

Prague at the End of History

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What we call “progress” is confined to each particular world, and vanishes with it. Always and everywhere in the terrestrial arena, the same drama, the same setting, on the same narrow stage – a noisy humanity infatuated with its own grandeur, believing itself to be the universe and living in its prison as though in some immense realm, only to founder at an early date along with its globe, which has borne with deepest disdain the burden of human arrogance.

Auguste Blanqui (1872, as quoted in Benjamin, 1999: 25)

NOVEMBER 17

In the Czech Republic November 17 is a public holiday, which is now officially known as the Day of Struggle for Freedom and Democracy. It used to be called International Students’ Day, and in some quarters the change of name remains controversial (see, e.g., Novinky.cz, 2016). The holiday commemorates two events that occurred on the same day of the month, though fifty years apart. The first took place in 1939. Following Slovakia’s secession from Czechoslovakia under Nazi tutelage, Hitler’s Wehrmacht invaded the Czech Lands on March 15 and incorporated them into the Third Reich as the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Protest demonstrations took place in Prague on October 28, the day Czechoslovakia had declared independence from Austria-Hungary in 1918. Police fired on the protestors, wounding a medical student, Jan Opletal, who later died of his injuries. There was further trouble after Opletal’s funeral on November 15 as students roamed though the city destroying bilingual signs, chanting anti-German slogans, and singing patriotic songs. In response, on November 17 the Nazis raided student dormitories in Prague and Brno, deported over 1200 students to concentration camps, and shot nine alleged ringleaders. All Czech universities were declared closed for three years. In the event, they remained shut for the rest of the war. The following year the International Students Council, a London-based refugee body, proclaimed November 17 International Students’ Day.

During the Cold War the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSČ) utilized International Students’ Day for its own agendas. An important part of the communists’ legitimacy in Czechoslovakia stemmed from the party’s resistance credentials dur-

ing World War Two and the perceived betrayal by the west in 1938 at Munich. Over time, and especially after the Soviet invasion of August 21, 1968 crushed Alexander Dubček's "socialism with a human face," the November 17 commemorations became largely formulaic. But the fiftieth anniversary in 1989 took place under unusual circumstances. For weeks East German refugees had been pouring through Prague *en route* for West Germany. The East German government opened the Berlin Wall on 9 November but the KSČ was still resisting the tide of reform sweeping the Soviet bloc. On November 17 a 15,000-strong crowd assembled at the Albertov campus of Charles University, where they listened to speeches demanding democratization. Josef Šárka, a participant in Jan Opletal's funeral fifty years earlier, told them, "I am glad you are fighting for the same thing as we fought for back then" (quoted in Šťastný, 2009). After the rally the students marched to Vyšehrad Cemetery, where they lit candles, sang the national anthem, and laid flowers on the grave of the great Czech romantic poet Karel Hynek Mácha. From Vyšehrad the students set out for Wenceslas Square, marching along the embankment toward the National Theater. On Národní Avenue, just down the road from the theater, they were ambushed and beaten up by riot police. The police action triggered ten days of swelling nightly demonstrations that eventually forced the Communist Party to relinquish power.

Thereafter November 17 became a day not only for remembering the Nazi victims of 1939, but also for affirming the democratic values of what became known as the Velvet Revolution. Students marked both by laying flowers every year at Albertov. But in 2015 the celebrations took another strange turn. Against vehement opposition from the university authorities, the far-right Anti-Islamic Bloc organized a rally "in support of the views of the president on immigration and Islam" at the exact same time and place that the November 17 commemoration would normally take place. A month earlier President Miloš Zeman had warned that "Islamic refugees will not respect Czech laws and habits; they will apply Sharia law, so unfaithful women will be stoned to death and thieves will have their hand cut off" (quoted in Slovácký deník.cz, 2015). When the students arrived at Albertov to lay their flowers police barred their entry. Only people with pre-printed cards reading "Long Live Zeman!" were allowed past the barriers.

