

**Martin Machovec**  
**Going underground**

The term “underground” has not been entirely unequivocal in Czech culture. However, it has traditionally been used to refer to the community that grew up around the rock band The Plastic People of the Universe in the 1970s. That community, which soon became part of the dissent and identified to a considerable degree with the people around Charter 77, consisted of poets, musicians and visual artists, as well as philosophers, essayists and samizdat publishers with markedly different orientations and places on the political spectrum, ranging from ultra-leftist radicals to millenarians to Christian traditionalists.

**Mirek Vodrážka**  
**Create a system or a different system will enslave you**

The paper sets out to define critically the Czechoslovak underground, which arose at the end of the 1960s and was active until the fall of the communist regime in 1989. The concept of “the system”, to which the underground was reacting to critically, directly or indirectly, is used to illuminate the genesis of the movement. It’s coexistence with the Western counterculture is also emphasised. The author questions the established thesis that the underground was apolitical and introduces a critical distinction between the terms subculture and counterculture, politics and sub-politics, and system and chaos.

**Ladislav Kudrna – František Stárek Čuñas**  
**A strike that changed the underground**

During preparations for the 14th congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSC) measures were taking against “long hairs”. Until the 1970s the State Security (StB) had been primarily focused on “right-wing opportunists” (communists expelled from the party after August 1968). However, the “sudden” emergence of an underground community of “long hairs” had been an unpleasant surprise for StB officers.

**Mirek Vodrážka**  
**The mythical vision of the advent of the Great Controller**

The autobiographical study examines the final year of communist totalitarian power. Theories of chaos and non-equilibrium history are used to demonstrate the political instability of both the governing regime and the dissent and underground. The author illustrates the gradual intertwining of the structures of power, the dissent, the grey zone and nascent civil society via the concept of chiasmus.

**Petr Placák**  
**The 100-thousand crown court case**

An article by Petr Placák, one of the organisers of anti-regime demonstrations in Prague in 1988–1989, on the trial of four former members of the State Security (StB) who in June 1989 picked him up at a demonstration at the Royal Game Reserve in Prague 7 and hauled him off to Křivoklát, where they beat him up on an isolated forest path. After almost a quarter of a century, he achieved success: Two of the StB men were sent to prison and one received a suspended sentence (the fourth had died in the interim).

**Jan Cholínský**  
**Standing by the wall**

The study explores continuity and divergence in the development of the Czech social and musical underground subculture of the 1970s and 1980s. It looks at the sphere of non-conformist rock music and the efforts of communist culture policy to ostracise and later control it, including by organising Rockfest festivals. It looks at the underground’s refusal to enter into dialogue with the regime and presents two important underground rock bands of the latter half of the 1980s, Orchestr Bissex and Beatový družstvo Sokolov, including lyrics from demo recordings they made between 1985 and 1989.

**Libor Svoboda**  
**Courier or people smuggler?**

The study explores the life story of

people smuggler and courier Josef Randák and his sister and helper Marie Jírovcová. After escaping across the border in May 1949, Randák was active as a people smuggler and then as a courier in the service of Britain’s intelligence service (SIS). While attempting a border crossing on 23.4.1950 he was seriously injured and subsequently captured. A state court sentenced him to 15 years in jail, while his sister received 10 years. She was released in 1955; he got out in 1960. In the 1970s Randák signed a deal to cooperate with the StB. He died in 1993.

**Petr Blažek**  
**The fortunes of the good soldier Pavel Vošický**

The article examines the circumstances of the show trial in which Pavel Vošický received an 18-month jail term in 1959. As a soldier on basic military service he was initially monitored by the counter-intelligence on suspicion of working with the British secret service. However, he eventually went on trial for ironic and critical remarks about the then communist leadership and for highlighting the role played by the US Army in liberating Czechoslovakia in 1945. In 1969 he went into exile in the US, where he worked as a graphic artist. He moved to the Czech Republic in the first half of the 1990s.

**Petr Kopal**  
**Film and history – propaganda**

The study explores the subject of conducting research into film propaganda. The fundamental importance that totalitarian regimes attached to film has led historians to broaden their specialisation to include film, which has begun acquiring the status of historical source. Much credit for this must go to experts on the Middle Ages who, thanks to their specialisation, were used in the 1950s to working with iconic material as texts of equivalent value. A significant shift occurred in the 1970s with the creation of the International Association for Media and History (IAMHIST).