In the Manifest, they declared that they do not owe any dual loyalty and were loyal Americans.²²

He fought against the German and Austrian propaganda and opposed the advocates of U.S. neutrality. After the entry of the United States into the War on 6 April 1917, he became Director of the Slav Press Bureau which weekly distributed about 500 printed materials on the fight of the Slavic nations for independence in Austria-Hungary.

He very actively assisted Masaryk after he arrived in the United States, held lectures, served as a consultant to the senators Henry Cabot Lodge, John Sloan and Adolph Joachim Sabath who inspired him to write the brochure “Should Austria-Hungary exist?”

Pergler authored Memorandum of the Bohemian National Alliance presented to the Secretary of State Robert Lansing in Summer 1916, on the reconstruction of Central Europe, in which Pergler suggested that Wilson should recognize the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris as the true representative body of the Czecho-Slovak nation. Lansing then presented this document to Wilson.

In May 1917, two members of the Bohemian National Alliance presented to Col. House in his New York apartment a memorandum that was to be addressed to President Wilson. In it, Pergler explained that the federalization of Austria-Hungary was not feasible and that Austria-Hungary would be a constant menace to world peace. Besides, he also mentioned that the Czech State legally never ceased to exist. Wilson undoubtedly read the document, and after the United States entered the War, he used some of these arguments in his Flag Day address of June 14, 1917. Wilson stated that Austria-Hungary could be kept only by force because its peoples, including “the proud states of Bohemia and Hungary” ardently desired to direct their own affairs.²³

On 10 March 1918, Pergler was elected Vice-Chairman of the U.S. Branch of the Czechoslovak National Council. Pergler realized that any attempts to change “the foreign cause” could hardly be successful without involving the U.S. Congress. It was Pergler who presented Czech and Slovak claims for independence for the first time in a public hearing before the U.S. House of Representatives’ Foreign Committee on February 25, 1916. The hearing was initiated by a socialist, Congressman Meyer London, whose intention was to inform Congress on the demands of various nations in case of peace negotiations. The Bohemian National Alliance formed a four-member delegation: President of the Alliance Ludvík Fisher, František Filip on behalf of Czech communities in the West, prof. J.J. Král from Washington and Charles Pergler. He was also asked by the Slovak League of Chicago to represent the position of Slovaks who were not represented in the delegation. Pergler was appointed to be a speaker and “presented excellent and rich speech.”²⁴ In order to gain support for Czech and Slovak independence, he brilliantly used his knowledge of American political history: he referred to the will of the U.S. politicians to recognize Hungarian claims to independence in 1849, he also mentioned that one of the main motives actuating American people in their conduct in the Spanish-American War was the desire to see Cuba free and independent. In support of the Czech and Slovak demands, he used the very words of Woodrow Wilson:

No lapse of time, no defeat of hope seems sufficient to reconcile the Czechs of Bohemia to incorporation with Austria; pride of race and the memories of a notable and distinguished history keep them always at odds with the Germans within their gates and with the

²²The Bohemian National Alliance turned to their members on October 14, 1916, with an appeal “to vote as Americans, not as Bohemians.” See “No Hyphen for Them,” *V Boji*, Vol. 1, No. 11, Chicago, October 13, 1916, p. 174.

²³Charles Pergler, *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*, Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company Publishers, 1926, p. 43.

²⁴„Zástupci českého a slovenského národa před kongresním výborem ve Washingtoně“ (The representants of Czech and Slovak nation before the Congressional Committee in Washington), *V Boji*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Chicago, March 25, 1916, p. 41.

*government set over their heads. They desire at least the same degree of autonomy that has been granted to Hungary.*²⁵

The first part of this slogan was seized upon by Czechs and later used repeatedly, for example on the title page of the *Bohemian Review*, the English-speaking journal published by Czechs in America in support of independence. In the hearing, Pergler also referred to Wilson’s desire to secure permanent peace and reminded:

*It is the devout desire of all rightminded men that the present terrible conflagration be followed by a permanent and durable peace. But the peace following this war cannot be durable and cannot be permanent if ancient injustices are perpetuated... As long as a single nation anywhere remains under the heel of the conqueror, just so long the peace of the world is insecure.*²⁶

He evoked the sense of the “high moral ground of justice and righteousness” of the United States, but at the same time, suggested that recognition of independence is a matter of enlightened American self-interest. He reminded Congress that an independent Czechoslovakia was perfectly consistent with America’s ideals and its democratic tradition.

Through his personal contacts with William Hard, a highly acclaimed American journalist, Pergler attracted former U.S. President Theodor Roosevelt to the idea of the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary. Pergler invited Hard to the Slav Press Bureau in 1917, at that time in New York. This was the beginning of their collaboration. During WWI, Hard collaborated with *New Republic* and especially with the highly influential *Metropolitan Magazine*, which had a circulation of over half a million. One of its contributing editors was also Theodor Roosevelt. After the United States had entered the war against Germany in April 1917, Hard started publishing his analyses on the situation in Europe, the first one in the October 1917 edition under the title “The case of Austria-Hungary.” This caught Roosevelt’s attention. Since that time, Roosevelt became one of the most fervent supporters of the policy that finally led to the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, and, according to Pergler, significantly impacted American public opinion in this direction. Pergler remarked that the very publishing of Hard’s article was one of the tipping points in the Czechoslovak liberation movement (!) since it was the first time that such an influential monthly had radically demanded the break-up of Austria-Hungary and the independence of Czechoslovakia.²⁷ Hard also later played an important role in making Masaryk better known, more and widely popular with the American public. Hard had a deep influence not only on Roosevelt but also on Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis who, aside from Col. House, exerted a tremendous influence upon President Wilson. Pergler met Brandeis for the first time during Christmas 1917. They had a long, three-hour conversation on the position of Czechs in Austria-Hungary, and Pergler presented him a collection of various speeches by Czech deputies, proclamations and documents related to the “Czech cause.” Brandeis knew about Masaryk and expressed his wish to meet him when he came to America.²⁸

Again, it was Hard who presented Pergler to Congressman and later Senator Medill McCormick of Illinois, who was to become Pergler’s main contact in the Senate. Together with American millionaire and philanthropist Charles Crane, he was instrumental in preparing the ground for talks between Wilson and Masaryk, the last of which finally convinced Wilson to accept the right of minorities for independence.

²⁵Woodrow Wilson, *The State*, D.C. Heath & Co. Publishers, 1889, Section 589, p. 338. Quoted in *Bohemia’s claim to independence. An address delivered by Charles Pergler, LL.B., before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the United States, on February 25th, 1916*. Chicago: Bohemian National Alliance of America, 1916, p. 6; also quoted in Charles Pergler, *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*, Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company Publishers, 1926, p. 39.

²⁶Pergler, Charles, *Bohemia’s claim to independence. An address delivered by Charles Pergler, LL.B., before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the United States, on February 25th, 1916*. Chicago: Bohemian National Alliance of America, 1916, p. 6p. 10-11.

²⁷Pergler, Karel. *Amerika a československá nezávislost /America and Czechoslovak independence/*. Vol. 1, Prague: Český čtenář, 1926, p. 142-143.

²⁸Pergler, Karel. *Amerika a československá nezávislost /America and Czechoslovak independence/*. Vol. 1, Prague: Český čtenář, 1926, p. 144-145.

In July 1917, Pergler presented to Secretary of State Lansing a special report of the Bohemian National Alliance intended for President Wilson. The Czechs informed him about the heroic victory of Czech and Slovak soldiers in the famous Battle of Zborov of July 2, 1917. The battle was of great importance since it was the first time after three hundred years (the White Mountain Battle of November 8, 1620) that the Czech and Slovak army units fought as an independent, unified force under their own flags, to free their country from the Austrian-Hungarian yoke.

In January 1918, the president of the Bohemian National Alliance, Ludvík Fisher, asked Pergler to present the White House the so-called "Tříkrálová deklarace" ("The Epiphany Declaration" of January 6th, 1918) in which the Czech deputies took a clear stand in favour of Czechoslovak independence. Pergler immediately grasped the importance of the document: as a lawyer, he knew every nation needed to give evidence that the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary was the desire of at least a majority of Austrian peoples, evidence of their capacity to govern themselves and to safeguard their state territory. From the standpoint of international law, independent statehood requires meeting three elementary conditions: 1) to have an army capable of securing the state's territory; 2) to form a sovereign government; and 3) to have its own legislative body in which the will of the people is expressed through elected deputies. At this time, Czechs and Slovaks already had their organized army, the so-called "Legions" fighting in Russia on the side of the Allies. The Czechoslovak National Council in Paris had already acted effectively and perfectly fit the role of a future government. The only thing that was missing was the unified voice of political representatives at home, members of a legislative body, in favour of independence. And this is exactly what the Epiphany Declaration proclaimed. Therefore, in an accompanying letter, Pergler asked Lansing to emphasize to President Wilson that this action of the Czech deputies was, in fact, "a constitutional assembly of the Czech Crown Lands."

Pergler sought direct contact with President Wilson, but it was difficult since all the Czech spokesmen were American citizens, and as such could hardly be presented to Wilson as true representatives of Czechs and Slovaks in Europe. But he found a way to present his political opinion through some of the most distinguished men who surrounded Wilson. The permanent pressure on Wilson that Pergler (and after June 1918, also Masaryk) developed through his American contacts was of great importance. Wilson, although friendly to the Czechs and the Slovaks, was not willing to commit himself to territorial changes or rearrangements of Austria-Hungary until August 1918, referring always to federalization as a possibility. Among Pergler's important contacts was John Spargo, a renowned American historian and advisor to President Wilson, and especially Col. Edward Mandell House, Wilson's closest collaborator. In mid-April of 1918, Col. House asked Pergler to help him with the preparation of a secret memorandum for the State Department from which it would be clear that recognition of self-determination of Central European nations was in U.S. interest. Pergler started working intensively on the document, but before he ended the job he received a message on the arrival of Masaryk from Vladivostok to the United States. Pergler was appointed by the Bohemian National Alliance to meet him in Vancouver. As a matter of fact, it was not just an appointment by the Alliance since Masaryk himself asked the Alliance to send Pergler as his personal secretary for his U.S. sojourn. "I cabled from Tokyo," recalled Masaryk, "to get him so that we could take advantage of the long way from Vancouver for work. Mr. Pergler accompanied me for the rest of my stay in America and worked with great diligence."²⁹ After Masaryk landed on April 29, 1918, Pergler accompanied him by train to Chicago. During their journey, Masaryk gave the memorandum his finishing touch.

Among Pergler's closest American collaborators with access to President Wilson, there was Dr. Albert H. Putney of the State Department. Because Putney and Pergler belonged to the same law organization, they established friendly contacts, later becoming lifelong friends and university colleagues. At the State Department, Putney was in charge of the Near East Division,

²⁹Masaryk, Tomáš G. *Světová revoluce. Za války a ve válce, 1914–1918 / World Revolution. During the War and In the War, 1914–1918*, Prague: Čin, 1925, p. 259.

which included Central European affairs, i.e. Austro-Hungarian affairs as well. Pergler was introduced to him for the first time in Winter 1917, by his friend, English journalist and writer Gordon Smith, who was in charge of South-Slav propaganda. This was after President Wilson's address to Congress on December 4, 1917, in which he asked to approve the declaration of war with Austria-Hungary, but at the same time emphasized that the United States "does not wish to impair or rearrange the Austro-Hungarian Empire." This was, of course, a rather dangerous statement that wrongly interpreted could harm the claims for independence. Therefore, Pergler immediately decided to send a letter to Putney in which he asserted that "no solution continuing Habsburg sovereignty could be acceptable to the Czechoslovak people," and indicated that the spirit of Czechs and Slovaks for independence would never be weakened by any compromise.³⁰ Pergler presented the same view in an interview with the Washington Post on December 12, 1917. At the same time, Putney started working on a special memorandum on the Austro-Hungarian "problem" for Secretary of State Lansing, i.e. also for Wilson, and asked Pergler to provide as many materials on Czech and Slovak issues as possible. Pergler willingly did so and provided materials, brochures, books, including two by Masaryk and Beneš, and historical and legal arguments he had available at the moment. Unfortunately, Pergler had to leave Washington to meet Masaryk in Vancouver, but the main part of the Memorandum had already been worked out, and Putney did the rest. When Pergler returned to Washington on May 8, 1918, the Memorandum was ready. The next day, it was presented to Lansing. This Putney-Pergler Memorandum smartly emphasized that Austria-Hungary was a safeguard for German domination in Europe, in other words, independence of small states such as Czechoslovakia, Poland, etc. would definitely prevent the existence of a "German Central Europe." In the case of Czechoslovakia, Putney gave excellent evidence that the Czech state, in spite of Austrian domination for three hundred years, legally never ceased to exist. What was even more important was that Putney's wording was used by the State Department, and Pergler had no doubt about it, for its official proclamation of May 29, 1918, in which it stated that "the nationalistic aspirations of Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs for freedom have the warmest sympathies of this Government."³¹

Finally, on two occasions Pergler managed to get in personal contact with President Wilson. The first time was on July 4, 1918, when a pilgrimage to the tomb of George Washington by citizens of foreign descent was organized.³² On the presidential yacht *The Mayflower*, Pergler represented the Czechs and took advantage of the situation to inform Wilson that the Czech deputies in Prague on May 16, 1918, declared their support for the League of Nations, one of the main ideas Wilson advocated. The second time Pergler was received by Wilson, directly at the White House, was on September 9, 1918, after the Czechoslovak National Council had been recognized as a *de facto* government on September 2, 1918. Masaryk immediately appointed Pergler as the Commissioner of the Czechoslovak National Council, i.e. the first diplomatic representative of the new government of Czechs and Slovaks. The invitation of Pergler to the White House clearly indicated the willingness of the United States to establish official diplomatic relations, although, America later refused to recognize Pergler as an official diplomat because of his American citizenship. Yet, at the time the act was of great symbolic and political importance. Pergler recalled President Wilson's words during the meeting. Wilson declared that "By your conduct throughout the war, especially by your armies, you have demonstrated that you insist upon complete independence. We have merely recognized an accomplished act."³³ These words are worth remembering, as in the future Pergler on various occasions recalled them in order to emphasize that it was the army, the Czech and Slovak Legionnaires abroad who played a crucial role in Czechoslovakia's recognition. This emphasis would later serve Pergler's

³⁰Pergler, Charles. *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*. Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company Publishers, 1926, p. 45-47.

³¹Pergler, Karel. *Amerika a československá nezávislost / America and Czechoslovak independence*. Vol. 1, Prague: Český čtenář, 1926, p. 134. translated by author from Czech original.

³²Masaryk, although present in Washington, was not invited since at that time the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris, the leading body of the independence movement, had not yet been recognized by the United States.

³³Pergler, Charles. *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*. Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company Publishers, 1926, p. 56.

opponents in Czechoslovakia in accusing him of diminishing the role of the political foreign resistance movement, i.e. namely that of Masaryk and Beneš. Wilson's wording is quoted in most of Pergler's work dedicated to WWI. In his *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*, he even added a further interpretation when he wrote that "without the army Czechoslovak independence would have remained but a dream."³⁴

In all his activities he closely collaborated with Czech and Slovak organizations in the United States – as a vice-president of the Bohemian National Alliance, as president of the Czechoslovak National Council in the United States of America, and one of the secretaries of the Bohemian Chapter of the Socialist Party of America. His war activity, namely his propaganda endeavor, was perfectly summarized by Thomas Čapek, the first historian of Czech and Slovak America, when he wrote that "the lectures and talks he [Pergler] delivered before chambers of commerce, economic leagues, bar associations, college clubs, legislative bodies, and before men of affairs generally, contributed in no small degree to a clear understanding by the thinking American people of the past history and future aspirations of the reborn Czechoslovak State."³⁵ As director of Czech and Slovak propaganda in the United States, he soon commanded high respect among prominent Americans and institutions, such as Yale University, the New York Academy of Political Science or the American Academy of Political Sciences. As his colleague of the National University, Dr. Bernard Mayo wrote that Pergler's wartime campaign, "was a foundation upon which has been erected the superstructure of cordial and well-informed relations which today exist between the New World democracy and the progressive democracy which has been carved out of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, in the heart of the Old World."³⁶

Pergler as a Diplomat

Interestingly enough, Charles Pergler had been appointed by Masaryk as the first official representative of the newly-created state to the United States as early as September 2, 1918, i.e. nearly two months before the Czechoslovak Republic officially proclaimed its independence!³⁷ Thus, Pergler became one of the very first diplomatic representatives of the then still Provisional Government of Czechoslovakia.

After independent Czechoslovakia was officially proclaimed on October 28, 1918, President Masaryk and his government started building a new network of diplomatic representation. Pergler was automatically supposed to become the first Czechoslovak minister (ambassador) to the United States. Thanks to his close contacts with the U. S. Senate and several American politicians, he managed to secure loans for Czechoslovakia from the United States that helped immensely in the initial period of Czechoslovak independence. However, due to his U.S. citizenship, in the Fall of 1919, America refused to recognize him as an official.

As a widely recognized man in American political and university circles, and receiving frequent invitations by various corporations, clubs and universities, even during his diplomatic period, Pergler found time to deliver addresses and to continue in his literary activities on behalf of Czechoslovakia.³⁸

In 1920, Pergler became the first Minister of Czechoslovakia to Japan. Among other projects, Pergler was to work with the Soviet and Japanese governments on the release of Czechoslovak prisoners of war still being held in Chita and Vladivostok in Siberia.³⁹ Aside from

³⁴Pergler, Charles. *America in the Struggle for Czechoslovak Independence*. Philadelphia: Dorrance and Company Publishers, 1926, p. 57.

³⁵Čapek, Thomas. *The Čechs (Bohemians) in America*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920.

³⁶Mayo, Bernard. *Dr. Charles Pergler – As Seen Through American Eyes*. Written manuscript, p. 4. Georgetown University Manuscripts, Charles Pergler Papers, box 1, folder 33.

³⁷Archive of the Office of the President of the Czech Republic, Dr. Karel Pergler, former ambassador of Czechoslovakia in Tokyo, inventory # D 1588/39.

³⁸The first post-WWI study Pergler published on Czechoslovakia was his article "The Czechoslovak State," in the monthly *Asia*, November 1918. During the first five months of 1919, he published another three extensive studies: "The Birth of Czechoslovak Republic," *The Independent*, March 29, 1919; "The Czechoslovaks," *The Christian Herald Literary Digest*, April 12, 1919; and "The Importance of the Czechoslovak State to Europe," *Current Opinion*, May 1919.

³⁹AMFA, Tokyo, Political Reports 1920, Telegram of Minister E. Beneš to Charles Pergler, 8 July 1920.

his main tasks, Pergler, as it was typical for him and his deep interest in positive promotion of a newly-created Czechoslovakia, published during his stay several articles or studies on Czechoslovakia in a local Japanese newspaper. Also, he supplied data to some local authors who wrote articles on his country. He started this task as early as May 1920, with a nearly twenty page-long study in a special war publication of the daily *Hiroko Shimposha* under the title "The Czechoslovak State."⁴⁰ Czechoslovakia was presented here as an economically developed country with rich cultural history and democratic traditions, and whose government is a safeguard of security in Europe. A similar tone resonated in the article "Liberated Bohemia" of May 6, 1920, reprinted in the American daily *The Japan Advertiser* published in Tokyo.⁴¹ His job was not easy at all due to a lack of communication with headquarters in Prague. It seemed that sometimes the Ministry in Prague even intentionally, and in contradiction to standard protocol, avoided his office.⁴²

Pergler's stay in Tokyo was, in my opinion, significant in order to understand why he later became an advisor to the U.S. military government in Korea. It is true that during his tenure he paid more attention to Japan since it was the Japanese government that played an important role in the evacuation of the Siberian Czech and Slovak Legionnaires; Pergler's main task at the initial period of his functioning. However, among the reports sent from Tokyo during Pergler's stay, we could find at least two relatively long reports dedicated to Japan's occupation of Korea and the general situation in this country.⁴³ The author was not Pergler himself, but his secretary Dr. Reichmann. However, Pergler approved them and, knowing how much attention he has always given to any materials he or his office produced, it is clear that he absorbed a good amount of information about Korea in spite of his relatively short stay in Tokyo. Besides this, he himself put some brief notes on Korea in other reports, such as the one on the assimilation of Koreans by Japan.⁴⁴

During Pergler's year in Tokyo, however, a scandal emerged which would trouble Pergler for the rest of his career in the Czechoslovak government. Antonin Novak, an assistant to the delegation to Japan, began embezzling large sums of money from the Legation budget. In March 1921, Novak left Tokyo for the United States with a large sum of money from the Czechoslovak Legation. Although Pergler did not know about the fraud until after Novak had departed, Pergler was made personally responsible for his employee and was immediately relieved of his position and fired from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result of the conflict between him and his boss, Foreign Minister Edvard Beneš, his pension as a retired member of the Foreign Service was also taken away. Their mutual tension worsened even more in 1923 when Pergler questioned: "the sudden enrichment" of Masaryk who refused to give any explanation on how he had used the cca 6 million dollars he had received during WWI from US Czechs and Slovaks.⁴⁵

Back in the United States of America

Having these two most influential Czechoslovak politicians as his personal enemies, Pergler decided to return to Washington, D. C., where he studied law at American University. He obtained his LL.M. in 1924. He then became the Washington Representative for the Czech-American umbrella organization, the Czechoslovak National Council of America, until 1927. After further work at the National University College of Law in Washington, Pergler received an honorary LL.D. from the University in 1928.

⁴⁰A copy of this study was sent to the Ministry in Prague and is available in AMFA, Tokyo, Political reports 1920.

⁴¹AMFA, Tokyo, Political Reports 1920, Pergler's report for Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, 23 March 1920.

⁴²For example, when in the summer of 1920 a Czechoslovak military representative in Siberia was captured and imprisoned by the Japanese, the Prague Ministry did not ask Pergler to intervene with the Japanese Government in the matter; rather appealing to English, American, French and Italian diplomats in Prague. See AMFA, Tokyo, Political reports 1920, Pergler's report for Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 10, 1920.

⁴³AMFA, Tokyo, Political reports 1920.

⁴⁴AMFA, Tokyo, Political reports 1920.

⁴⁵AMFA, Charles Pergler Personal file 1918–1945. Beneš, Edvard, *The Statement of March 8, 1923 related to the affair of the former minister Ch. Pergler*, as a reaction on interpellation of deputies J. Slaviček, I. Hrušovský and others.

Pergler's Political Involvement in Czechoslovakia

In 1929, Pergler returned to Prague and was elected to Czechoslovakia's parliament, in which he served from 1929 to 1931. Again, Pergler soon ran into a disagreement with President Masaryk and Foreign Affairs Minister Beneš. Pergler began to lead an inquiry into the source of the sudden wealth of Masaryk and Beneš after WWI. He was also shocked by the censorship imposed by Masaryk and Beneš in Prague. Pergler was removed from Parliament in 1931 but was immediately elected to the Prague City Council. At this point Masaryk and Beneš had Pergler expelled from Czechoslovakia, claiming that he was not rightfully a citizen of the country because of his time spent in the United States. Pergler attempted unsuccessfully to reclaim his rights. This experience brought him to the camp of strong anti-Masaryk and anti-Beneš political opponents, which included, among others, the famous General Radola Gajda and his "fascist" party; a fact that positioned Pergler among the extreme-right politicians.

Pergler's criticism of Masaryk, Beneš and their followers, and his endeavour to create effective political opposition against them resulted from his deep conviction in the necessity of the freedom of speech and of the opposition party as safeguards against dangers inherent in a democracy. It was his conviction to prevent the inclination of partisan leaders to auto-intoxication by power, to unmask the never-ending audacity of elected persons to cover their partisan acts with the sanctity of sovereignty, but although they are servants of the sovereign people.

Disillusionment with Inter-war Czechoslovakia and a New Exile in America

In 1917, Masaryk received rather substantial financial support from Czech and Slovak emigrants in the United States for his "liberation activities." Masaryk never presented any budget on how this money was used during and after the war. In 1923 and later, Masaryk presented to his family, to Beneš, to his wife, and to his foundation more than 200,000 Czechoslovak Crowns Pergler, at that time a deputy, expressed his surprise by the sudden wealth of both Masaryk and Beneš, and in 1932, he publicly asked for an explanation as to what had happened with the six million dollars that had been donated by Czech and Slovak Americans to the new republic. The reaction of the official Masaryk-Beneš circles was very impulsive: Pergler was accused of not being a patriot due to his living in the United States until 1918, and after a wild exchange of mutual accusations in press, Pergler was expelled from Czechoslovakia to the United States.

Pergler's friend, a well-known historian John Spargo, reacted to the decision of the Czechoslovak Electoral Court with the words:

*Your treatment marks the height of stupidity and ingratitude. You know well and I likewise know that there would have been no Czechoslovakia, in all human probability, but for Charles Pergler... I know that but for your work, the outcome at Pittsburg would have been very different, and likewise the outcome at the Peace Conference in June 1919. There would have been no championship of Czechoslovakia by Wilson but for you, and without that championship, there would have been a different result at the Peace Conference.*⁴⁶

Pergler's colleague at the National University, Dr. Mayo, mentioned in his lecture that Pergler's case reached even the Senate of the United States. The Senate unanimously voted to have Pergler's lecture printed in the Congressional Record for the information of American people. The title was "The Constitutionality of Legislation Here and Elsewhere." He delivered the lecture before lawyers in Baltimore, and it was signed by Pergler as a "Man Without a Country."⁴⁷

From 1933 to 1936, Pergler served as the Dean of the National University School of Economics and Government, and later the Dean of the National University College of Law (now the National Law Center at George Washington University), from 1936 to 1946. During

⁴⁶Quoted from: Mayo, Bernard, *Dr. Charles Pergler – As Seen Through American Eyes*. Written manuscript, p. 7. Georgetown University Manuscripts, Charles Pergler Papers, box 1, folder 33.

⁴⁷Mayo, Bernard, *Dr. Charles Pergler – As Seen Through American Eyes*. Written manuscript, p. 9. Georgetown University Manuscripts, Charles Pergler Papers, box 1, folder 33. The author of this study has not been able to locate this text so far.

this time he delivered frequent lectures on international law, foreign relations, and political science before educational societies. Such was, for example, his lecture before the American Bar Association in Boston in August 1936, on "The Recognition of Foreign States." He was also a lecturer in constitutional law at the Catholic University of America and American University. From 1946 to 1948 Pergler worked as Special Advisor to the US Military Government of Korea. Charles Pergler died in Washington, D. C. on August 14, 1954.

Conclusions

With his quest for social justice, equality of individuals and peoples, Pergler became a personification of the most influential forces of the developments in his old home country. As an indisputable political leader among the American Czechs, he helped substantially in the "negotiated revolution" of Czechs and Slovaks in 1918. He always preferred to negotiate, he always refused violence, and if we look at the Czechoslovak "revolution" of 1918, it was non-violent. The leaders in Prague simply announced to the Austrian governor that the National Committee is taking power. The leaders themselves called the crowds on the streets to avoid any violent actions and invited people to sing and play music, to celebrate. Even the German consuls in Prague and Brno were so impressed with the developments that they sent messages to Berlin, reporting on the peaceful change.⁴⁸ Josef Korbel remarked that this could have happened nowhere else in Eastern Europe, that the two peoples reemerged as one nation "without firing of a shot, a revolution sui generis."⁴⁹ And Pergler, no doubt, played a very significant role in this.