Zeman himself spoke at the rally, where he told the crowd that people opposed to Islam and refugees should not be "branded" as Islamophobes, fascists, or racists. "What joins these two anniversaries over the abyss of time of fifty years?", he asked:

I think there are two things. First, the disagreement of our nation with occupation, be it open as in the case of the German occupation, or poorly hidden but real as in the case of the Soviet occupation. This nation deserves to rule itself

and no one, I repeat, no one from outside can dictate what it should and shouldn't do. But the second reminder from both November 17ths is possibly just as serious. Then people went out into the streets to protest against manipulation, to protest against the fact that they were pressured to believe a single correct opinion [...] that they were not allowed to think differently than those who manipulated them. (Zeman, 2015a)

Afterwards Zeman stood side-by-side with Anti-Islamic Bloc founder Martin Konvička to sing the Czech national anthem. Konvička had previously made himself notorious for advocating concentration camps for Muslims. Other guests at the rally included the English Defence League founder "Tommy Robinson" (Stephen Yaxley-Lennon) and the leader of the German anti-Islamic group Pegida. Banners carried by the crowd read "Fuck Islam!" and "Ban Islam!" Zeman went still further in his 2015 Christmas and New Year message, telling his compatriots, "I am profoundly convinced that we are facing an organized invasion and not a spontaneous movement of refugees." (Zeman, 2015b) He was narrowly (51.4% to 48.6%) re-elected as Czech President in 2018, winning majorities in every region of the country except Prague, where he was trounced by his opponent Jiří Drahoš. Drahoš also bettered Zeman in the major cities of Brno and Plzeň, though not in the one-time coal and steel metropolis (and Communist Party stronghold) of Ostrava, where Zeman took 62% of the vote.

I begin with this example to illustrate the striking non-linearity of Prague's modern history. There is no trajectory of progress in this repeated mobilization of the signifier November 17, but something that is much more complicated, contradictory, and fluid – what we might call *the eternal return of the never-quite-the-same*. The only thing that establishes coherence in this sequence is the recurrence of the signifier itself – the day in the calendar November 17 – but that signifier endlessly defers to different signifieds (Nazi oppression, communist virtue, the Velvet Revolution, the Islamic threat to the Czech nation) according to the shifting needs of successive presents. In the ultimate irony, the memory of Jan Opletal, who was killed by fascists, is eventually mobilized under the selfsame sign of November 17 in the service of what many would see as a latter-day variant of fascism.

This endless mutability of the signifier is nicely illustrated by the artist Roman Týč's protest of 17 November 2009. Otakar Příhoda and Miroslav Krátký's 17 November 1989 memorial on Národní Street, installed in 1990, depicts upraised hands above the inscription "17.11.1989." Some of them are making the peace sign. Týč added two matching bronze side panels to the memorial. The new panel on the left, whose inscription read "17.11.1939," showed hands raised in the Nazi salute. The new panel on the right, whose inscription read "17.11.2009," showed hands making the middle

finger “Fuck You!” gesture. Týc’s panels were removed by police the following day. The artist explained:

The plaque itself was simply crying out for the completing information. All these hands are Czech, unlike the gestures they display. It is not beside the point to put what has happened here and what is happening here into context. The Czechs ‘Heil’-ed back then, and when all is said and done they do the same today; after all these years the victorious victory maybe isn’t so victorious after all... (quoted in Lidovky.cz, 2009)

THE PHANTASMAGORIA OF HISTORY

There are two versions of Walter Benjamin’s celebrated essay “Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century” – the text that inspired the methodology as well as the title of my 2013 book *Prague, Capital of the Twentieth Century*. Benjamin ends the first version, written in 1935, by looking forward to a revolutionary awakening in which “we begin to recognize the monuments of the bourgeoisie as ruins even before they have crumbled.” (Benjamin, 1999: 13) There is a clear notion of progress here, albeit a dialectical one. But in the second version of the essay, written in 1939, Benjamin replaces the final paragraph with a brief discussion of the “vision of hell” presented in Auguste Blanqui’s *Eternity Through the Stars* – a work, Benjamin makes a point of telling us, that Blanqui wrote while imprisoned in the fortress of Taureau during the Paris Commune of 1871. The Commune, as I am sure you all know, was hailed by Karl Marx as the prototype of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the necessary first step on the road to a classless communist society and the withering away of the state (see the section titled “The Paris Commune” in Marx, 1871). Blanqui’s text, claims Benjamin, “presents the idea of eternal return ten years before [Nietzsche’s] *Zarathustra*...” “There is no progress,” wrote Blanqui; “the universe repeats itself endlessly and paws the ground in place.” “Blanqui [...] strives to trace an image of progress that turns out to be *the phantasmagoria of history itself*,” says Benjamin. He ends: “The world dominated by its phantasmagorias – this, to make use of Baudelaire’s term, is ‘modernity.’” (Benjamin, 1999: 25–26)

