



SECURITAS IMPERII STUDENT AWARD

100 YEARS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA (KSČ)

The Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes has launched an international student competition to mark the 100th anniversary since the founding of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ) with a €500 prize for the winner. The student award ties in with an upcoming monothematic issue of the academic journal *Securitas Imperii*. The SI Student Award accepts interdisciplinary submissions in Microsoft Word format with any of the listed themes. Students at all levels are invited to submit articles. Student award is also eligible for early career researchers within a year since completing their studies by the time of submission. The deadline for submissions is **30 June 2021**.

We are accepting contributions on the following topics:

1) International relations

Czechoslovak communism as part of the international communist movement and later the Soviet Bloc. Work dealing with shifts within internationalism; the relationship with Moscow and other communist parties, especially the KSČ's dynamic with Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus, will be welcomed. Issues that can also be covered include the political, economic, and cultural position of Czechoslovakia within the Soviet Bloc, as well as the relationship with communist and socialist parties in the West and beyond. Was there any suppressed "Czechoslovak national path" to socialism? What was the significance of the Cold War for the formation of Czechoslovak communism? What were the experiences of students and workers from the socialist states and global south in Czechoslovakia? Did the Czechoslovak Republic function for them as a "showcase" of communism?

2) Instruments of power dominance

The illegal activity of interwar KSČ. The discontinuity and continuity of the resistance against Nazism and Communism. Forms and changes in repressive and disciplinary mechanisms. The role of purges and the framing of designated culprits. The search for enemies within the party. Excluded and marginalized – the role of ex-communists in Charter 77 and beyond.

3) Economic and social situation

The social policy of the Communist Party from the protest marches of the unemployed in the 1930s through the post-war welfare state, the post-February 1948 transformation of social structure, technocracy, and the beginnings of a culture of consumption in the 1960s, to the idle industrialism and economic-social stagnation of the normalisation era. Strategies of material pacification, legitimising functions of social policy and its limits.

4) Political system

The general relationship between communism, modernity, and liberal democracies. The position of the Communist Party in the interwar political system, socialist democracy as a "higher" type of democracy, the supremacy of power and the denial of pluralist democracy, the Communist Party and parliamentary democracy after 1989. Parliament and other constitutional institutions and democratic procedures as a means of generating a picture of the KSČ's legitimacy in the years 1948-1989. The specifics of the relationship between Czechoslovak communism and parliamentary democracy compared to other countries of the Soviet Bloc.

5) Party and society

From the people's party to the against-the-people party. Communication between supporters and the party's leadership, the function of the KSČ membership base in the day-to-day running of society, the party apparatus, the mutual interaction of the membership base, party elites, and non-partisans. Transformations of the party elites; the role of key senior officials. The development of communist satellite organisations and associations. Mass rallies, sources and forms of social loyalty, the pitfalls of interpretations of relative stability, the boundaries of communist dictatorship, and dominion as a social practice.

6) Legacy

The Communist Party after the loss of its monopoly on power, the course of the Czechoslovak transformation, the development of the radical left after 1989, the Communist Party as an anti-establishment party. The development of the post-November 1989 policy of memory, dealing with monuments and landscape, the issue of a possible ban on communist parties. Anti-communism as an instrument of political struggle.

7) Race, ethnicity, and gender

Racial and gender equality within the communist movement and in society under state socialism, ranging from policies addressing emancipation to the consolidation of conservative ideas during the normalisation era. The dichotomy of condemning racism and persistent racial prejudices in society. Party ideology and state policy on the Roma question. The developments of the KSČ's approach to people with physical or mental disabilities. The experience of sexual minorities under state socialism.

8) The power of images: the reception and rejection of communist imagery

Following the model of Soviet Bolsheviks, the KSČ developed a complex visual language intended to address the masses. This visual language, however, was neither unequivocal nor unidirectional. Communist images conveyed powerful and straightforward messages that helped to mobilise followers. On the other hand, these images were often misread, reinterpreted, or even ridiculed.

This section aims to analyse various aspects of this communication: the KSČ's persuasion tactics and self-representation in popular media, representations of the Communist Party in the public space, how the KSČ made use of visual propaganda, depicting the "victorious February" of 1948 and other important moments in the KSČ's history.

Other topics related to 100 years of the Czechoslovak Communist Party or, in general, to the history of communist parties in Central Europe are also accepted.

Please submit your entries via email: securitas.imperii@ustrcr.cz

Deadline: **30 June 2021**

Prize: 500 euro