He could never fully grasp the real reasons for his release from diplomatic service, as he could not absolutely grasp his "loss" of Czechoslovak citizenship after active years in diplomacy, and after being elected a member of the Czechoslovak Parliament. He ultimately took a desperate step and decided to join extreme-right political forces. But did it mean that he had totally changed his philosophy of life, his political ideals to which he was loyal throughout his life? I do not think so. Even his strong opposition and criticism of the glorified heroes, such as Foreign Minister Beneš and especially President Masaryk, was not dictated by any substantial change of his political morals. It was, let us admit, a rather opportune step that had resulted from Pergler's conviction on the necessity of freedom of speech and of an opposition party as safeguards against the dangers inherent in democracy. Otherwise, under the pretext of democracy, the system could evolve into autocracy or, in his opinion, into dictatorship.

He felt offended. He felt like a target of Masaryk's and Beneš's incomprehensible wrongdoing. His last political involvement in Czechoslovak matters both in Czechoslovakia and in the United States was the result of his personal tragedy, of the hatred against these two men, so venerated in the old homeland.

How can one explain that Masaryk and Beneš expelled from diplomatic service and ousted from his old homeland a man who rendered such an excellent service to both of them, to his country, who arduously and fervently promoted Masaryk's program among American political leaders, among American Czechs and Slovaks at a time when political leaders at home were still hesitating, who played so significant role in opening the doors for Masaryk to American politicians, who defended Beneš's foreign policy, and who even nearly completely sacrificed his own professional career for the sake of their collective ideals?

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⁴⁸Kořalka, Jiří. Cesta k 28. říjnu /The road to October 28/. *Reportér*, Vol. 3, No. 41 (1968), pp. 8-9.

⁴⁹Korbel, Josef. *Twentieth – Century Czechoslovakia. The Meaning of Its History.* New York: Columbia University Press 1977, p. 3.

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The Legitimacy of Regimes in Exile

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Introduction

Today's world is virtually all divided into small or large segments. These segments are ruled by various governments ranging from the democratic spectrum to totalitarian regimes. These states are the basic building blocks of the international system. Some of these states or sovereign territories are recognized by the international community, but some formations lack this recognition. Krasner states that there can be two types of sovereignty. Firstly, the “Domestic sovereignty refers both to the structure of authority within a state and to the state's effectiveness or control.”⁵⁰ Secondly, “the International legal sovereignty refers to whether a state is recognized by other states, the basic rule being that only juridically independent territorial entities are accorded recognition.”⁵¹ Sovereignty is a fundamental component of a state to function in the international arena.

In order for a state to function in the international sphere, it is essential that the state would have territorial recognition as well as diplomatic recognition. Thus, the governing body of a state will have direct control over its own territory. Diplomatic recognition is important so that states can interact together, however, diplomatic recognition is not a requirement for a sovereign country.

A state exists at the moment when the conditions of statehood are fulfilled, regardless of whether the state is recognized or not. The conditions are stated, for example, in the Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States signed at Montevideo, December 26, 1933. It codifies the declarative theory of statehood as accepted as part of customary international law, where Article 1 states that:

The state as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications:

- (a) a permanent population;
- (b) a defined territory;
- (c) government; and
- (d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states.⁵²

These are the basic criteria for statehood. If we look closer, then the permanent population is considered as “permanent” meaning without a nomadic behavior. “Territory” is without a question a place where the population is located and which the neighboring countries do not claim. “Government” in this case is considered as a government with effective control. The tendency is to define government not in terms of a centralized public authority, but rather to focus on effective control.

Lourie and Meyer differentiate two kinds of recognition. Firstly, it is the continuation of recognition of the government existing prior to the occupation. The second is the recognition aborigine of a newly created governmental authority on Allied soil.⁵³ Which authority, then, and under what rationale, is to be regarded as legitimate to represent a state? Traditionally, the predominant criterion applied through these avenues has been the effective control of the state.⁵⁴ Recognition or non-recognition of territorial changes depends on the behavior of the state community, it is usually considered to be a matter of politics.⁵⁵

⁵⁰Stephen D. Krasner, “Problematic Sovereignty,” in *Problematic Sovereignty: Contested Rules and Political Possibilities*, ed. Stephen D. Krasner (New York, USA: Columbia University Press, 2001), 2.

⁵¹Krasner, 2.

⁵²Organization of American States, “The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States” (Organization of American States, December 26, 1934).

⁵³Samuel Anatole Lourie and Max Meyer, “Governments-in-Exile and the Effect of Their Expropriatory Decrees,” *The University of Chicago Law Review* 11, no. 1 (1943): 26–48, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1597652>.

⁵⁴Yejoon Rim, “Two Governments and One Legitimacy: International Responses to the Post-Election Crisis in Cote d'Ivoire,” *Leiden Journal of International Law; Cambridge* 25, no. 3 (September 2012): 693.

⁵⁵James Wilford Garner, “Non-Recognition of Illegal Territorial Annexations and Claims to Sovereignty,” *The American Journal of International Law* 30, no. 4 (October 1936): 679, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2191130>.

Government in Exile

Sovereignty, recognition and diplomatic relations all are linked to the country itself and not just to the ruling political elites. If this were the case, then virtually after each election diplomatic recognition would have to be revoked and the process restarted. Thus, diplomatic recognition is not linked to the political elites but to the official government itself. Therefore, the recognition of a government in exile is complicated due to the fact that the government in exile is without a territory or a society to govern.

A government in exile is a political group that claims to be a country's or semi-sovereign state's legitimate government. However, this government is unable to exercise legal power and must reside in another country. Governments in exile usually plan to return to their country of origin and retake control of the country. Governments that choose to take refuge in another country are usually forced to take this step by a wartime occupation, or, in its aftermath, by civil war, revolution, or a military coup. From the legal point of view, it is questionable to recognize a government in exile, if the country of origin has a new government.

For example, in the Encyclopedia of Disputes Installment 10, Manfred Rotter defines the government-in-exile as an individual or a group of individuals residing in a foreign State who:

- (1) claims supreme authority over either a State in the sense of international law which is still under the control of another national or foreign authority or a State to be created on the territory of another State in anticipation of coming political events;
- (2) is recognized as such at least by the State in which it resides, notwithstanding its lack of effective control over its home State and
- (3) is organized to perform and actually performs some acts of the State on behalf of the home State or the State to be created.⁵⁶

The government in exile, if it is recognized, may perform many duties as a normal functioning government, even with some limitations. International law recognizes that governments in exile may undertake many types of actions in the conduct of their daily affairs. These actions include:⁵⁷

- (1) becoming a party to a bilateral or international treaty;
- (2) amending or revising its own constitution;
- (3) maintaining military forces;
- (4) retaining, or newly obtaining, diplomatic recognition from other states;
- (5) issuing identity cards;
- (6) allowing the formation of new political parties;
- (7) holding elections.

The recognition of governments in exile is a very complicated procedure and must be studied case by case. Therefore, there is no checklist for potential exile governments to take as an example in order to receive diplomatic recognition. It is important to consider the reasons why the legitimate government chose to escape the country and seek refuge abroad.

Firstly, an important criterion is the situation of the state before the government in exile takes form. Therefore, whether the state is sovereign and has an internationally recognized government, and whether it is a member of the United Nations and has diplomatic recognition is of major relevance. Secondly, if the government in exile is established, it must be clear that it is a continuation of the government that developed from the original country, or whether the government in exile does not have the linkage to the legal authority of the original state. Thirdly, it depends whether the regime in exile is supported by the population from the country of origin. Additionally, it is important to study the situation in the state, therefore, to analyze why the government escaped and what were the reasons for it. Lastly, it is also important to consider the country where the government in exile is formed.

The effectiveness of a government in exile depends firstly from the support from the foreign governments and secondly from the population of its own country. Some exiled

⁵⁶Bryan A. Garner, ed., *Black's Law Dictionary*, 9th ed. (St. Paul, USA: West A Thomson Reuters business, 2009), 765–66.

⁵⁷<https://definitions.uslegal.com/g/government-in-exile/>

governments may develop into an impressive force that can pose a major challenge to the incumbent regime of the country, while others are just a symbolic gesture.

Stefan Talmon provides 4 criteria for an authority in exile to qualify as a “government” in international law and this encompasses:

- a) [sovereign and independent] State;
- b) representative character;
- c) independence;
- d) international illegality of the government in situ.⁵⁸

A provisional government is a governmental authority set up to manage a political transition generally in the cases of new nations or following the collapse of the previous governing administration. The provisional governments are usually established during or after civil or foreign wars. Provisional governments maintain power until a new government can be appointed by a regular political process. Shain and Linz classified the provisional government into these groups:

- (a) revolutionary provisional governments, which emerge after the internal revolution, or coup d'état, or as a result of a war
- (b) power-sharing interim governments, in which an incumbent authoritarian government and the democratic opposition share executive power temporarily before elections;
- (c) incumbent caretaker governments, when the power during the transitional period belongs to the former regime;
- (d) international interim governments, in which the international community, through the aegis of the United Nations, directs and monitors the process of democratic change.⁵⁹

An Example of a Government in Exile

As mentioned above, it is possible to generalize the conditions for the recognition of provisional governments (or governments in exile). However, the decision-making process and the reasons of the recognition must be examined individually due to the fact that it depends on many factors. Thus, the recognition will always have to be evaluated based on the strategic (militarily), political, or economic point of view. The rationale of the recognition of the government in exile must be studied extensively due to the fact that the argumentation and the facts of recognition can change dramatically over time based on the particular situation. It is not easy to generalize the reasons of recognition.

In the case of the Provisional Government of Korea, Mi develops an argument about the legitimacy of the government based on four criteria: Historical Legitimacy, Constitutional Hierarchy, Democratic Legitimacy, and Value-Oriented Legitimacy.⁶⁰ For example, the recognition of the Provisional Government of Korea lacked a number of factors in order to be fully recognized. Timothy L. Savage in the article “The American Response to the Korean Independence Movement, 1910–1945” published in 1996 extensively summarizes the historical episode of the Provisional Government of Korea. Savage states that in 1941–1942 the “... [British] Foreign Office was of the opinion that, given the disunity among Korean nationalists and the impossibility of carrying on any military activities within Korea at that time, the allies should limit themselves to general statements of support for Korean aspirations.”⁶¹ Savage mentions that

⁵⁸Stefan Talmon, “Who Is a Legitimate Government in Exile? Towards Normative Criteria for Governmental Legitimacy in International Law,” in *The Reality of International Law: Essays in Honour of Ian Brownlie*, by Guy S. Goodwin-Gill and Stefan Talmon (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), 499–537, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198268376.001.0001>.

⁵⁹Yossi Shain and Juan J. Linz, *Between States Interim Governments and Democratic Transitions* (Cambridge U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 5.

⁶⁰OH Hyang Mi, “The Controversy over the Legitimacy of the Korean Provisional Government during the Period of the National Representative Conference in Shanghai,” *Korea Journal* 51, no. 3 (September 2011): 169–95.

⁶¹Timothy L. Savage, “The American Response to the Korean Independence Movement, 1910—1945,” *Korean Studies* 20 (1996): 209.

in 1942, “the lack of unity among Korean exiles continuously complicated”⁶² their recognition. US Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew on 8 June, 1945, explained the reasons why the United States did not recognize the Korean Provisional Government established in Chongqing, China. His explanation, according to Talon was that they “do not possess at the present time the qualifications requisite for obtaining recognition by the United States as a governing authority. The ‘Korean Provisional Government’ has never exercised administrative authority over any part of Korea, nor can it be regarded as representative of the Korean people of today.”⁶³

Conclusion

The case of the international recognition of the provisional government is, of course, extensive, and it is not the aim of the article to discuss the Provisional Government of Korea as a case study. It must be taken into account, that the recognition of a provisional government does not depend on the rationale of the country, but its allies must be taken into account. Additionally, larger military strategies in the region must be considered because if the provisional government is officially recognized, then the country of origin might be facing military retaliation. However, in the case of a domestic recognition, the provisional government might be recognized domestically as a continuation or interim government which will organize elections and the transfer of power when the country of origin would be liberated and the war would be terminated.

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⁶²Savage, 210–11.

⁶³Talmon, “Who Is a Legitimate Government in Exile? Towards Normative Criteria for Governmental Legitimacy in International Law.”

Provisional Korean Government in Exile and the Czechoslovak Legion in the Far East

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Introduction

The “Siberian Anabasis” of the Czechoslovak Legion was among the most iconic chapters of the establishment of independent Czechoslovakia during the time of the First Republic. When Masaryk arrived in Prague from the United States on 21 December 1918, as President of Czechoslovakia, his car was triumphantly escorted by Legionnaires in typical Siberian style fur hats and coats with ammunition belts across their chests. High ranking positions in diplomacy and in the army awaited them. A monumental memorial to honor the Legions and the Czechoslovak resistance was erected in Prague on Vítkov Hill, a place associated with a courageous victory of the Hussites over the much stronger Crusaders of Emperor Sigismund. The advancement of the Legions along the Russian railway was already a subject of detailed study in the inter-war period. The Legionnaires were a distinctive embodiment of the idea of the Czechoslovak nation, which became an official expression of Czechoslovak national identity during the First Republic. During the Second World War, former Legionnaires represented a significant part of the anti-Nazi resistance in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and, particularly, in exile in France and later in England. After the communist takeover in February 1948, they were harshly persecuted and jailed, and a number of them lost their lives. Only after the collapse of Communism in 1989 was their rehabilitation possible and the history of the Czechoslovak Legions in Russia became a goal of academic research and publications.

There are still many “blank spots” in the history of the Legions. The topic of this article – the various interactions between the Legionnaires and the Korean independence activists, fighters, and their leadership in the Provisional Korean Government in Exile – belongs among them. There are currently just a few articles by Zdenka Klöšlová, who opened this theme as the first and so far the only researcher on the topic. Despite its seemingly marginal significance, this is a very important topic that deserves further and deeper attention.

The goal of this article is to examine this little known chapter of Czechoslovak-Korean relations within the larger context of the events in Siberia and the Far East. It also seeks to apply an international perspective on the period of the end of the First World War and the beginning of the interbellum to assess the chances of success in the respective Czechoslovak and Korean independence struggles. This is all to seek a response to the question of why the Czechoslovaks succeeded when the Koreans, at that time, did not.

T. G. Masaryk as “Quartermaster” of Czechoslovak Troops

These are Masaryk’s own words which he used when he left Moscow for Vladivostok on 7 March, 1918. He said: “*Brothers, soldiers, prisoners of war! I am leaving from the midst of you, actually, I will be your quartermaster in France, there I will meet you again. I hope that all of you will join our army.*”⁶⁴

There were a considerable number of Czech (also Slovak, Polish and other) prisoners of war, originally soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian Army, in Russia. Some fell in captivity during military operations, but many surrendered voluntarily because of a reluctance to fight for Austro-Hungarian and German war aims. The leaders of the Czechoslovak resistance abroad, the Czechoslovak National Council (chaired by Tomáš G. Masaryk, Milan R. Štefánik, Josef Dürich and Edvard Beneš as secretary), knew well of the existence of the Czech and Slovak prisoners of war, who also formed national armed units of volunteers incorporated

⁶⁴Vznik Československa 1918. Dokumenty československé zahraniční politiky (further DČZP 1918). [Origins of Czechoslovakia 1918. Documents on Czechoslovak foreign policy]. Klimek, Antonín, Nováčková, Helena, Polišíenská, Milada, Štoviček, Ivan (eds.). Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 1994. Document No. 14. From Czech transl. by M. Polišíenská.

in the Entente armies, such as the *Česká družina* in Russia. Later, in 1917, the Czechoslovak volunteer corps, the so-called “Legion,” was established. Their formation was intensified and facilitated by the courageous fight of the Czechoslovak Legion in the battle of Zborov at the beginning of July 1917, as part of the Kerensky offensive, as well as by Masaryk’s presence in Russia and his negotiations with the Provisional Government. Masaryk’s decision to leave for Russia and to negotiate with the Kerensky Provisional Government, which was in power after Tzar Nikolai II abdicated on 15 March, 1917, was very courageous; and he assumed – as he did more times in his life – an extraordinary responsibility. Masaryk was a very well educated, well established scholar. He was certainly a charismatic man. In Austria-Hungary, he was a deputy in the Imperial Council for a small political party. Now, he was just a 67 year-old university professor from an enemy country, who chaired a miniature Czechoslovak National Council. He was also in sharp disagreement with the vice chairman of the Council, a Russophile named Josef Dürých, about relations towards the Russian Empire. Dürých propagated and advocated for the enlargement of the Tzarist Empire into Central Europe.⁶⁵ When Masaryk arrived in Russia, he had not only to persuade the Provisional Government to approve the mobilization of volunteers into the Czechoslovak Army corps as an independent armed force (as until then, the Czechoslovak volunteers had been part of the Russian Army), he also had to struggle to eliminate the influence of Josef Dürých among the Czechoslovaks in Russia.

On 16 December, 1917, France issued a decree on the establishment of the Czecho-Slovak army in France. The establishment of Czechoslovak corps on the territory of Ukraine was agreed between Masaryk and the government (Tsentralna Rada) of the short-lived Ukrainian People’s Republic on 15 January, 1918. That same day, it was proclaimed that the Czechoslovak troops in Russia, Ukraine and other parts of the former Russian Empire were under the administration of the French High Command. Among the signatories of this document were Masaryk and the leading personalities of the Czechoslovak National Council: Russia-Branch – Prokop Maxa, Rudolf Medek, Bohdan Pavlů, Václav Girsá, and others. All of them later became important officials or commanders of the Anabasis of the Czechoslovak Legion and later, during the First Republic, high ranking army officers, and diplomats. On 17 January, this group took an oath of allegiance to fight for state sovereignty.⁶⁶

These events happened amidst very dramatic events in Russia and in Ukraine, which substantially changed the situation of the Czechoslovak Legion. In November 1917, the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government of Kerensky and then, on 3 March 1918, the peace of Brest-Litovsk was signed. At that moment, Masaryk was in Moscow. A draft of *Dokladnaya zapiska* (“Memorandum”) from 3 March (the addressee not stated) survived in which he explained the meaning of the resistance against the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and Germany, the role of the Czechoslovak National Council, the situation of the Czechoslovak army in the Tzarist Empire under Prime Minister Kerensky, and the situation of the Czechoslovaks in Kiev where the local Soviets tried to enforce the establishment of Red Guards within the Czechoslovak Legion. Masaryk emphasized, in particular, the principle of Czechoslovak neutrality in Russian domestic affairs after the Bolshevik revolution.⁶⁷

On 7 March, 1918, Masaryk, using the opportunity to travel with the English military mission from Kiev, left Moscow by the Trans-Siberian Railway towards the East. His stay in Moscow was very dramatic. His life was under direct threat when he came under fire close to the hotel Metropol, where he was staying. As he later told the famous Czech writer Karel Čapek, he did not expect to survive his mission in Russia.⁶⁸

In a speech to an assembly of Czechoslovak troops before his departure, he emphasized neutrality, criticized the one sided peace of Brest-Litovsk, and acclaimed France,

⁶⁵A strong supporter of the Tzarist Empire was the influential Czech politician Karel Kramář, ten years Masaryk’s junior (1860–1937), a pan-Slavist who proposed a Slavic federation led by Russia and an active Russian involvement in Central Europe. Kramář was the first prime minister of independent Czechoslovakia (1918–1919) and chairman of the Czechoslovak delegation at the Paris Peace Conference.

⁶⁶DČZP, documents No. 3, 5, 6.

⁶⁷Ibid., document No. 13. From Russian transl. by M. Polišenská.

⁶⁸Čapek, Karel. *Hovory s T. G. Masarykem* [Talks with T. G. Masaryk]. Praha: František Borový, 1946, 164–170.

the Allies, Russia, and democracy. This was where he called himself the quartermaster of the Czechoslovak soldiers who were to be transported to France and Italy, quoted above. He said: “*long live the first Czechoslovak troops, a powerful builder of a free fatherland,*” and he referred to the Hussite duties.⁶⁹

The Trans-Siberian Anabasis

The transfer of Czechoslovak troops to Vladivostok was difficult, challenging and unsafe. The leading principle of the Legion’s position was non-interference in Russian domestic affairs, even if France, in particular, insisted on the Czechoslovaks’ active engagement in the anti-Bolshevik intervention campaigns. Still, the Legion had to formulate its position towards, and to interact with, a number of actors who at that time operated on the territory of Russia, particularly in Siberia. These included Bolsheviks, Esers (Socialist Revolutionaries), Left Esers, the Provisional Government of Autonomous Siberia of Piotr Derber (Tomsk, Vladivostok), the Provisional All-Russian Government (Omsk), Kolchak, Ataman Semyonov, Ivan P. Kalmykov, General D. L. Horvat and other Cossack warlords operating in the Trans-Siberian Railway area as well as in greater Siberia and the Far East,⁷⁰ German and Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war, and last but not least the members of the Korean independence movement. There were also armed forces, political representatives, and various organizations and institutions of the Allies – France, Britain, and America, as well as Japan and China, which at that time was in the midst of a civil war as well.

The Bolsheviks forced the Legionnaires to surrender their arms, but Prokop Maxa, who was Second Vice-Chairman of the Czechoslovak National Council: Russia-Branch and plenipotentiary of the Council to the Staff of the Czechoslovak Corps, instructed the troops not to hand them over to the Bolsheviks. He told them to keep their weapons and to move as fast as possible through Russia towards the East. Later, on 21 May, in reaction to the “Chelyabinsk incident”⁷¹ and in an attempt to avoid fighting with the Bolsheviks and maintain neutrality, Maxa changed this order and instructed the troops to hand over their arms. Maxa’s order was opposed by the Assembly of Czechoslovak troops in Chelyabinsk the next day. They decided not to surrender their arms and to keep them until a free departure and safety would be guaranteed. Then, on 25 May, Trotsky ordered any member of the Czechoslovak corps to be killed if they were caught with a gun.⁷²

After traveling three weeks, Masaryk arrived in Vladivostok around 1 April. He was most likely there just one day, which he spent with the Czechs living in Vladivostok. He visited the Czech club “Palacký.” His goal was Japan, but he had to travel through Manchuria and Korea via Mukden, Andong (Dandong, Antung), Seoul and Pusan.⁷³ From there, he reached Japan.

⁶⁹DČZP, Document No. 14, from Czech transl. by M. Polišenská.

⁷⁰Hošek, Martin. *Mezinárodní aspekty průjezdu československých legionářů po Východočínské železnici v roce 1918. In Našinec v Orientě. Cestovatelia zo Slovenska a Čiech v Ázii a Afrike (19. Stor.1. pol. 20. Stor.)*. [The International aspects of the passage of Czechoslovak Troops through the Chinese Eastern Railway in 1918]. In *Our men in the Orient. Travellers from Slovakia and Bohemia in Asia and Africa (19th -1st Half of 20th Century)*. Slobodník, Martin (ed.). Bratislava, Univerzita Komenského: 2009. 211–220. Bisher, Jamie. *White Terror: Cossack Warlords of the Trans-Siberian*. Routledge: 2005.

⁷¹On 14 May, 1918, in Chelyabinsk, one of the Czechoslovak Legionnaires was very heavily wounded when a German or Hungarian prisoner of war threw a heavy piece of iron at the Legionnaires. The Czechoslovaks retaliated brutally. The local Soviets arrested the accused Legionnaires, but the Czechoslovaks liberated them, occupied the city of Chelyabinsk, and confiscated the arms. With the Chelyabinsk incident, a fragile peace between the Legion and the Bolsheviks ended. A circular telegram of the assembly of the Czechoslovak Army Corps from 22 May, 1918, was sent to the Soviet of People’s Commissars in Moscow, the French military mission in Vologda (the American Embassy in Petrograd was closed in February 1918, and its staff and records relocated east to Vologda, but they are not among the addressees of this telegram), the local Soviets on the Chelyabinsk-Samara-Penza and Chelyabinsk-Omsk-Irkutsk routes, the military commissar Aruchin (Amuchin) in Yekaterinburg and the Czechoslovak “commissar” in Penza. V. Najbrt. DČZP, doc. 34, from Czech transl. by M. Polišenská; Langbart, David A. “No Little Historic Value”. *The Records of Department of State Posts in Revolutionary Russia. Prologue Magazine*, 2008/1; also Unterberger, Betty Miller. *The United States, Revolutionary Russia and the Rise of Czechoslovakia*. University of North North Carolina Press: 1989 (1st ed.), Texas A & M University: 2000, 170–201.

⁷²A circular telegram order of 25 May 1918 of People’s Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs Leon Trotsky. DČZP, document No. 35, from Russian transl. by M. Polišenská.

⁷³Klöslóvá, Zdenka. T. G. Masaryk v korejském Pusanu /T. G. Masaryk in the Korean City of Pusan/. *Nový Orient* 2001/8, 265.

From Japan, Masaryk contacted the activists for Czechoslovak independence in the United States via the telegraph. He left Japan on 20 April, and on 29 April, still traveling incognito as Professor Marsden, he reached Vancouver. He was welcomed by a large group of sympathizers and supporters of Czechoslovak independence. One of the most active was Charles Pergler, who became Masaryk's American secretary. Masaryk immediately started his difficult, but ultimately successful struggle for recognition of Czechoslovakia's independence.⁷⁴

At approximately the time when Masaryk reached the United States, at the end of April 1918, the vanguard of the Czechoslovak Legion reached Vladivostok. Shortly afterwards, on 14 May, the Chelyabinsk incident occurred, and subsequent fights between the Legionnaires and the Bolsheviks along the railway broke out. In July and August 1918, the entire Trans-Siberian Railway was cleared, and the Czechoslovak soldiers started to arrive in Vladivostok.

On 28 October 1918, independent Czechoslovakia was established. The Czechoslovak Legion was proclaimed part of the Czechoslovak Army and subject to the command of Milan Rastislav Štefánik as Minister of War. In November, Štefánik arrived in Siberia with the intention to transform the Legion into a regular army.⁷⁵ He did not succeed in this, as after the establishment of Czechoslovakia, the troops were affected by a crisis and a decrease in morale. There was no willingness among the Legionnaires to engage themselves further as regular soldiers. The Legionnaires were impatient and embittered from the long wait for the evacuation home.⁷⁶ In Harbin, Štefánik established the "Office of the plenipotentiary of the Government of Czechoslovakia," headed by Colonel M. Hess. He was transferred from Harbin to Beijing in October 1919, but the office in Harbin existed until 1923.⁷⁷ Štefánik also established a "Czechoslovak Mission" in Shanghai, and some reports of the Czechoslovak representative in Shanghai have survived.⁷⁸ Shortly after Štefánik returned to Europe, he died 4 May, 1919, in an airplane crash near Bratislava, Slovakia.⁷⁹

USA, France and the Czechoslovak Legion

Based on Czechoslovak and Czech literature, there may be an impression that the Legionnaires fought their passage through Siberia to Vladivostok by their own forces and that there were, with the exception of the Russian Whites and Reds, no other military elements in Siberia. However, this is not true.

The Czechoslovak Legion was at that time the strongest, best organized and very well equipped military force on the territory of Russia. The escalating conflicts of the advancing main contingent of Czechoslovaks, who were spread thousands of kilometers along the Trans-

⁷⁴There is much literature on this topic. See Polišínská, Milada. *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA 1918-1938. I. díl, Ministerstva, legace a diplomaté. II. díl. Priority, diplomatická praxe a politický kontext* [Diplomatic relations between Czechoslovakia and the United States 1918-1938. Vol. I. Foreign ministries, legations and diplomats. Vol. II. Priorities, diplomatic practice and diplomatic context]. Prague: Libri, 2012, 2014. Particularly in 2018, at the centennial anniversary, new research and publications were added, see e.g. articles in *Kosmas, Czech, Slovak and Central European Studies*, New Series, Vol. 2/1.