In this second version of the essay, hell (as Stephen King once famously said) is repetition, and the very notion of a coherent history is a phantasmagoria. Indeed, Benjamin goes so far as to assert that domination by such phantasmagorias is what *defines* modernity. This is a radical inversion of modernist visions of history as a process of unfolding human consciousness whose terminus is a state of affairs in which (in Marx’s words) “the practical relations of everyday life offer to man none but *perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations* with regard to his fellowmen and to nature.” (Marx, 1996: 90)¹ In the Blanqui/Benjamin 1939 version, history has neither meaning, nor direction, nor point. Worse, what distinguishes modernity is its dom-

ination by the (Hegelian) *fantasy* that what is rational is real and what is real is rational, or, in short, the delusion that *history has an end*. Coincidentally or otherwise, Benjamin revised his “Paris, Capital of the Twentieth Century” essay and replaced Hegel’s dialectic with Nietzsche’s eternal return in March 1939, the month Hitler’s Wehrmacht entered Prague. Which brings me to my own work.

I am presently writing the final volume in a loose trilogy of books that take Prague as an alternative vantage point from which to interrogate Benjamin’s dreamworlds of modernity. They have inexorably led me to the same point Benjamin reached in 1939. *The Coasts of Bohemia: A Czech History* (1998) used Prague’s experience from the mid-18th to the mid-20th century to explore issues of national identity, state formation, and historical memory. *Prague, Capital of the Twentieth Century: A Surrealist History* (2013) focused on architectural and artistic modernisms in the Bohemian capital during the first half of the twentieth century, with a particular concern with the fraught relations between avant-garde art and revolutionary politics. The third volume, *Prague at the End of History: Postcards from Absurdistan*, will explore the period from 1938 to the present and concentrate on issues of power, resistance, and modern subjectivity.²

In nominating Prague for the title “capital of the twentieth century” I am obviously not suggesting that the Czech capital was a major center of economic, political, or cultural power during the period. Nor do I deny that other cities (Berlin being the most obvious example) might have an equally good claim to the title. “Capital of the twentieth century” is, after all, only a metaphor – a heuristic device, designed to shift perceptions.

I am making two key arguments. The first is that the *variety* of Prague’s experiences of *different* forms of modernity make it a better vantage point from which to theorize “the modern condition” – if there is such a thing – than more obvious metropolitan centers like Paris, London, Los Angeles or New York. The second is that viewed from Prague, dominant western narratives and theorizations of modernity are exposed as Benjaminian *phantasmagorias*, or, in Karl Marx’s phrase, “*illusions of the epoch*.” As I put it in the introduction to *The Coasts of Bohemia*,

From the vantage point of London, or Paris, or New York – or, not so very long ago, Moscow – it is possible to identify history with progress, to ascribe to it providence, directionality, and meaning. It is possible to write modernity in the singular, and to prattle about “the end of history.” Such fables are believable precisely so long as the Bohemias of this world are forgotten. Viewed from Bohemia itself, the modern condition looks somewhat different. It is a chiaroscuro of beauties and terrors, whose colors are invariably more vibrant, and whose depths are very much darker, than our anemic narratives of progress are apt to acknowledge. Modernity was never either singular or simple. It was always a

“postmodern” polyphony, in which the fragile stabilities of location and identity rested on the uncertain vicissitudes of power. (Sayer, 1998: 16–17)

CAPITAL OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY?

Let me put some flesh on these bones. Prague is situated, in the words of Karel Čapek – the writer whose 1921 play *R.U.R.* gave the word *robot*, which encapsulates all the promises and the fears of modernity, to the languages of the world – at the “spiritual and intellectual crossroads of Europe.” (Čapek, 1994: 22) This has not always been the most comfortable of locations. From the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, Bohemia was the cockpit of the religious wars that tore Europe apart: the first defenestration of Prague, in 1419, launched the Hussite Wars that could, in retrospect, be seen as the first salvo of the Protestant Reformation; the second defenestration of Prague, in 1618, launched the Thirty Years War that ended in the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, which (as all IR students know)³ laid the basis for the modern system of sovereign nation states.

