



Partecipazione e Conflitto

<http://siba-ese.unisalento.it/index.php/paco>

ISSN: 1972-7623 (print version)

ISSN: 2035-6609 (electronic version)

PACO, Issue 17(1) 2024: 96-112

DOI: 10.1285/i20356609v17i1p96

Published March 15, 2024

Work licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non commercial-Share alike 3.0 Italian License

RESEARCH ARTICLE

"Against Red Fascism!": Anti-Communism of the Czech Antifascist Action as a Polarizing Factor on the Czech Radical Left¹

Jan Charvát

Institute of Political Science, Charles University, Prague

ABSTRACT: After the collapse of communism in 1989, several new phenomena emerged in the Czech Republic, including the far right, which built on aggressive anti-communism, nationalism, and support for right-wing currents. At the same time, there was a significant discrediting of general left-wing attitudes because of their identification with communism. The article focuses on how the Czech Antifascist Action (AFA) worked with anti-communism. The article first shows the basic principles on which anti-communism is based. It then focuses on post-communist anti-communism, specifically in the Czech Republic. At the same time, the article presents the history of anarchist anti-communism. The article then summarizes AFA's history, specifically its Czech version until the COVID-19 period. Methodologically, the article uses content analysis. The crucial data source is the texts published by AFA in their magazine *Antifa News* or *Akce!* and on their website *Antifa.cz*. In principle, it can be assumed that anti-communism played several distinct roles but were intertwined and mutually reinforcing. It enabled AFA to distinguish itself from the Communist Party and communism generally. The specificity of the Czech AFA's anti-communism lies in combining both approaches typical of anarchist anti-communism and approaches characteristic of the Czech variant of post-communist anti-communism.

KEYWORDS: Antifascist Action, antifascism, anticommunism, post-communism, Czech Republic

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR: jan.charvat@fsv.cuni.cz

¹ This article was supported by the NPO „Systemic Risk Institute“ LX22NPO5101, funded by the European Union – Next Generation EU.

1. Introduction

After the collapse of communism in 1989, several previously unknown phenomena emerged in the Czech Republic. Among these were the rise of the far right, which built on the aggressive anti-communism of the time; the rise of nationalism; and support for right-wing currents, including extreme ones. At the same time, there was a significant discrediting of left-wing attitudes and their identification with communism. The non-Stalinist Marxist groups (such as *Levá alternativa*) that emerged at the same time were marginal and short-lived. The established parties used (and continue to use) widespread anti-communism to ostracize left-wing projects. This environment gave rise to an aggressive and pervasive form of the far right associated with political parties and a well-established subculture of racist skinheads, which formed a significant part of the Czech far right from 1990 to 1998 and, subsequently, formed its central core until 2013 (Charvát, Slačálek, and Svatoňová 2023, 87). In this defined environment, the emerging Antifascist Action (AFA) had to contend with neo-Nazi militants and a hostile environment imbued with inherent anti-communism. In this context, it is meaningful to study how AFA, as a project based on anarchist and radical left positions, approached the question of anti-communism. This text thus investigates *what role anti-communism plays in the functioning of Czech Antifascist Action*. I would like to understand how Antifascist Action works with anti-communism, to what extent it uses it, to what extent it uses approaches more typical of left-wing anti-communism, and to what extent its approach reflects the post-communist anti-communism typical of the Central European region. AFA is an informal multinational group of radical antifascists that has been, from the beginning, linked to anarchism. The Czech AFA was founded in 1996, and anti-communism has always been a relatively prominent component of their ideology. This makes the Czech mutation of AFA somewhat different from its Western European counterparts, but at the same time more like its Central European counterparts. In recent years, AFA has been inactive in the Czech Republic, mainly due to a decline in the activities of the subcultural far right after 2015, against which the AFA previously mobilized quite well. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine one can witness a short-term resurgence of AFA activity on social media, where Czech AFA takes a strictly pro-Ukrainian position, with some form of anti-communism reflected here.

Before beginning the analysis itself, however, it is necessary to briefly clarify some basic postulates as regards the structure of the text. First, it is necessary to explain how anti-communism functions, with consideration for its form in Central Europe and then in the Czech Republic. Similarly, it is essential to present in basic terms the form of anarchist anti-communism, which is crucial to Czech AFA. Subsequently, an overview is provided of the structure guiding the radical antifascist groups, to which Czech AFA ascribes.

1.1 Anti-communism

In its broadest sense, anti-communism is an attitude that rejects communist ideology, communist movements, or the communist state system (Balibar 2003, 86). Anti-communism can take different forms, often referring to at least the interwar, Cold War, and post-Cold War variants (Gökarıksel 2020, 219). The roots of these ideas usually stem from the 1920s, especially in the context of the American Red Scare (the first of that name) (Ghodsee 2017). At the time, however, anti-communism served to define itself not only against communist ideology but, as Ceplair (2011, 14) points out, it was already employing the “one-size-fits-all” rhetoric of the American anti-communists, which placed all leftists (but also other groups like radicals and atheists) under the umbrella term “reds”. Thus, although, in theory anti-communism should only be a rejection of communism, in real politics, it more often plays the role of a mobilizing and delegitimizing factor that can be also used against a wide range of other (left-wing) ideologies and, at the same time, to legitimize one’s own (non-communist) position. It is, therefore, not just a counter-attitude but a doctrine of its own that can be used in different ways and plays a specific role in society.

There is another point related to this. As Gökarıksel (2020, 216) and others (Ghodsee 2017, 134; Dujisin 2021, 72) indicates, the symmetrization of fascism and communism is common in contemporary liberal democracies, and both concepts are, moreover, usually summarized under the unifying term “totalitarianism”. The symmetrization with fascism and the automatic linking of communism and totalitarianism are essentially strategies that aim to delegitimize communist ideology. However, because anti-communism is used in a broader scope, this approach can lead to a rejection of any criticism of capitalism or attention being drawn to the dysfunctionality of democratic principles (Gökarıksel 2020, 222). As a result, it can be used by a wide range of political parties in their repertoire, whether social democratic or on the far right.

1.2 Post-communist Anti-Communism

The collapse of communism in Central Europe was framed as a renewal or struggle for “liberalism,” “freedom,” and a “return to the West.” Only gradually was “capitalism” added. All this opposes communism, totalitarianism, the East, and the socialist (planned) economy (Dujisin 2010, 480). This approach was then reinforced by reference to the oppressive history of communism and the simultaneous fear that it could return. The result, as Gökarıksel (2020, 222) points out, was that in Eastern Europe, anti-communism in particular became an approach to silence any views that criticized capitalism.

Chelcea and Druță (2016, 525) even go so far as to argue that post-communist anti-communism in Central Europe is purposefully used by the “winners of the post-communist transition” to ostracize the “losers of transformation”, to discipline the lower social classes, and to advocate anti-social policies. From this perspective then, anti-communism in post-communist Europe is not just an ideological stance but an important part of policymaking. That is why, according to the authors, it is alive and relevant more than thirty years after the fall of communism.

