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SPECIAL ISSUE ARTICLE

“Completely Forgotten and Totally Ignored”: Czechoslovak Veterans of the Austro-Hungarian Army and the Transitions of 1918-1919

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Abstract

This article uses Czechoslovakia as an example of the process of transition following the end of the First World War and the dissolution of Austria-Hungary. It analyzes the military context of the transition itself, showing how difficult, violent, and prolonged a process it was, in contrast to the traditional assumption of a quickly emergent successor state built on the ethnic-based enthusiasm of its Czech-speaking population. In the second part, it goes on to analyze the memory of the transition and the position it came to hold in the overall narrative of this period of the interwar years, with specific attention given to the way Czech-speaking veterans of Austro-Hungarian service tried to retell the story of the transition, and why their proposed narratives ill-fitted the official discourse of the war as the “national struggle for independence” of Czechoslovakia.

Keywords: First World War; Czechoslovakia; Slovakia; Czechoslovak-Hungarian War; war memory

Culture of Victory, or Culture of Defeat?

Interwar Czechoslovakia is often regarded as an embodiment of a relatively peaceful transition in post-Habsburg Central Europe, a bulwark of effective state-building in the midst of ongoing post-war chaos, violence, and revolution left and right. The presented article operates on two important assumptions. First, that even in this area of Europe, major military operations as well as state-organized violence did not end with the declaration of independence at the end of October 1918, and that even such an “ideal example” of post-war state-building as Czechoslovakia had a difficult time gaining the enthusiasm of the large numbers of its population necessary to participate in the operations necessary for establishing its uncertain and contested borders. Second, it shows that particularly because of its “inglorious” realities, memory of these campaigns ended up being marginalized on the fringes of what may be termed a “culture of victory” emerging soon after the Czechoslovak state was finally established and started to promote itself as an epitome of a progressive, democratic, non-violent future. This process of marginalization is made obvious here by looking at the case of those Czech veterans of the Austro-Hungarian army of 1914-1918 who participated in the campaigns of the transition era and tried in vain to use this participation as a way to avoid being left out of the triumphant discourse of the new republic. Their example is also poignant as a reminder of the fact that in the newly emergent nation states of the interwar era, belonging to the leading ethnic majority was not always a straightforward ticket to a hegemonic symbolic status, and large groups have had a reason to feel left out of the established national narratives.

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In his recent study of uniformed and paramilitary violence in post-war Central Europe, Rudolf Kučera has set out to compare a "culture of defeat" at the core of paramilitary violence in post-war Austria with a "culture of victory" which propelled the uniformed violence in Czechoslovakia at the same time (Kučera 2016; Konrád and Kučera, 2018). The culture of defeat is often seen as a complex phenomenon which saw the overwhelming humiliation of military defeat to cause many of the war returnees in countries like Germany, Austria, or Hungary to be unable to cope with the way the war ended, turning them to various forms of often politicized violence instead, be it perpetrated by right-wing or left-wing groups (Schievelbusch 2003; Gerwarth and Horne, eds., 2012; or Eichenberg and Newman 2010). In his article, Kučera argues that in post-war Czechoslovakia, a specific culture of victory emerged leading to similar—albeit not as extreme—forms of collective violence perpetrated mostly by ex-Czechoslovak legionaries. They felt strong identification with the new nation-state and its official ideology and defended it against every real or perceived threat from the left or from minority groups such as the Czechoslovak Germans (also Kocourek 2016).

The "culture of victory" itself was based on a specific re-interpretation of war memory which celebrated the Czechoslovak Legion as a key element in gaining national independence. It was the legionaries, all ninety thousand of them, whose sacrifice in lives, blood, and suffering brought freedom to the whole nation:

> "Led by its faith in its own history, the nation at home faced off the inhuman violence of military dictatorship with a silent as well as overt resistance … Led by the selfsame faith, we have created three volunteer armies abroad with the help of our allies and under Masaryk's leadership, and these armies … were recognized as an army of an independent nation with its own revolutionary government, only to become a keystone of the independent Czechoslovak state later on." (*Národní osvobození*, June 30, 1924)