Prague entered the twentieth century as the capital of a restive province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire energized by a nineteenth-century Czech “national revival” that transformed Bohemia’s German-speakers – who then made up around one-third of its population – into an ‘ethnic’ minority. Previously language had signified divisions of social classes rather than nations. This was a paradigm instance of modern nation (and, after 1918, nation-state) formation, which anticipated many features of twentieth-century anti-colonial struggles in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere. Over the next hundred years the polities of which Prague was the capital experienced multiple changes of borders – both state borders, and the borders of the imagined communities of which Prague was the capital – and of populations, external entanglements, and internal political regimes. It has been a display cabinet for the gamut of modern political systems, successively serving as the capital of the most easterly liberal democracy in Europe (1918–1938), a Protectorate of the Nazi Reich (1939–1945), a westerly outpost of the Soviet imperium (1946–1989), and a post-communist republic in uncertain transition to who knows what (1990–).

The Czech Lands were detached from their Austrian integument and joined with Slovakia (formerly a part of Hungary) and Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia to form the first Czechoslovak Republic on 28 October 1918. Ethnic Czechs formed a bare majority (51%) in interwar Czechoslovakia, in which Germans outnumbered Slovaks and there were substantial minorities of Hungarians, Jews, and others. The first republic boasted one of the most advanced industrial economies in the world, some pioneering social legislation, and what Kenneth Frampton (1993), speaking of Czechoslovakia’s contribution to modern architecture, has called “a modernity worthy of the name.” After 1918 modernism became part of a new vocabulary of national identity that signaled a break with the imperial past and offered the possibility of build-

ing a progressive, democratic future. This was an environment in which avant-gardes could play a leading role in public life. The Devětsil group of the 1920s brought together poets, painters, architects, novelists, theater directors and performers in a heady jazz-age mix whose program was summed up in Karel Teige's motto: "Poetism is the crown of life, whose foundation is constructivism." Poetism, Teige explained, is "nothing but lyrical and visual excitement over the spectacle of the modern world. Nothing but love for life and its events, a passion for modernity." (Teige, 2002: 580–581) Czechoslovakia won more prizes than any nation other than France at the *Exposition des arts décoratifs et industriels dans la vie moderne*, the 1925 Paris spectacle that gave Art Deco its name, while the Czechoslovak Surrealist Group, formed by former Devětsil members in 1934, made Prague the world's second center of surrealism outside Paris.

But interwar Czechoslovakia was also riven by deep ethnic divisions and class conflicts, which contributed to both its eventual demise in 1938–1939 and its post-war integration into the Soviet bloc. At the end of September 1938 the Munich Agreement ceded a third of the country's territory and inhabitants to Germany and Hungary. Six months later the Czech Lands disappeared into the Third Reich. Prague was the first European capital to be occupied (I discount *Anschluss* Vienna) – on 15 March 1939 – and the last to be liberated – on May 9, 1945. Responses to the occupation ranged from eager collaboration to resistance and every shade of ambiguity in between; the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich by Czechoslovak partisans parachuted in from Britain and the reprisal at Lidice are emblematic, but they do not tell the whole murky story of the occupation. Lest we forget, Prague's Jewish community, one of the oldest and largest in Europe, was almost wiped out during the Nazi occupation; most of those who survived the Holocaust emigrated after the war.

Czechoslovakia's territory was restored in 1945, with the exception of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia, which was annexed by the Soviet Union. The Czechs expelled the three-million-strong German population in 1945–1946 in one of the largest and most brutal episodes of ethnic cleansing in modern Europe. For the next four decades Prague found itself in the imagined 'Eastern Europe' of Cold War cartography, even though the city lies to the west of Vienna and for a millennium Bohemia's history had been bound up with the Holy Roman Empire and the Catholic Church. The 1945–1989 period offers a window into a panoply of forms of communist rule, from post-liberation governance by people's committees and presidential decree, through a democratically-elected coalition in which the KSČ was the largest party (1946–1948) – perhaps the only occasion on which this has happened in world history – to the Stalinism of the 1950s with its purges and show trials, the political thaw and cultural renaissance of the sixties, Dubček's socialism with a human face, the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion, and the twenty years of normalization. Each produced

its own forms of accommodation and resistance. Even during the worst repression Czechoslovakia was far from a cultural desert. I would argue that Václav Havel's "Power of the Powerless" (1978) constitutes not just an important analysis of communist regimes, but as profound a reflection on specifically *modern* forms of power and subjectivity as anything in Foucault. But I would also draw attention to *socialist* modernisms, from design and architecture to Czech New Wave film.

