

“Václav Havel. A multi-voice portrait of the hero of the Velvet Revolution”: 18 interviews by a Swiss-Italian student to remember the former Czech President ten years after his departure

Prague, December 9th, 2021

December 18th, 2021 will mark the tenth anniversary of the death of President Václav Havel, the hero of the Velvet Revolution; a significant figure for the Czech Republic and the history of modern Europe. For this occasion, the bilingual Italian-English magazine published in Prague, *Progetto Repubblica Ceca*, edited a new book on the former Czech dissident. “Václav Havel. Ritratto a più voci dell’eroe della Rivoluzione di Velluto” / “Václav Havel. A multi-voice portrait of the hero of the Velvet Revolution”. The aim is to remember Václav Havel, his moral stature, values, and legacy.

The publication is composed of eighteen exclusive interviews to prominent people, both national and international, on the figure of the late Czech president and human rights activist. Among them are ambassadors, politicians, former ministers, academics, journalists, and historians who considered his relevant global impact. With reference to domestic and foreign policy, philosophy, and literature, Havel was explored in accordance with each interviewee’s relation with him.

The interviews have been conducted and curated by Amedeo Gasparini, a 24-year-old Swiss-Italian freelance journalist, graduated in “International Relations” at Charles University in Prague last June. The volume is published in Italian, with English translation, and it is printed in the Czech Republic for a limited number of copies. The introduction is by journalist and writer Sergio Tazzer, an expert on Central and Eastern Europe and founder of the weekly RAI radio program “East West.”

This volume is a non-profit publication, and it aims to achieve a charitable purpose. The distribution of the book is in fact not subject to a cover price, but to a freewill donation to organizations engaged in activities consistent with the spirit of the former dissident and human rights activist.

This initiative was made possible thanks also to the support of SIAD SpA, an Italian multinational company operating in the production and supply of industrial, engineering, healthcare and LPG and natural gas, present in the Czech Republic with SIAD Czech, with two important plants and an extensive distribution and sales network.

The following patronages participated in this editorial initiative as well: Embassy of Italy in the Czech Republic, Italian Institute of Culture, City of Prague, Europeum, Forum 2000, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom – Central European and Baltic countries, Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, Václav Havel Library.

Mid-December a presentation in Italian with Czech translation will be held at the Italian Cultural Center (Vlašská 34, Malá Strana, Prague). It will be an opportunity to present the new volume to the public, a few days before the anniversary of President Havel’s death. Mauro Marsili, Ambassador of the Italian Republic in the Czech Republic will be present as well.

Interviewees

- Martin Palouš, Ambassador to the US (2001-2005) and Rep. to the UN (2006-2011)
- Dominik Duka, Cardinal of the Czech Republic (2012-)
- Cyril Svoboda, Deputy Prime Minister (2002-2004) and Minister of Foreign Affairs (2002-2006)
- Václav Malý, Bishop of Prague (1997-) and founder of the Civic Forum (1990)
- Karel Schwarzenberg, politician, Minister of Foreign Affairs (2007-2009, 2010-2013)
- Michael Žantovský, Ambassador to the US (1992-1997) and Israel (2004-2009)
- Vladimír Dlouhý, Minister of the Economy (1990-1992) and Trade (1992-1997)
- Rob Cameron, journalist, BBC Prague correspondent (2004-)
- Gabriele Nissim, historian of Eastern Europe, founder of The Garden of the Righteous (2003-)
- Jakub Hladík, secretary and advisor to Václav Havel (1998-2008)
- Luděk Niedermayer, banker, Member of the European Parliament (2014-)
- Alexandr Vondra, Ambassador to the US (1997-2001), Minister of Foreign Affairs (2006-2007)
- Jacques Rupnik, professor and historian at Sciences Po, advisor to Václav Havel (1990-1992)
- Veritas Holiková, nun and psychologist (2002-), last person to meet Václav Havel
- Zdeněk Bakala, businessman and investor, billionaire, financier of Václav Havel Library (2010-)
- Zdeněk Hřib, doctor and mayor of Prague (2018-)
- Pavel Kopp, former Czech diplomat, photographer, engineer
- Madeleine Albright, US Rep. to the UN (1993-1997), US Secretary of State (1997-2001)

About the magazine

Progetto Repubblica Ceca is the first Italian paper magazine in Prague after the Velvet Revolution. Published quarterly also in English, it covers topics which range from politics to economics, from society to culture, from history to music, from literature to tourism. Over the years, the magazine has become an essential cultural reference point for the Italian community in Prague and the Czech Republic and it is also distributed in Slovakia and Italy. For more information, www.progetto.cz / Klimentská 1652/36, 110 00 Prague.

Patronages



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