Consequently, in the words of Martin Zückert, a "state invention of military tradition" followed, where the exploits of the Czechoslovak Legion became codified as *the* history of Czechoslovak military participation in the First World War (Zückert 2006a, 112). From the early engagements in the ranks of the French Foreign Legion in 1915, through the glorified participation in the otherwise disastrous Kerensky Offensive in 1917 (immortalized as the Battle of Zborov), to fighting in the Italian Alps in 1918 and then the "defence" of the new republic's territorial integrity in 1919—all of these events became cornerstones of national memory (Wingfield 2016; Galandauer 2002). Of course, this version of events made it possible for Czechoslovakia to be on the side of the victors. It also, in a process that was more or less mirrored in other victorious states in post-Habsburg Central Europe, such as Poland or Yugoslavia, made it possible for the legionaries to exploit victory through perceived entitlement to its spoils (Jarząbek 2017; Eichenberg 2011; Newman 2015). This version soon got projected into state institutions as well as into welfare, though not into—to the utter dismay of the legionaries—the Czechoslovak army or the political system (Stegmann 2010; Zückert 2006b; Šedivý 2002; Šustrová 2020).

However, as this article will argue, the "cultural landscape" of post-war Czechoslovakia is much more complex than the term "culture of victory" might suggest. Indeed, this culture of victory is only the more visible, although not necessarily larger part of the landscape, both in its official form and in the "bottom-up" practices of various pressure groups pushing their Czechoslovak nationalist agendas throughout the public space. As shown by Mark Cornwall, hidden under its surface was a strong undercurrent of a culture of defeat represented by the Czechoslovak Germans, who had a hard time coming to terms both with the result of the war, and with its public interpretation in the country they ended up in (Cornwall 2016). But it was not just minorities who did not take part in the culture of victory, and its hegemony was not as simply ethnic-based as is often thought. Exclusiveness was inherent to the way it was constructed, based on the glorification of just a tiny minority of

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Czechs and their wartime experience. Therefore, even people identifying themselves fully as Czechs found it difficult to feel included, as Jakub Beneš has recently described in his analysis of the "interpretive battles over the green cadres," the rural-based, anti-war, anti-Austrian, only vaguely nationalist movement of deserters emerging in the Moravian countryside during 1918 (Beneš 2019, 286). It was especially the men who spent most or all of the war fighting for the Habsburg Empire—more than a million of them by the end—whose role in the process of nation-building was the most problematic. While technically part of the Czech culture of victory, remembering their war experience meant admitting a symbolic defeat, as the official as well as public memory had no place for them beyond the caricatured image of the Czech soldier inspired by Jaroslav Hašek's "Good Soldier Švejk." "We, the soldiers of the World War," wrote one of them in 1937, "the first soldiers of the revolution at home, the first to fight in the Germanized provinces, in Těšín and in Slovakia … We were always the first ones—but in one thing: in the minds of our nation. There, we are the last ones. Indeed, we are even worse off: we are completely forgotten and totally ignored" (*Kamarádství*, June 21, 1937, 184). On a personal level, these veterans had lived in a culture of defeat, struggling to find a more honorable place in the national memory of the fight for independence, an experience not dissimilar, for example, from those South Slav veterans who had served in the Austro-Hungarian army and became "a kind of appendage to liberation and unification" of the Serb-dominated Yugoslavia (Newman 2015, 148).

The transition of 1918-1919 and the violent conflicts that embroiled the early republic became an all-important key to their efforts, as they presented these veterans with a unique moment in history when their culture of defeat could be amalgamated with the culture of victory. However, the problem was that these efforts challenged the traditional interpretation of the transition process as a clean break with the monarchical past, featuring little to no imperial continuities (Rychlík 2018; Morelon 2019). Consequently, the manifold social and political conflicts of the immediate post-war era, when acknowledged, were supposedly solved with the ultimate involvement of the morally superior forces of the new republic, the legionaries, by December of 1918 at the latest. The subsequent brief wars with Poland and Hungary thus represented just a small aberration from an otherwise stable situation. On the same plane, the veterans' narrative also threatened to subvert the "heroic teleology" (Boisserie 2017, 355) in which the national revolution of 1918 was seen as the only historically possible outcome of the dissolution of the empire. This made mentions of any post-1918 conflict hardly welcome, especially if it would mean bringing to light some of its ugly realities such as the accompanying high levels of violence, moral as well as military failures, or doubts related to the overall enthusiasm for the cause. Therefore, from the point of view of the official memory, it was expedient to "forget and ignore" those who fought on the wrong side during the Great War. The large-scale violence of the transition era, which many of the same veterans saw rather ironically as their chance for redemption, became a complication of the overall picture of Czechoslovak exceptionalism as promoted by mainstream politicians (Orzoff 2009). It was doomed to be at best an afterthought, a simplified epilogue of the glorious national struggle fought valiantly by the volunteers in the ranks of the Czechoslovak Legion, with the almost pre-ordained result of a peaceful and progressive Czechoslovak state.