Similarly, Zoltán Dujisin (2010, 475) points out that in the post-communist space, anti-communism has taken on a particular form that differs from the original dissident (during communist rule) anti-communism, and whose primary dimension is the delegitimization of existing political opponents (confirmed by Navrátil and Hrubeš 2018, 6). This often leads to political opponents being labeled communists regardless of their natural ideological anchorage. A typical example is the growing tendency to label the European Union as “modern communism,” from the far right to the established right. Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley (1998) then point out that post-communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe have been characterized by a relatively aggressive anti-communism that opposed collaboration with the technocratic elites of the former communist regimes.

At the same time, specifically in Central Europe, we see an approach that is partly similar to the Nazi pre-war approach to the racialization of communism, only that instead of Jewish communism, we often speak of Russian Bolshevism. The link to the Russian ethnicity can, on the one hand, bring into play the nationalist dimension of the communism critique; however, on the other hand, it allows communism to be perceived as Eastern, Asian, primitive, and non-European. In this constellation, it is natural to link communism with (non-European) totalitarian thought and then symmetrize it with Nazism. In Central Europe, then, this symmetrization often shifts, and Nazism is interpreted as a left-wing tendency, as a merely national variant of socialism, as opposed to communism, which is an international variant. An overview of the main arguments and authors sharing this view is provided by the leading Czech conservative thinker Roman Joch (2013) in his essay, “Leftist Roots of Fascism”.

In short, while Western anti-communism symmetrizes fascism and communism and includes all left-wing radicals under the communism label, in Central and Eastern Europe, this approach is shifted, and fascism is considered a nationalist version of communism, with the term being applied to the entire political left.

1.3 Czech Anti-communism

Koubek and Polášek (2013, 16) define anti-communism as “a particular political strategy that serves to limit the room for manoeuvre of certain left-wing parties (alliance/coalition ties) in free competition between political parties and to weaken them electorally, or mirroring this, to mobilize supporters of non-left parties and strengthen them electorally”. Slačálek, does not see anti-communism just as an attitude hostile to communism. Rather, he says anti-communism must meet three criteria: (1) essentialism, which allows the term communism to encompass a wide field from the teachings of Karl Marx to the practices of Pol Pot; (2) the exclusion of communism from democratic recognition; and (3) the importance of anti-communism to the identity of the actor (Slačálek 2021, 171 f.). Slačálek then defines six types of Czech anti-communism: (i) based on the type of political mission, (ii) based on the graduation of criticism as regards social change, (iii) based on political background, (iv) based on the actual semiotic function, (v) based on the proposed cure, and (vi) based on spatial scope (Slačálek 2021, 173 f.). Left-wing anti-communism (a subtype of the third type) is defined by the distance from communism within the relegitimization of left-wing attitudes. As Navrátil and Hrubeš (2018, 7) point out, the influence of anti-communism in Czech society was so strong that it pushed leftist actors into a paradoxical situation where they had the choice of either defining themselves as anti-Communist and, in turn, reinforcing the political discourse of their political opponents, or they could choose to oppose anti-communism, which immediately led to their being labeled bearers of a “nostalgia for communism”

For Czechoslovak and, subsequently, Czech society, anti-communism was a natural and understandable approach that took shape after the fall of the communist regime in 1989 (Navrátil and Hrubeš 2018, 6). At this time, anti-communism primarily represented a tendency to cut oneself off from the communist past and start building a new society that would be democratic and based on free market ideals. At the same time, anti-communism was often used as a denunciation technique against all those who criticized the economic transformation proposed by the Civic Democratic Party (ODS; the country’s most important Czech moderate right-wing party) led by Václav Klaus. According to Dujisin (2021, 483), ODS was the key player responsible for the emergence of anti-communism as a unifying doctrine, with several former dissidents using their symbolic status as capital to bolster ODS. Thus, anti-communism became a natural doctrine that merged with the liberal view toward the economy and society in the Czech environment and became, to a large extent, a weapon and armor used by political elites to repel a significant part of the criticism (Koubek and Polášek 2013, 10). The nationalist tendencies of the Communist Party also reinforced the liberal dimension of Czech anti-communism. The latter referred to the history of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia before 1989, which worked with nationalism and Pan-Slavism as a standard (Slačálek 2021, 196).

The spread of this kind of anti-communism in Czech society helped to gradually isolate the party. However, the Communist party went against this trend quite significantly when, in the 1990s, it rid itself of reformers who tried to turn the originally orthodox Communist Party into a modern European-style left-wing party. Liberal anti-communism, based on the experience prior to 1989, was hand in hand with the long-term existence of an unreformed and unreformable Communist Party, and led to the emergence of a distinctly schematic anti-communism that settled in the pantheon of most Czech political parties for many years (Cabada 2015, 14). Such a schematically conceived anti-communism, on the one hand, allows for a natural symmetry with historical Nazism and, on the other hand, offers a straightforward ideological formula acceptable to a significant part of Czech society (Pehe 2006). In the context of a post-communist country, in which the fear of a return of a communist dictatorship resonated for some time, it is not surprising that anti-communism took hold in society in this schematic way. However, it is also not surprising that it was often used against subjects or ideological trends that had little to do with communism or the Communist Party. In practice, as many authors have pointed out, anti-communism was also used against parties other than the Communist Party, especially the Social Democrats (Koubek and Polášek, 2013, 5; Navrátil and Hrubeš 2018, 6; Slačálek 2021, 196). Nevertheless, even here, Czech anti-communism followed the trajectory we have seen throughout history, such as during the Red Scare

in the United States (see Ceplair 2011, 16). However, as Koubek and Polášek (2013, 11) indicate, the purpose of Czech anti-communism is not so much to mobilize voters and win elections but rather to narrow the maneuvering room for left-wing political parties.

Navrátil and Hrubeš (2018, 7) point out that political anti-communism can be understood in three ways. First, as the gradually disappearing legacy of the transition from communist to post-communist society; second, as a mobilizing element against the current Communist Party; and third, as a permanent stigmatization of the left as a whole. They also note that several types of anti-communism as well as numerous adherents to anti-communist ideology exist simultaneously in Czech society, from political parties to civil society (Navrátil and Hrubeš 2018, 12).

Koubek and Polášek provide a rather interesting and helpful explanation of Czech anti-communism. According to them, anti-communism plays two key roles in Czech society—as a screen and as a putty. The authors write that the role of a screen allows anti-communism to limit debates on specific critical social issues by referring to their connection to “communism.” These topics are unpleasant or dangerous for the elites and, in this way, can be disqualified. The role of a putty then makes anti-communism a link between all, predominantly right-wing political parties—when invoked, it serves as a kind of ritual, confirming their position in defense of “the right thing” (Koubek and Polášek 2013, 12).