⁷⁵This was Štefánik's second trip to Russia. First, he was there in 1916 to organize the Czechoslovak volunteers. Similarly, he was engaged in the United States and in other countries. At this time, he arrived in Russia from the United States with a French military delegation via Japan, where he was on 28 October, when Czechoslovakia was declared. He continued to Vladivostok and by Trans-Siberian Railway to Irkutsk, Omsk and further on to Chelyabinsk, then to Yekaterinburg, and on 18 December, back to Omsk. On 15 January, 1919, he left for Vladivostok and then to the United States and to Europe. According to Písecký, Ferdinand. *Generál M. R. Štefánik*. https://zlatyfond.sme.sk/dielo/5119/Pisecky_General-M-R-Stefanik.

⁷⁶Michal Kšiňan, Jiří Rajlich and Ivan Šedivý in a discussion moderated by Vladimír Kučera on 23 March, 2013, on Czech TV. <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/archiv/1052450-prvni-ceskoslovensky-vojak-milan-rastislav-stefanik>.

⁷⁷In 1930, a Czechoslovak Consulate was established in Harbin. The period 1923-1930 is unclear. *Konzulární zastoupení Československa v cizině a cizích zemí v letech 1918-1974* [Consular representation of Czechoslovakia abroad and foreign countries in Czechoslovakia, 1918-1974]. Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (further AMFA), 1974.

⁷⁸Klösslová, Zdenka. The Czechoslovak Legion in Russia and Korean Independence Movement: A Contribution to the Earliest Czech-Korean Contacts. *Archiv Orientální* 2002/2, 216.

⁷⁹Besides the Minister of War, Štefánik, who was responsible for the army abroad, there was also the position of Minister of National Defence (Václav Klobáček), who was responsible for the army on the territory of Czechoslovakia. After Štefánik's death, the position of Minister of War ceased to exist, and the Army abroad was subject to the command of the Minister of National Defence.

-Siberian Railway, with the Bolsheviks substantially intensified the internationalization of the situation on Russian Territory and in Siberia. As said above, the vanguard troops of the Czechoslovak Legion reached Vladivostok in late April/early May 1918. On 29 June, 1918, they overthrew the Bolshevik government in Vladivostok and took control of this key strategic area.

At that time, the Commander of the Legion's "Vladivostok group" was General Mikhail Diterikhs, general of the Russian Imperial Army and one of the leaders of the White movement.⁸⁰ The Commander-in-Chief of Czechoslovak and Allied forces in Siberia was French General Maurice Janin.⁸¹

The fall of Bolshevik power in Vladivostok opened the door to the establishment of the Provisional Government of Autonomous Siberia of Piotr Derber in Vladivostok (which only lasted until the establishment of the Provisional All-Russian Government on 23 September, 1918, in Omsk). Subsequently, military operations heading back towards Siberia started to help the Legionnaires along the railway. The states of the Entente and their allies decided to support the Czechoslovaks and, from the middle of August, started to land troops in Vladivostok from Japan, Great Britain, France, the United States, China, Canada, and Italy. The Czechoslovaks in Vladivostok also needed transit via the Chinese Eastern Railway.⁸² The territory that it crossed was an area of fighting between various competing anti-Bolshevik groups, and the situation there was very tense. China was interested in renewing its control over this railway, and Japan's position in the area was also growing.

In Vladivostok, the members of the "diplomatic corps"⁸³ met rather often and cooperated closely with the representatives of allied naval forces. The Czechoslovak Legion dominated their agenda. The diplomatic corps and allied naval forces formulated and approved a joint position on the plan of the Czechoslovak Legionnaires in Vladivostok. This plan was to use the Chinese Eastern Railway. Only the Japanese Consul was against it.⁸⁴

There was a U.S. Consul General in Vladivostok, but the American presence was larger, as there was also a U.S. Consul in Yekaterinburg (Henry Palmer), a Consul General in Irkutsk (Ernest Lloyd Harris) and a Consul in Omsk (Alfred R. Thomson).⁸⁵ Vladivostok became a center of the representations of the Entente Powers – besides the consulates, there was also an American YMCA, Red Cross organizations and various inter-allied managing and coordinating bodies, among the most important being the Inter-Allied Railway Committee.⁸⁶

Chinese sources offer an interesting insight into the events in Vladivostok and in the Far East.⁸⁷ The Consul General of China in Vladivostok⁸⁸ reported on 30 June, 1918, that the Czechoslovaks supported by the Japanese and the British took over the city, complained that the Czechoslovaks did not inform him in advance about this action, and accused them of lying due to China's weakness and lack of unity. Other countries did not inform him either, wrote the Consul, because they suspected China could disclose the coup to the Bolsheviks.

After the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Czechoslovakia, the repatriation of the Legionnaires from Vladivostok was one of the priorities

⁸⁰Mikhail Diterikhs (1874-1937), General, commander of Czechoslovak troops in Vladivostok and subsequently commander of Czechoslovak and Allied troops in Vladivostok, Chief of the General Staff of the Czechoslovak Corps in Russia, from November 1918, Minister of War in Kolchak's Government in Omsk.

⁸¹Pierre-Thiébaud-Charles-Maurice Janin (1862-1946), French General, Commander-in-Chief of Czechoslovak troops abroad, from November 1918, Commander-in-Chief of Czechoslovak and Allied troops in Siberia. *DČZP*, p. 430.

⁸²The Chinese Eastern Railway, also the Trans-Manchurian Railway.

⁸³They did not have the ranks of Ministers or Ambassadors, as no standard diplomatic relations of foreign countries with the chaotic governmental situation in Russia were established. The most appropriate and only possible representation was at the level of consulates or political representatives, but the scope of their work was larger than under normal conditions.

⁸⁴Hošek, 216.

⁸⁵*Foreign Relations of the United States* series, 1918/Russia, Vol. II.

⁸⁶The Inter-Allied Railroad Committee was established by an agreement signed in March 1919. It consisted of representatives of each allied power having military forces in Siberia, including Russia; and its purpose was guarding, maintaining and keeping operational the railroads in Siberia, particularly the Trans-Siberian Railway. Foust, Clifford. *John Frank Stevens. Civil Engineer*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013.

⁸⁷Hošek, *Mezinárodní aspekty průjezdu československých Legionářů po Východočínské železnici v roce 1918*.

⁸⁸Chinese Consul General in Vladivostok was Shao Cheng-sün. *Ibid*, 213-217.

of the Czechoslovak legation in Washington. The United States played a key role in it, as they provided ships and secured the prevailing part of the communication and financial and material provisions of this uneasy and very costly operation. Masaryk, as Chairman of the Czechoslovak National Council, negotiated a loan for the transfer of troops even before the declaration of independent Czechoslovakia, and the necessity to have the loan legally guaranteed became a driving force for the recognition of the Czechoslovak Provisional Government as *de facto*, waging a war on the side of the Allies. Various operations and acts related to the loan became one of the first tasks, or even the first task, of the official Czechoslovak diplomatic representation in the United States.⁸⁹

The oldest section of the Czechoslovak Legation in Washington was the Office of the Military Attaché, which grew out of the assignments of Legionnaires Zdeněk Fierlinger and Vladimír Hurban to Washington to take care of the repatriation of Czechoslovak troops from Vladivostok. Fierlinger and Hurban operated in this position even before the establishment of Czechoslovakia. Under Chargé d'Affaires Jan Masaryk, the task was approaching its conclusion. Minister of Foreign Affairs Edvard Beneš made known on 7 January, 1920, that J. Masaryk was authorized by the Czechoslovak Government to sign in its name obligations related to the expenditures of the repatriation of the Legionnaires.

The financing of the transportation was, however, delayed; and J. Masaryk pushed for its acceleration, saying that *“the regime of terror – compatible to the Tsarist regime – is unbearable.”*⁹⁰

In the meantime, on 19 January, 1920, the American representative in the Inter-Allied Railway Committee, C. H. Smith, reported from Vladivostok that he received a telegram from the “Czech Chief of Staff” in Irkutsk, Václav Girsá. Smith forwarded this telegram to Washington through U.S. Consul Macgowan in Vladivostok. The telegram briefly discussed the Anabasis of the Czechoslovak Legion.⁹¹ Lansing wrote on 22 January, 1920, to Secretary of War Newton D. Baker (abbreviated):

*I suggest that it be made quite clear to General Graves [U.S. General, commander of American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia] that the mission of American troops in Eastern Siberia will not have been accomplished until the safe evacuation of the Czecho-Slovaks is assured and a substantial portion of them actually afloat. It is to be hoped that (despite very strained relations) the Czecho-Slovaks will find it possible to pass through the regions controlled by General Semenov [General and Ataman of the East Siberian Cossacks, founder, and dictator of the Transbaikalian republic] without serious difficulty. I am sure however that it is not possible to permit a concentration of the American troops at Vladivostok, or the departure of a considerable portion of them before the free passage of the Czecho-Slovaks to Vladivostok is assured.*⁹²

At the same time, the interim Secretary of State, Frank Lyon Polk, in opposition to Baker who considered the withdrawal of all American troops to Vladivostok as a military necessity, argued that *“the presence of American troops may prove the only stabilizing factor. Their premature withdrawal to Vladivostok might even jeopardize the successful repatriation of the Czecho-Slovak troops to which the Government of the United States stands solemnly pledged.”* Polk supported his arguments with telegrams from the U.S. Consul General in Omsk, who was at that time on his way to Vladivostok, and Smith from the Inter-Allied Railway Committee in Vladivostok, who described the critical situation of the Czechoslovaks in Siberia and the threat which Ataman Semyonov represented to them.⁹³

On 1 February, Smith reported to Washington that the Inter-Allied Railway Committee elected him plenipotentiary representative, which was approved by the Generals Janin (French) and Graves (U.S.). Smith wrote (abbreviated) that, *“The actual circumstances of the*

⁸⁹Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA 1918-1938/I*, 247-264, also II, 15-30.

⁹⁰Polišenská, M. *Diplomatické vztahy Československa a USA 1918-1938/I*, 260. Transl from Czech by M. Polišenská.

⁹¹FRUS 1920/III, 561.

⁹²DČZP, p. 435.; FRUS 1920/III, 496.

⁹³FRUS 1920/III, 500-501.

evacuation of Czechs make necessary the adoption of measures which can only be decided on the spot and whose execution must be immediate.” Consul Macgowan added to this that, *“The main reason for this is that the Committee felt that in view of the extreme difficulties surrounding the evacuation they must delegate their powers to one man who would work in entire harmony with Mr. Stevens.”*⁹⁴

Stevens was the President of the Technical Board in Charbin.⁹⁵ He wrote to the U.S. Secretary of State that even though General Graves insisted that the Service Corps staff be sent out immediately, according to his own understanding, they should stay as long as they could to assist with the evacuation of the Czechoslovaks; and emphasized that the Service Corps was very much needed. Secretary of State Robert Lansing supported his position, but at that moment he had just a few days left to serve in office, as he resigned on 13 February, 1920.

Correspondence between the American officials Consul Macgowan in Vladivostok, President of the Technical Board Stevens, Consul General Harris in Irkutsk (who at that time was also in Vladivostok), and the U.S. Secretary of State reveal the dedication of the Americans to evacuate the Czechoslovak Legion from Siberia effectively.

On 31 March, 1920, Beneš telegraphed Fierlinger, the military attaché in Washington, that Girsá reported a delay of six weeks for the ships. In Vladivostok, there were reportedly 17 000 men waiting to be evacuated, and there were 7 000 men waiting in trains on the Chinese Eastern Railway heading to Verkhneudinsk.⁹⁶ Fierlinger had to find out the reason for such a delay. In the middle of April, Beneš telegraphed Fierlinger that Girsá reported that the American ships did not arrive yet and that outrage was rising in the army. Nevertheless, on 15 April, all Czechoslovaks and all other allied evacuees were prepared in Manchuria Station⁹⁷ and its surrounding neighborhood, and Stevens wrote that if no problems appear, then all of them should reach Vladivostok in one month, provided there would be the ships. He was also preparing to transport home 110 members of the Service Corps.

At the same time, another name appeared in the documents sent from Vladivostok – American Consul General in Vladivostok John K. Caldwell, who was in contact with the supreme military commander of the Czechoslovak Legion, General Jan Syrový. Caldwell reported to the State Department on 17 April, 1920, that the Czechoslovaks were advancing east and would proceed as fast as possible, as no one knew what would happen.⁹⁸ He emphasized the discipline of the Czechoslovaks, and that not only Czechoslovaks but also Latvians, Yugoslavs, Poles, and Romanians had to be evacuated as well. According to a joint report by Consul General Harris and Consul Macgowan, 47 735 Czechoslovaks, 2 150 Poles, 1 350 Latvians, 1 500 Serbs and 2 800 Romanians (55 535 in total) had to be evacuated from Vladivostok.⁹⁹ In addition, there were another 71 335 non-descript persons to be evacuated, but no Czechoslovaks were among them. These numbers show the huge extent of this operation. When the Legionnaires embarked on their Trans-Siberian journey, the perspectives on their evacuation from Vladivostok were very unclear and uncertain. They left Ukraine urgently and went into the unknown. Before the entire Czechoslovak contingent managed to depart by the Trans-Siberian Railway, the head of the French military mission General Jean Lavergne informed Maxa on 14 May, 1918, that France could not secure enough of ships to evacuate the troops from Vladivostok and that the American ships were fully occupied by the transportation of the American Army to the European battlefields.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴Ibid., 562. John F. Stevens was a well-known American engineer who came to Russia in the Spring of 1917 at the request of Kerensky's Provisional Government to help in rehabilitating and operating the Russian Railway. Later, he had important work in the Inter-Allied Railway Committee. Foust, Clifford. *John Frank Stevens. Civil Engineer*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013.

⁹⁵Component of Inter-Allied Railway Committee.

⁹⁶Today Ulan-Ude, capital of the Republic of Buryatia.

⁹⁷Probably Harbin.

⁹⁸FRUS 1920/3, 567, 17 April 1920.

⁹⁹FRUS 1920/3, 566, 9 April 1920.

¹⁰⁰DČZP, doc. No. 30. From Czech transl. by M. Polišenská.

According to Stevenson's reports, the last Czechoslovak soldiers left Irkutsk on 25 February, 1919. Around 10 April, 26 000 Czechoslovaks out of the remaining 32 000 were already in Vladivostok. There was not enough space on the ships, as the ships that were expected to arrive had a capacity of just 18 000. Both American officials, Caldwell and Stevenson, recommended to the Department of State to ask the British Government for help. The British had to evacuate the Polish and Romanian prisoners of war.¹⁰¹

The situation in Eastern Siberia was very sensitive and explosive. American foreign service officers observed a neutral position and concentrated fully on the effective and fast evacuation of the Czechoslovak Legion and other foreign militaries in the Far East. They noticed that the Bolsheviks were trying to help the Czechoslovaks leave, but it was more likely the effort of the Bolsheviks to get rid of this well-armed corps, nominally neutral in Russian domestic affairs (though this was not always the case), as soon as possible. On 5 May, Stevens reported from Harbin that the evacuation was going very well and that the Japanese presence in the area was ever increasing. He considered his main task to be the evacuation of the American Service Corps, and he was looking forward to resigning from the Committee and to leaving Russia after the completion of his task.¹⁰²

On 25 May, Caldwell wrote that all of the Czechoslovaks were now in Vladivostok, and he named the ships which had arrived. The operation took much longer, and on 18 July, 1920, the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry received a telegram reporting the bad mood of the troops still waiting for transportation.¹⁰³

At the same time, the correspondence about the financing of the evacuation of the Czechoslovak troops intensified between the American Minister in Prague, Richard Crane, the Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, J. Masaryk, and the Department of State. On 15 July, 1920, Secretary of State Colby wrote to Minister Crane in Prague that the Chinese Eastern Railway charged 3 million dollars in gold for the transfer of the Czechoslovak troops. Crane had to discreetly ascertain whether the reimbursement of costs was up to Czechoslovakia or France. One week later Crane reported that, according to Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Beneš, these bills belonged within the framework of the Agreement reached in Paris, and therefore half had to be paid by Great Britain and half by France. Beneš, however, said that it was also agreed that half would be paid jointly by Great Britain and the United States and the other half by Czechoslovakia. The situation was obviously not clear, and large financial amounts were in play. Later, Crane wrote that the Allies took the obligation to provide the resources for securing the Czechoslovak Army in Siberia and, therefore, they should pay for the costs of the Chinese Railway. For Czechoslovakia, it was impossible to pay the bill at that moment anyway.¹⁰⁴

Even one year later, in July 1921, under Minister Bedřich Štěpánek in Washington, various remaining issues related to the repatriation from Vladivostok, particularly regarding the American loan, were on the agenda.¹⁰⁵

The Czechoslovak Legion and the Movement for Korean Independence

The Czechoslovak troops concentrated in the Vladivostok area after their 1918 hard-fought passage along the Trans-Siberian Railway. This was mainly thanks to operations under the command of General Radola Gajda in July and August 1918.

Gajda, twenty-six years old at that time, was elevated to the rank of General particularly because of this military success and his merits in the transportation of troops to Vladivostok. He was very influential and popular. He was dominant and fascinated many by his gentlemanly behavior and dazzling lifestyle.¹⁰⁶ His "residence" was on a train, and his wagon was splendidly

¹⁰¹FRUS 1920/3, 566, 9 April 1920.

¹⁰²FRUS 1920/3, 569.

¹⁰³Polišenská, M. *Diplomatické vztahy I/263*.

¹⁰⁴AMFA, Legation Washington/II, box. 4. From Czech transl. by M. Polišenská

¹⁰⁵Polišenská, *Diplomatické vztahy I/282*.

¹⁰⁶Ivo Pejčoch. *Generál Radola Gajda, muž spojený s českými fašisty /Radola Gajda, a man associated with the Czech fascists/*. <http://www.vhu.cz/general-radola-gajda-muz-spojeny-s-ceskymi-fasisty/>

furnished with antiquities and precious furs, as well as a piano. Gajda even boasted the nickname "Liberator of Siberia."¹⁰⁷

Gajda served from 1 January, 1919, under Kolchak. Gajda was commander of one of Kolchak's three armies, and the surviving photographs show Gajda sitting in front next to Kolchak among other high officers of Kolchak's. During Spring 1919, however, Kolchak's position started to crumble. He was losing influence on all sides. Finally, Kolchak – the "Ruler of All Russia," as he proclaimed himself in November 1918 – needed to escape from his headquarters in Omsk. In January 1920, he was handed over to the Left Social Revolutionaries (Left Esers) by the Czechoslovak Legionnaires, who controlled the Trans-Siberian Railway in Irkutsk. A few days later, power in Irkutsk was taken by the Bolsheviks, who sentenced Kolchak to death and executed him on 7 February, 1920.¹⁰⁸

In the meantime, during 1919, the Korean movement for independence, which had a strong basis in Korean communities outside of Korea, was strengthening and becoming active. The most important centers of the Korean Independence Movement outside of Korea were in Manchuria, in Shanghai, and in Russia, with a center in Vladivostok where Koreans had been living since the 19th Century.

In January 1919, a leading activist for the independence of Korea and one of the founders of the New Korea Youth Association,¹⁰⁹ a very determined small organization, Yo Un-hyong (1886-1947), was sent from Shanghai to Russia. Yo Un-hyong was a recognized representative of the movement for Korean independence.¹¹⁰ The main goal of this journey was to agitate for the independence of Korea, to inform the Korean community in Russia about the intention to send a delegate to the Paris Peace Conference and to collect money for this purpose. This delegate was to be Kim Kyu-sik (Kim Gyu-sik), a young, highly educated man, who indeed left for Paris. In May 1919, Kim presented the "Petition of the Korean People and Nation for Liberation from Japan and for the Reconstitution of Korea as an Independent State" and the "Claims of the Korean People and Nation" to the Paris Peace Conference. Due to the provisional status of the Korean government in exile, and particularly because of the political and strategic situation in the Far East – the position of Japan as an Ally at the side of the Entente Powers – he was not allowed to participate at the Paris Peace Conference.¹¹¹

Yo Un-hyong spent approximately one month in Vladivostok, and it was during this time that he sought a meeting with General Gajda. Why it was particularly Gajda whom Yo Un-hyong contacted, we do not know, as states Zdenka Klösllová. The fact is that the Korean activist tried very intensely at that time to find support for the independence movement. He worked hard to develop contacts, and Gajda had the aureole of a powerful military leader who had 40 000 men under him¹¹² and who controlled the Trans-Siberian Railway. He was distinctive and visible. The supreme military commander of the Czechoslovak Military Corps was, however, General Jan Syrový, and there were top Czechoslovak political representatives such as Prokop Maxa and, particularly since April 1918, Dr. Václav Gírsa in Vladivostok as representative of the Czechoslovak National Council: Russia-Branch. In November 1919, he was replaced by Bohdan Pavlů, the former Czechoslovak diplomatic representative to Russia in Oms, as plenipotentiary

¹⁰⁷Klösllová, *The Czechoslovak Legion in Russia and Korean Independence Movement*, 210.

¹⁰⁸Telegram of the President of the Technical Board Stevens to the Secretary of State, Harbin, sent February 11, received February 21. FRUS 1920/Vol. I, 680.

¹⁰⁹The Association was established in August 1919, in Shanghai in the French concession. Klösllová, Zdenka. *Dva Češi v korejské historii. Radola Gajda a Josef Hanč. Nový Orient* 2000/6, 216.

¹¹⁰Wilson Center Digital Archive, *Biographies: Yo Un-hyong*. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/resource/cold-war-history/yo-un-hyong>

¹¹¹Kim Kyu-sik then worked from 1919 to 1921 in Washington, D.C. as chairman of the Korean Commission where he cooperated with the president of the Provisional Korean Government in Exile Syngman Rhee. Then he held several positions in Shanghai in the Provisional Korean Government, and in the 1920's, 1930's and until 1945, he was engaged in anti-Japanese efforts, including the position of vice President of the Provisional Government. He returned to Korea in 1945. During the Korean War, he was abducted to North Korea where he died in 1950. Nahm, Andrew C., Hoare, James E. *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Korea*. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/resource/modern-korean-history-portal/kim-gyu-sik>

¹¹²Klösllová, *Dva Češi v korejské historii*, 216.

and delegate of the Czechoslovak Government in the Inter-Allied Council in Vladivostok. Pavlů was there until the evacuation of the Legions in Summer 1920.

Gajda did not officially represent Czechoslovakia, which at that time had existed just two months; but the Korean circles were surprisingly well informed about their path towards independence. Yo Un-hyong reportedly “urgently asked Gajda for help for the independence of Korea” and discussed with him various movements of small and weak nations for liberation.¹¹³ Klöslová says that it is hard to say how well Gajda was informed at that moment about the situation of Korea and how he reacted to Yo Un-hyong’s plea. I suppose, however, that he must have been basically acquainted with the Korean situation, as he had already been in Siberia and in the Far East for a certain time and, as general of the Czechoslovak Corps, he undoubtedly observed the situation in the area. Besides that, the Koreans in the European part of Russia established a National Assembly in Petrograd in Autumn 1918, which most likely addressed the Czechoslovak National Council: Russia-Branch and asked it “to intercede with the Allies for the Independence of Korea.” It is not known whether this happened before or after the Declaration of Independence of Czechoslovakia,¹¹⁴ but in the Czechoslovak top military and political circles in Russia, this very probably was known.

Gajda made a very strong impression on the Koreans, which was even increased by his response to Yo Un-hyong’s request for protection on his way back to Shanghai. The direct flight distance between Vladivostok and Shanghai is about 1600 km, but a brief look at the map shows us that surface travel was much longer and riskier. Yo Un-hyong had to go through Manchuria and China and then by ship. He certainly could not go through Korea, which was under Japanese control. Gajda very generously gave to the Koreans’ disposal a military train to Shanghai and his aid-de-camp Josef Hanč, as an assistant.¹¹⁵ Hanč and Yo both spoke English and thus were able to talk together.¹¹⁶ As recorded by the Russian Colonel Solodovnikov, who was chief of Gajda’s staff, sixteen Korean resistance fighters also boarded this train; and one of them – the former commander of a Korean guerilla group fighting against the Whites, Han Ch’ang-gol – was commander of the machine-gun division of the train.¹¹⁷

In February 1919, the All-Russian Central Assembly of Korean Associations was renamed the Korean National Council. Shortly afterwards, the March First Movement broke out. On 11 April, 1919, the Provisional Korean Government in Exile was established and immediately, before 13 April, the Korean National Council handed to the Czechoslovak political representative Václav Gírsa a declaration to be transmitted to the Czechoslovak Government. We do not know what the declaration contained nor how Gírsa dealt with it. This document has not yet been found, and in those dramatic times and during transfers it may have been lost. On April 13, 1919, the Czechoslovak Daily (*Československý denník*), the newspaper of the Czechoslovak Corps in Russia, reported that “*The Korean National Council handed a Korean declaration to the Czechoslovak political representative.*” It could be considered as the first attempt of the Korean Exile Government to address the Government of Czechoslovakia.¹¹⁸

Gajda’s time of glory in Vladivostok lasted only three-quarters of a year. In November 1919, he engaged himself significantly into an anti-Kolchak putsch initiated by the Esers. The headquarters of this putsch was reportedly on Gajda’s train. The Koreans also participated in this putsch; according to a Russian source, Gajda had promised to give them arms afterward.¹¹⁹ The putsch failed, and many Koreans were persecuted brutally and executed for

¹¹³Ibid., 218.

¹¹⁴Klöslová, *The Czechoslovak Legion in Russia and Korean Independence Movement*, 209.

¹¹⁵Hanč remained for the rest of his life very interested in Asia and wrote a book *The Far East*. This book was published in 1933 and, according to Klöslová, it was probably the first publication on the occupation of Manchuria by Japan in 1931. Dejmek, Jindřich in cooperation with Němeček, Jan and Slavomír Michálek. *Dějiny diplomacie Československa II. Biografický slovník československých diplomatů (1918-1992)* /History of diplomacy of Czechoslovakia II. Biographical dictionary of Czechoslovak diplomats (1918-1992). Praha: Academia, 2013, 79-80.

¹¹⁶Klöslová, *The Czechoslovak Legion in Russia and Korean Independence Movement*, 212.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 213.

¹¹⁸Ibid., 212.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 213, 214.

their participation. Gajda, who was arrested by Kolchak’s deputy in the Far East General S. N. Rozanov,¹²⁰ had to commit to leaving Russia within three days. On 27 November, Gajda hastily left Vladivostok for Shanghai.

Gajda, expelled from Vladivostok as a *persona non grata* and now on his way to Czechoslovakia, was given a splendid hero’s welcome in Shanghai by the local Chinese officials, with great publicity. It was certainly a healing balm on his wounded vanity and his “*sometimes disordered ambition.*”¹²¹ Gajda spent December of 1919 in Shanghai. He was addressed as a representative of the Czechoslovak Republic, was “bombarded” by journalists, and met delegations of other nations. The Russian press, at the same time, wrote harsh articles against him calling him “*a half-illiterate, mercenary murderer who frivolously squandered thousands of young lives in the name of his vanity,*” and claiming, that “*in his train, he concealed deserters and traitors.*”¹²² The members of the Provisional Korean Government in Exile certainly knew of these anti-Gajda articles and knew about the failure of the putsch and Gajda’s expulsion. They were not critical of his activities in Russia. They sought again in Shanghai to contact him, continued to admire him, and hoped for support from him, even if this were – apart from receiving encouraging words of sympathy – futile expectations.

Members of the Provisional Korean Government and journalists met Gajda in the hotel Astoria, where he had accommodations. In particular, the article “A report of a Visit to General Gajda” by an unknown journalist and published in the newspaper *Tingui sinmun* interprets well the atmosphere of a meeting with Gajda, who was introduced as a famous Siberian hero who was of great significance in the foundation of the Czechoslovak state. Gajda was described as a handsome young man who treated the journalist “*as if they knew each other intimately.*”

The article reproduced Radola Gajda’s statements (abbreviated):

My homeland had been suffering several hundred years of disgrace and slavery and has now freedom again. Last March, your esteemed country proclaimed independence and demonstrated courage and patriotism unparalleled in history. As far as the general situation in the world is concerned, the era of Japanese Imperialism has passed. This is why I think that, if your nation proceeds in unity, patiently and courageously, the day when you achieve independence is not far. Please take me as a friend of your nation. Give your esteemed comrades my best wishes...when we meet again, both our nations will be great independent nations.