In the following pages, we will see that the process of transition from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy to Czechoslovakia was far from straightforward, clean, or even pre-ordained. On the contrary, it will become obvious how complex, often violent, built on massive imperial continuities, and bereft of idealized notions of republican enthusiasm and national sacrifice it was, not at all conforming to the traditional images of overwhelming enthusiasm of most, the Czech-speaking majority and soldiers in particular. In the second part of the article, we will follow the way the veterans' narrative tried to shape the public discourse of the same events in a vain effort to avoid being "completely forgotten and totally ignored," which will help us to understand better their position in the inter-war politics of memory in Czechoslovakia.

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The Republic in Danger

Post-war Central Europe was anything but a safe place and while Czechoslovakia avoided the worst of the region's revolutionary and counter-revolutionary violence (compare Böhler, Borodziej and Puttkamer, eds., 2014; Roshwald 2001; Wilson 2010; or Bodó 2011), it still suffered from sharp ethnic as well as class conflict threatening to tear the newly established state apart before it even came to existence. In this context, the First World War was indeed a war that refused to end.

On October 28, 1918, quickly reacting to the Andrássy Note, which the general public interpreted both as a harbinger of peace and as the moment when Austro-Hungarian government gave up authority over the Slavic regions of the monarchy, the National Committee declared the independence of 'Czechoslovakia.' However, its members knew very well how tenuous their power was. They quite reasonably doubted the loyalties of the still nominally Austro-Hungarian troops in Prague and all over the country, as these men, mostly Magyar, Romanian, or German-speaking, were torn between the desire to go home and the remnants of loyalty to their command. Luckily for the revolution, the army command itself was confused as to what were the orders from Vienna, and when the army headquarters in Prague finally made up its mind to take some action, its soldiers turned out to be all but opposed to anything that would prevent them from going home and joining a fight in their respective regions. In the meantime, on October 29, Germans in Liberec (Reichenberg) in northern Bohemia announced their utmost aversion to the new state by proclaiming the independence of the *Deutschböhmen* province. Over the next few days, newly declared German provinces of *Sudetenland*, *Deutschsüdmähren,* and *Böhmerwaldgau* followed suit, hoping for support from Vienna as well as from the returning German-speaking troops, and later voting to join the newly established Republic of German-Austria. In parallel, Polish troops started to occupy the heavily industrialized (and mostly Polish-speaking) region in the western part of the historic Duchy of Těšín (Cieszyn/Teschen) on the night of October 31, right after the local *Rada narodowa* claimed the area for Poland. And while Slovak elites have enthusiastically subscribed to the idea of the Czechoslovak state in the Martin Declaration of October 30, they had little control over Slovakia itself, which was still ruled by mostly Magyar, German, and Jewish elites, supported by the troops loyal to the Károlyi government in Budapest, or roamed by bands of deserters or "the green cadres" often loyal only to themselves or their next of kin (Beneš 2017). However, last but not least, probably the most immediate concern of the National Committee was security on the streets of Bohemian and Moravian towns and cities, restless after four years of starvation and suffering. *Summa summarum*, it was clear that both military and paramilitary force would be needed to "make" the Czechoslovak project a reality.

The key question the National Committee faced was where to get the troops. While the Legion in France and Italy (a brigade and a division, respectively) were theoretically available, it would take weeks before they could be moved to Czechoslovakia. As for the largest contingent of the legionaries, in Russia, the chaotic situation there made their speedy return a pipe dream. As a result, using Czech-speaking troops of the Imperial and Royal army seemed the obvious solution. However, its combat troops were in the process of chaotic retreat from northern Italy, while reserve battalions of the regiments with Czech-speaking majorities were moved to Hungary in early 1915 in a misguided effort to protect the morale of the troops (Rothenberg 1976, 171). As a result, besides those serving with the units with German-speaking majorities, only men on leave, sick, absent without leave, deserters, or those working in supply depots were immediately available, but not necessarily combat-ready. Thus, calling for volunteers to defend the new order was the only realistic option, and the National Committee did just that, calling upon the Sokol nationalist gymnastic organization to supply manpower as soon as the afternoon of October 28. The call met with success and by the evening, hundreds of mostly young men of pre-military age reported for duty, seeking their chance to prove their mantle: "'Franta is going to the HQ of the 28th Infantry,' wrote Alois Kaiser in his autobiographical novel. 'Volunteering for Slovakia. He did not have the chance to fight, so let him enjoy it …'" (Kaiser 1931, 83). The National Guards were quickly formed and the Sokols,