1.4 Anarchist Anti-communism

Like communism, anarchism belongs among radical left ideologies, which, as shown in the previous section, are often conflated. As Markku Ruotsila (2009, 511) points out, for American socialists, Bolshevism was a specific version of anarcho-syndicalism. However, there have been several disputes between anarchism and communism since the First International that have historically escalated into physical violence. Levy (2014, 25) points out that Alexander Bakunin criticized Marx and considered it likely that the eventual communist revolution would end, not with the proletariat’s victory but with the creation of a new class composed of technicians and intellectuals. In principle, several themes can be identified that distinguish anarchists from communists. On a purely ideological level, these include a different perception of the state: for Marxists, the state is primarily the protector of capitalism, whereas, for anarchists, its agenda does not disappear with the mere elimination of the institution of private property. (Levy 2014, 29) Levy notes in his text that for anarcho-collectivists, any communism was a path toward totalitarianism. Communism, in this conception, was authoritarian and dictatorial, and the fundamental principle that anarchists criticized was the subordination of the individual to the collective (Levy 2014, 24). Indeed, Gerald Meyer (2007, 103) writes that as early as 1918, anarchists warned against the Marxist conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This approach did not disappear from anarchism, as Errico Malatesta attests when suggesting that while the dictatorship of the proletariat may help defend the revolution, it also creates space for the future victory of a new, privileged class standing above the masses of the people (Levy 2014, 27). According to Ceplair (2011, 49), Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman were vital in spreading anarchist anti-communism as they were activists who had experienced communist terror first-hand. Meyer (2007, 103) then points to the importance of the Kronstadt rebellion in forming anarchist anti-communism. References to Kronstadt are expected within the anarchist scene to the present day and always, as we shall see, refer to the anarchist rejection of Bolshevism, which is understood as totalitarian. This estimation was confirmed in the 1930s during the Spanish Civil War, and, at least according to Levy (2014, 29), anarchist anti-communism significantly influenced the interwar critical view of the communist movement. At the same time, Levy (2014, 30) reports that developments in the 1960s led anarchists in the direction of participatory democracy, which still placed them in a contrasting position to authoritarian communism.

Thus, the critical moments of anarchist anti-communism work with both a rejection of communist statism and a rejection of communist authoritarianism—both are seen as direct threats to freedom.

2. History of Antifascist Action

Although the roots of radical anti-fascism in Europe go back to the 1930s (Burley 2017, 96; Finley and Esposito 2020, 107), what is relevant for us is the situation during the early 1980s and onwards when the organized neo-Nazi movement entered the European space and penetrated the skinhead subculture. The latter, although initially emerging as a non-political and non-racist subculture, underwent a transformation that brought members of the English far-right into its ranks starting in the late 1970s. It then spread worldwide in the form of neo-Nazi gangs combining far-right ideology and subcultural aesthetics. This combination of political activism and a subcultural predilection for violence is responsible for the sharp increase in violence, particularly against its similarly subcultural counterparts, punks, as well as anarchists and left-wing activists in general. This situation led to groups of anti-racist punks and skinheads organizing antifascist groups (Vysotsky 2020, 272; Koch 2018, 16), leading to the emergence of the modern AFA in Europe and Anti-Racist Action (ARA) in the United States. These are primarily subcultural groups based on the anarchist tradition (Burley 2017, 7). After 1980, in Western Europe, these groups began to use the name Antifascist Action together with its iconography (Bray 2017, 25).

The British AFA is essential in this respect, comprising groups of anarchists, socialists, and Trotskyists (Bray 2017, 57). Formed in 1985, it declared itself non-sectarian, organized upon “democratic lines, with equal representation for all groups involved” (Copsey 2016, 709). As Copsey (2016, 711) points out, particularly after 1989, the British AFA comprised a mixture of groups including Marxist Red Action, various groups of anarchist provenance, and completely ideologically unaffiliated individuals. This also led to tensions within the group between its Marxist and anarchist wings in terms of international cooperation with other antifascist groups across Europe, which have typically been more anarchist in outlook (Copsey 2016, 715).

The formation of antifa groups in eastern, and still communist, Germany in the late 1980s followed a similar trajectory, with several groups responding to neo-Nazi skinhead violence by forming various anti-skinhead groups, mostly subcultural, which again drew principally upon the anarchist tradition (Weiß 2015, 651 f.). After 1989, a few antifascist groups emerged in Germany, claiming the name AFA but slightly diverging from the organization’s British rendition. They instead emphasized more autonomist tendencies—the term “autonomous” here denotes an ideological position oscillating between anarchism and a not-quite-concrete left-critical view espousing radical self-governance, and a turn away from society towards internal structures of self-determination (Jones 2018; Jones and Schuhmacher 2024). The experience of the communist regime plays a role here, leading leftist autonomists to reject communism and, as Copsey (2016, 712) points out, to emphasize horizontal ties over vertical ones. It was this “autonomist” style that spread from Germany to Europe and went on to influence many antifascist groups (Jones and Schuhmacher, 2024), aided by the reluctance of British Marxists within the AFA to cooperate with European autonomists for ideological reasons (Copsey 2016, 715).

According to Grzegorz Piotrowski (2021, 44 f.), the first groups of militant anti-fascists appeared in (still communist) Poland in the mid-1980s, primarily because of skinhead violence at punk and reggae concerts. As in Germany, members of these groups were primarily recruited from anarchist and subcultural backgrounds, and their activities were focused on simultaneous resistance against racist skinheads and the state apparatus. This distinguishes them from anti-fascist civic groups, which focused more on human rights issues and support for EU anti-discrimination laws (Piotrowski 2021, 44).

The Polish and German experiences significantly influenced the emergence of militant anti-fascist groups in the Czech Republic after 1989. Here, too, these groups were primarily formed from subcultural youth for reasons of self-defense against the growing violence of racist skinheads, which, at least in the first half of the 1990s, was not adequately responded to by the police and the state. In turn, this reinforced the tendency among these groups to anchor themselves in an anarchist ideology that worked with both a vision of direct action and a distrust of the state, specifically its law enforcement agencies.

A third significant wave in the emergence of antifa groups occurred in the United States, where, especially after Donald Trump's ascendancy, the activity of groups labelling themselves directly as "antifa" is accelerating rapidly. They are thus gradually replacing the older ARA structures that have been inactive since the late 1990s (Bray 2017, 108).

Today, the term antifa essentially refers to a broad movement of different groups primarily united by their reactivity to fascist (especially street) mobilization (Finley and Esposito 2020, 106). As Jones, Piotrowski and Schuhmacher (2024) point out in their introduction 'Antifa from Below', this is a subcultural movement distinct from earlier forms of communist anti-fascism. From a theoretical perspective, antifa is a countermovement that mobilizes to stop the growth of activities that identify as fascist/neo-Nazi (Vysotsky 2020, 11). Fascism is usually seen more broadly in AFA's terms, but it does conform in principle to academic definitions of the far right (Mudde 2007, 23-25; Arlow 2020, 116 f.). It is not a centralized movement (Vysotsky 2020, 50), and individual groups within a single country or a region as well as globally can vary considerably both ideologically and in the structure and breadth of activities. At the same time, what links them are both the more left-wing ideological positions (Vysotsky 2020, 55) and the willingness to use violent, illegal methods in the fight against fascism (Arlow 2020, 117). For a significant portion of antifa groups today, it is true that they come more from an anarchist framework (Vysotsky 2020, 55). This is because anarchism, more than other leftist movements, tends to gravitate toward direct action tactics, which corresponds to the *modus operandi* of antifa groups. The punk subculture, which again tends to gravitate toward anarchism rather than other ideologies, has also played a significant role in the emergence of antifa groups globally (Arlow 2020, 122; Vysotsky 2020, 55).