Gajda also promised that he would promote Korean independence in both speech and writing. The journalist also recorded that the next day a member of the Provisional Government, Ahn Changho, met Gajda and had had a long talk with him and that Yo Un-Hyong had met him twice.¹²³

Gajda demonstrated good familiarity with the situation of Korea and vice versa. The Korean Independence movement also had a firm knowledge of the position of the Czechoslovaks under Austro-Hungarian dominance and of the recognition of the independence of Czechoslovakia. Gajda and the Korean Independence Movement representatives identified similarities/identical fates of both nations. Gajda’s speech was optimistic, gave the Koreans courage and hope as well as straightforward advice. I suppose that his enthusiasm, optimism, and promises were influenced by the atmosphere which surrounded him in Shanghai.

According to Klöslová, Gajda was the first, and until then possibly the only, Czechoslovak who appreciated the March First Movement; the most important manifestation of anti-Japanese resistance of the Koreans.¹²⁴ The March First Movement had received almost no coverage in the Czechoslovak press, which was the opposite of what Gajda had claimed.

¹²⁰Moffat, Ian, C.D. *The Allied Intervention in Russian, 1918-1920: The Diplomacy of Chaos*. Palgrave Macmillan: 2015, 252-253.

¹²¹Klöslová, *Dva muži v korejské historii*, 218.

¹²²Klöslová, *The Czechoslovak Legion in Russia and Korean Independence Movement*, 214.

¹²³Ibid., 219, 220.

¹²⁴Ibid., 221.

Yo Un-yong did not forget that Gajda had provided him security a year ago on his way from Russia to Shanghai. He was the impetus for a great gift, which Gajda received from the Provisionary Korean Government in Exile. It was a beautiful silver cup. The inscription on the cup read that the Koreans addressed Gajda as a representative of the Czechoslovak Republic and that they still hoped to receive support from him. The existence of this silver cup is documented even in Czech sources. The representative of the Czechoslovak Government in Shanghai sent to Prague a brief account that Gajda received this cup but did not say from whom he received it. There was nothing about the Korean independence movement in Shanghai in this report.

When leaving Shanghai, Gajda thanked Lyuh Woon-hyung and promised to display the cup in his homeland. He did so in July 1927, at "The exhibition of the relics and documents of General Gajda's resistance abroad." According to the catalog of 229 displayed objects, it was a "Present of the Provisional Korean Government to General Gajda at Christmas 1919. This government was called into existence against the Japanese by General Gajda." This was not correct, but this formulation was certainly checked and approved by Gajda. The exhibition took place at the time when Gajda had compromised his reputation as a legendary hero by his cooperation with the Czech fascist movement.¹²⁵

The Czech Arms Business and the Korean Independence Fighters

The ships to evacuate the Czechoslovak troops from Vladivostok were rented by the Czechoslovak Central Economic Commission (Centromise) in Vladivostok, which was able to evacuate 14,3% of the Legionnaires at the expense of the Legion itself. The evacuation of the remaining soldiers had to be done by the Americans (50%), British (25%) and other Allies (25%).¹²⁶ The repatriation of the Czechoslovak troops started in December 1919, the first evacuation ship was the Jinan Maru, which left Vladivostok on 9 December, 1919. At first, the wounded and sick were transported to the United States, but then the transportation stopped due to the lack of means. The Legionnaires were waiting in Vladivostok and in neighboring regions for a number of months and became increasingly impatient.

During this time the Legionnaires tried to sell their arms to anyone who was interested in them. In Russia, where there was a large arsenal of weapons of various provenance, there was a lively trade. Anyone and everyone (buyers, sellers, and mediators) who could participate in this business, did. This was related to the overall situation in the area at that time. Legionnaires knew that the fight was over for them; that they were just waiting for their departure (even if the situation was far from being peaceful, as the invasion of Vladivostok by the Japanese on 4-5 April, 1920, followed by many atrocities, had demonstrated). The White Movement members struggled not to fall into the hands of the Bolsheviks, who gradually dominated Russian territory and solidified their power.

Among the buyers, there was growing activity by the Korean independence fighters, who had assumed a posture of guerilla warfare. The center of the Korean fight for independence was Manchuria. At the beginning of the 20th Century, about 600 000 Koreans lived in its southern part.¹²⁷ After the defeat of the March First Movement, in Manchuria and in Russia, "armies of independence" emerged that penetrated across the borders and caused considerable losses and damage to the Japanese. Klöslóvá suggests that within one year, as many as forty independence armies appeared,¹²⁸ from which follows a great need for weapons.

In October 1919, the Northern Route Military Command was founded as an army of the Provisional Korean Government in Exile in Shanghai. Parallely, the Western Route Military Command also existed. From the beginning of 1920, the Northern Route Military Command started to build a military camp in deep forests and mobilize young men. Soon, there were

¹²⁵Ibid., 216, 217. In addition on Gajda: Pejčoch, Ivo. Generál Radola Gajda, muž spojený s českými fašisty. <http://www.vhu.cz/general-radola-gajda-muz-spojeny-s-ceskymi-fasisty/>

¹²⁶<http://www.vhu.cz/evakuace-ceskoslovenskych-vojaku-z-vladivostoku/> Evacuation of Czechoslovak soldiers from Vladivostok.

¹²⁷Klöslóvá, Korejci a české zbraně. *Nový Orient*, 8/2000, 286.

¹²⁸Ibid.

1 100 men in this camp.¹²⁹ The Northern Route Military Command operated on the territory of Manchuria, but it secured arms from the territory of Russia. One of the main suppliers was the Czechoslovak Legion.

The Command of Czechoslovak troops planned the sales of the weapons. At the end of 1919, the so-called "Liquidation Department" had been established in order that "if possible, nothing of our military material falls in the hands of the approaching Red Army." The plan was that "an accelerated sale of the material of the Legion will take place after an armistice between the Red Army and the Czechoslovak troops will be proclaimed."¹³⁰ The Legionnaires were interested to sell the arms quickly, and they were selling them cheap. It started, as expected, right after the armistice between the Red Army and the Czechoslovak Army in February 1920, was concluded.

Lee Beom-seok, one of the leading commanders of the Northern Route Military Command, authored memoirs in which he wrote (abbreviated):

During the First World War, Germany and Austria concluded a [peace] treaty with Russia. This way, Czechoslovakia liberated itself from Austria and with the help of the United States, England and France achieved independence as a free democratic state. As soon as this information spread, two corps of Czechoslovaks from Austria, which participated in the war, started to consider going from the front in Eastern Europe via Siberia to Western Europe; to fight with the Allied armies and return victoriously home. Therefore, they went across Russia, through the Ural Mountains, and gathered in Vladivostok. While waiting for ships that would go West, they were told about the Korean independence movement; and they recalled their life in slavery that they had had to live under the yoke of the Austrian Empire, and showed us sympathy. It happened finally that they sold to our Northern Route Military Command weapons they kept in storage in Vladivostok. This business took place in the forest at night. These weapons were used for vengeance and to get rid of disgrace.¹³¹

I Pom- sok justified the sale of arms idealistically, just based on the sympathies of the Czechoslovaks for the Koreans, for their same position as oppressed nations. He praised the acquisition of heavy machine guns, rifles, 800 000 cartridges, and more of another materiel from the Czechoslovaks. I Pom- sok wrote that the arms were sold in piles. I Pom- sok's memoirs are one of the most important Korean sources on the sale of Czechoslovak Legion arms to the Koreans.

Another memoir concerning the Korean acquisition of arms is from Yi U-sok, who was deputy-commander of a guard squad that accompanied a group of Korean men carrying arms bought from Czechoslovaks in Vladivostok to the base of the Military Command in Northern Kandu in July 1920. Two-hundred-thirty Korean fighters were assigned to this operation, and they brought to the camp, completely exhausted, 200 guns, machine guns, and ammunition.

The Military Command reportedly dispatched its men thirteen times to Russian territory in the period between July and September 1920, to secure the arms. This shows the frequency of this business. We do not know if these thirteen acquisition trips were to buy the arms from the Czechoslovaks, but considering the size of the Czechoslovak contingent, I would suppose that it accounted for at least a majority of the trips.¹³²

Klöslóvá suggests that the beginnings of Czechoslovak sale of arms to the Koreans went back to the meeting of Yo Un-hyong with Radola Gajda in Vladivostok in early 1919. Even if she says that there are no sources confirming this, it sounds probable – see Gajda's promise of weapons to the Koreans mentioned earlier.

The Czechoslovak-Korean arms business grew to such proportions, however, that it triggered a negative reaction from both the Russian and the Japanese authorities. On 7 March, 1920, the chief of the Japanese General Staff, General Inahaki, protested to the Russian authorities against the fact, that "on their territory the Koreans, subjects of Japan, are having

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Klöslóvá, Korejci a české zbraně, 288. From Czech transl. by M. Poliřenská.

¹³¹Klöslóvá, Czech Arms for Korean Independence Fighters. *Archiv orientální*, 2003/1, 57.

¹³²Ibid.

an opportunity to acquire the arms and military equipment against Japan.” The protest further said that “even if on 30 January [1920] the Provisional [Russian] Government¹³³ issued an order preventing Koreans to acquire arms, this order remained on paper.” Inahaki expressed an advance warning that “if the Russian authorities are unwilling or unable to take action,” then “Japanese troops will be forced to oversee the regulation of conditions.”¹³⁴

The fact that the Koreans had in their possession so many arms were used by Japan as the justification of their plan to leave Siberia only after the Czechoslovaks would leave. Japan even blamed Russia that “the Koreans on Russian territory were equipped by arms so that they even dared to invade the territory of Korea.”¹³⁵ According to Klöslová, Korean historians stress that:

[The] high-quality of the arms from the Russian territory, including the arms bought from the Czechoslovak Corps, were one of the factors that enabled the Northern Military Command to win, in October 1920, the greatest victory of the anti-Japanese resistance, the battle of Qingshanli (Cheongsanri) in Southern Manchuria. The battle, on 21-26 October, 1920, is considered a landmark in the history of the Korean fight for independence.¹³⁶

The Czechoslovak Military Attaché in Washington, Vladimír Hurban,¹³⁷ reported later to Prague that his Japanese counterpart told him that the Government in Tokyo was concerned about the anti-Japanese behavior of the Czechoslovak soldiers and that Minister Charles Pergler had already received a note.¹³⁸

The Czechoslovak Armed Corps was the largest military force in Siberia at that time, and the arms held by the Legionnaires were prevalent in the Russian territory. Even if the arms sold to the Koreans were used in their fight for independence, in reality, on the Czechoslovak side, it was a trade for a profit with aspects of smuggling.

The Czechoslovaks must have known that these arms would be directed against Japan, which supported the Legion, was important for the repatriation of the Legionnaires, and was a friendly country of Czechoslovakia. The Legionnaires understandably could not take their large arsenal of weapons with them during the evacuation and had to dispose of them before their departure. Yet they were a foreign section of the Czechoslovak army, and selling the arms individually was highly questionable and politically risky. I concur with Klöslová that the Czechoslovak soldiers who participated in the sale of arms most likely had breached the rules, and they would have been punished for their illicit activities. The Korean side, on the contrary, has acknowledged and appreciated their conduct.¹³⁹ Further research should investigate any possible official discussion on the surplus of arms at the level of the Inter-Allied Commission. However, the arms business was to a large extent on a non-official basis. Comparison with other nations’ militaries in Vladivostok such as the Serbs or the Poles would also reveal important information.

The Legion actually was a manager of its own financial resources. In 1919, a Legiobanka was established in Irkutsk as a financial and economic institution of the Czechoslovak Legion.¹⁴⁰ In 1920, Legiobanka bought a ship in Japan, which was named Legie.¹⁴¹ This was the first Czechoslovak naval merchant ship for trade between Czechoslovakia and the Far East. The Centrokomise operated in Vladivostok, which has already been mentioned.

Could have the sale of arms to the Korean Resistance Fighters jeopardized the evacuation of the Legions? I do not think so, as the operation had a much larger international

dimension. On the contrary, there was an obvious interest to evacuate the Czechoslovaks, who were in Russia for a number of months, as fast as possible once the ships were available. Despite their proclaimed non-interference in domestic Russian affairs, they were involved in battles and could not avoid dealing with various political players in the area. Particularly the French, and also the British, were the first who were interested in using the Legion to support Kolchak. This plan failed, and the Legion did not become an instrument of the final defeat of the Bolsheviks. In 1920, when the Czechoslovaks were evacuated from Vladivostok, the chances of the Whites to reverse the situation were already null.

Conclusion and Questions for Consideration and Future Research

From the point of view of Czechoslovak-Korean relations, the most important aspect is that already at that time – in the very beginning of the existence of independent Czechoslovakia and the formation of the Provisional Korean Government in Exile – the young leaders represented here by Gajda and Yo Un-hyong were able to comprehend and express the common features of both nations, i.e. their subject position, national oppression, and patriotic endeavors. They managed to formulate their arguments on mutual friendship and support. The young Korean leaders demonstrated admirable knowledge about the situation in Central Europe, considering the difficult and lengthy communication mechanisms at that time. I think it is not so important to know whether Gajda meant his words sincerely or just “*pro forma*,” but he spoke like an experienced politician (even if he was not in the position to speak as an official representative). My opinion is that mutual Czechoslovak-Korean knowledge was greater than the literature suggests. Even if in the plethora of dramatic events in 1919 and 1920, the Czechoslovak expression of sympathies to the Korean movement for independence represented just a small episode, for mutual Czechoslovak-Korean relations it had an important meaning.

Why did the Korean independence movement not succeed in 1919 and the Czechoslovak independence movement did? The answer is closely linked to the international context. There was a certain analogy between the two: both movements had strong arguments, they had provisional governments in exile, they had the support of large expatriate communities which helped them with their dedication, they had armed forces outside of their homeland. Yet there were two very basic differences. The Czechoslovak resistance movement was affiliated with the victorious side – the Entente – and was directed against Austria-Hungary which at the moment when the Provisional Czechoslovak Government was recognized, was already collapsing. The Korean independence movement acted against Japan which was a strong ally of the Entente and belonged to the victors. The Czechoslovak troops were originally intended for deployment on the Western front, and thus for a substantial strengthening of the Entente, which was in the vital interest of the Allies; while the Korean movement could not offer at that time any valuable counterweight for support. It was not in the capacity of the Korean movement to achieve change, and therefore we cannot speak about failure. The conditions for the independence of the Korean nation came after a quarter-of-a-century later, after the Second World War.

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¹³³It means the Provisional All-Russian Government (1918-1920), located in Omsk.

¹³⁴Klöslová, Czech Arms for Korean Independence Fighters. *Archiv orientální* 2003/1, 59.

¹³⁵Klöslová, *Korejci a české zbraně*, 288. From Czech transl. by M. Polišenská.

¹³⁶Klöslová, Czech Arms for Korean Independence Fighters, 62.

¹³⁷Hurban's authorship of the telegram is based on the context, as the telegram is not signed.

¹³⁸Polišenská, *Diplomatické styky*/I, 261.

¹³⁹Klöslová, Czech Arms for Korean Independence Fighters, 62.

¹⁴⁰Legiobanka continued in the Czechoslovak First Republic under its name and after many changes has today a legal successor.

¹⁴¹The ship Legie was sold during the Great Depression to a Greek owner, and during the Second World War, it was torpedoed by a Nazi Germany submarine and sunk.

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Opposing Empire to Forge a Nation: A Comparison of the Czechoslovak and Korean Declarations of Independence at the end of World War I

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Introduction

Between the Fall and the Spring of 1918–1919, within a matter of months of each other, Czechoslovakia and Korea each declared independence from their respective Imperial masters. In so doing, they each also laid claim to a national identity of their own. Czechoslovakia emerged at this time as an independent and vital state in Central Europe. Korea would remain under foreign rule for decades to come.

Why was there this disparity between the Czechoslovak and Korean cases? While there can be numerous valuable avenues towards answering this question, an examination of the declarations of independence themselves also provides vital clues. When the respective declarations are compared with each other and with another key document of the time, President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, key differences emerge that suggest not only different documents from the two would-be states, but also different views and actions behind those documents. These differences of both style and substance provide unique insight into the different trajectories the two peoples would follow in the aftermath of World War I.

The Two Declarations of Independence

Czechoslovakia declared independence on October 18, 1918, in Paris. Korea declared independence less than five months later on March 1, 1919, in Seoul. The location and circumstances of the two declarations hint at some immediate differences. The Czechoslovaks declared their independence in the capital of an ally just before World War I ended. The Koreans declared independence in a major city of their country, still under occupation, months after the armistice was announced. These points are significant, and will be returned to in the Conclusion. First, though, let us look at the similarities of the documents.

There are four unique areas of similarities between the Czechoslovak and Korean declarations of independence. The first refers to the age of the nation and its historical independence. The second refers to at least one specific treaty violation that has damaged the nation's historical independence. Third, each of the declarations contains idealistic and poetic proclamations of the "new age" that will allow a return to their nation's independence. Fourth, each of the declarations outlines future steps to be taken.

Age of the Nation and Historical Independence

The Czechoslovaks write:

We make this declaration on the basis of our historic and natural rights. We have been an independent State since the seventh Century; and, in 1526, as an independent State, consisting of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, we joined with Austria and Hungary in a defensive union against the Turkish danger. We have never voluntarily surrendered our rights as an independent State in this confederation.

...

We claim the right of Bohemia to be reunited with her Slovak brethren of Slovakia, once part of our national State, later torn from our national body, and fifty years ago incorporated in the Hungarian State of the Magyars, who, by their unspeakable violence and ruthless oppression of their subject races have lost all moral and human right to rule anybody but themselves.

...

The world knows the history of our claims, which the Hapsburgs themselves dared not deny. Francis Joseph, in the most solemn manner repeatedly recognized the sovereign rights of our nation.

The Koreans write:

We hereby declare that Korea is an independent state and that Koreans are a self-governing people. We proclaim it to the nations of the world in affirmation of the principle of the equality of all nations, and we proclaim it to our posterity, preserving in perpetuity the right of national survival. We make this declaration on the strength of five thousand years of history as an expression of the devotion and loyalty of twenty million people.

...

For the first time in several thousand years, we have suffered the agony of alien suppression for a decade, becoming a victim of the policies of aggression and coercion, which are relics from a bygone era. How long have we been deprived of our right to exist? How long has our spiritual development been hampered? How long have the opportunities to contribute our creative vitality to the development of world culture been denied us?

Treaty Violation Damaging the Nation's Historical Independence

The Czechoslovaks write:

The Habsburgs broke their compact with our nation by illegally transgressing our rights and violating the Constitution of our State, which they had pledged themselves to uphold, and we, therefore, refuse longer to remain a part of Austria-Hungary in any form.

...

The world knows the history of our struggle against the Habsburg oppression, intensified and systematized by the Austro-Hungarian Dualistic Compromise of 1867. This dualism is only a shameless organization of brute force and exploitation of the majority by the minority; it is a political conspiracy of the Germans and Magyars against our own as well as the other Slav and the Latin nations of the Monarchy.

The Koreans write:

We do not intend to accuse Japan of infidelity for its violation of various solemn treaty obligations since the Treaty of Amity of 1876. Japan's scholars and officials, indulging in a conqueror's exuberance, have denigrated the accomplishments of our ancestors and treated our civilized people like barbarians.

Proclamations of the "New Age"

The Czechoslovaks write:

Democracy has defeated theocratic autocracy. Militarism is overcome—democracy is victorious; on the basis of democracy, mankind will be reorganized. The forces of darkness have served the victory of light – the longed-for age of humanity is dawning. We believe in democracy, we believe in liberty – and liberty evermore.

The Koreans write:

We claim independence in the interest of the eternal and free development of our people and in accordance with the great movement for world reform based upon the awakening conscience of mankind. This is the clear command of heaven, the course of our times, and a legitimate manifestation of the right of all nations to coexist and live in harmony. Nothing in the world can suppress or block it.

...

Behold! A new world is before our eyes. The days of force are gone, and the days of morality are here. The spirit of humanity, nurtured throughout the past century, has begun casting its rays of new civilization upon human history. A new spring has arrived prompting the myriad forms of life to come to life again. The past was a time of freezing ice and snow, stifling the breath of life; the present is a time of mild breezes and warm sunshine, reinvigorating the spirit. Facing the return of the universal cycle, we set forth on the changing tide of the world. Nothing can make us hesitate or fear.

...

Conscience is on our side, and truth guides our way. All of us, men and women, young and old, have firmly left behind the old nest of darkness and gloom and head for joyful

resurrection together with the myriad living things. The spirits of thousands of generations of our ancestors protect us; the rising tide of world consciousness shall assist us. Once started, we shall surely succeed. With this hope, we march forward.

Outline of Future Steps

The Czechoslovaks write:

We shall outline only the main principles of the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Nation. The final decision as to the Constitution itself falls to the legally chosen representatives of the liberated and united people.

The Czechoslovak State shall be a Republic. In constant endeavor for the progress, it will guarantee complete freedom of conscience, religion and science, literature and art, speech, the press, and the right of assembly and petition. The Church shall be separated from the State.

Our democracy shall rest on universal suffrage. Women shall be placed on equal footing with men, politically, socially, and culturally. The rights of the minority shall be safeguarded by proportional representation; national minorities shall enjoy equal rights. The government shall be parliamentary in form and shall recognize the principles of the initiative and referendum. The standing army will be replaced by the militia.

The Czechoslovak Nation will carry out far-reaching social and economic reforms; the large estates will be redeemed for home colonization; patents of nobility will be abolished.

Our nation will assume its part of the Austro-Hungarian pre-war public debt; the debts for this war we leave to those who incurred them.

In its foreign policy, the Czechoslovak Nation will accept its full share of responsibility in the reorganization of Eastern Europe. It accepts fully the democratic and social principle of nationalism and subscribes to the doctrine that all covenants and treaties shall be entered into openly and frankly without secret diplomacy.

Our Constitution shall provide an efficient, rational, and just government, which will exclude all special privileges and prohibit class legislation.

The Koreans write:

We shall safeguard our inherent right to freedom and enjoy a life of prosperity; we shall also make use of our creativity, enabling our national essence to blossom in the vernal warmth. We have arisen now.

...

Three Open Pledges

- 1. Our action today represents the demand of our people for justice, humanity, survival, and dignity. It manifests our spirit of freedom and should not engender antiforeign feelings.*
- 2. To the last one of us and to the last moment possible, we shall unhesitatingly publicize the views of our people, as is our right.*
- 3. All our actions should scrupulously uphold public order, and our demands and our attitudes must be honorable and upright.*

Comparison

While these four areas are of similarities between the two declarations, a few points of difference immediately stand out. The Czechoslovak declaration is more detailed and explicit. This is especially true in regards to the historical independence and treaty violations, as well as (crucially) outlining a future constitution. Indeed, the detailed outline of the future constitution is the longest section in the above categories from the Czechoslovaks; and within that section, one can find numerous references to the systems and traditions of the major Western Allies.

The Korean declaration focuses far more on the impressive age of its civilization, the size of its population, and the ideals that it shares with the West. Their longest section from above is focused on the ideals of the "new age" and the necessary place of Korea in that age. The joy and idealism are palpable, yet it also spills over into the section on future steps. Here,

unlike with the Czechoslovaks, there is no real concrete grasp of what to do next. The future steps are themselves ideals.

The Two Declarations in Comparison with the Fourteen Points

The Fourteen Points was a vital document emerging during World War I and expressing both a justification for US involvement in the war, as well as a vision of the post-war world. It is often referred to as an idealistic document, praised with attempting bold changes to solve the problems of a world in flux and in turmoil. While those assertions are up for debate, it is quite clear that the document had a strong impact on both the Czechoslovaks and the Koreans as they were drafting their respective declarations of independence.

Before entering into the comparisons of the declarations with the Fourteen Points, a few terms should be clarified. First, the relationship between the declarations and the Fourteen Points will be discussed in terms of "attachments." An "attachment" here refers to concepts that appear both in the declaration of independence as well as in the Fourteen Points.

Second, it should be clarified what is meant by "the Fourteen Points" in this analysis. The Fourteen Points was part of a larger speech given by President Wilson on January 8, 1918. It has since been taken and viewed as an independent document. As "taking them as an independent document" can lead to any number of variations, this analysis is using the version as highlighted by the US National Archives. This version includes the fourteen points, bookended on either side by the two paragraphs immediately preceding and following those points. Purely as a way of reference, the first two paragraphs will be called the "Introduction" while the last two paragraphs will be called the "Conclusion."

The Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence

The Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence was issued nine months after the Fourteen Points speech. There are 19 attachments between it and the Fourteen Points. The Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence attaches to the Introduction and the Conclusion, as well as every single one of the fourteen points, save Pt. 2 concerning freedom of navigation (a rather understandable omission for a landlocked Central European people). With this immense degree of attachment covering the near whole of the Fourteen Points, the Czechoslovaks seem to have taken the Fourteen Points as a checklist of necessary components for their declaration. Some of these attachments deserve particular mention.

One of the crucial things that the Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence does is clearly situate itself among the Allies and among the victims of World War I. For example, in terms of the Allies, the declaration reads:

For these principles our nation shed its blood in the memorable Hussite Wars five hundred years ago, for these same principles, beside her Allies in Russia, Italy, and France, our nation is shedding its blood today.

In terms of the victims, the declaration reads:

We cannot and will not continue to live under the rule, direct or indirect, of the violators of Belgium, France, and Serbia, the would-be murderers of Russia and Rumania, the murderers of tens of thousands of civilians and soldiers of our blood, and the accomplices in numberless unspeakable crimes committed in this war against humanity by the two degenerate and irresponsible dynasties.

Not only does this directly place the Czechoslovaks as a primary victim of aggression and as an important and active Ally, it also directly connects to Pts. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 of the Fourteen Points.

In addition to situating Allies and victims, the Czechoslovaks also solidify their Imperial master and prime enemy, Austria-Hungary, with the prime enemy of the Western Allies, Germany. The declaration reads:

Francis Joseph, in the most solemn manner repeatedly recognized the sovereign rights of our nation. The Germans and Magyars opposed this recognition; and Austria-Hungary,

bowing before the Pan-Germans, became a colony of Germany, and as her vanguard to the East, provoked the last Balkan conflict, as well as the present world war, which was begun by the Hapsburgs alone without the consent of the representatives of the people.

This section is significant, as it not only attaches their enemy to that of the Western Allies but also reminds everyone of the conditions of the beginning of the war. Austria-Hungary started the war through an act of pure aggression in Eastern Europe with the consent and support of Germany, the dominant of the two powers. It also attaches to the Introduction, Conclusion, and Pt. 10 of the Fourteen Points.

One final important attachment to highlight is the Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence directly referencing Wilson, the Fourteen Points, and other essential American and Allied national documents. The declaration reads:

We accept and shall adhere to the ideals of modern democracy, as they have been the ideals of our nation for centuries. We accept the American principles as laid down by President Wilson: the principles of liberated mankind, of the actual equality of nations, and of governments deriving all their just power from the consent of the governed. We, the nation of Comenius, cannot but accept these principles expressed in the American Declaration of Independence, the principles of Lincoln, and of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.

While it may come across a bit strong, the effect is still striking. The Czechoslovaks declare that their nation has shared the democratic principles of the West for hundreds of years and that these principles overlap with the fundamental documents of the Allied democracies and Wilson's own plan for peace. It is a powerful statement that informs, reminds, shames, and praises the Western Great Powers all at once.

The Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence is a thoroughly meta-political document. What is meant by that is that the declaration functions in a way to achieve multiple political goals. The first political goal, obviously, is to declare national independence. The second goal is to make clear that Czechoslovakia is a valuable Ally fighting and dying alongside the other Allies, and often in defense of the Allies and their respective homelands. The third goal is to lay claim to victimhood of the enemies' aggressions going back centuries. The fourth goal is to situate the Czechoslovak people and future state squarely within the democratic traditions of the Western Great Powers. Each of these goals reinforces the others, making multiple arguments towards a legitimate declaration of independence as well as a legitimate acceptance of that declaration by the Allies.

The Korean Declaration of Independence

The Korean Declaration of Independence was issued a little more than 13 months after the Fourteen Points. There are only 8 attachments between it and the Fourteen Points. The Korean Declaration of Independence attaches mainly to the Introduction and the Conclusion while attaching to just two of the fourteen points (Pt. 5 and Pt. 7 by inference). The Koreans seem to have responded very strongly to the spirit and the ideals of the Fourteen Points, as this is where their attention is focused concerning the attachments. As with the Czechoslovak declaration above, some of these attachments should be looked at more closely.

The Korean declaration finds attachments to every line of the Introduction and the Conclusion, often repeatedly. As these two sections of the Fourteen Points are where the idealistic language is most pronounced, it is no surprise to see a similar trend in the Korean Declaration of Independence. The theme of the "new age" is quite dominant in the Korean declaration. For example, the declaration reads:

We claim independence in the interest of the eternal and free development of our people and in accordance with the great movement for world reform based upon the awakening conscience of mankind. This is the clear command of heaven, the course of our times, and a legitimate manifestation of the right of all nations to coexist and live in harmony. Nothing in the world can suppress or block it.

...

Today when human nature and conscience are placing the forces of justice and humanity on our side, if every one of our twenty million people arms himself for battle, whom could we not defeat and what could we not accomplish?

Part of this "new age" is the breaking of the cycle of vengeance. The language regarding this is mostly in the Conclusion of the Fourteen Points but is discussed through much of the middle of the Korean declaration. In the Fourteen Points, referring to future relations with Germany, it reads:

We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this programme that impairs it. We grudge her no achievement or distinction of learning or of pacific enterprise such as have made her record very bright and very enviable. We do not wish to injure her or to block in any way her legitimate influence or power. We do not wish to fight her either with arms or with hostile arrangements of trade if she is willing to associate herself with us and the other peace-loving nations of the world in covenants of justice and law and fair dealing. We wish her only to accept a place of equality among the peoples of the world, -- the new world in which we now live, -- instead of a place of mastery.

In the Korean declaration, in reference to Japan, the attachment reads:

We do not intend to accuse Japan of infidelity for its violation of various solemn treaty obligations since the Treaty of Amity of 1876. Japan's scholars and officials, indulging in a conqueror's exuberance, have denigrated the accomplishments of our ancestors and treated our civilized people like barbarians. Despite their disregard for the ancient origins of our society and the brilliant spirit of our people, we shall not blame Japan; we must first blame ourselves before finding fault with others. Because of the urgent need for remedies for the problems of today, we cannot afford the time for recriminations over past wrongs. Our task today is to build up our own strength, not to destroy others. We must chart a new course for ourselves in accord with the solemn dictates of conscience, not malign and reject others for reasons of past enmity or momentary passions. In order to restore natural and just conditions, we must remedy the unnatural and unjust conditions brought about by the leaders of Japan, who are chained to old ideas and old forces and victimized by their obsession with glory.

Later, in the section "Three Open Pledges," the Koreans list as their first pledge:

Our action today represents the demand of our people for justice, humanity, survival, and dignity. It manifests our spirit of freedom and should not engender antiforeign feelings.

The Korean's approach to the Japanese goes a bit beyond what Wilson was suggesting should be the Allies approach towards Germany, which went quite a ways on its own. We can also see some of the influence of the Korean Christian community in this section, invoking the lesson from Matthew 7:3-5 about solving the faults within one's self before seeing to the faults in others.

The Korean Declaration of Independence is a thoroughly idealist document. By this, it is meant that the Korean declaration connects itself to world events via the declared ideals of the time: a "new age" where Imperialism and aggression are no longer accepted behaviors; where a nation that chooses a democratic path is already an equal member of the vanguard leading the world in this critical moment; and that with these tidal shifts of history, one can forget history and look purely to the bright future. The Korean declaration focuses on these points to assert and obtain the independence of the Korean nation, though it almost wholly ignores the realist political details of the fourteen points themselves.

Comparison

The Czechoslovak attachments are numerous, layered, and thorough. They attach to the Introduction and Conclusion, where the idealism of the Fourteen Points is mostly contained, as well as to all but one of the individual fourteen points themselves. Going beyond this, the Czechoslovak declaration explicitly highlights their contributions to the Allies, their long suffering at the hands of the enemy who caused World War I, and their national and historical democratic underpinnings.

The Korean attachments are quite sparse, and they are almost wholly concerned with the ideals contained in the Introduction and the Conclusion. The Korean declaration not only assumes and matches those ideals, but actually goes beyond them. In great contrast to the Czechoslovak declaration, the Koreans go out of their way to absolve Japan of wrong-doing. Despite the language of forgiveness in the Fourteen Points, the Czechoslovaks do nothing but hammer home the ingrained evil of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Conclusions

There are three main tensions that emerge from observing the above analyses within the context of the events of the time. The first is the Realist/Idealist tension at the end of World War I. The second is the tension between action and reaction to events. The third is the tension between Allies and Enemies.

Wilson, and the Fourteen Points, are both considered to be images of theoretical Idealism. Due to the geopolitical power shifts caused and exacerbated by World War I, this Idealism found a position of strength in the dealings between the US and Europe. Europe, though, was and remained students of Realism. To be honest, the US was also. What this tension led to, then, were Realist actions being clothed in Idealist language. For example, while the Fourteen Points may have given the impression of being anti-Imperialist, it was only the enemies' empires that were named as needing to be dissolved. Those peoples who read and heard and believed the Idealism at the expense of the Realism were going to be unpleasantly surprised by the consequences. Those people who read and heard and believed the Realism hiding "between the lines," on the other hand, were in a good position to benefit from the knowledge.

The tension between action and reaction is also significant. The Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence, as mentioned above, was announced in the capital of a major Western Ally. It was the culmination of months and years of political maneuvering across multiple countries and continents, leveraging multiple and different political acts around the world. Successful combat operations on both the Western and Eastern fronts, building good personal relationships between Czechoslovak and Western leaders, and utilizing the massive expatriate communities in the US, all paved the way for the Czechoslovaks to impact events as they were unfolding in a desirable way. The Koreans, on the other hand, were mainly reacting to events. To a degree, this was inescapable on their part, due to the final and most significant tension.

The Czechoslovaks were lucky to benefit from being a subject people under an empire at war with the West. The Koreans were severely harmed by being a subject people under an empire that was allied with the West. The Czechoslovaks could vilify the Austro-Hungarian Empire with abandon, without needing to think twice that their view would not be in line with the views of their Allies. The Koreans had to thread a much more difficult needle, as Japan was the main Eastern ally to the Western powers. The Koreans did not at all have the same luxury as the Czechoslovaks did, of being able to be honest about their view of their oppressors with the confidence that their potential liberators would agree. As the fourteen points were far more concerned with the Western theater anyways, the Koreans also did not have much opportunity to directly connect to the realist politics of those points the way the Czechoslovaks could. With this being their reality, the Koreans attached where they could: the ideals of the universal human values and rights that they welcomed as touchstones to a better future of all humankind.

Though the Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence may have been more immediately successful in its goals due to its appreciation for realist politics, within a generation Czechoslovakia would be consumed by realist politics hacking away at their support structures of the alliance, personal relations, and domestic political leverage. Though the Koreans were unsuccessful at the time, they had a very clear understanding of the reality of their region and

what it meant for the world. In a painfully prescient passage, the Korean declaration reads:

The enslavement of twenty million resentful people by force does not contribute to lasting peace in the East. It deepens the fear and suspicion of Japan by the four hundred million Chinese who constitute the main axis for stability in the East, and it will lead to the tragic downfall of all nations in our region. Independence for Korea today shall not only enable Koreans to lead a normal, prosperous life, as is their due; it will also guide Japan to leave its evil path and perform its great task of supporting the cause of the East, liberating China from a gnawing uneasiness and fear and helping the cause of world peace and happiness for mankind, which depends greatly on peace in the East. How can this be considered a trivial issue of mere sentiment?

Just think of how different the world would be today, had the West listened to the Korean's warning.

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Politics of Recognition: A Study on the Propaganda Activities of the Korean Provisional Government around WWI

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Introduction

As is well known, Korea lost its sovereignty through the Treaty on Japanese Annexation of Korea in 1910. However, due to Japanese oppression of the Koreans during the 1910s, the Koreans actively participated in the national movement for Korean independence in the March First Movement of 1919, right after World War I. Regarding the Korean cause, it is well known that the Wilsonian idea of self-determination had a great impact on colonies, the areas which were under former imperial powers, particularly the defeated Austro-Hungarian Empire. However, it did not apply to the Allied Powers or Entente Powers such as the US, UK, France, Japan, Russia, Italy, etc. Thus, it was evident that Korea or India under Japan and the UK respectively, would not achieve independence; while Czechoslovakia under the Austro-Hungarian Empire would be able to secure its independence before the end of the war. Having considered the international reality, it might be understandable because the Allied Powers were not able to dissolve themselves. Thus, this paper does not try to explain the historical issues related to Korean independence but rather deals with comparing the Korean overseas groups, particularly the Korean Provisional Government's propaganda for Korean independence, with the Czechoslovak overseas groups' ideas for independence.

Considering the fact that the Korean independence movement was directly related to World War I, it is necessary to look at the existing literature on World War I, where it is relevant to the Korean case. The First World War has been dealt with in terms of the collision of the European powers, focusing on the alliance system, domestic politics, imperial rivalries, etc.¹⁴² Recent best-selling work shows a multi-archive approach that tried to show the misunderstanding and incapacity of European political leaders.¹⁴³ Also, there is research on the peoples' experience, rather than the political leaders' decision making.¹⁴⁴ Recently, there is some research on the legacy of World War I. The most important is about the Paris Peace Conference and its impacts.¹⁴⁵ However, this literature is full of Euro-centric approaches. Very few works have focused on colonial issues. Thus, Erez Manela's work is very exceptional in dealing with colonial issues, including one chapter (out of ten) on the Korean March First Movement.¹⁴⁶ There is no doubt that Korean scholarship on this issue is enormous, but what is still missing is how Korean overseas groups, including the Korean Provisional Government, tried to put Korean issues before the "family of nations."¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, a Korean research team has even published a database on the March First Movement.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴²James Joll and Gordon Martel, *The Origins of the First World War* (London and NY: Routledge, 1984) (1992, and 2006 Editions).

¹⁴³Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* (New York: Penguin Books, 2012).

¹⁴⁴Alexander Watson, *Ring of Steel: Germany and Austria-Hungary in World War I-The People's War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014).

¹⁴⁵One of the representative works is Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House Publishing, 2003). Though it touched upon China and Japan, its context is within the peace conference. Another is Adam Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War, America, and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916-1931* (New York: Viking, 2014), which deals with the rise of the US.

¹⁴⁶Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anti-Colonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁴⁷There is so much literature on the March First Movement in Korea. In 1969, for the 50th anniversary of the March First Movement, there was *Samil undong 50 chunhyon kinyon nonjip* [50th Anniversary Theses on the March First Movement] (Seoul, Tonga Ilbosa, 1969). Also, this year 2019 is the 100th anniversary of the Movement, so that there has been published a book coauthored by many prominent scholars on this Movement. See 3.1 *Undong 100 chunhyon* [March First Movement, One Hundred](Seoul, Humanist, 2019).

¹⁴⁸http://db.history.go.kr/samil/home/introduce/introduce_content.do.

Thus, this paper is to show what the Korean Provisional Government brought to the international community. It will show the Provisional Government assumed that it represented Korean society and put its argument to the Korean-American and Korean-European treaties, which were not touched by Japanese policy towards Korea. Thus, it failed. However, this experience pushed the Korean overseas organizations during World War II to realize the importance of state recognition, so that it tried to appeal to the Allied Powers, particularly the US, for not only the obligation of a treaty between Korea and the US (1882) but also for their recognition of the Korean Provisional Government as a lawful government. Also, though we need more research, the Korean Provisional Government probably learned from the Czechoslovakia case during World War I, so that the former strengthened military power as well as diplomatic activities in the US.

Korean National Council and the Formation of the Korean Provisional Government

Korea had been deemed to convey its own diplomatic rights to Japan through the Japanese Protectorate Treaty with Korea, which was forced upon the Government of the Empire of Korea (*Taehan Cheguk*) on November 17, 1905. Thus, Korean delegates were denied entrance to the conference venue when the Hague Peace Conference was held in 1907, a conference which brought a new international norm in international disputes. Thus, when the Japanese Annexation Treaty with Korea, which was unclear as to whether the Korean Emperor had consented to or not, was announced in August 1910, the main powers accepted this as *fait accompli* with muted responses.

A Korean overseas group was formed through immigration to Hawaii and California between 1902 and 1905. Thus, around 1907, the Korean National Council had formed mainly in Hawaii and California. It was not a political organization, but more like Korean fraternity groups. However, with the loss of Korean sovereignty, many Korean youth groups went to the Maritime Province in Russia, and Beijing and Shanghai in China, so that those people also had networks, among others.

The Korean National Council dispatched its delegation to the Paris Peace Conference right after World War I. However, unlike the Bohemian National Alliance in the US and the National Council of Czechoslovak Countries in Paris, it did not seek for state recognition, a stance which will be explained later.¹⁴⁹ It is interesting that right after World War I broke out, the overseas communities of Czechs and Slovaks were active in bringing their own independence, so that the Czech Declaration of Independence was already proclaimed on November 15, 1915.¹⁵⁰ Since then, until the end of World War I, the Bohemian National Alliance was active in its propaganda activities. As is well known, Czech and Slovakia cooperated in achieving independence with the Czechoslovak Legion (militia) and diplomacy in Central Asia/Siberia and US/Europe respectively. Thus, the Allied Powers realized the importance of the Czechoslovak Legion as well as the urgent need to dismember the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Consequently, they recognized the Czechoslovak Provisional Government which was centered in Paris, France.¹⁵¹

Only around the time of the end of World War I, however, did the Koreans try to grasp the chance to resort to the Allied Powers at the Paris Peace Conference. Thus, they dispatched a delegation of the Korean National Council to Paris when there was an imminent breakdown of the Central Powers in late 1918.¹⁵² Particularly, the overseas Koreans in Shanghai dispatched

¹⁴⁹For this, see Jong-Chol An, "Making a State Known Internationally: Charles Pergler's Activities for the Czechoslovak Republic during and after World War I" in *Korea in Eastern Europe: Perceptions and Cultural Connections*, *Wiener Beiträge zur Koreaforschung* VII (March 2016): 26-42.

¹⁵⁰William Mahony, *The History of the Czech Republic and Slovakia* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011), p. 136 ("On November 14, Masaryk announced the founding of the Czech Committee Abroad in Paris in order to conduct negotiations with the government of the Allied Nations."). The date November 14 is European time while November 15 is US mid-West time.

¹⁵¹For general information of Czechoslovakian independence, Michael R. Cude, "Wilsonian National Self-determination and the Slovak Question during the Founding of Czechoslovakia, 1918-1921," *Diplomatic History*, 2014.

¹⁵²David Hyun and Yong Mok Kim eds., *My Autobiography: The Reverend Soon Hyun* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2003) (hereafter *My Autobiography*).

its delegation to Paris. The chief delegate was Kim Kyu-Sik, who was a leader of the New Korean Youth Group (*Sinhan Ch'öngnyöndan*).

Their basic ideas for Korean independence were similar to the 33 Korean representatives for the Mansei Movement in the March First Movement in 1919. In a letter sent to the Japanese Prime Minister, through the Korean representatives of the Movement (as the Annexation was not clear in terms of the Korean Emperor's approval), they raised several points. Among these were time-honored Korean traditions, Korean suffering under Japanese colonial rule, brutish Japanese culture compared to Korean "high culture," the Japanese threat to Oriental peace, the change of international settings for peace, etc.¹⁵³

The Korean delegates to the Hague Peace Conference in 1907 were denied because the Empire of Korea did "convey" its diplomatic rights to Japan in the Protectorate Treaty in 1905. Thus, as of 1919, to the Allied Powers, Korea was a part of Japan and, moreover, it was not a wartime participant in the war against the Central Powers. Thus, it was only later they realized that a provisional government was crucial to communicate with the Allied Powers, though at this moment, there were only peaceful Korean demonstrations.

As is well known, the March First Movement occurred in March 1919, and continued vehemently at least until the end of April 1919, with the Korean independence movement spreading widely due to the Emperor Kojong's death and the Wilsonian principle of self-determination. Thus, the Korean National Council and other overseas Korean groups realized that there should be a unified organization for Korean independence. Consequently, on April 11, 1919, the Korean overseas group formed the Korean Provisional Government.

The Korean Provisional Government realized that it was urgent to dispatch a delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, which was held from January 18, 1919 until July 1919. Thus, amid the conference sessions, the Korean Provisional Government was established in Shanghai, China. Even before the Korean Provisional Government was set up, March 13, 1919, la Mission du Gouvernement Provisoire de Corée (Mission of the Korean Provisional Government) arrived at Paris, France, and set up the Bureau d'Information Coréen (Bureau of Korean Information) for propaganda activities¹⁵⁴. Also, the Mission to Paris published French publications such as *La Corée Libre* (Liberty of Korea) and *L'Indépendance de la Corée* (Korea Independence) for communicating to the allied powers.¹⁵⁵

It is interesting to find that the Korean Provisional Government had no doubt about their rightful status as an organization representative of the Korean people to proclaim Korean independence. Moreover, it is very illuminating that the Government based their rationale for Korean independence upon the Korean-American Treaty (1882), rather than a logic for the international recognition of the Korean state as a new one.¹⁵⁶ For the Korean Provisional Government, their status was self-evident. Thus, it sent its own suggestions to the Conference as if it were an independent country's government. The core suggestions can be summarized in five points, which are consistent with a document prepared later for the Korean Commission to the US, an organization of the Korean Provisional Government.

First, it argued that Korea had been independent with a unique history and culture for 4,200 years. This is similar to Czech-American Charles Pergler's argument that the Habsburgs "unlawfully and by violence suppressed" Bohemian history and culture, right after the Thirty Years

¹⁵³"Korean 33 Representatives to Japanese prime Minister," March 1, 1919, in the March First Movement database at the National Institute of Korean History available at http://db.history.go.kr/samil/home/manifesto/select_manifesto_detail.do.

¹⁵⁴Letter from Kim T'ang to Koh Kim, Bureau d'information coréen on April 26, 1919, in *Taehanmin'guk Imsichöngbu charyojip* [Sources on Korean Provisional Government] 24, database of the National Institute of Korean History, available at http://db.history.go.kr/item/level.do?setId=20&itemId=ij&synonym=off&chineseChar=on&page=1&pre_page=1&brokerPagingInfo=&position=9&levelId=ij_024_0010_00010_0010.

¹⁵⁵"Taehan Minguk Imsichöngbu chuparidaep'yobu"[Paris Mission of the Korean Provisional Government] in *Han'guk minjok taebaekwa sajön* [Encyclopedia of Korean Culture], available at <https://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/SearchNavi?keyword=%EB%8C%80%ED%95%9C%EB%AF%BC%EA%B5%AD%EC%9E%84%EC%8B%9C%EC%A0%95%EB%B6%80%EC%A3%BC%ED%8C%8C%EB%A6%AC%EB%8C%80%ED%91%9C%EB%B6%80&ridx=0&tot=2243>.

¹⁵⁶For the recognition of states, Mikulas Fabry, *Recognizing States: International Society & the Establishment of New States Since 1776* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010), particularly Ch. 4 "New States Between 1918 and 1945." However, this book did not deal with Korea at any place.

War (1618-1648) and ended "Czech national life" in the middle of the 18th century. The origins of Czechoslovakia were dated back to around the 7th century¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, Czechoslovakia also established the oldest university in Central Europe, Charles University, in 1348.¹⁵⁸

Second, Korean amity and commercial treaties with Japan, the US, the UK, and others all verified Korean independence. In particular, the US had formed a treaty with Korea in 1882, in which there was the first article providing:

*There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the President of the United States and the King of Chosen and the citizens and subjects of their respective Governments. If other powers deal unjustly or oppressively with either Government, the other will exert their good offices on being informed of the case to bring about an amicable arrangement, thus showing their friendly feelings.*¹⁵⁹

Japan also approved Korean independence and the preservation of territory in several treaties, at least up to the Korean-Japanese Treaty on Offensive and Defensive Alliance in February 1904.

Third, it indicated the brutality of Japanese colonial rule. Japan had always shouted for reform in Korea. Though there were some reforms, most of them were only for Japanese interests and happiness through Korean labor and taxes. Koreans had a large Christian population so that Japanese rules also went against Korean Christianity. This is similar to the point that Charles Pergler argued that Czechoslovakia was the country which produced the martyr John Hus under the Catholic regime before Luther "by a hundred years."¹⁶⁰

Fourth, Japan was excluding foreigners such as English, French, and Americans from their territories. Thus, to them, the most dangerous thing was unchecked Japanese expansion to the Asian continent. The seed of this expansion started from the Japanese annexation of Korea. With its hegemony in Asia, Japan would then go to the Pacific for their interests. Thus, Japan had the ultimate goal of sending its people to Australia and the US as immigrants. This argument is similar in expounding the post-war order in Asia with Charles Pergler's post-war order in Central Europe, in that the dismemberment of the Habsburg Court and independence of Czechoslovakia would ultimately secure peace in Central Europe, for it ultimately would weaken the German war machine.¹⁶¹

Fifth and last, the size of the Korean independence movement was enormous in the March First Movement, which was related to 3 million Korean independence corps, representing 30 million Koreans. Ultimately, it created the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai. The implication was that Koreans would ceaselessly join the independence movement.

As a conclusion, the document argued that, according to the international public law (*kukche kongpöp*), Korea was entitled to enjoy the outright cancellation of the Japanese Annexation Treaty with Korea and the subsequent independence of Korea. To them, it was the realization of the principle of justice like in the cases of the resurrection of Poland and the return of Alsace Lorraine from Germany to France, etc.¹⁶²

Korean Provisional Government's Activities for Recognition of Korea in the US

During World War I, Czechoslovakia was very different because the overseas Czech and Slovak people had already formed the National Council in Paris and participated in propaganda works in Europe and in the US, while the Czechoslovak Legion was actively harassing the

¹⁵⁷Charles Pergler, "The Austrian Problem," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science in the City of New York*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 1917), pp. 140-142.

¹⁵⁸Charles Pergler, "Czechoslovakia: a Symbol and a Lesson," *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, 15/1 (Winter 1939), p. 6.

¹⁵⁹For the original text of the Korean-American treaty, see <https://web.archive.org/web/20160311075538/http://www.instrok.org/instrok/resources/Draft%20and%20Final%20Versions.pdf>.

¹⁶⁰Charles Pergler, "Czechoslovakia: a Symbol and a Lesson," p. 6

¹⁶¹Charles Pergler, "The Austrian Problem," p. 145.

¹⁶²"Suggestions to Paris Peace Conference by the Korean Provisional Government," June 1919, available at the database of the National Institute for Korean History, available at http://db.history.go.kr/item/level.do?sort=levelId&dir=ASC&start=1&limit=20&page=1&pre_page=1&setId=-1&prevPage=0&prevLimit=&itemId=ij&types=&synonym=off&chineseChar=on&brokerPagingInfo=&levelId=ij_016_0020_00010&position=-1.

Eastern War Front against Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Particularly, the Czechoslovak Legion was very effective in attacking the two Empires, so that the Allied Powers already recognized the Provisional Government of Czechoslovakia in Paris. Thus, the Korean Provisional Government learned enough from this experience of the Czechoslovak overseas community during World War I, that World War II saw the active movement for the recognition of the Korean Provisional Government; though it did not achieve its aim during the war. Moreover, the recognition of the Korean Provisional Government had lingering effects even after Korean liberation from Japan.

Thus, after the Paris Peace Conference, the Korean Provisional Government focused on the US for its own rationale because the US became a powerful country with its centrality in international politics.¹⁶³ Thus, we can see its activities and logic for the Korean independence movement in the US through the Korean Provisional Government's special envoy to the US, Hyun Soon. Hyun's main activities, with the formal title of the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister plenipotentiary from the Republic of Korea to the United States of America, focused on his visit to the State Department of the US for submitting Korean causes, which mainly asked the US for "the resumption of direct diplomatic and commercial relations" upon "the basis of the Treaty of 1882 between our two countries."¹⁶⁴ His submitted suggestion to the US, the "request for formal and official recognition on the part of the President and Government of the United States of America of the full and complete independence of KOREA,"¹⁶⁵ while bold, can be also divided into five points.¹⁶⁶

First, the request was "on the basis of our hereditary and unquestionable historic right," because Korea had been "independent and sovereign state and national for more than four thousand years." It was actually very rare around 1910 to see the outright annexation of one historical country by another one, though the late 19th century was full of those stories. This was the same argument that Charles Pergler raised.

Second, in relation to the first, the request was also based upon the Korean-American Treaty in 1882, which has the second paragraph of Article I, as follows "If other powers deal unjustly or oppressively with either Government, the other will exert their good offices, on being informed of the case, to bring about the amicable arrangement, thus showing their friendly feelings." Thus, without cancellation of the US Congress, a country was not able to annul the treaty, so that it was still valid.¹⁶⁷

Third, before the Japanese Protectorate Treaty with Korea in 1905, or at least until the annexation treaty in 1910 were "concluded," in various treaties, including the Wartime Alliance Treaty in February 1904, Japan had "unequivocally recognized and reiterated the fact that Korea was an independent state and nation." Thus, the Koreans did not surrender "our rights of sovereignty" to Japan. Thus, the Koreans "have refused, and shall continue to refuse, to recognize or acknowledge any alleged right or authority" on the part of Japan over Korea.¹⁶⁸

Fourth, furthermore, the suggestions criticized that Japan was not entitled to rule Korea because "through the institution of feudalism Japan has created a military aristocracy which is utterly at variance with Korean ideals." To Koreans, Japan is not "a civilization that is worthy of imitation."¹⁶⁹ "Feudal" meant backward and barbaric in the suggestions.

¹⁶³This theme came from Adam Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War, America, and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916-1931*.

¹⁶⁴Hyun accepted his position on October 6, 1920, when Syngman Rhee went to Shanghai, China, for his inauguration as the First President of the Korean Provisional Government. Hyun's position exactly falls on the tenure of Korean President until June 1921 when Hyun was dismissed by Rhee. At that time, Syngman Rhee and Kim Kyu-Sik had led the Korean Commission in Washington, DC. David Hyun and Yong Mok Kim eds., *My Autobiography*, pp. 149-150. For his announcement of his position to the US, "The Announcement of the Honorable Soon Hyun's Acceptance of the Appointment as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Potentiary," in David Hyun and Yong Mok Kim eds., *My Autobiography*, pp 165-D4 and D5.

¹⁶⁵"The Request for Recognition of the Independence of Korea" (May 11, 1921), in David Hyun and Yong Mok Kim eds., *My Autobiography*, p. 173-D6.

¹⁶⁶Soon Hyun to Charles Evans Hughes, "Request for Recognition of the Independence of Korea," *ibid.*, pp. 173-D7-9.

¹⁶⁷For this argument, see Carole Cameron Shaw, *The Foreign Destruction of Korean Independence* (Seoul National University Press, 2007).

