

Conference report: "Twenty-First Annual Czech and Slovak Studies Workshop at UNC-Chapel Hill", USA, April 29 – 30th, 2022

Tereza Juhászová  | tereza.juhaszova@fsv.cuni.cz

Department of Russian and East European Studies, Institute of International Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

The Czech and Slovak Studies Workshop is an annual event for scholars dealing with Czech and Slovak topics in various disciplines – history, literature, anthropology, art, economics, linguistics, and sociology. Since 2000, when the Slavic Department at the University of Michigan organized the first workshop, scholars from across the United States and abroad have been invited to share their current research projects in an interdisciplinary setting.

The Twenty-first Annual Czech and Slovak Studies Workshop took place at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA, on April 29-30, 2022. The event was organized by Chad Bryant (Department of History, UNC-Chapel Hill, Author of *Prague: Belonging and the Modern City* [HUP, 2021]), Hana Píchová (German and Slavic Languages and Literatures, UNC-Chapel Hill, Author of *The Case of the Missing Statue: A Historical and Literary Study of the Stalin Monument in Prague* [Arbor vitae, 2014]), Kirill Tolpygo (UNC-Chapel Hill Libraries), and Tess Megginson (Department of History, UNC-Chapel Hill). It was generously funded by the Center for European Studies; the Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies; the Department of History; the College of Arts and Sciences; the North Carolina Germans Studies series; the Department of Music; the Department of German and Slavic Language and Literatures; the Czechoslovak Studies Association; and the Vice Provost's Office for Global Affairs.

On Friday, April 29th, Pieter Judson (European University Institute, Author of *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* [HUP, 2016]) gave the keynote lecture "Learning to Forget Empire: Central Europe's Global and Imperial Pasts." He called for new approaches to imperial and global pasts in Habsburg Central Europe and commented on the newest expressions of nationalism in the current governmental policies of the successor states of the Habsburg Empire. He stressed the role of national societies in maintaining and reforming the Habsburg Empire to counter-argue the nationalist narratives of the imperial past in contemporary Central Europe.

This was followed by Zuzana Schreiberová (director of the Multicultural Centre Prague), who gave a talk entitled "Ukrainian Refugees in the Czech Republic: Experiences and Reactions." She talked about her experience with refugee populations since 2015, and described the current work of the Multicultural Centre Prague with refugees from Ukraine. This talk was the only one that took place online, otherwise the workshop was held in person, which enabled a fruitful discussion of the presented papers.

During the two days, scholars presented their papers in panels thematically grouped. Each of the eight presenters briefly introduced their work and then more time was devoted to discussion of the pre-circulated papers. On Friday, Mira Markham (UNC-Chapel Hill) and Kevin J. Hoeper (UNC-Chapel Hill) dealt with Habsburg-era Localities – myths from Moravian Wallachia and Public Military Ritual in Bohemia, respectively. Christopher Campo-Bowen (Virginia Tech) presented a chapter from his book about Ethnicity, Property, and Opera in the First Czechoslovak Republic.

On Saturday, two scholars from Central Europe, Patrícia Fogelová (Institute of Social Sciences, CSPA SAS, Košice) and Tereza Juhászová (Charles University) discussed Post-World War II Urban Frames in East Slovakia. Then Tess Megginson (UNC-Chapel Hill) and Tanya Silverman (University of Michigan) talked about visual interpretations – Cultural Maps in the Interwar Czechoslovakia and (Sur)realism in Věra Chytilová's films, respectively. The last paper entitled "Victimhood, Hegemony and Ontological Security in Central and Eastern Europe" was presented by the political scientist Jessie Barton Hronešová (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Fellow at UNC-Chapel Hill/ Ca' Foscari University).

Each of the presentations dealing with Czech and Slovak topics from various disciplines provoked strong discussions amongst the scholars. The workshop provided a huge space for knowledge transfer, with scholars exchanging not only "hard data", but inspiring different ideas and methodological approaches. This workshop certainly has an important place among the events organized by scientists in the field of Czech and Slovak studies, with its participation being of high value, especially for young scientists.