2.1 History of Antifascist Action in Czech Republic

At the beginning of the 1990s, Czech society was affected by the brutal violence of neo-Nazi skinhead groups (Charvát and Kuřík 2018, 381). Failing to respond adequately at first, the police at this time were still primarily a corps formed during the communist government and were unable or unwilling to respond to racially motivated violence. The primary targets of neo-Nazi skinhead groups were initially ethnic minorities, but soon mainstream skinhead violence turned against alternative and subcultural youth, often influenced by anarchist ideology in the 1990s. At this time, the first anarchist groups and organizations emerged and over time absorbed the issues of antiracism and antifascism into their activities. AFA itself was founded in 1996 after a police crackdown on the punk club Propast, which served as a meeting place for antifascist skinheads (Charvát 2007, 164).

AFA's activities can be divided into three periods separated by both an organizational change and an ideological shift.

The first is from its establishment in 1996 to 2003. During this period, the first four regional AFA groups were formed, which would increase to 14 by 2002. The groups were founded as a self-defense organization of mostly subcultural youth against the violence of neo-Nazi skinheads. Ideologically, AFA embraces anarchism based mainly on the promotion of direct action, the rejection of the state and the police in particular, solidarity, and anti-racism. After 2000, AFA became a more robust organization focused on clashes with neo-Nazis. The first peak in AFA's activism occurred at this time in clashes with the neo-Nazi group National Resistance (NO; *Národní odpor*; formed using the German *Nationaler Widerstand* group model), at that time the largest and most influential neo-Nazi skinhead organization in the country. AFA managed to partially marginalize NO and push them out of the public space by 2002 (Charvát 2007, 166). However, the loss of an external enemy led to an ideological dispute within AFA; the politically profiled part of its members got into disputes with the more subcultural-attuned individuals, leading to the integration of AFA into the newly formed Federation of Anarchist Groups (FAS) in 2003. There were also several physical clashes between AFA militants and members of Trotskyist or Marxist groups, reflecting the significant animosity between the two groups (Bastl 2010, 12).

The second period, from 2003 to 2007, is characterized by AFA's involvement in the FAS (Charvát 2007, 167). Antifascist activities were in this instance considered secondary and subordinate to anarchist ideology, and indeed, the ideology of AFA also partially changed during this stage. AFA endorsed the FSA's policy, which was based primarily on a class analysis aimed at the working class. The revolutionary antifascism to which AFA was now subscribed was seen as strictly a part of social anarchism, which is tied to Murray Bookchin's concept (Tomek and Slačálek 2006, 596) and stands in opposition to so-called lifestyle anarchism. However, the FAS project gradually degenerated. On the one hand, it became perceived by other anarchists and subcultural and alternative youth as an over-politicized and closed group. On the other hand, AFA's involvement in the FSA eventually led to an internal hollowing out of the FAS and a shift of most activities in favor of AFA (Bastl 2011, 111 f.).

The third period began in 2007 and lasted until 2017/2018 when AFA activities essentially ceased. During this time, AFA slowly shed its connection with the FAS and began a new era that partially muted its anarchist ideology. AFA here leaned more toward an eclectic, new-left approach that toned down issues of class analysis, though it did not completely abandon them, and refocused the organization toward a broader audience of (not only) subcultural youth with a left-liberal perspective. AFA came up with a series of strategic changes that included both abandoning blockades of neo-Nazi demonstrations and embracing communication with the media (Bastl 2011, 117). The period of 2007 and 2008 coincides again with a rise in activities among the Czech far-right and neo-Nazi groups and is the second peak in the activities of AFA. During this time, the group focused on the systematic monitoring and doxing of neo-Nazis, successfully penetrating the public space through communication with the media (Bastl 2011, 118).

However, in 2008, the far-right scene, which skinhead and post-skinhead groups had dominated since the early 1990s, transformed. At the same time, the importance of neo-Nazi groups fell, and as the traditional enemy of AFA disappeared from the scene, so too did its activity (Daniel 2020, 67). It made a partial comeback starting in 2014 when the anti-Islamist movement grew more assertive; however, after the disintegration of the Czech anti-Islamist groups in 2017 and 2018, the AFA also effectively ceased its activities, although it did sporadically publish articles in the following years.

3. Thematic Analysis of AFA texts on Anti-communism

This analysis followed the principles of inductive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). This approach involved five steps. The first stage analyzed texts published by AFA in the magazines *Akce!* And *Antifa News* as well as on the web, identifying units of meaning related to anti-communism. The second phase involved the generation of codes aimed at identifying basic categories linking the different units of meaning. The third involved the identification of the main themes that appear in the texts. This was followed by a fourth phase, during which the themes were checked and unified to avoid overlap. In the fifth phase, the main themes related to the issue of anti-communism were finally established.

The critical data sources are the texts published by Antifascist Action in their magazines *Antifa News* and *Akce!*. Between 1996 and 1997 four issues of *Antifa News* were published, and between 2000 and 2013, 17 issues of *Akce!* were published. The second source is texts from the *antifa.cz* website, which has been active from 2005 to the present.

In total, a corpus of 53 texts published either in the Antifascist Action magazines or on the AFA website were in some way related to the issues of communism/anti-communism, Bolshevism, or the authoritarian left.

In the case of printed materials, the data was collected manually; a web search engine was used to find all articles containing the terms "communism," "Bolshevism," "authoritarian left," "far left," and "extreme left" for web-based data. Of these, texts that did not correspond to the topic under study were then discarded.

I identified 30 meaning units to explain the reasons for criticizing or rejecting communism in the texts. Twelve concerned the symmetrization of fascism and communism, nine dealt with the issue of restricted freedoms under communism, six focused on communist statism, and single critiques focused on the claim that communism is right-wing, that communism erroneously relies on the primacy of economics, and the interdependence of communism and Putin's Russia.

3.1 The main themes of Czech AFA's anti-communist discourse

3.1.1 Symmetrization of Fascism and Communism

The category of symmetrization is the most widely used and contains five subgroups: (a) communism is the equivalent of fascism, (b) "red fascism", (c) Nazi anti-capitalism, (d) National Socialism, (e) Communists killed as many people as the Nazis. However, it also includes simpler tropes, such as the use of terms like "red fascism", historical references to the number of deaths compared to the number of victims of fascism, and (in one case) the notion that communism is international socialism and Nazism national (Barevný 2003, 30), a trendy idea in the Czech mainstream. It should be added, however, that later AFA also published a text which, on the contrary, rejected this idea.

The basic program of AFA, published in the second issue of *Akce!* (Akce! 2000a, 2), speaks of an authoritarian left that is symmetrical with Bolshevism and Nazism. At the same time, however, it warns that AFA's aim is not to speak out against Bolshevism as the current rise of the far right would use these positions to spread anti-leftist sentiments. In this sense, AFA subscribes to its leftist orientation but mentions AFA as part of the anti-authoritarian movement. The text itself is distinctly political and understands antifascism as part of a class struggle in which the critical enemy is the existence of capitalism and the state.

Since at least 2000, phrases like red fascism and the symmetrization of fascism and communism have been commonplace. In this sense, AFA adopted a mainstream discourse, where the symmetrization of communism and fascism was (and is) one of the critical key themes of post-communist anti-communism. The symmetrization itself then sees fascism as equivalent to communism in some cases, whereas in other cases, it points to specific differences but similarities in outcome. Both fascism and communism, according to AFA, enslave large sections of the population and liquidate some sections of the population on either a class or racial basis, both have totalitarian ideologies, and neither is concerned with the freedom of society (Br. 2002,17).