The post-1989 period has seen the accession of the Czech Republic to NATO and the EU, and a transition to capitalist economy and political democracy that has been accompanied by widespread corruption and a resurgence of populist, xenophobic, and sometimes openly anti-democratic politics. While this is explained in part by the specific circumstances of modern Czech history, the striking post-communist combination of oligarchy and populism has its contemporary counterparts in Western Europe and the United States – confounding expectations, on all sides, of the global triumph of democracy following the fall of communism in 1989–1991 (see further Tallis and Sayer, 2017). Add to the mix the waves of political emigration caused by the Munich crisis of 1938, the 1948 communist coup, and the 1968 Soviet invasion, and it becomes plain that this is a part of the world in which modernity has been exactly what Baudelaire said it was: *le transitoire, le fugitif, le contingent*.

Such a history offers slim pickings for grand narratives, and least of all for grand narratives of progress. Modernity as seen from Prague is a Kafkaesque world in which – to return to Benjamin's Paris essay – "the exhibition may turn into a show trial, the interior mutate into a prison cell, the arcade become a shooting gallery, and the idling *flâneur* reveal himself to be a secret policeman at the drop of a hat." (Sayer, 2013: 9–10) Prague furnishes a different perspective on the experience of modernity than London, Paris, or New York; a perspective that challenges our familiar fields of vision. It is a viewpoint for which surrealism, with its awareness of what Milan Kundera calls "the density of unexpected encounters" (Kundera, 1995: 50), may provide as relevant a theoretical framework as anything found in the social sciences. The view from Prague allows – I would say, compels – us to recognize that the gas chamber and the gulag are as authentic an expression of *l'esprit moderne* as 12-tone music or abstract art.

POSTCARDS FROM ABSURDISTAN

I have titled the concluding book in my trilogy *Prague at the End of History* with deliberate irony, because during this period history has been declared *at an end* no less than three times: by the Nazis, when they incorporated Prague into a "thousand-year Reich"; by the communists, who proclaimed socialism to be already "achieved" in 1960 and saw the future as one of marching inexorably toward communism; and by western commentators who naively thought the 1989 revolutions heralded (in Francis Fukuyama's words) "the universalization of Western liberal

democracy as the final form of human government.” (Fukuyama, 1989)⁴ Each was the illusion of its epoch; all were spectacularly wrong. “What [...] makes Prague a fitting *capital* for the twentieth century,” I argued in *Prague, Capital of the Twentieth Century*, “is that this is a place in which modernist dreams have time and again unraveled; a location in which the masks have sooner or later always come off to reveal the grand narratives of progress for the childish fairy tales they are.” (Sayer, 2013: 10) The dreamworlds have repeatedly disintegrated to return us to a state of surreal banality that Czech dissidents dubbed Absurdistan. They used the term to refer specifically to the period of normalization; I give it a wider compass.

Absurdistan is what modernity looks like once we take the modernist blinkers off. Its features have been unsparingly exposed in Prague’s twentieth-century literature and arts as well as in Czech popular culture, often by way of a rich vein of vulgar comedy that stretches from Franz Kafka’s *The Trial* and *The Castle* and Jaroslav Hašek’s *Good Soldier Švejk* to Milan Kundera’s *Laughable Loves*, Bohumil Hrabal’s *I Served the King of England*, and Václav Havel’s *The Memorandum*. Absurdistan is a place where, as the Czech surrealist poet Petr Král remembered while writing a guide to Prague in exile in Paris in the 1980s, you can turn a corner and stumble across “the Russian steppes between two baroque domes, like an antechamber of the Gulag comfortably situated in the suburbs of Paris or Munich.” (Král, 1987: 71) The *domeček* (little house) StB torture chamber tucked away behind the exquisite Loreta Church in Hradčany comes into view – a veritable meeting of umbrellas and sewing machines on an operating table.