¹⁶⁸Soon Hyun to Charles Evans Hughes, "Request for Recognition of the Independence of Korea," pp. 173-D7-8.

¹⁶⁹*ibid.*

The fifth and last reason that Korea criticized Japan was that Japan waged a war against "free government and Christian civilization in Korea," and that the Koreans "have accepted and shall adhere to the American principles of equal rights and justice for all nations alike." Consequently, Korea looked to the US because it symbolized to the Koreans "as ever-burning beacon light of liberty which will ultimately lead the nations of the world to a universal reign of law based upon the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of civilized mankind."¹⁷⁰ Thus, Korean independence would follow the US model, particularly in a democracy.

Overall, the Korean recourse to the US and Europe during and after World War I was to rely upon the Korean-American Treaty in 1882, international law, criticism of Japanese militarism, etc. This was also widely reported in the US news media.¹⁷¹ The Korean argument was not to simply ask the Allied Powers' recognition of a new state, based upon self-determination, which only applied to former Austro-Hungarian territories. That was why the Korean overseas group and later the Korean Provisional Group did not seek for its own legitimacy and recognition by the Allied Powers.

The Korean resort to international law and the treaty between Korea and the US (1882) was different from the Czechoslovakia case because the latter resorted to historical and cultural legitimacy dating back to the 17th century when Czechoslovakia was an independent kingdom. However, the two countries' overseas groups had a common ground that Korea and Czechoslovakia were entitled to be independent of tyrannies, military and Catholics, symbols of Japanese and Austro-Hungarian Empire jointly or respectively.

However, there was a big difference between the Korean and the Czechoslovak cases in terms of a legal aspect; to Charles Pergler, "The Czech State never ceased to exist legally; Czechoslovakian claim to independence were recognized before the armistice by all the European powers as well as by the United States." Thus, the Czechoslovak Republic was not "created" by the Paris Conference right after World War I. Rather, the peace conference in Paris simply "acknowledged an existing fact." Furthermore, the Czechoslovak Republic became a "participant in the peace conference as a sovereign power," because of the presence of the Czechoslovak Legions.¹⁷² However, the Korean Provisional Government was very different because it was not created before the Paris Peace Conference, so that they never contacted the Allied Powers during wartime. Thus, there must still be research done on why the Korean overseas groups were late in mobilizing their powers during World War I, and why they rather only focused on the Korean independence movement at the end of World War I, or around October 1918.

In addition to the time of the overseas diaspora group's activities in Korea and Czechoslovakia respectively, the most crucial difference was the presence or size of the military group. It is well known that, in reality, the Czechoslovak Legions were crucial in bringing allied powers to the position to recognize the independence of the Czechoslovak Republic. The Czechoslovak National Committee had begun to organize the Czechoslovak Legion in France, Italy, and Russia right after the outbreak of World War I. In Russia, in particular, there were more than 70,000 Czechoslovak soldiers who had formerly served the Austro-Hungarian Empire in waging war against Russia. The Czechoslovak Military Legion was crucial for the Allied Powers to concentrate their military powers on the Western front because the Legion was still threatening the Eastern front.¹⁷³ Due to their presence, the Central Powers' Troops were not to divert their units to the Western front easily. Thus, the Czechoslovak leaders were able to achieve the French government's official recognition of the Czechoslovak army under the leadership of the Czechoslovak National Council in December 1917. Furthermore, after the US declared war on the Central Powers in late 1917, approximately 40,000 Czech-American

¹⁷⁰*ibid.*, p. 173-D9.

¹⁷¹"Korean Asks Help to Regain Liberty," *Washington Post*, May 12, 1921, in *ibid.*, p. 173-D10.

¹⁷²Charles Pergler, "The Right of Czechoslovakia to Independence," *The New York Times Current History* 14/6(September 1, 1921), pp. 942-943.

¹⁷³Patrick Crowhurst, *A History of Czechoslovakia between the Wars: From Versailles to Hitler's Invasion* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015), p. 21.

and Slovak-Americans joined the US forces.¹⁷⁴ Thus, due to Czechoslovak Legion's exploits in Siberia, the Czechoslovak National Council was recognized by the Allied powers as a proper wartime military: by the French on June 30, 1918, the British on August 9, 1918, and the United States on September 3, 1918.¹⁷⁵ Even US President Woodrow Wilson was quoted as saying that *"Throughout the war, by your entire course of conduct, and by your legions, you have shown your demand independence, and we have merely recognized an accomplished fact,"* shortly after recognition of the Czechoslovak National Council.¹⁷⁶

Against this backdrop, the Korean activists also knew these complex relations, though to them a new era would come with the idealistic principles. However, the Paris Peace Conference showed the two elements of both idealistic and realistic international relations, so that in order to be recognized as a proper government and a future independent government, military power was one of the two cardinal columns in which a rationale for independence and military powers were both necessary.

Thus, some research is needed on what the Korean activists were doing in terms of military preparation during World War I. Furthermore, it is strange to find that there is less evidence that the Korean Provisional Government tried to get the recognition of the Allied Powers as a proper counterpart as a legal government, beyond the proclamation of a new government. It was more like a unilateral proclamation on the part of the Korean Provisional Government. Maybe even if you secured your legal position as a lawful counterpart, still maybe there was a long way to secure military power because military power was meager on the part of the Korean overseas groups. Thus, the lesson that the Korean Provisional Government learned from the Czechoslovak case was probably that the diplomacy and military power both were important, a point that they tried to realize during World War II, particularly in Washington, DC, and China. However, in the Second World War, in addition to the above mentioned elements, the principles for state recognition had another element: US post-war strategy. Thus, the road to independence was not easy while Czechoslovakia was also absorbed into the German orbit during World War II, and became unstable under the Communist bloc during the Cold War era.

Conclusion

Korea lost its own sovereignty in 1910 *de jure* while it did in 1905 *de facto*. World War I made a space for diverse ethnic or national groups under imperial powers, particularly the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to gain their independence. Korea was no exception. However, right after World War I, the Wilsonian moment was only to root for the European countries, not for the Asian countries. To be precise, it only applied to the German allied countries: Germany, Austro-Hungarian, and the Ottoman Empire. Japan joined the Allied Powers, so that Korea would not secure its chance to secure independence. The same situation applied to India which was under the UK.

Thus, the Koreans who experienced national independence until 1910 did not feel the need to get the recognition of other countries right after World War I. Rather, they simply asked the US and European powers that the Korean-American Amicable Treaty (1882) and treaties with Europe not be annulled through the Japanese forceful overtaking of Korea, but rather should be resurrected and continued by the US and European powers. Thus, it did not take efforts to obtain the recognition of Korea which other nations under the Austro-Hungary Empire, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, did in Paris, London, and Washington, DC.

Later, Korea realized that the recognition of its own Provisional Government was necessary, so that during World War II, in addition to strengthening its military powers, it put all its energy towards this issue. Thus, when Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai became busy with reinstalling its own Commission to the US in Washington, DC, for this issue. Unfortunately, as is well known, the KPG did not

secure recognition by the Allied Powers, mainly from the US. Regardless of its success or not, the important point that the KPG learned was that state recognition was necessary in the international arena. Probably, the KPG more realistically learned it from the Czechoslovak experience right after the March First Movement in 1919.

The connection between Czechoslovakia and Korea was realized through Charles Pergler, who was a diplomat and scholar but was marginalized from the Czechoslovak Republic. He came to Korea under the US Army Military Government as a US citizen, not as a Czechoslovak citizen. However, that shows a wonderful saga which provides many images about the two countries' relationships. Although the road to independence was a bit different in terms of time, manner, and space, the spirit of independence still resounds between the two countries. That shows the reason why the two countries' seemingly different but intertwined relations should be carefully compared and studied.

¹⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

¹⁷⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶Charles Pergler, "Czechoslovakia: a Symbol and a Lesson," pp. 7-8.

The Impact of the Japanese Annexation on Korean Society and Post-war Policy

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Japanese occupation had a very big impact on the whole of Korean society, and the long annexation also influenced the early years of both independent Koreas. The Japanese occupation of Korea was much longer than the German occupation of Bohemia and Moravia during World War Two. It lasted not six years, but 35 years; so many Koreans had been born in occupied Korea. They did not remember a time when the country was independent. So, after the defeat of Japan, it was impossible to find any officer, clerk, expert or policeman who had not collaborated or worked for rulers in Tokyo. Most of the people were under the strong influence of Japanese propaganda, and some of them stayed in their minds. Echoes of Japanese propaganda were possible to see also during the Korean War.

There were, of course, also differences between both occupations. Japan never promoted a policy of eradication leading to a holocaust. The Empire “only” used Korea as a source of natural and human resources, which led sometimes to enslavement. To realize the situation better, in September 2014, I spoke with two people who remembered the Japanese occupation. I met Kim Bok-dong, one of the so-called comfort women, and Lim Bang-kyu, who was born in the south of Korea and raised during the time of the occupation. After World War Two, Lim was strictly opposed to the United States Army Military Government in Korea.

In order to understand this complicated issue, it is important to remember that Tokyo changed its approach to the annexed peninsula over the years. After suppressing the uprising for freedom that erupted in 1919, it began to promote Korean national culture. The governor allowed two Korean papers to be published. Between the wars, Japan promoted the idea of *naisen ittai*, according to which Japan and Korea were one body. Confirming this, Lim Bang-kyu, who was raised during World War Two, stated (Švamberk 2015, p. 171):

They said that In-san and Cho-sen are one country, and that Korea is descendent of Japan. However, since Korea is a peninsula, they saw it as less than a Japanese major island; they saw it as just a ‘half-island.’ The Japanese said that, even if they are on a higher level, they will take care of us as their own, as Asians, and that we should be grateful to them for this. Koreans were seen as the younger brother who still needs to be raised.

The indoctrination was quite successful. Already by the late twenties, many Koreans from the upper class spoke Japanese and later some even favored Japanese military efforts.

When war with China erupted, tough Japanization was enforced. Korean people had to change their names to Japanese names. And all the lessons in the school were only in the Japanese language, remembered Lim Bang-kyu (Švamberk 2015, p. 166):

When I started elementary school, they were prepared to teach only in Japanese. Those who were a year older still learned Korean as well, but when I started going to school, they changed all instruction to be in Japanese. When they said that we will have a national language, they meant Japanese. When they spoke about national history, they meant Japanese history. I didn’t learn any Korean history, only Japanese. We had to memorize the names of all the Japanese emperors. When the children came to school in the morning, they had to do a morning workout. Since Japan is east of Korea, we had to bow deeply and genuflect towards the east because that is where the Japanese emperor was. The temple of the goddess Amaterasu was also there. When the lessons were finished, before going home, we had to bow to Amaterasu again. Most of the teaching was geared towards making us Japanese; they taught us to think in Japanese.

The pressure on pupils was very strong, added Lim (Švamberk 2015, p. 167):

Those who were in the higher fourth grade couldn’t even speak Korean. We were all given these small cards that fit in our shoes. Whenever you heard another student speaking in

Korean, you would take one of his cards. At the end of [each school] month, they would check how many cards we each had. Those with the least cards were the worst pupils. Those with the most cards were the best.

School punishments were harsh. Pupils were also forced to work, noticed Lim (Švamberk 2015, p. 167):

They made us kneel, or they would beat our outstretched hands. We also had to weave bags from rice straw as a punishment, but this was for the older kids. It was very strenuous for the children because they didn’t use looms, and the bags were very heavy. It was difficult for them to carry the bags at all. The bags were not only used for carrying rice. They also filled them with clay and used them as shields against shrapnel. We built various defenses against shrapnel.

Pupils also had to support the Japanese war effort in some other ways, said Lim (Švamberk 2015, p. 167):

The school playground was grass, which was given to the cows, or sometimes used as fertilizer. All the schoolchildren maintained it. After school, the children had to make piles of grass because there was no money to buy fertilizer. We also had to mow the grass, and dry it to make hay for the horses, but we could only dry it in the shade. Because of the war, they had all the children collect iron, everything from nails to spoons, chopsticks to musical instruments, and anything that was made out of iron, sometimes even door handles.

Since the United States and Great Britain controlled the sea, the Japanese could not get enough oil, so they wanted the Korean children to grow sunflowers, and when school started, bring in all the seeds. We also had to cut certain trees and collect the sap, out of which they made oil, which was used as an additional energy source.

These drastic methods of Japanization were successful, mentioned Lim, when he spoke of Korean pupils (Švamberk 2015, p. 167):

“They could express themselves in Japanese, think in Japanese, and finally even learn from their Japanese teachers in Japanese.”

Japanization did not end with the obligation to change one’s family name and use the language of the occupiers. It went much deeper because the Japanese army needed the occupied Koreans to be ready to die for the emperor. Therefore, teachers were trying to instill the image of the enemy in schoolchildren as early as possible. Lim recalled (Švamberk 2015, p. 169):

“We spent a lot of hours training for deployment to the army. They would make straw dummies and name them Roosevelt and Churchill. We had to kill these people. We only used wooden swords because we were ten years old.”

According to him, the Japanese ideology during the war was simple, as seen in the way they described the conflict (Švamberk 2015, p. 169):

“They made it into a struggle between the West and Asians. In order to survive the American and British efforts to take over, they needed us to stand by the Japanese and protect Asia together.”

After graduation, the Japanese army awaited the boys. Lim recalled:

“In 1945 there was a kind of conscription, which called up all boys over the age of twenty to the army.”

Lim admitted that young Koreans were willing to fight and die for Japanese emperor Hirohito (Švamberk 2015, p. 171):

They brainwashed us, and nearly made us Japanese. There was a celebration during army recruiting in Jeolla bukto. The officer gave a welcome speech about what was happening at the time, which the young people didn’t understand. He told us that we should fight well, and that as good soldiers, we should be ready to sacrifice ourselves for the nation. Almost everyone would then say that he was ready to die for the emperor of Japan, and for Japan. When they said that, they cried, but today no one would admit that it happened.

But the Japanese did not need only young Korean men to fight for them. They also used Korean girls for forced labor. Lim remembered (Švamberk 2015, p. 168):

“Women were supposed to go into labor units, which didn’t mean working as comfort women, but working in a factory. Most of them went to Hokkaido, where there were many coal mines and factories.”

However, some Korean women ended up as sex slaves in Japanese army brothels that operated under atrocious conditions. As one of them, Kim Bok-dong, said (Švamberk 2015, p. 168):

They took all the girls and ordered all the women to report to the factory, and they falsely told them that they will work there. When they showed up at the factory, they took them to the front, where they serviced the Japanese soldiers.

They had labeled us as women’s labor departments. They lied to us and told us we would work in the factory, but we all had to service Japanese soldiers. I couldn’t study because I was a peasant’s daughter. I was young I was only fourteen, so they just took me, along with some others. They dragged us to all the places where they were fighting: Taiwan, Canton, Hong Kong, Malaya, Sumatra, Indonesia, Java, and Singapore. I was with the army until Japan was defeated.

Conditions in army brothels were horrible, remembered Kim Bok-dong (Švamberk 2015, p. 177):

On Saturday, beginning at twelve and ending at five, there was a line of soldiers in front of us. We worked from six in the morning until four in the afternoon on Sundays, so they didn’t ask us to do more after that. Japanese soldiers had to fight, so they couldn’t come every day. Those who couldn’t come on Saturday or Sunday came during the week.

The whole Korean society, even small kids, was under Japanese control and infiltrated by Japanese propaganda. Many Koreans did not think that Japan could lose the war. Lim made no secret he was among those surprised by the defeat of the Japanese Empire in the summer of 1945 (Švamberk 2015, p. 172):

It was August 15 or 16 when we were liberated from the Japanese. I don’t remember the date exactly, but I was in school. It was during the holidays, but I was still in school. The teacher ordered us to take down the Japanese flag. The Japanese principal told us that Japan had lost the war, and now we Koreans would be able to live in a free Korea. We, who were raised Japanese, were shocked because we could not imagine that the Japanese had lost the war. Everything was so strange.

The new circumstances were completely beyond the children’s previous experiences, mentioned Lim (Švamberk 2015, p. 172):

“We kids thought it was odd how everyone laughed, what everyone said, that they spoke in Korean. The teachers also switched from Japanese to Korean.”

But not only children were surprised by Tokyo’s surrender. Lim recalled (Švamberk 2015, p. 172):

“We were happy that Korea was free, but there was also chaos. When the Japanese had occupied us, we were ruled by the emperor. Now there was no one to rule us, no organization.”

The situation changed very quickly with the network of the newly founded People’s Committees, described Lim (Švamberk 2015, p. 142):

The People’s Committee system was already established one week after the liberation. We had no ruler, no organization that ruled us, rather there was an effort made to create our own organization, management system and government in the village – and not only in my village. It would start in the village, we had a People’s Committee, then the head of the village would go to a bigger village, and then to the city to put together a [higher] committee, but it wasn’t elected.

At that time, there were many political leaders in prison at Seodaemun, who, after their release, spread out across Korea and became chairmen of the People’s Committees.

The People’s Committees, consisting of various nationalist and predominantly leftist resistance groups, had taken over not only local governance but also quickly developed

a hierarchical structure. Lim Bang-kyu recalled (Švamberk 2015, p. 142):

“The first People’s Committees were established in this situation, mostly spontaneously hierarchical structures quickly formed in the power vacuum, and three weeks after the liberation was announced, the Korean People’s Republic was declared.”

The experienced Korean politician Yo Un-hyung (Mongyang) was elected as the temporary chairman of the National People’s Representative Conference of the short lived People’s Republic of Korea (PRK) on September 6. This republic was officially proclaimed on September 12, but in reality existed from September 6.

The Choice of Yo Un-hyung was logical. In 1919, he was one of the founders of the Youth of New Korea Party and the minister-in-exile of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai. He had even discussed assistance and probably also an arm deal with the commander of the Czechoslovak Legionnaires when they stopped on their trans-oceanic journey home after fighting in Siberia. Radola Gajda praised the Korean uprising in March, and he was provided an armed escort for his return to Shanghai (František Nonnemann). Later, he was a member of the Korean and Chinese communist parties; and during the Japanese occupation, he spent some years in jail. He never went into exile and never abandoned the fight for independence. In August 1944, he founded the Korean Restoration Brotherhood in Seoul, which expanded. He was very active after the defeat of the Japanese Empire in August 1945. On August 15, he immediately took authority of administration from Ryusaku Endo, the Vice-Minister in the post of Governor-General of Korea; and two days later he formed the Committee for Preparation of Korean Independence.

Everything happened very quickly, and the United States was not prepared for such fast developments. Dean Rusk and Charles Bonested determined the furthest boundary for the Red Army at the last minute, on August 10, 1945, the day after the Soviets launched their offensive in the Far East. To keep Seoul in the US zone, they decided to use the 38th Parallel as the demarcation line. Moscow, surprisingly, accepted this. The Red Army, which had liberated Chongjin on August 16 and Pyongyang on August 24, advanced no further, even when the Americans left the South to fend for itself, not arriving in Incheon until September 8 – six days after the end of World War Two and two days after Yo Un-hyung was elected as the temporary chairman of the National People’s Representative Conference. Washington missed the momentum; the Americans came too late.

The Americans were also unsure about the situation and how to act – if they should approach Korea as an occupied country, after being part of Japan for more than thirty five years; or as a liberated country, just emerging from the yoke of the Japanese. General John Reed Hodge, who headed the American troops, received completely contradictory orders. The Commander of the Sixth Army, General Joseph Stilwell, told him the occupation should be only half-friendly because a small group of Japanese collaborators was among the inhabitants. On the other side, General Douglas MacArthur told him that the Koreans should be treated as citizens of a liberated nation. The Secretary of War and the Navy Coordinating Committee ordered him to *“create a government in harmony with US policies,”* although US policy towards Korea was not yet defined (Hastings 2010, pp. 19-20).

Hodge refused to see three representatives of the Korean People’s Republic who had come to meet him at the port when his ship arrived. He thought it *“unwise to give even the slightest appearance of possibly favoring any political group”* (Jager 2013, p. 32). Hodge was aware that the Japanese feared the independence supporters and that, especially, communists might seize power if the Americans did not come (Cummings, 2006, p. 189).

This fear was comprehensive, but the original idea of the People’s Republic of Korea was different – to create a wide front of patriotic Korean leaders. Seats in leadership were guaranteed for important exile leaders such as Syngman Rhee and Baekbeom Kim Koo, as well as for the partisan commander Kim Il-sung, who would eventually become the leader of North Korea. From the distance of time, this combination of names looks strange, but the choice of the latter is not as surprising as it may seem at first glance. Lim explained (Švamberk 2015,

pp. 151-152):

“Kim Il-sung symbolized the struggle for freedom in Korea. Every country that has fought for freedom has made someone a symbolic hero. At that time, Kim was someone to whom people opposing occupation attributed supernatural abilities.”

It is obvious. Fighting the Japanese with their strong army was not easy, and Kim was able to continue in the partisan war with them in Manchuria for some years with Japanese units unable to catch him. *“There were different heroic stories about Kim Il-sung, which doesn't mean Kim actually did these things. They show that under Japanese rule, the Koreans imagined they were fighting the Japanese and everyone who fought for freedom in Korea was named Kim Il-sung,”* added Lim.

There was also the Korean Restoration Army, established by the Korean Provisional Government in Chongqing on September 17, 1940; but this unit was part of the Chinese National Revolutionary Army led by the Kuomintang. The unit gradually expanded, and at the end of the war, it had over 300 men in active service. In 1944, the Korean soldiers were sent at the request of the British Army to Burma and India and participated in the famous Battle of Imphal. Their planned deployment in Korea never happened because the war ended so quickly. Finally, they did not participate in the liberation of Korea. This was a big mistake by the Allied SEAC (South East Asia Command) because it helped the Soviet Red Army and Kim Il-sung to establish their position as the only liberators of the Korean Peninsula since the Americans only came after the war.

The Koreans eagerly awaited the Americans. They hoped that the Americans would detain the Japanese General Governor Abe Noboyuki and his loyal collaborators, but they were quickly disappointed. Lim recalled (Švamberk, 2015, p 146):

“When the Americans arrived, we welcomed them, waving American flags, but when the word occupation appeared, the United States lost its [positive] image.”

This happened almost immediately. *“The day before his ship landed, an airplane scattered leaflets that said that Korea below the 38th Parallel will be occupied by Americans. I have the original poster,”* added Lim.

On September 7, Douglas MacArthur's first two declarations were distributed across the country, which certainly did not make the Koreans feel they were being treated as a liberated nation. The very first article of the first declaration clearly states (Burchett 2013, pp 38 – 39):

“All powers of government over the territory of Korea south of 38 degrees north latitude and the people thereof will be for the present exercised under my authority.”

The sixth paragraph specified who would have power in South Korea: *“Further proclamations, ordinances, regulations, notices, directives, and enactments will be issued by me or under my authority, and will specify what is required of you.”*

“And it warned that those who do not submit to US military administration may be punished,” added Lim. That was in the second declaration of the day, where MacArthur repeatedly used the term “occupation” (Burchett 2013, pp. 38-39):

In order to make provision for the security of the armed forces under my command and for the maintenance of public peace, order and safety in the occupied area, as Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific, I do hereby proclaim as follows: Any person who: Violates the provisions of the Instrument of Surrender, or any proclamation, order, directive given under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific, or does any act to the prejudice of the life, safety, or security of the persons or property of the United States or its Allies, or does any act calculated to disturb public peace and order, or prevent the administration of justice, or willfully does any act hostile to the Allied Forces, shall, upon conviction by a Military Occupation Court, suffer death or such other punishment as the Court may determine.

Hodge, to whom Governor Abe Noboyuki had surrendered on September 9, began to cooperate with the Japanese occupation administration because it was the only functioning network in South Korea. The general secured administrative positions for the Japanese colonial

officials, and order was maintained by the same policemen as during the time of annexation. It is possible to understand, but it was not clever. The Americans only took the places of the Japanese rulers.

General Hodge established the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) on September 12 – on the same day as the proclamation of the People's Republic of Korea. Hodge refused to recognize the PRK.

Douglas MacArthur was aware that the long-term retention of Japanese people in power could cause problems. Therefore, on September 11, he ordered all Japanese to vacate their positions. Many continued to serve as informal advisors to the Americans, however. Distrust of the Americans grew.

Lim described the degree of change after the arrival of the Americans (Švamberk 2015, pp 172-173):

The situation completely changed. Immediately after independence, all the people who had sided with the Japanese were imprisoned; but then they were freed and had power over us again. Again, they had weapons. Anyone who had power under the Japanese was put in jail, but the American military government released all those who had been on the Japanese side, so they still had power. Immediately after the declaration of independence, these people feared reprisals from Koreans who were tortured or spied on, but the USA gave them power. Since the Japanese were gone, many government positions were vacant, so many people were promised an even higher position; for example, a policeman could become a senior police officer.

Old collaborators sided with the Americans, did what the Americans wanted, and occupied high posts in the government. None of the people who had sided with the Japanese was punished. They hired them. That's the reason why we were against the Americans. It framed our thoughts and feelings toward the United States.

They also released all the people who were in jail. In order to govern, they needed Korean people on their side, so they let everyone out of prison, most of whom had supported the Japanese. It is historical reality.

Lim added that it was only *“between the liberation and September 8, when the Americans landed in Incheon, we lived in freedom.”* He described his point of view (Švamberk 2015, p 148):

I think the Americans were not interested in Korea's independence, but wanted to dominate Korea because its position on the peninsula is important. They felt that the people who were against the Japanese would not obey, but the people who had supported the Japanese would because they needed money and would feel grateful to the American army that had saved them.

It was his view of the situation, but the reality was different. There was no such American intention. The USA had not yet specified its policy toward Korea, and the Korean Peninsula was not incorporated in the American sphere of interest until the end of the forties. The policy was only the utilitarian approach of USAMGIK in managing South Korea.

American authority extensively used members of security forces formerly loyal to the Japanese Empire. On October 15, 85% of the Korean national police force was made up of officers who had served in the Japanese forces until the defeat of the Empire. The situation did not change much, even after a year. As former US director of KNP (Korean National Police) William Maglin stated in 1946, 949 of the 1,157 officers were members of the colonial forces, which is 82% (Cummings 2005, p. 166).

There was a similar situation in the newly created National Defense Forces, the future army. For the first class of the newly established Korean Military Academy, the US authorities chose twenty officers from the former Japanese army, another twenty from the Manchukuo puppet state Kwantung Army, and only a third from the Restoration Army controlled by the Provisional Government in Chungking, which had fought in Burma.

The situation in South Korea was from the first weeks after liberation disturbing and created concerns on the American side. H. Merrell Benninghoff, Hodge's political advisor,

remarked on the Korean's disillusionment in his report to Washington on September 15, 1945 (Cummings 2006, pp 192 – 193):

“South Korea can be best described as a powder keg ready to explode at the application of a spark. There is a great disappointment that immediate independence and sweeping out of Japanese did not eventuate.”

Americans needed someone unencumbered by cooperation with the Japanese. This was Syngman Rhee, a Korean politician who stood at the head of the Provisional Government of Korea from 1919 to 1925, when he was removed from office over allegations of misuse of power. He did not accept this decision and continued to fight for Korean independence. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, he tried to convince American President Franklin D. Roosevelt to give Korea independence.

Since Rhee Syngman had lived in the United States ever since he had not been involved with the Japanese, and he understood the American mentality. He was recommended by the head of the Office of Strategic Services, Preston M. Goodfellow, according to whom he possessed more American attitudes than any other Korean leader. After a secret meeting, MacArthur transported him to Korea on October 16, aboard his personal plane, The Bataan, despite the reservations of the State Department that he is a man who only pursues his own interests (Cummings 2006, p. 195). Rhee Syngman opposed the People's Republic of Korea, even if he had a guaranteed seat in its leadership. He probably would not split the possible power with other Korean leaders.