Thus, the attempt to symmetrize fascism and communism is to take a society-wide argument and turn it around in favor of leftist antifascists. AFA says, "Yes, communism is just as bad as fascism. Nevertheless, if you think it is legitimate to fight communism, then it is legitimate to fight fascism."

3.1.2 Restriction of Freedom by Communism

This category contains three subgroups: (1) against the freedom of the people, (2) totalitarianism, and (3) historical experience. The most widely held view is that communism is against people's freedom. The second subcategory contains a perception of communism as a totalitarian or authoritarian political movement. However, it also includes arguments for suppressing the Kronstadt rebellion and references to the equality that true communism is supposed to imply, whereas Bolshevism suppresses it. The key term "authoritarian" plays a central role here. Antifascist action sees itself as part of the anti-authoritarian scene, working with this term from its inception while simultaneously seeing communism as the opposite, that is, as an authoritarian left.

Anti-authoritarianism appears here as a synonym for anarchism, but also, in principle, for freedom, a libertarian approach to society, or all those who oppose the state. Logically, the key aspect of hostility to communism is authoritarianism, which suggests communism is the direct opposite of anarchism or freedom. Even Grubacic's thesis against Marxism relies precisely on its authoritarianism (antifa.cz

2012a). He adds that Marxism's willingness to merge with the state and eventually with the nation both lead to dictatorship.

Similarly, a text dealing with the history of the Spanish Civil War describes the rivalry between anarchists and communists, accusing the Communist Party of counterrevolution. According to the author, anarchist reliance on the people was vital, and the basic principle was spontaneous self-organization from below. The fundamental mistake of the anarchist leadership was that they allowed themselves to be intoxicated by the vision of a united antifascist front, whereas the Bolsheviks were implacable and went hard after their goal (Akce! 2000b, 9). In anarchist circles, recalling the Spanish Civil War, the Kronstadt, or the Makhnovist uprising are traditional ways of delegitimizing the Communist Party (antifa.cz 2013a). The relatively popular subscription to George Orwell's tradition of the radical left falls into the same category (antifa.cz 2018).

What resonates most in this argument is AFA's anarchist anchorage, which has remained unchanged throughout its existence.

3.1.3 Communist Statism

This category includes two subcategories: state capitalism and societal control. The first is the thesis that communism is state capitalism. It is, therefore, not about any revolutionary transformation of society, which communism is supposed to be, but only about transferring all capitalist activity to a single capitalist—the all-embracing state. From the point of view of anarchist ideology, its two greatest enemies, the state and capital, are thus linked together and serve as an ideal example of antagonism. Exceptionally, there is also a critique of "state planning" that combines opposition to the state (anarchist) and opposition to planning (society-wide). In this case, it is an argument that links anarchist anti-communism with post-communist anti-communism, for which state planning is one of the vital economic sins of communism that denies the free market.

The second subcategory is the perception of communism as a situation where the state controls society. Here too, we see a primarily anarchist view, assuming the existence of a free society without the state. The post-communist emphasis on freedom combines here anarchist opposition to the state.

3.1.4 Right-Wing Ideology

This is a unique view from the 1990s that attempts to justify opposition to communism ideologically and reconcile it with a subscription to the left. AFA here subscribes to the left but excludes communists from it because it is not concerned with the freedom of the people and is, therefore, a right-wing ideology in effect (Antifa News 1996, 1). This is the reverse of the popular argument within the Czech public that sees fascism as a left-wing tendency. It was never used later, and in principle, this argument is not used within the Czech far left.

3.1.5 The Primacy of Economics

This argument appears in one of the longer texts (Barevný 2003, 29) devoted directly to AFA's relationship to communist ideology. Its key argument is that while communism focuses only on freeing people from economic shackles, anarchism also understands political and social moments as oppressive. According to this text, reducing man to only homo economicus is a fundamental flaw in the Marxist approach and cannot be removed from communism.

3.1.6 The Interconnectedness of Communism and Putinism

Anti-communism has been carried to the point of criticizing Russian Putinism in recent years. Russia has never been adored in the Czech anarchist movement as it appears in some left-wing groups in the

Czech Republic (or Western Europe). Several texts critical of the situation in Russia have been published on *antifa.cz*, usually focusing on Russian antifascists and anarchists, or on the contrary, on the growth of Russian neo-Nazi groups. The correlation between the current Russian regime and communism is usually framed by the debate about Russian imperialism and colonialism, specifically as regards its relationship to Central Europe. This is summarized rather well in an otherwise quite remarkable text that Antifascist Action published to mark the Russian invasion of Ukraine (*antifa.cz* 2022). The text sides with Ukraine and criticizes the Western left for its pro-Russian attitudes and failure to acknowledge Russia's colonialist past and present.

3.2 Content Analysis of AFA Texts on Anti-Communism

Although the issue of anti-communism appears in the pages of *Akce!* and Antifa News and on *antifa.cz* fairly regularly, few texts deal with the problem of communism in depth. Most texts that make some comment on communism do not explain the AFA's opposition toward communism. Even the small number that do attempt to clarify their ideological positions are usually primarily concerned with other issues, and the interpretation of communism appears in them secondarily. For the AFA, anti-communism is not a topic that needs explanation; rather, it is an axiom, a primary and unquestioned assumption upon which there is overwhelming agreement. This attitude toward communism did not change even during the ideological changes described in the section on the history of the Czech AFA.

Three texts focus directly on the relationship of AFA or anarchism to communism, and two others address this topic partially. This is not to say that AFA's position on communism is unclear or obscure. On the contrary, since the very inception of Antifascist Action in 1996, the unequivocal rejection of any cooperation with communist groups has been repeated, along with a declared willingness to oppose such groups with physical force if necessary (Akce! 2000a, 2; Kenský 2000, 1; Mich. 2002, 6).

Thus, from the beginning, we see a clear rejection of the "authoritarian left" or Bolshevism even without a more profound analysis. AFA here adopts the narratives of the FSA, which are strictly against Marxism-Leninism. At the same time, however, AFA espouses the left, from which it excludes the communists because they are not concerned with the freedom of the people and are, in effect, a right-wing ideology (Antifa News 1996, 1). It then understands the left as an ideology based on equality and a movement oriented toward the middle and lower classes that rejects any form of private property. Within this understanding of the left, AFA then includes social democracy, the Greens, various kinds of anarchist groups, but also a group labeled "radical communists" (Antifa News 1996, 1). Thus, on the one hand, we see a quasi-class demarcation of the lower and middle classes in opposition to the upper classes; on the other hand, we see a specific category of radical communists, which seems to denote dissident communists who do not follow the line of Marxism-Leninism. At the same time, AFA also talks about the fact that there was no real socialism in the Eastern Bloc because the existing regime was based on class society, capital accumulation, and non-democracy. Such a regime should be labeled Stalinism, not democratic socialism (Antifa News 1996, 2). Thus, AFA tries to distance itself from communism but, at the same time, does not label the former "communist" regime as communist. The problem of a radical left approach to anti-communism is evident here as AFA attempts to balance its opposition to state communism with its support for anarchist/libertarian communism.