Absurdistan is a place where the future is certain, comrade; only the past is unpredictable. In Absurdistan it’s the shop next door that doesn’t have any bananas; *this* is the shop where we don’t have any meat. In Absurdistan, Soviet jazz will not be played: Ivan Ivanovitch has fucked his balalaika. These are all communist era Czech jokes, but as all Praguers know, Absurdistan was here before communism and will still be here after it. The Jewish novelist Jiří Weil, who avoided his transport to Terezín and the death camps by faking suicide in the Vltava, knew exactly what land he was in when the workmen ordered to remove the bust of Mendelssohn from the roof of Prague’s Rudolfinum concert hall started to haul down Richard Wagner – because he had the biggest nose. Absurdistan is tailor-made for black humor, which André Breton called “the mortal enemy of sentimentality.” (Breton, 1997: vii) Absurdistan is no place for kitsch. I use the term here as Milan Kundera (1986: 135) defined it: “the need to gaze into the mirror of the beautifying lie and to be moved to tears of gratification at one’s own reflection.”

Anthony Giddens once described modernity in terms of “a certain set of attitudes towards the world, the idea of the world as open to transformation, by human intervention,” resulting in “a society [...] which, unlike any preceding culture, lives in the future, rather than the past.” As is typical of Anglo-American social theorists, he as-

sociates this with “industrial production and a market economy” and “the nation-state and mass democracy.” (Giddens and Pierson, 1998: 94) But industrialization does not always come with a market economy, or the nation-state with mass democracy. Prague offers a broader perspective on the modern world, and in particular on modernist hubris. What better exemplifies the “idea of the world as open to transformation, by human intervention,” after all, than the Nazis’ “triumph of the will” and the communists’ “scientific socialism”? Prague abundantly showcases the magnificent heritage of modernism in architecture, design, and the visual arts. But Prague also shows that nothing says twentieth-century quite like the concentration camp, the gulag, the party committee, and the show trial. We cannot begin to conceive *this* modernity without addressing processes of state making that are *centrally* grounded in genocide, ethnic cleansing, class war, racism, and xenophobia. Nor can we avoid uncomfortable questions of collaboration, complicity, and the abjection of the modern subject – Kafka’s K, anyone, or would you prefer Václav Havel’s obliging greengrocer? For all its undoubted beauties, Prague is a reliable antidote to kitsch.

The “Prague Platform” agreed by French and Czech surrealists in Prague in the spring of 1968 called out “the demented imbeciles of progress” on both sides of the erstwhile Iron Curtain. Surrealism, they argued, was “especially well placed to verify the fallacious character of the myth of Progress or historical inevitability.” (L’Archibras, 1968) Three months later the armies of the Warsaw Pact proved them right. In this fiftieth anniversary year of the crushing of the Prague Spring – which, in the 20/20 vision of hindsight, begins to look like it might just have been modernity’s last new hope – I would urge that Prague’s historical experience might induce us to expand our understanding of the modern condition. Better yet, we might want to venture down the path opened up by (among others) Max Weber, Hannah Arendt, and Zygmunt Bauman, and ask whether all these former easts and wests are not but two sides of a single coin. My hope would be that in place of Kundera’s beautifying mirror of kitsch, Prague might provide a more *unheimlich* looking-glass in which we can recognize aspects of ourselves in the other and vice versa – and shudder as well as laugh, caught short by the sudden recognition of Rimbaud’s truth: “*Je est un autre.*”

ENDNOTES

¹ Marx continues: “The life-process of society, which is based on the process of material production, does not strip off its mystical veil until it is treated as production by freely associated men, and is consciously regulated by them in accordance with a settled plan.”

² Like the previous two volumes, *Prague at the End of History: Postcards from Absurdistan* will be published by Princeton University Press. I hope to complete it by the end of 2020.

³ Another modernist myth of origin. For an effective critique of it, see de Carvalho et al. (2011). I am grateful to Benjamin Tallis for drawing this article to my attention. Philip Corrigan and I long ago argued

a similar case in regard to England in Corrigan and Sayer (1985), some of whose conclusions I have recently revisited in light of Bohemian history in Sayer (2016).

⁴ Fukuyama wrote this in the summer of 1989, that is, *before* the final collapse of communism across the Soviet bloc.

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