Lim commented briefly on the American choice: *“They also needed a leader who would be on their side. They had that in Rhee Syngman.”*

Also, Hodge preferred Rhee because of his fluent English and his ability to talk with authority to American officers.

Lim described still another reason for the growing resistance to the American military government because the USAMGIK did not accept the Korean Provisional Government (Švamberk 2015, 148):

The Americans did not recognize the Provisional Government in Shanghai, which could not officially return. When they asked about the possibility to return, US officials rejected it, allowing its members to return only individually, as private citizens. Meanwhile, Koreans considered the Provisional Government to be the government.

This was big surprise because the Allies had initially expected the Provisional Government in exile to come to power. Americans lost trust because Yo Un-hyong was involved in forming the Korean People's Republic.

Another leader of Provisional Government “Baekbeom” Kim Koo arrived in Seoul on November 23, but as a private person.

But Rhee also quickly got into conflict with the American leadership. The United States, which did not want to give Korea independence immediately, stuck to Roosevelt's idea to prepare the country for independence via patronage, as they did in the Philippines. Washington thought at the beginning of the 20th Century that the Philippines were not yet ready to govern themselves, not in the eyes of the Americans. Roosevelt felt that the Vietnamese, Burmese and Javan peoples also needed patronage.

In December 1945, foreign ministers from the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union met in Moscow to discuss the postwar arrangement. Korea was one of the key topics. They guaranteed independence to the country, but not immediately. The United States further promoted patronage because it thought that the majority of countries exiting from the colonial rule could not govern themselves right away, though Hodges' political advisor William Langdon wrote to the US State Department (Jager, 2013, p. 37):

After one month's service in liberated Korea and with a background of earlier service in Korea I am unable to fit trusteeship to actual conditions here. Or to be persuaded of its sustainability from moral and practical standpoints and, therefore we should drop it. It is imperative that U. S. act to will convince the Korean leaders that our intentions of their independence are genuine.

However, the United States continued to pursue Roosevelt's policy, and the Soviets finally agreed with a kind of compromise. *“There was five-year administrative management arranged. At first, all Koreans, from the Right or the Left, disagreed because it was a trusteeship,”* recalled Lim.

The reaction was furious. The South was engulfed by strikes. Schools were closed. People took to the streets to demonstrate. Rhee stood against the Moscow decision and demanded immediate independence, insisting that *“the self-respect of his nation would not permit the acceptance of this decision or of anything short of full independence.”* Another important politician, Kim Koo, called for a general strike and the recognition of the Provisional Government (Jager 2013, p. 39).

Because Korea did not immediately gain independence, Lim decided to join the students' protest movement (Švamberk 2014, p. 154):

Most students were in the leftist union of students after independence. In December 1945, the main theme of the protests was against trusteeship. The government suppressed most of [the protests]. At the time, there were negotiations in Moscow between the United States, Britain, and the USSR. The students argued with each other over whether they agreed with the results of the negotiations.

Because Korean opinions were influenced and partly formed by Japanese propaganda, they felt the United States denied them freedom and independence. A portion of Koreans saw the Americans as occupiers, and they felt they had to rebel against them. Lim confirms this with other memories (Švamberk 2015, p. 153):

I was fifteen. We had a gym teacher named Kim Jubsu. Once he summoned us to come and play sports. He told us: ‘You know, guys, people died in the Second World War, in Britain, in Africa, thousands of people died in the Second World War. We also lost most of our possessions, and money is worthless. We suffered physically and mentally. And who started this war? Japan, Germany, Italy. After the war, these three nations should be ruled by the nations that won the war. But don't think that our nation is less important, because we weren't trying to hurt anyone. We were also the victims of war, so shouldn't we be free and independent? And why should a foreign country govern us? We were under the Japanese for thirty six years, so why should we be ruled by the United States now? So, even if you are young, you need to spread the anti-American fight and kick the Americans out of our country. If we don't, we will be their colony for a long time.’ It really got to me. I felt my hair stand on end. The Americans are doing the same thing as the Japanese. The politics looked the same. That's why I felt called to join the anti-American movement.

The indoctrination by the Japanese ideology is evident in these words of the gym teacher, Kim Jubsu. His words sound like sentences picked from the Japanese promotional material from the era of *seisen*, of the policy of Pan-Asianism. Japan called for war in the Pacific to expel the white colonizers, whose position in the newly built Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere the Japanese wanted to lay claim.

Although the Japanese had behaved worse than the white colonizers, a return to the pre-war status of the occupied country was resented in Far East and South East Asian countries. The Koreans denied any idea of patronage because Korea was not a colony. Resistance to the establishment of the American military government picked up quickly in Korea because the US approach perfectly fit the Japanese propaganda stereotypes. This was clearly shown in other words from the gym teacher, paraphrased by Lim (Švamberk 2015, pp. 169-170):

The United States had the Philippines and Cuba as colonies. Afterwards, the Japanese occupied the Philippines, French Indochina, Malaysia, and Singapore. Patriots in all these countries began armed struggles, just like the Koreans against Japan. However, what happened after the war? The French are again trying to control their colonies and retain their sovereignty over the Vietnamese. The United States did the same thing when they reoccupied the Philippines.

The use of agitation by the Japanese occupiers may not be as paradoxical as it might seem. When the conditions on the battlefield began to reverse, to the disadvantage of the Axis states, Japan's Supreme Military Council stated in a communiqué in March 1943, that it

was necessary to stabilize and ensure existing territorial gains by involving the governments formed in the occupied territories with the Japanese-led armed forces and police actions. The text suggested that it was necessary to grant formal independence as quickly as possible (Novotný 1994, p. 234).

Prime Minister Hideki Tojo rapidly began implementing the plan; and in July 1943, he held talks in Singapore with the leader of the Burmese nationalists, Ba Maw. Burma declared independence on August 1, and the Philippines on October 14. At a conference in Tokyo on November 5, Tojo told representatives from Burma, Manchukuo, the Nanking puppet republic of China, Thailand, and the Philippines that Japan supports *“their efforts for self-determination”* (Skřivan 1997, pp. 335-336). Philippine President José Laurel responded by saying: *“One billion Orientals, one billion people in Greater East Asia cannot possibly by any great extent be dominated by England and America.”*

The Japanese plan to involve South Asian nations in the fighting was developed before the war. Already, when advocating the plan of an attack on the South, Tojo had said: *“Our actions in the South will certainly help the nations under oppression”* (Novotný 1994, p. 228).

When Hodge lost his most trusted ally Rhee Syngman and faced growing unrest, he urged Washington to abandon the trusteeship idea, withdraw Soviet and American troops and *“leave Korea to its own devices and an inevitable internal upheaval for its own self-purification.”*

Hodge persisted in saying that it needs to be done, even if there is a danger that the left will seize power and *“by occidental standards Koreans are not ready for independence.”* In a summary report on the activities of the American Military Government, he wrote openly that in Korea there *“is growing resentment against Americans in the area including passive resistance... Every day of drifting under this situation makes our position in Korea more untenable and decreases our waning popularity... The word pro-American is being added to pro-Jap, national traitor and collaborator.”*

Though Hodge’s conclusion that it would be best to withdraw from Korea was not unreasonable, it was not realistic at the time of the onset of the Cold War. The alliance of the West and the Soviets had disintegrated after the defeat of the Axis. The former allies became enemies. Moscow was endeavoring to capitalize the victory over the Nazis and reinforce its influence over the East European countries. Churchill, in his speech at Fulton on March 5, 1946, spoke about the Iron Curtain dividing Europe.

In this situation, Hodge himself *“declared war”* on the People’s Committee structures in the South on December 12, 1945, because, according to him, they were behind the wave of strikes and protests (Cummings 2010, p. 115).

There were more problems in the southern part of Korea. To get independence was very significant for the Korean people after years of annexation. But there were other very important issues – high unemployment and spiraling inflation, especially fast-growing prices of food had heightened social tensions. As Japanese executives left, the companies and commercial relationships between Japan and Korea collapsed, unemployment rose sharply. Over a four-month period, 600,000 Japanese soldiers and 40,000 Japanese colonial administration officials left Korea.

There was also paradoxically a lack of rice, the price of which the Americans deregulated after a record harvest and the fact that the Koreans no longer needed to supply rice to Japan. However, speculators exploited the situation and bought up all the rice. In September 1945, a bushel of rice cost 9.4 yen; a year later, the price was 2,800 yen.

The United States Army Military Government in Korea introduced ration cards, as had the Japanese, but with smaller allowances because many Koreans from the North had moved to the South. *“As the result of its handling of the rice problem, the Koreans arrived at a complete loss of faith in the Military Government,”* complained a lawyer working for them (Jager 2013, p. 31).

Also, Lim acknowledged a big desire of independence was not the only reason to join the student movement (Švamberk 2015, p. 155):

“The main issues were land reform, regulation of the price of rice, and improvement of working conditions—demanding the introduction of the 8-hour workday.”

Of course, the emphasis on land reform was not related to the Japanese propaganda from World War II. However, this issue was related to the time of occupation. Japan had appropriated Korean resources, including a very large part of the land, after annexation. In 1932, Japanese owners had 52.7% of the land. Postponing the redistribution of land was quite absurd in this situation because, though hundreds of thousands of Japanese had left by the end of 1945, the land was not being divided among the poor peasants.

The Americans did not want to rush land reform because they leaned on *yangban*, the traditional elite keeping the land. H. Merrell Benninghoff, Hodge’s political advisor, felt the country was in chaos, which was being exploited by different groups, mainly leftist. However, he reported that he had found people who were able to comply with the US presence, and on whom he recommended focusing (Cummings 2006, pp 192-193). *“The most encouraging single factor in the political situation is the presence in Seoul of several hundred conservatives among the older and better educated Koreans. Although many of them have served the Japanese, that stigma eventually disappears”* he said.

These landlords were the cornerstones of the newly established Korean Democratic Party, founded a few weeks after liberation on September 16, with the support of the Americans. This party was opposed to the People’s Republic of Korea.

Pressure for land reform was entirely understandable, given that the situation for the peasants was desperate, which *The New York Times* correspondent Walter Sullivan described after talking to ten peasant families. None of them owned land. Landowners had to surrender a third of their crops, and in addition, they had to surrender another percentage towards taxes and various other contributions, in effect totaling between 48% and 70% of their crops (Cummings 2005, p 215).

The situation escalated at the beginning of 1946, as radical land reform took place in North Korea. With this land reform, formerly rich landowners could not have more land than the poorest peasants. The United States did not want to allow anything similar, but the delays of land reform had further undermined the weak position of the USAMGIK, connected as it was with former collaborators with colonial Japan, and increased tensions and strengthened the resistance of the poor peasants against the Americans, in which the leftist ideology mingled with the old Japanese anti-American propaganda. Lim added Americans *“didn’t care at all about land reform, so most ordinary people started to oppose the USA.”*

Land reform in the South was launched in March 1948, and 663,950 acres of farmland were redistributed to peasants. But the land reform was only partial, with merely 18% of all farmland being distributed to peasants and without touching a single unit owned by Korean landlords (Kim 2016, p. 97). Regardless, this dulled the edge of the protests.

Rapid land reform was not the only reason for some in South Korea to look to North Korea. Changes in North Korea went faster, even though collaborators with the Japanese were given a chance there after World War II, but the former elites could not restore their power. The situation in the north was better for peasants. Lim explained why, saying (Švamberk 2015, p. 156):

The communists and the people who opposed the Japanese came from very poor families that had been treated badly. Most of them had to go to Manchuria or Pyongyang. They treated them well in the North, but in the South, people who were against the Japanese and their collaborators were not treated well... We faced constantly increasing repression, and it made us feel that what we were doing was right.

The regime in North Korea, just after the end of World War II, was also more liberal and open. Kim Il-sung university was first opened in October 1946.

Unresolved issues and focus on the power struggle escalated tensions in the South. The wave of strikes by railway workers began in Busan in September 1946. The Autumn Rebellion broke out on November 1, in Daegu, when the police shot one of the striking railway workers.

The US Army intervened, and Hodge declared martial law. The rebellion spread throughout the poor agricultural South Jeolla Province, which was still dominated by People's Committees. They had a strong position in the purely peasant southwest of Korea and on Jeju Island. The Korean Democratic Party had only a limited scope, as General Albert Wedemeyer observed during his visit to South Korea at the end of 1947: *"It is not organized in the provinces, except in the leading cities"* (Cummings 2005, p. 203).

In January 1947, Rhee rejected all cooperation with the "reds," as he referred to any movement not explicitly right-wing, which further polarized the country. The Left gathered around the newly established South Korean Worker's Party, and the Right developed a number of ultra-right-wing organizations (Jager 2013, p. 45).

The United States tried to avoid more problems and to find a way out of South Korea. In September 1947, with the objections of Moscow, they handed the Korean question over to the United Nations. When the idea first surfaced, Soviet representative Terentii Shtykov offered a way to end the trusteeship; by withdrawing the Soviet troops from North Korea if the Americans would do the same in South Korea. After three weeks of deliberation, Washington said no. It insisted that the United Nations solve the question of the future of Korea. Moscow and Pyongyang, where Kim Il-sung had served as the head of the Central People's Committee since February 1946, had rejected the proposal that the future of Korea should be decided by the United Nations. They also stood against the UN-planned, Korea-wide elections scheduled for May 10, 1948. Therefore, elections only took place in the South. Rhee's Association for Rapid Independence Party won 55 out of 200 seats in Parliament, and three right-wing parties closest to his views got 47 deputies, so they got a narrow majority. Rhee was elected president on July 20, and on August 15, the independent Republic of Korea (ROK) was declared. The North replied with a parliamentary election held on August 25, and the DPRK was declared on September 9. On October 12, Moscow recognized it as the sole legitimate government of Korea. Conversely, on December 12, the United Nations recognized ROK as the sole legitimate representative of Korea.

Independence did not end the violence. Rhee decided to crack down on all of the leftists. Struggles also erupted on the 38th Parallel in August 1949 and continued for most of the next year. Pyongyang decided to conquer the entire peninsula by force and obtained the approval of both Beijing and Moscow. At dawn on Sunday 25 June, 1950, the North Korean People's Army crossed the 38th Parallel and, after three days, captured Seoul and continued to drive on the south. North Korean leadership erroneously believed that South Koreans were waiting for liberation from the American yoke, and so the operation was supposed to be easy. Instead, a full blown war flared up. The Security Council voted to deploy international forces under the command of the United States.

North Korea again exploited not only the communist ideology but also the old Japanese propaganda about the liberation of Asians from American control as well as about the brutal and cruelly inhuman American soldiers, especially the American bomber pilots. Czechoslovak ambassador in Beijing Franz Karl Weiskopf wrote to Prague in a cable in November 1950 (Weiskopf 1950):

Americans obviously determined to burn out a bomb out all the border towns and villages just to prevent Chinese troops and supplies being sent to the Korean territory and to create an unbearable situation for the local people. That is why is now bombing and burning of small inhabited secluded houses on daily order.

Czechoslovak chargé d'affaires Emil Hršel chose similar words in his cable in December 1950 (Hršel 1950a):

The situation in the territories liberated from Americans occupiers is perhaps even worse. Before their retreat, they (Americans) not only slaughtered progressive citizens but also set fire to the houses and destroyed the vital supplies of life. The Americans boasted that leaving only a heap of ashes when they retreated the big city of Hamhung.

The North Korean propaganda often used images of the rape of innocent Korean women by American soldiers. *"72 (corpses of) young women and girls were found in a mass grave in Yo-dong. All bore signs of rape, but American 'bearers of culture' were not satisfied with*

this fun, as testified beer bottles in their genitals," wrote Czechoslovak ambassador in Beijing Weiskopf in his dispatch from September 19, 1951, where he used the information provided by the Chinese authorities. *"In almost every captured American tank (Chinese) volunteers and (North) Korean soldiers found beside crew and few chickens a Korean girl, who had belonged to all members of crew,"* continued in the same cable. (Weiskopf 1951)

The Pyongyang propaganda also exploited the issue of racism, just as had the Japanese Empire during the war. It was easy because some Americans were racially prejudiced and did not always consider Koreans to be equal, as demonstrated by the derogatory term "gook;" but the North Korean propaganda inflated this problem. Weiskopf wrote an unbelievable story about a wounded American pilot:

A captive American aviator was so severely wounded that only immediate transfusion could save his life. When a Korean nurse who wanted to give him her blood came to his bed, he asked about her nationality. When doctor gave him information, she is Korean, the aviator answered: "I don't want blood from her. Give me blood from any European or American." Finally, he got blood from the Korean nurse.

Weiskopf closed the message with the words of a Hungarian doctor in Korea: *"The Americans' racial haughtiness over Chinese and Koreans overcome all that the Nazis have shown in this regard"* (Weiskopf 1951).

Japanese influence in early North Korean propaganda and its mixing with the communist and nationalistic propaganda is a bigger issue suited for a separate study. Also, the accusation of the use of bacteriological warfare by the American side is connected with the Japanese war crimes from the time of occupation. Japanese unit 731 in Harbin developed and, in various areas of China, practiced chemical and biological warfare. Japanese aviators dropped infected food supplies and clothing and spread plague-infected fleas from planes. The North Korean accusation about the use of infected insects, which came during the time of strong epidemics, caused by the horrible situation in war-torn areas, looked like a carbon copy of the descriptions of the Japanese war crimes.

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Works on Korea by Czech Independent Scholars (1990-mid-2019)

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Since 1990, when the then post-communist Czechoslovakia established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea and broke its unilateral connection with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the interest in Korean affairs among the Czechs rose significantly. This (surely incomplete) bibliography presents a list of books and articles published by experts in many fields *outside* of traditional Korean studies. According to the *Association for Korean Studies in Europe (AKSE)* which publishes a bibliography of Korean studies in different European countries (koreanstudies.eu), it is the list of works by "independent researchers," which means those, who are not connected to two centers of Korean studies in the Czech Republic – Charles University, Prague and Palacký University, Olomouc. Though AKSE encourages the inclusion of publications by anyone else which may be of serious interest to scholars of Korean studies, this happens only occasionally, and the Czech entries – prepared by Koreanists from Charles University – are usually the only list of publications by the Korean experts in the Czech Republic. Some of these works are indeed included in the Bibliography of Korean Studies in the Czech Republic (Czech lands, Czechoslovakia) which was compiled by Zdenka Klöslová and it can be seen at <http://korea.ff.cuni.cz/>. Still, there are dozens of entries not mentioned, which can be found in this work.

If we do not count a few articles on Czechoslovak involvement during the Korean War written and published in the late 1990s, there were virtually no independent scholars' texts on Korean topics published until the new millennium. We can count no more than 50 such articles in the first decade after the Velvet Revolution, but already more than one hundred in the second one, and almost twice more in the decade since 2010. This is connected not only with the Czechs' interest in Korea, but also due to the increased number of various scholarships and grants, widened cooperation and agreements between universities, and exchanges of students and professors.

But the last three decades have not seen only an increased number of works on Korea. It was also the diversification and widening of the interest in Korean affairs into virtually all possible fields of science beyond traditional Korean studies. You can find articles covering topics from modern history to jurisprudence, from cinematography to labor relations and to such topics as nuclear research, comparative linguistics, botany or political science, among many others.

Who are the authors of the publications listed below? The compiler did not include those connected with Korean studies in both universities already mentioned. Thus, you will not find the important articles written by such renowned Czech experts as Vladimír Pucek, Miriam Löwensteinová, Vladimír Horák or Zdenka Klöslová – these can be found in the bibliography of AKSE mentioned above. On the contrary works of former students of Korean studies, who are not being affiliated with those universities as of now, are included.

Authors included consist of Asian experts who occasionally published works on Korean topics. These are e. g. Ivo Vasiljev (1935-2016) who originally studied Korean but later turned to Vietnamese studies and published on a wide range of topics on Asia, or Jiří Jánoš (b. 1942) who studied Japanese and Korean studies and wrote nine books on Japan and two on Korea plus a handful of popular articles. Also included here are experts on Far Eastern art who published on Korean topics, such as Helena Honcoopová (b. 1948) who worked in the Czech National Gallery and authored books and exhibition catalogs, or Filip Suchomel (b. 1966), who was the Vice-Rector of both the Academy of Arts, Architecture, and Design, and the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. Among their teachers was Lubor Hájek (1921-2000), a leading Czech art expert and author of important monographs on Japanese art, as well as on art from around the whole region.

Other Asian experts listed here are Rudolf Fürst (b. 1958), a Sinologist working with the Institute of International Relations. Michal Tomášek (b. 1963) is a Japanologist and a lawyer specialized in Asian jurisprudence. Petra Ben Ari (b. 1983) studied Chinese and Korean in Prague, Italy, China and Seoul National University and as a freelancer translates and writes on contemporary Korean literature. Similarly Nina Špitálníková (b. 1987) studied Korean studies and publishes independently primarily on North Korea.

Korea is also an interesting topic for noted Czech historians. Vladimír Nálevka (1941-2010) was a renowned historian specializing in history and politics of the 20th Century, and also an author of numerous popular books; while Karel Durman (b. 1932) is an internationally acclaimed historian who has lived in Sweden since the 1980s. Korea also became a focus of father-and-son historians Aleš Skřivan (b. 1944) and Aleš Skřivan Jr. (b. 1973), who is an expert on Chinese economic relations and Czech(oslovak) trade relations with the region, and is associated with the top Czech University of Economics. Works by Milada Polišínská (b. 1952) of Anglo-American University, and Jan Kočvar (b. 1982) of the Military History Institute are also worth mentioning. Other publications on military history are by Milan Jelínek (b. 1947), expert on marine warfare, Prokop Tomek (b. 1965), Vladimír Pilát (b. 1957), Daniel Kamas and Zbyněk Válka (b. 1960), specialists in Czech(oslovak) military history, and security experts Michal J. Stolár and Michal Uher.

Quite a number of works on modern Korean history have been published by historians and politologists of University of West Bohemia in Pilsen. These are Veronika Křištofová (b. 1990), Lenka Kudláčová (m. Lenka Caisová, b. 1990), and Ladislav Cabada (b. 1973) and his wife Šárka Cabadová Waisová (b. 1978). More popular texts on Korean history were written by Ivan Brož (1938-2012), a renowned author of more than fifty popular books on politics and history, and Petr Zídek (b. 1971), a historian turned journalist who has published more than a dozen popular books on 20th century history.

Interest in Korea has also been demonstrated by Roman Joch (b. 1971), conservative politologist associated with the think-tank of former Czech President Václav Klaus; as well as the left-leaning politologist Zdeněk Zbořil (b. 1938), one of the founding fathers of the study of political science at Charles University in Prague. Many of the younger generation of politologists first studied in Korea, these are e.g. Jan Blinka (b. 1987), Daniel Šitera from the Institute of International Relations, Adam Strauch (b. 1984) and Vladimír Beroun (b. 1985).

A few journalists have also contributed relevant texts on Korea. Alex Švamberk (b. 1961), whose father served on the Korean peninsula in the 1950s, published two books and a series of texts on early Czechoslovak participation in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. Karel Pacner (b. 1936) is a popularizer of science and history and is a prolific writer. Martin Vlnas (b. 1984), is the current editor of *Finmag* magazine.

With increasing popularity of Korean film, there were many texts published by journalist and film critic Michal Procházka (b. 1975), who has been writing articles on Korean culture since the 2000s, and since 2013 serves as the representative of the state-run CzechTourism agency in Seoul. A handful of articles on K-film have also been written by Jaromír Blažejovský (b. 1957), Antonín Tesař (b. 1983), and Kamil Fila (b. 1980). They have published even more, but the author did not include the film reviews as well as interviews with different Korean filmmakers in this bibliography.

Three Czech diplomats have also significantly contributed. Zdeněk Matějka (b. 1935) served as a junior diplomat as the Czechoslovak member of the NNSC and later on became Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Tomáš Smetánka (b. 1959), the former editor-in-chief of the leading Czech daily *Lidové noviny*, spent more than a quarter of a century in the Czech diplomatic service as a five-time Ambassador (including the post in Seoul). Jaroslav Olša, Jr. (b. 1964) is another career diplomat who also served as ambassador to Seoul and is the author of works on Czech relations with non-European countries, including Korea.

Authors of Korea-related articles are also Bohemists, all of which spent significant time as lecturers at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. There are Ivana Bozděchová (b. 1960), Milan Hrdlička (b. 1935), and Antonín Bytel (b. 1935).

But there are many other authors of texts on Korea who are from various fields of life: architect Jiří Kočandrlé (b. 1941), historical linguist Václav Blažek (b. 1959) and geologist Josef Havíř (b. 1970) (both from Masaryk University in Brno), Markéta Jarošová from the State Office for Nuclear Safety, or economists Viktor Hollmann and Vladimír Hlásny (b. 1979), formerly associated with Yonsei University, Jana Kačorová, nursing expert of Silesian University of Opava, Vladimír Pitschmann (b. 1958), chemical engineer and expert on chemical weapons, Vojtěch Klézl and Pavlína Pawlasová of Vysoká škola báňská in Ostrava, and last but not least botanist Jiří Kolbek (b. 1946) of the Botanical Institute of Charles University, author of dozens of articles on North Korean landscape and vegetation. Of note are also the works of Jaroslav Ignatius Vokoun (b. 1968), reclusive writer and publisher of religious books.

The author has omitted various publications, such as popular travel stories by writers such as diplomat Jana Chaloupková, reviews of Korean films and manhwa in genre magazines. You will also not find commentaries by politicians, such as the late President Václav Havel, or former Foreign Ministers Alexandr Vondra and Lubomír Zaorálek. Similarly omitted are texts published in dailies and weeklies by prolific journalists specialized in foreign relations, e.g. Milan Vodička, Adam Černý, Viliam Buchert, and Ladislav Kryzánek.

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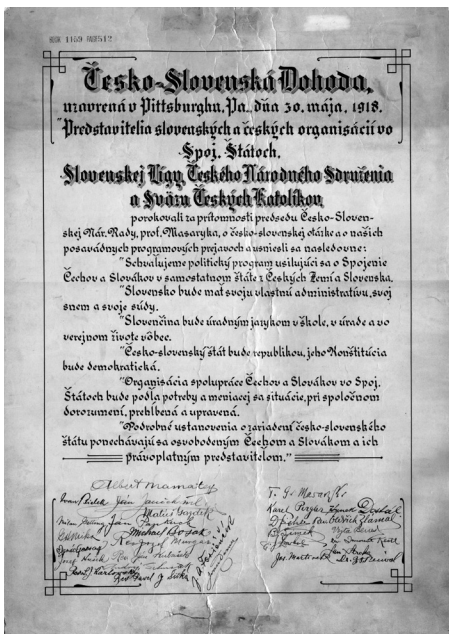
영화포스터 속 한국과 체코의 만남 (Czech-Korean encounters through movie posters). Seoul: Korean Film Archive 2013.

Appendix 1

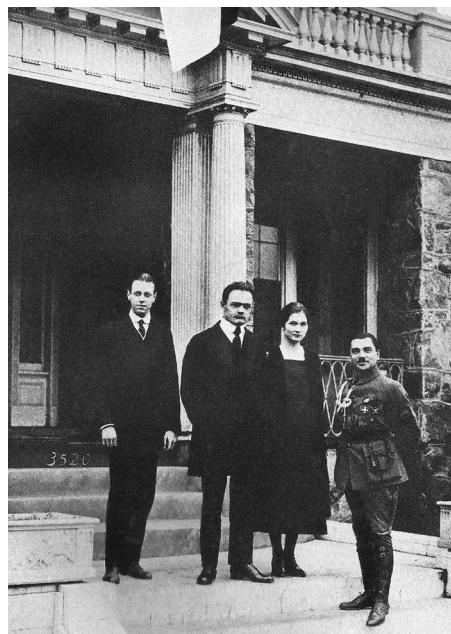
Photographs as attachment to
Ivan Dubovický: Charles Pergler – Spurned Patriot (pp. 8-26).
Photographs provided by Ivan Dubovický.