The first text to focus directly on the issue of the AFA's perception of communism is "Anarchists and the Left" from *Akce!* issue no. 5 in 2002. The text extensively discusses the reasons why anarchists cannot, in principle, work with communists, the basic framework it works with being the belief that while anarchism is primarily based on freedom, communism is associated with oppression. The text not only focuses on the differences between anarchism and communism but also draws attention to the specific activities of the Communist Party and, conversely, to the various Marxist guerrillas or left-leaning terrorist or separatist groups whose symbolism is generally prevalent in the anarchist movement. The article argues that all these groups, while they may in part seek national, linguistic, or

ethnic equality (which it considers legitimate), do not ultimately aim for greater individual freedom, and thus it makes no sense for anarchists to support them.

So, the point of the communist-anarchist alliance is denied twice: first, because of the sheer irreconcilability of the basic principles underlying both systems of thought (i.e., because of the content), and second, because of their fundamentally different conceptions of how to achieve their goals (i.e., because of the form) (Br. 2002, 15).

Unlike most other texts, this is not an entirely schematic view, even though the basic symmetry between communism and Nazism is in principle equally present. This text imaginatively concludes the first period of AFA's existence, which clarified the political positions.

The July 2003 issue of *Akce!*, no. 8, announces the merger of AFA and the FSA and contains a relatively strong criticism of AFA's earlier activities, in which it is even suggested that some former members of AFA may have been interested in making AFA an umbrella organization on the German model that would include Marxists or Trotskyists. The reference to a possible collaboration between anarchists and communists works here to delegitimize AFA's previous approach before the FSA merger.

A second, more profound theoretical article appears entitled, "Is Revolutionary Solidarity Marxist?" This elaborates more on how Marxism is flawed, as opposed to anarchism, and concludes that Marxism focuses primarily on the economic question, whereas the purpose of anarchism is the liberation of man from political, economic, and social oppression.

It was the contribution of Marx that he drew attention to economics; the shame of many Marxists that they took this idea and made it the cornerstone of their perception of the world and their thinking, without attempting to develop it and see its limits; the crime of many Bolsheviks that they did not even try, and instead made it a raging religion in which Marx's *Capital* was the bible, Lenin its prophet, and the people merely the material (Barevný 2003, 29).

This text attempts to identify a particular base and offers a theoretical one that can be used in debates with Marxists, one that works primarily with Marxism's fixation on the economic question and the reduction of man to a productive force. At the same time, this text argues that real communism, whether libertarian or anarchist, cannot be reduced to nationalization or economic goals. Thus, the author assumes that the very notion of communism, though framed as libertarian, is acceptable as a concept for anarchists as well. However, it must be distinguished quite clearly from the Marx-Leninist quasi (from the anarchist perspective) communism, for which the term Bolshevism is better used. The text again works with the symmetrization of Nazism and communism, but this time the author uses the position, popular in post-communist anti-communism, that communism represents international socialism, while Nazism represents a national position. It should be added that this is the only text where this trope appears. On the contrary, a text published on the *antifa.cz* website argues against this position (*antifa.cz* 2006a).

The text "The Nation as a Creation of the State," published in 2006 on the *antifa.cz* website, is a partial commentary. This text does not originate from AFA (it is a chapter from the scholarly book *Freedom against Power*), but it speaks very clearly to the relationship with communism or authoritarian socialism. It interprets Rucker's study of states, explaining the move away from the authoritarian left. Authoritarian socialism is nonsense—socialism is either libertarian or it is not. Anarchism represents the part of the political spectrum that has accepted and combined the libertarian and socialist emphasis on liberty: "The idea of anarchism is the synthesis of liberalism and socialism, the liberation of the economy from the shackles of politics, the liberation of culture from all political power, and the liberation of man by a bond of solidarity with his fellow man" (*antifa.cz* 2006c).

The text "Our Attitudes" from 2008 also partially addresses the issue of anti-communism. This is essentially a new AFA program that emerged after the break with FAS. It summarizes the essential characteristics of Antifascist Action, its activities, its purpose, and reasons for action, including its relationship to communism. The basic framework of the critique of the communist parties here is the threat to freedom, which is recalled in the context of the experience of the socialist bloc and the

oppressive communist regime that prevailed there. In it, Antifascist Action rejects orthodox divisions and claims an anarchist tradition standing in opposition to both capitalism and communism.

We do not intend to experiment with what tragically marked Russia, China, Czechoslovakia, the entire Eastern Bloc, and many other countries, where Bolshevism led to millions of deaths, even today. It is necessary to oppose various threats to human freedom, whether from the right or the left (antifa.cz 2008b).

The text thus both invokes the tradition of the communist experience typical of Central Europe and continues the strategy of symmetrizing fascism and communism.

The third analytical text appeared on antifa.cz in 2015 and is taken from the magazine *Existence*, published by the Anarchist Federation. It is specific because it talks about the possibilities of cooperation with the radical left, although it maintains the basic framework of anti-authoritarianism. The text defines itself as regards the classical right-wing axis and calls for using a political compass to distinguish between authoritarian and anti-authoritarian positions. It then subjects the anarchist movement's practice to a rather harsh critique, which it argues has "concretized" itself in positions that reject any cooperation with other left-wing movements. Here it names, on the one hand, Social Democracy (which, according to the text, is too weak in promoting social change) and, on the other hand, the Bolshevik groups (which, on the contrary, are too vigorous and pose a threat to freedom). However, it then returns to the critique of communism, essentially repeating the argument about the Marxist "primacy of the economy" and the anarchist emphasis on the "multiplicity of oppression," which must be eliminated in all its forms. It then concludes by summarizing the need to join emancipatory movements but to remain wary of party politics (antifa.cz 2015). The text thus tries to find space for broader cooperation on the left and criticizes the dogmatic adherence to the "Kronstadt betrayal." In the end, however, it does not support cooperation with the communists either.

Sporadically, some passages do not reject communism, but in most cases, these are interviews with people outside the structures of AFA itself. These include interviews with a group of antifascist skinheads (antifa.cz 2007b), two with the music group Non Servium (antifa.cz 2008a, 2012b), an interview with Andrej Grubacic (antifa.cz 2012a), and an interview with Red Action (antifa.cz 2012c). This approach does not appear in AFA's texts. Furthermore, if one does espouse Marxism, this is often supplemented by being a critical adherent, as in the case of the interview with John Holloway (antifa.cz 2011b).

Anti-communism

In addition to specific criticisms of communism, the notion of anti-communism appears in AFA texts as well. The term often appears in an ironic sense when it is synonymous with neo-Nazism, referring to the fact that neo-Nazis do not say they are neo-Nazis, but that they are "patriots and anti-communists" (antifa.cz 2006d, 2011a). At the same time, the term "anti-communist" appears quite often when describing the ideological makeup of the far right, for example, in the case of Anders Breivik (antifa.cz 2011c). An exciting text dealing with anti-communism in the autonomous nationalists' conceptualization analyses neo-Nazi anti-communism as a legitimizing element of the struggle for "democracy" and highlights how they use anti-communist language to delegitimize the status quo. This is interesting insofar as AFA does nothing of the sort. Its anti-communism is an unbreachable wall, but it is not used as a battering ram against the system.

Criticism of the Communist Party is relatively rare and often coupled with criticism of established political parties who only remember anti-communism when it suits them (antifa.cz 2007a). Here AFA usually points to the inability or unwillingness of public discourse to distinguish between communism and Bolshevism. Related to this is criticism of the established parties, which use anti-communism but have no problem cooperating with communists (antifa.cz 2006b). This also appears specifically when criticizing far-right parties, who at some points in this period have no problem speaking together with orthodox Bolshevik groups (antifa.cz 2013b). This intensifies, especially in later years when far-right

groups become linked to communist groups, as was the case of Casa Pound, an Italian neo-fascist organization (antifa.cz 2014a). The critiques then highlight a schizophrenia where neo-Nazis or neo-fascists, on the one hand, attack communism only to collaborate with it simultaneously on various projects, especially those of an international character. At the same time, this moment is used to symmetrize fascism and communism, albeit secondarily (antifa.cz 2014b).

4. Conclusion

Anti-communism functions as a doctrine of its own, helping mobilize voters against communist ideas or political parties and, contrariwise, reassuring them of their pro-democratic (because of their anti-communist) anchorage. In Western Europe, this has led to a certain symmetrization of communism and fascism and the use of communism to refer to a wide range of radical policies. In Central Europe, this approach is intensified, and Nazism is often regarded as an outright left-wing tendency while the term "communism" is applied to any left-wing project. In contrast, the anarchist tradition of critiquing communism focuses primarily on rejecting communist statism and authoritarianism, which it sees as antithetical to a free society.

A content analysis of the texts published over the last 17 years by Antifascist Action has shown that the key themes used by AFA in its anti-communism concern, first, the symmetrization of fascism and communism to the point of identifying; second, the restriction of freedom by the communist regime; and third, communist statism. This approach thus combines both the typical Central European model of the symmetrization of fascism and communism and the two key criticisms characteristic of anarchism. This moment shows that the Czech AFA was rooted in the anarchist movement and fully embraced its ideological postulates. Moreover, AFA's anti-communism follows the same trajectory as Czech anti-communism (directed not against the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, but rather against its more successful and, for liberal parties, more competitive Social Democracy) because it too is directed against the Trotskyist groups with which anarchists were in fundamental conflict and competition, rather than against the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia. The strict form of anti-communism thus created a permanent polarization within the Czech radical left, which very strictly separated the revolutionary Marxists from the anarchist antifascists.

Regarding the imagined models of anti-communism, AFA corresponds to the left anti-communism mentioned by Slačálek. The relegitimization of leftist positions here occurs clearly in the context of the perception of communism as a non-leftist project. The role of the screen that Koubek and Polášek speak of does not apply in the case of AFA since it subscribes to its leftist position, including the question of class, and thus there is no "covering up" of uncomfortable issues due to their connection to "communism." On the contrary, the role of putty works, first as a putty within the anarchist scene, but also as a putty that allows a common rejection of communism to be shared with the mainstream. This seems to be quite significant. In addition to its role as putty, AFA's anti-communism also plays the role of a shield. Opposition to communism among anarchists allowed them to escape, at least verbally, the impact of militant democracy, referring to the fact that "we are not communists."

The question of what role anti-communism played in Czech Antifascist Action can therefore be answered threefold: First, it enabled the anarchist antifa to distinguish itself from the Communist Party. In the Czech environment, this distancing was significant because the prism of communism threatened any project claiming to be left-wing. Second, anti-communism allowed for a clear distinction between anarchism and communism and thus co-created a sure "cement" that differentiated and united anarchist militants beyond antifascism. Third, and finally, the emphasis on anti-communism in the rhetoric of AFA created an imaginary bridge to the majority opinion with which it merged the question of anti-communism.

References

- Akce! (2000a), "Základní charakteristika české Antifašistické akce", *Akce!*, 2: 2.
- Akce! (2000b) Diskusní setkání evropských antifašistů ve víru sebekritiky, *Akce!*, 11: 4.
- Antifa news (1996), "Pravice versus levice", *Antifa news*, 3: 1.
- Antifa news (1996), "Kdo jsou R.A.S.H.?", *Antifa news*, 3: 2.
- Antifa.cz (2006a), *Bude první máj patřit nacistům?* Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/bude-prvni-maj-patrit-nacistum>).
- Antifa.cz (2006b), *1. Máj 2006 v Praze*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/1-maj-2006-v-praze>).
- Antifa.cz (2006c), *Národ jako výtvar státu*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/narod-jako-vytvor-statu>).
- Antifa.cz (2006d), *Jsm rádi, že nemusíme být u všeho*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/jsme-radi-ze-nemusime-byt-u-vseho>).
- Antifa.cz (2007a), *Antifa festivaly za hranicemi*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/antifa-festivaly-za-hranicemi>).
- Antifa.cz (2007b), *Rozhovor: Štěňata proti rasismu*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/rozhovor-ste%C5%88ata-proti-rasismu>).
- Antifa.cz (2008a), *Rozhovor s Non Servium*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/rozhovor-s-non-servium>).
- Antifa.cz (2008b), *Naše postoje*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/nase-postoje>).
- Antifa.cz (2011a), *RAC - Rock proti komunismu... nebo White Power?* Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/rac-rock-proti-kunismu-nebo-white-power>).
- Antifa.cz (2011b), *John Holloway: změnit svět bez uchopení moci*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/john-holloway-zmenit-svet-bez-uchopeni-moci>).
- Antifa.cz (2011c), *Manifest kulturního konzervatismu*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/manifest-kulturniho-konzervatismu>).
- Antifa.cz (2012a), *Anarchismus je demokracie bráná vážně*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/anarchismus-je-demokracie-brana-vazne>).
- Antifa.cz (2012b), *Rozhovor s Non Servium po čtyřech letech*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/rozhovor-s-non-servium-po-ctyrech-letech>).
- Antifa.cz (2012c), *Mlátit nácky: Interview s aktivisty Red Action*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/ml-tit-n-cky-interview-s-aktivisty-red-action>).
- Antifa.cz (2013a), *Přednáška: Kronštadtské povstání*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/19-3-2013-prednaska-kronstadtske-povstani-l-infoshop-sale-orebitska-14-praha-3-zizkov-l-1900>).
- Antifa.cz (2013b), *Otevřený dopis členům DSSS*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/otevreny-dopis-clenum-dsss>).
- Antifa.cz (2014a), *S nácky kolem světa: Trocký, Che a Kareni*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/s-nacky-kolem-sveta-trocky-che-kareni>).
- Antifa.cz (2014b), *S nácky kolem světa: V Bašárově Sýrii*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/s-nacky-kolem-sveta-v-basarove-syrii>).
- Antifa.cz (2015), *Radikální levice*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/radikalni-levice>).
- Antifa.cz (2018), *Nestárnoucí Orwellova recenze Mein Kampfu z roku 1940*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/nestarnouci-orwellova-recenze-mein-kampfu-z-roku-1940>).
- Antifa.cz (2022), *Všichni jsme Ukrajinci: antifašistický vzkaz ze stínů střední a východní Evropy*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<https://antifa.cz/content/vsichni-jsme-ukrajinci>).
- Arlow J. (2020), "Antifa without fascism: the reasons behind the antifascist movement in Ireland", *Irish Political Studies*, 35:1, 115-137.