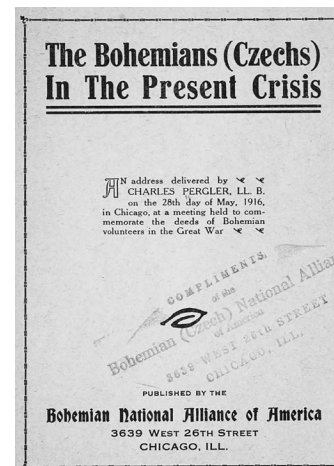
1
Charles Pergler.
Reproduced from Ch. Pergler,
Amerika a československá nezávislost,
Prague 1926.



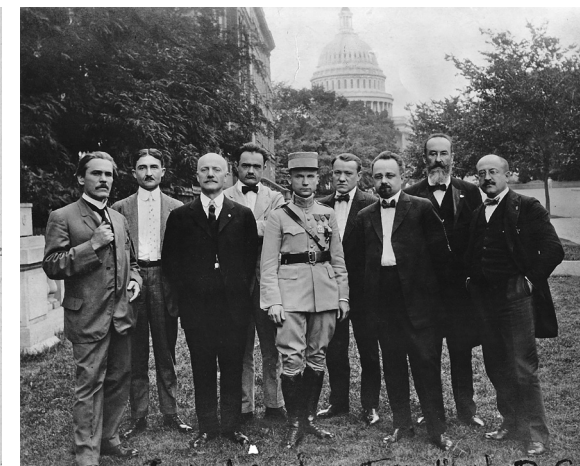
2
The so-called Pittsburgh Agreement of May 30, 1918, signed between T. G. Masaryk and representatives of American Czechs and Slovaks. Pergler's signature right below the Masaryk's signature.



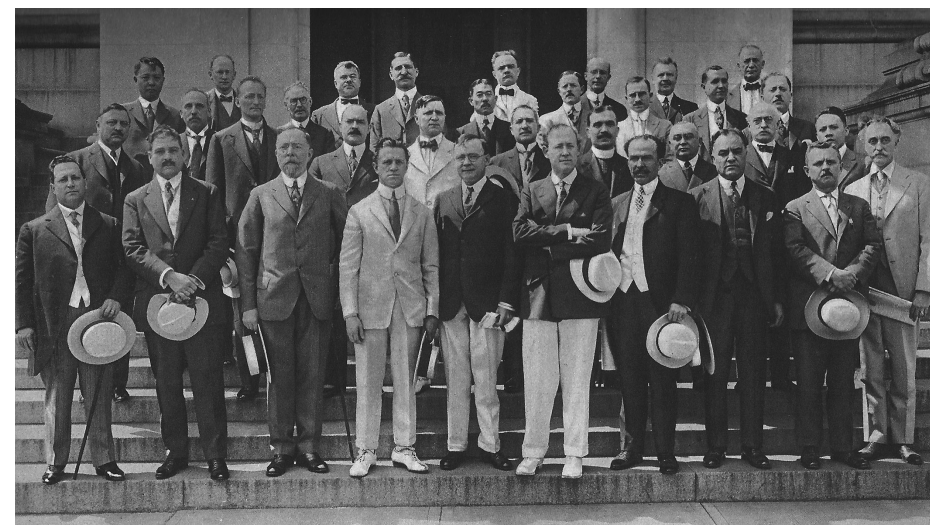
3
Pergler in front of the Czechoslovak legation building in Washington, D.C., undated.



4
The frontpage of Pergler's pamphlet with his Chicago address of May 28, 1916.



5
Milan R. Štefánek (in uniform) in Washington, D.C. with leaders of Czech and Slovak Americans, July 1, 1918. From the left:
A. Hrdlička, I. Bielek, A. Mamatey, Ch. Pergler, M. R. Štefánek, E. V. Voska, L. Fisher, I. Daxner, F. Písecký. In Medek, R., Bonnaud, R. (1928). *K vítězné svobodě 1914-1918-1928 [album fotografií z dějin zahraničního i domácího odboje československého: k oslavě prvního desetiletí ČSR]*. V Praze: Pěčí a nákladem Památníku Odboje, p. 321.



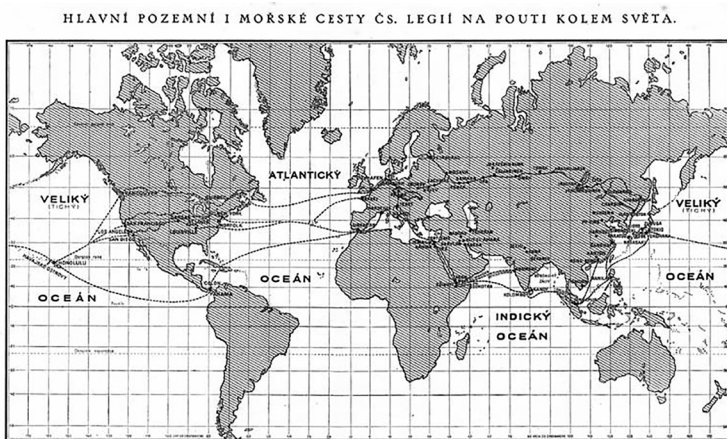
6
Participants accompanying President Woodrow Wilson on the pilgrimage tour to Mount Vernon, July 4, 1918. Pergler, as the only Czech American representative invited, in the middle of the third row in a white suite. Reproduced from Ch. Pergler, *Za národní stát. Výběr projevů K. Perglera v boji za samostatnost národa*. Prague 1923.

Appendix 2

Photographs as attachment to
Milada Polišínská: Provisional Korean Government in Exile and the Czechoslovak Legion
in the Far East (pp. 31-47).
Photographs provided by Milada Polišínská.



1
T. G. Masaryk with the First Czechoslovak brigade in Berezno, Volhynia, Ukraine
In Medek, R., Bonnaud, R. (1928). *K vítězné svobodě 1914-1918-1928 [album fotografií z dějin zahraničního i domácího odboje československého: k oslavě prvního desetiletí ČSR]*.
V Praze: Pěčí a nakladem Památníku Odboje. p. 96.
<http://www.digitalniknihovna.cz/nkp/view/uuid:cc0304c0-6514-11e6-85af-005056827e52?page=uuid:bc2cbca0-7a11-11e6-8340-5ef3fc9ae867>



2
Main surface and maritime roads of Czechoslovak Legion on their journey
around the world (a vintage postcard).
<https://codyprint.cz/legie/navrat.html>



3
Armored train of Czechoslovak Legion *Orlik* on Trans-Siberian
Magistrale. Military Historical Institute collections.



4
Yo Un-hyong (1886-1947),
Korean independence
activist based in China, co-
founder, Korean Provisional
Government, 1919.
[https://apjjf.org/-nishi-
masayuki/2560/article.html](https://apjjf.org/-nishi-masayuki/2560/article.html)



5
General Radola Gajda
(1892-1948) in 1919.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/
/wiki/Gajda_Affair](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gajda_Affair)



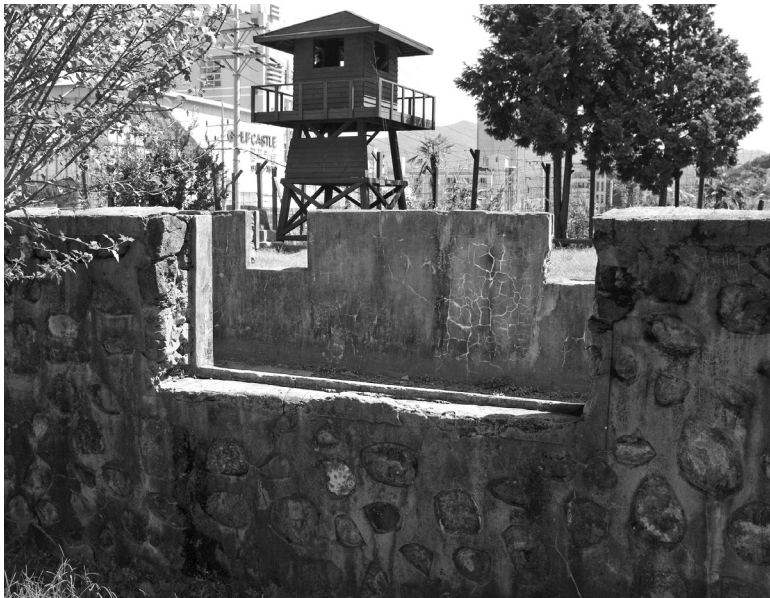
6
Cemetery of Czechoslovak
Legionnaires in Vladivostok.
Photo by Milada Polišínská.

Appendix 3

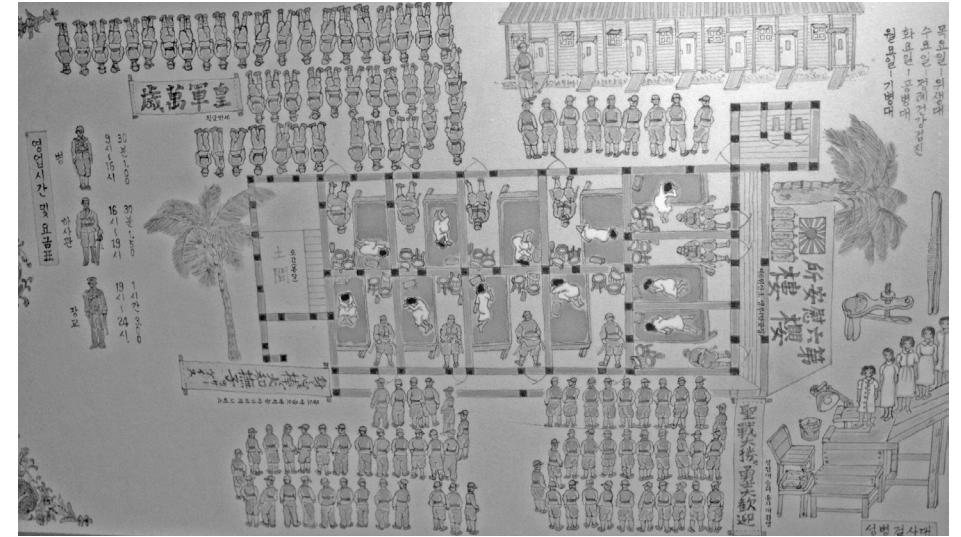
Photographs as attachment to
Alex Švamberk: The Impact of the Japanese Annexation on Korean Society
and Post-war Policy (pp. 64-75).
Photographs provided by Alex Švamberk.



1
Rest of camp in Kojo



2
Watchtower in PoW cam in Kojo



3
Japanese army brothel (drawing of one comfort woman)

Appendix 4

Panels of the exhibition accompanying the symposium
Korea and the Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence

Anglo-American University on April 24, 2019, Prague

Content of panels by Milada Polišenská, Jieun Park and George Hays II
Photographs on pages 107-109 provided by the Independence Hall of Korea
Design of the panels by Martin Ranninger

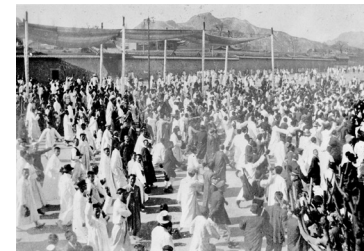
Republic of Korea: Retracing the Path to Independence

When World War I ended in 1918, the Paris Peace Conference was held to discuss what the winners of the war would get and how the losers of the war should be treated. Korean independence activists dispatched a delegation to the conference in the name of Sinhan Cheongnyueondang (predecessor of the Korean Provisional Government, meaning "New Korea Youth Association") to obtain a more advantageous diplomatic position with the world powers concerning the country's independence.

On January 21st, 1919, three days after the start of the conference, Emperor Gojong suddenly passed away. Judging that it was an opportune moment to inform the world of the Korean people's determination to regain national independence, Korean religious people and students started making preparations for the independence movement.



Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference



Independence movement in front of Deoksugung Palace

Just at the right time, Korean students issued the February 8th Independence Declaration in Tokyo, Japan. Early in the morning of March 1, 1919, they distributed the text of the Declaration of Independence in downtown Seoul, and this was the beginning of the movement. Thousands of people, including the students who had gathered in Tapgol Park, read aloud the Declaration of Independence, and started marching through the streets, shouting "Manse(Long Live Korea)!"

Similar street demonstrations were held on that day in six other cities in (present-day) North Korea including Pyeongyang and Wonsan.

Indeed, the independence movement was joined by all, including women, teenagers, religious figures, and those who were considered as low status back then. One of the most significant leaders was Yu Gwan-sun, a 17-year-old girl who led more than 3,000 people to the demonstration in Cheonan on April 1st, 1919.



Female students' independence movement in Jongno



Yu Gwan-sun, one of the leaders of the Korean independence movements

Republic of Korea: Retracing the Path to Independence

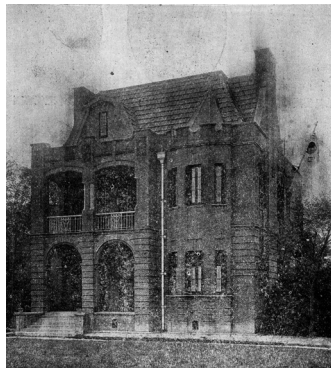
The Korean Provisional Government was established in Shanghai, China on April 11th, 1919. Korean nationalism activists, who were based in Shanghai, joined forces with members of Sinhan Cheongnyeondang who had fled to Shanghai after the March 1st Independence Movement. They organized the Provisional Legislative Assembly and launched the Korean Provisional Government as a democratic republic form of government.

The Korean Provisional Government continued the activities of Sinhan Cheongnyeondang to establish an integrated organization encompassing Koreans in foreign countries while conducting diplomatic activities and the war of independence against Japan. However, its activities were somewhat limited as it was not formally recognized as an "official" government under the international law. Realistically speaking, Japan exercised sovereignty over Korea having annexed the country by force.

Thus, while the provisional government was making diplomatic overtures to the world powers, Korean military organizations concentrated on waging a war of independence against Japan. One of such battles was the Battle of Qingshanli, Manchuria in October 1920, which is also known for the fact that the weapons supplied by the Czechoslovak Legion significantly contributed to the victory of the Korean army.



Members of the Korean Provisional Government (1919)



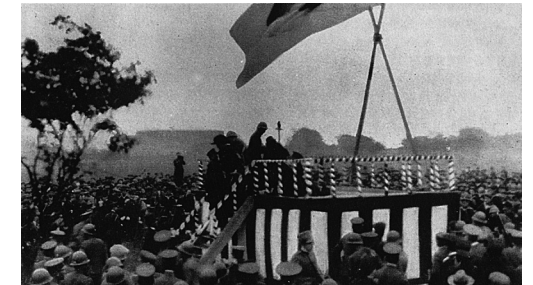
Building of the Korean Provisional Government in Shanghai, China

Due to the Japanese crackdown in China, the Korean Provisional Government was compelled to leave Shanghai and move from one place to another in China [Hangzhou (1932), Zhenjiang (1935), Changsha (1937), Guangdong (1938), Liuzhou (1938), Qijiang (1939), Chongqing (1940)] following the second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945).

Republic of Korea: Retracing the Path to Independence



Yun Bong-gil with a grenade, a gun, and a written oath



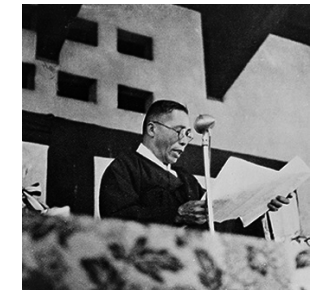
Hongkew Park in Shanghai, China right after Yun's bombing

The members of the provisional government were having difficulties amid the subdued atmosphere, but they began to recover their vitality following the heroic acts of Lee Bong-chang, who threw a bomb at the Japanese emperor in Tokyo in 1932, and Yun Bong-gil, who threw a bomb at a group of Japanese generals in Shanghai in 1932.

Both independence activists belonged to the Patriots Corps associated with the provisional government. Thus, the provisional government was able to start carrying out two important objectives together, diplomacy and the struggle for independence.



Members of the Korean Provisional Government in Chongqing, China right before their return to Korea (1945)

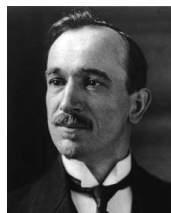


Kim Gu giving a speech at a ceremony welcoming the Korean Provisional Government

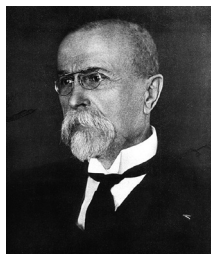
Koreans' persistent longing for independence finally bore fruit on August 15th, 1945, when Japan announced its surrender to the Allies, which led to the liberation of Korea. The streets in Korea were filled with people celebrating their freedom with the national flags in hands. The members of the Provisional Government returned from Chongqing, China to Korea, and were warmly welcomed and appreciated their deeds.

However, despite the desperate efforts made by Koreans, the post-liberation state of affairs turned out quite differently from their wishes. Amid the ideological conflicts of world powers, two different governments appeared on the Korean Peninsula, and the Korean War broke out in 1950. The Korean War lasted until 1953, causing a huge number of casualties.

The Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence



Edvard Beneš (1884-1948),
photograph from 1919



Thomas Garrigue Masaryk (1850-1937)



Milan Rastislav Štefánik (1880-1919),
photograph probably from the years of the First World War.

Their role in the establishment of independent Czechoslovakia has been particularly valued and T. G. Masaryk was awarded the title of President Liberator.



Translation:

The Czechoslovak state has been proclaimed

Czechoslovak people! Your age-long dream has come true. The Czechoslovak state, as of today, has joined the number of independent cultural states of the world. The National Council, entrusted by the confidence of all of the Czechoslovak people, as an authorized and responsible agent, has taken control of the administration of Your state.

Czechoslovak people! Everything that You do, you do as a new, free member of a large family of independent, free nations. At this moment, a new act begins in Your new and rich and glorious history. You shall not disappoint the expectations of the entire cultural world which, with blessings on its lips, commemorates Your glorious history that has culminated in the immortal achievements of the Czechoslovak legions on the Western front and in Siberia.

All the world looks at Your first steps in a new life, Your reaching of the Promised Land. You will preserve a pure shield, as Your national army – the Czechoslovak legions – preserved it. Do not forget national discipline, and be aware all the time that You are a citizen of a new state, not only with rights but also with obligations.

At the beginning of this great work, you are instructed by the National Council – from today, Your Government – that the dignity of Your behavior and Your joy correspond to the great present moment. Our liberators, Masaryk and Wilson, must not be disappointed in their persuasion that they achieved freedom for a nation which is able to govern itself.

Not a single disturbing act should disrupt these great moments, not one of You should commit something that could throw shade on the pure name of the nation, each of You must unconditionally preserve everything which is sacred to others. Personal freedom and private property must not be touched.

Follow, unreservedly, the orders of the National Council!

Prague, 28 October, 1918

For the Czechoslovak National Council:

Dr. Fr. Soukup. Jiří Stříbrný. Ant. Švehla. Dr. Vavro Šrobár. Dr. Alois Rašín

Lidové noviny
from Tuesday,
October 29, 1919,
announcing the
establishment
of independent
Czechoslovakia.

Independent Czechoslovakia was established and internationally recognized at the end of the First World War in 1918 thanks to several key factors: (1) the well-designed and tireless political and diplomatic work of the Czech and the Slovak resistance leaders in exile, chaired by Thomas G. Masaryk, whose closest collaborators were Edvard Beneš and Milan R. Štefánik; (2) the Czechoslovak Legions formed in France, Italy and dozens of thousands of men in Russia; (3) the support of the establishment of independent Czechoslovakia by the Czech and the Slovak communities abroad, particularly in the United States; (4) the political developments in the Czech lands and in Slovakia, particularly the general radicalization in 1918; (5) the international situation in 1918.

Masaryk was an internationally renowned university professor of philosophy and sociology, a democrat and humanist, and a deputy of the Imperial Council in Vienna. Already in 1914, he assumed that Austria-Hungary and Germany would be defeated and that the Czech and the Slovak questions represented a European question; that the subject position of the Czechs and the Slovaks in the Habsburg monarchy would be resolved within the post-war reconstruction of Europe; and that the post-war reconstruction would be directed toward democracy. He went into exile in 1914, establishing a center of political activities in London and, later, also in Paris. In 1916, the Czechoslovak National Council was established. T. G. Masaryk was its chair. Edvard Beneš, who joined Masaryk after being involved in the domestic resistance of the secret council (called the Mafia), became the Secretary of the Council and Masaryk's "right hand." The Vice-

Chairman of the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris was Milan R. Štefánik, a Slovak naturalized in France; an astronomer, colonel, and later general of the French army. The path toward persuading the British and the French governments about this political vision was very difficult for Masaryk and Beneš, and took several years.

The fall of Tsarism allowed Masaryk to negotiate successfully with the Russian Provisional Government to establish the Czechoslovak Legions, which would be deployed against the Central Powers. After the Bolshevik Revolution in November 1917, and after Soviet Russia concluded its peace with the Central Powers in March 1918, the Czechoslovak Legions, based mostly in Ukraine, had only one chance – to use the Trans-Siberian railway to reach Vladivostok and, thanks to ships provided by the United States and Japan, to return to Europe. The Czechoslovak Legions were mostly unable to reach Europe in time to be able to take part in the war on the Western front, as was the original plan. However, their brave and difficult Siberian anabasis, and their determination to fight for the war goals of the Allied Powers and for their own state – Czechoslovakia – were key factors in the recognition of the Czechoslovak National Council as the Provisionary Czechoslovak Government, at war against the Central Powers. The existence of the Czechoslovak army was, therefore, very significant for the international recognition of Czechoslovakia.

Czech and Slovak immigrants to the United States provided great and enthusiastic support to Masaryk in his efforts for an independent Czechoslovakia. They still had close ties with their old fatherland, but they were also very influenced by the American spirit

of freedom, democracy, and the U. S. Constitution. Masaryk arrived in the United States at the end of April 1918, from Japan. The first Czech to welcome him in Vancouver was Charles Pergler, who was, at the time, one of the most active advocates for the independence of Czechoslovakia and became Masaryk's assistant in the United States. There were other very important supporters of Masaryk's efforts – for example Richard Crane, and last, but not least, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson.

It was during Masaryk's stay in the United States that on October 14, 1918, in Paris, Masaryk was recognized as President of the Provisionary Government of Czechoslovakia. Edvard Beneš was recognized as Foreign Minister, and Štefánik was recognized as Minister of the Army.

In Austria-Hungary, the very oppressive regime imprisoned and condemned a number of Czech political leaders such as Karel Kramář and Alois Rašín, as well as Masaryk's daughter. In 1918, they were released in the hopes of stabilizing the monarchy. This attempt did not succeed. The radicalization grew, and the call for independence based on the right of national self-determination spread widely. The Czechoslovak National Council was established in Prague on July 13, 1918. On October 28, 1918, the Council proclaimed the independent Czechoslovak state.

The Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence



Siberian anabasis of the Czechoslovak Legions from Ukraine to Vladivostok.



One of the many trains used by the Czechoslovak Legions, and one of the many hardships of advancement.



Milan R. Štefánik with a group of Czech and Slovak supporters of independent Czechoslovakia in Washington, D.C., 1917. Left of Štefánik: first Czechoslovak Consul in Pittsburgh, Albert Mamatey.



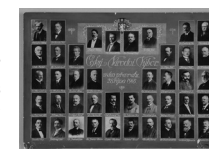
Thomas G. Masaryk. Left of Masaryk: Charles Pergler (activist for independence, lawyer, Czechoslovak diplomat in Japan). Right of Masaryk: Vladimír Hurban, in uniform (member of the Czechoslovak Legions in Russia, diplomat), in Washington, D.C., 1918.

T. G. Masaryk and signatories of the Pittsburgh Agreement, signed on 31 May, 1918, by the representatives of the Czech and the Slovak communities in the United States and T. G. Masaryk. The agreement approved the common state of Czechs and Slovaks, in which the Slovaks had to have their own administration, parliament and jurisdiction. As this was not fulfilled, the desire for Slovak autonomy caused serious political tensions in the 1920's and the 1930's.



T. G. Masaryk signing the Declaration of Freedom and Cooperation of Central-European nations in Philadelphia on 26 October, 1918.

Members of the Czechoslovak National Council in Prague on 28 October, 1918.



Meeting of Edvard Beneš and home political representatives (members of the Czechoslovak National Council, deputies, and representatives of two major banks) in Geneva, Switzerland, 28 – 31 October 1918. This meeting confirmed the unity of the home and exile resistance movements. Beneš sits at third from the right.

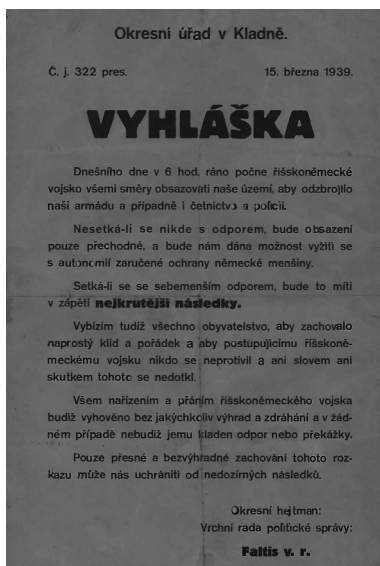
T. G. Masaryk arrives as President of Czechoslovakia in Prague on 21 December, 1918, after four years (1915-1918) resistance work in exile.



T. G. Masaryk escorted by the Czechoslovak Legions on Wenceslas Square after his arrival in Prague.

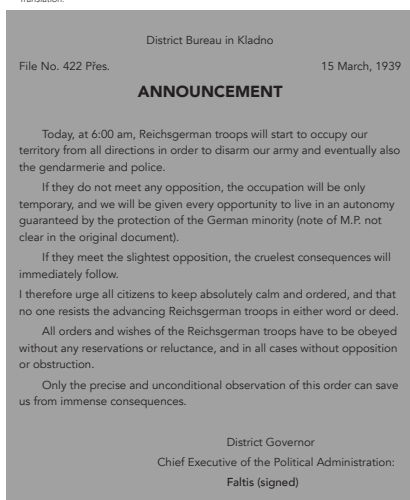
The Czech Republic: Retracing the Path to Independence

Freedom and independence is precious and must be protected



Document issued on the first day of the occupation by Nazi Germany

Translation:



Site of the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, Stellvertreter Reichsprotektor of Bohemia and Moravia, one of the highest-ranking German Nazi officials, and one of those responsible for engineering the Holocaust. His assassination on 27 May, 1942, conducted by Czechoslovak exile soldiers parachuted into Czechoslovakia by Great Britain (operation Anthropoid) was the only successful assassination of a high ranking Nazi leader during World War II that was planned by a government.

The assassination of Heydrich was followed by brutal Nazi reprisals with thousands of victims. The Czech nation and the entire world highly values the patriotism, courage and self-sacrifice of the freedom fighters and all who assisted them and risked their lives and lives of their families. The Heydrich assassination served the Nazis as a pretext to destroy the elite of Czech nation. All these victims are considered heroes.



The tragic fate of the village of Lidice became an internationally recognized symbol. In Lidice, all men older than 16 years of age were executed against the wall of Horák's farm, and the women and children were deported to concentration camps. Only a few of them were chosen for Germanization.



Lidice was completely destroyed so that no trace would be left.



The village of Ležáky: Same fate of complete extermination of inhabitants and destruction of the village.

This book tries to shed light on both the uncommonly similar origins as well as the tragically diverging paths of the Korean and Czech struggles for independence. Though both had active governments in exile, the support of proud expatriates, and sought to put an end to imperialism and war through the very declaration of their independence, their paths to independence would differ greatly.