- Balibar E. (2003), *We, the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Barevný M. (2003) Solidarita revolučně marxistická? *Akce!*, 8:29-30.
- Bastl M. (2010), "Antifašistická akce: od subverze k vigilanzismu?", *Rexter*, 2: 1-41.
- (2011) *Anarchismus*, in M. Bastl, M. Mareš, J. Smolík, and P. Vejvodová (2011), *Krajní pravice a krajní levice v ČR*. Praha: Grada, pp. 91-138.
- Br. (2002) Anarchisté versus „levice“, *Akce!*, 5:15-17.
- Braun V. and V. Clarke (2006), "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology", *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp. 77-101.
- Bray M. (2017), *Antifa: The Antifascist Handbook*, New York: Melville House Publishing.
- Burley S. (2017), *Fascism Today: What It Is & How To End It*, Edinburgh: AK Press.
- Cabada L. (2015), "Changes in Mutual Relations between Czech Social Democrats and Communists after 2000 and Strengthening of Anti-Communism in Czech Society and Politics", *Politické vedy*. Roč. 18(4): 8-31.
- Ceplair L. (2011), *Anti-communism in twentieth-century. A Critical History*, Santa Barbara: Praeger.
- Charvát J. (2007), *Současný politický extremismus a radikalismus*. Praha: Portál.
- Charvát J. and B. Kuřík (eds. 2018), *Mikrofon je naše bomba. Politika a subkultury mládeže v postsocialistickém Česku*. Praha: Togga.
- Charvát J., O. Slačálek, and E. Svatoňová (2023), "Four Cycles of the Czech Far-right's Contention", in K. Kondor and M. Littler (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Far-Right Extremism in Europe*, New York: Routledge, pp. 83-99.
- Chelcea L. and O. Druță (2016), „Zombie socialism and the rise of neoliberalism in post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe“, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 57(4-5), 521-544. DOI: 10.1080/15387216.2016.1266273
- Copsey N. (2016), "Crossing Borders: Antifascist Action (UK) and Transnational Antifascist Militancy in the 1990s", *Contemporary European History*, 25(4): 707-727. DOI: 10.1017/S0960777316000369
- Daniel O. (2020), "Music Subculture versus Class Revolutionaries: Czech Antifascism in the Postsocialist Era", *Fascism*, 9(1-2), 56-74. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1163/22116257-09010008>
- Dujisin Z. (2010), "Towards a collective memory of socialism? Grounding the discursive production of Hungarian and Czech post-communist anti-communism", *South East Europe Review*, 13(4), 475-488. DOI: 10.5771/1435-2869-2010-4-475
- (2021), "A history of post-communist remembrance: from memory politics to the emergence of a field of anti-communism", *Theoretical Sociology*, 50: 65-96. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-020-09401-5>
- Eyal G., I. Szelenyi, and E. Townsley (1998), *Making capitalism without capitalists: class formation and elite struggles in post-communist Central Europe*, London: Verso.
- Finley L. and L. Esposito (2020), "Antifa as Bogeyman", *Factis Pay No*, 14(2): 105-119.
- Ghodsee K. (2017), *Red Hangover: Legacies of Twentieth-Century Communism*, Durham: Duke University Press.
- Gökarıksel S. (2020), "Antifascist Strategy Today: Lineages of Anti-communism and 'Militant Democracy' in Eastern Europe", in: J. Rayner, S. Falls, G. Souvlis, and T.C. Nelms (eds.), *Back to the '30s?*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 215-234. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-41586-0_11
- Joch R. (2013), *Levicové kořeny fašismu*, Retrieved May 30, 2023 (https://www.lidovky.cz/ceska-pozice/levicove-koreny-fasismu.A131002_094518_pozice_136375).
- Jones A. (2018), "Militanz and Moralised Violence: Hamburg's Rote Flora and the 2017 G20 Riot", *German Life and Letters*, 71(4): 529-558.
- Jones A. and N. Schuhmacher (2024), "Ghostly Militanz: the Loss of Discursive Infrastructures and German Antifascist Radical Counterpublics", *Paartecipazione e conflitto*, 17(1): 46-63.

- Jones A., G. Piotrowski, and N. Schuhmacher (2024): Antifa from Below, *Partecipazione e conflitto*, 17(1): 1-10.
- Kenský J. (2000) Editorial, *Akce!*, 11: 1.
- Koch A. (2018), “Trends in Antifascist and Anarchist Recruitment and Mobilization”, *Journal for Deradicalization*, 14, pp. 1-51.
- Koubek J. and M. Polášek (2013), *Antikomunismus: nekonečný příběh české politiky?* Praha: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
- Levy C. (2014), “Anarchist Anti-Communism”, in K. Morgan (ed.), *Twentieth Century Communism*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, pp. 24-32.
- Meyer G. (2007), “Carlo Tresca: The Dilemma of an Anti-Communist Radical”, *Altreitalia*, 34: 94-111.
- Mich. (2002), “Rozhovor s AFA Bratislava”, *Akce!*, 5: 6.
- Mudde C. (2007), *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI:10.1017/CBO9780511492037
- Navrátil J. and M. Hruběš (2018), “Contesting communism after its fall: exploring two modes of anti-communist activism in the Czech Republic”, *East European Politics*, 34(1): 6-26. DOI: 10.1080/21599165.2018.1423966
- Pehe J. (2006), „Český antikomunismus je pokrytecký“, *Literární noviny*. Retrieved May 30, 2023 (<http://www.pehe.cz/Members/redaktor/cesky-antikomunismus-je-pokrytecky>).
- Piotrowski G. (2021), “‘Sometimes Anti-Social, Always Anti-Fascist’ – Interplay Between Moderate and Radical Actors in the Polish Anti-Racist and Anti-Fascist Movements“, *Studia Socjologiczne*, 3(241): 37-56.
- Ruotsila M. (2009), “Communism as Anarchism: The Pro-War Socialists, the Old Guard, and the Forging of Socialist Anti-communism in the United States”, *The International History Review*, 31(3): 499-520. DOI: 10.1080/07075332.2009.9641163
- Slačálek O. (2021), “Czech Republic: populism without culture wars?”, in: P. Barša, Z. Hesová, and O. Slačálek (eds.), *Central European Culture Wars: Beyond post-communism and populism*. Prague: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy, Humanitas.
- Tomek V. and O. Slačálek (2006), *Anarchismus. Svoboda proti moci*. Praha: Vyšehrad.
- Vysotsky S. (2020), *American Antifa: The Tactics, Culture, and Practice of Militant Antifascism*, Oxon – New York: Routledge. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429265174>
- Weiß P. U. (2015), “Civil Society from the Underground: The Alternative Antifa Network in the GDR”, *Journal of Urban History*, 41(4): 647-664. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144215579354>

Author’s Information:

Jan Charvát is an assistant professor at the Department of Political Science, Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. He studied political science at Charles University and political sociology at Högskolan Dalarna in Sweden. He is the author of book *Současný politický extremismus a radikalismus* (Contemporary Political Extremism and Radicalism, 2007, Portal) and editor and co-author of the books *Mikrofon je naše bomba: Politika a hudební subkultury mládeže* (The Microphone is Our Bomb: Politics and Youth Music Subcultures, 2018, Togga) and *Out of Step. Politics and Subcultures in the Post-Socialist Space* (2021, Dokořán).