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as well as members of their social-democratic counterparts from *Dělnická tělocvičná jednota* (Workers‘ Gymnastic Association; DTJ), started to patrol the streets, guard supply depots and keep watch over train stations (Ryšavý, 1938).

While the initial call for volunteers was successful, the National Committee quickly ran into trouble. First, there was a massive shortage of arms and basic equipment. Most army warehouses were either empty to begin with, emptied by the Hungarian and Romanian soldiers on their way home from Bohemia and Moravia, or ransacked by the general population immediately afterwards, and the returning reserve and frontline units often had to use weapons as an important bargaining chip in exchange for freedom of passage through Austria or Hungary (*Kamarádství*, December 20, 1937, 304–307; *Kamarádství*, November 10, 1936, 255–258; Říha 1937). While equipping troops was one issue, making them stay was another. In the face of an ensuing war over large swathes of the future Czechoslovak state, part-time soldiers of the National Guards were obviously a stop-gap measure. On November 6, the Committee of National Defence declared the men of classes 1882 through to 1900 to stay in service, with an option to volunteer in some of the companies and battalions springing up around Bohemia and Moravia in support of the revolution.[1] The first larger contingents of former Austro-Hungarian units did not start to arrive until November 6, quickly dispersing to see their loved ones. Only late in November did *some* of these men "volunteer" and return to the ranks. Volunteer units—made of teenage Sokols, students, workers, members of rifle associations, soldiers on leave, or "the green cadres" —therefore became the primary military tool of the revolution (Lexa 2016).[2]

By the end of November, the National Committee had control over numerous independent companies, two complete volunteer regiments, and a whole brigade of seven battalions of infantry along with an artillery section (Ježek 1937; Sander 1985). Commanded overwhelmingly by former Austro-Hungarian reserve junior officers of middle-class backgrounds, zealous Czechoslovak nationalists (Lexa 2016), even these highly motivated units faced—according to many sources—numerous issues. Besides their rather uneven military qualities, which one might expect in such formations, their commanders had to deal with overwhelming war-weariness and deep distaste for anything military, especially discipline and subordination, feelings that permeated the whole of society: "Resistance to Austrian militarism was so deep in our souls that many brothers took it along with them, and we faced many a rebuke of '*rakušáctví*'" (Loubal 1919). This "Austrianness" often meant anything which even remotely smelled of strict discipline, which put the troops' sensibilities in conflict with traditional notions of military effectiveness. Some of the more organized "green cadres" even questioned the authority of the Czechoslovak state altogether, refusing both to disband and re-enlist and presenting local commanders with massive headache (Beneš 2019, 295). Even more often, though, the volunteers saw their service primarily as a vehicle to material gain: "While some of the soldiers were quite disciplined, the majority of them came only searching for provisions, doing no service and only collecting the soldier's pay and rations" (Ryšavý 1938, 11).

Preference of peace and safety to the defence of the new country came to the fore with the return and re-mobilization of the former Austro-Hungarian regiments, soon to be called the "home army." While there was a general tendency to create "companies of assistance" from arriving troops as quickly as possible, there never seemed to be enough men, and the situation got worse as mostly disintegrated frontline units started to arrive individually or in small groups. Usually, they had only two things on their minds—to get out of their uniforms and go home. To alleviate this lack of enthusiasm for the defense of the republic, camps were set up at the border crossings by local national committees as early as November 4 to intercept and "volunteer" the returnees (Lexa 2016, 160), a method that could hardly produce motivated soldiers and service evasion became a mass phenomenon. The future Inspector General of the Czechoslovak Army, Josef Svatopluk Machar, recorded a complaint of his predecessor, Dr. Josef Scheiner, who despaired that while his department was issuing twenty thousand rations a day, it took him several hours to find 26 men to accompany a supply train across Prague. At the end, he managed to gather 13 soldiers, but only one reached the final destination, and that was only because "his family lived there and he went home;

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the others scattered along the way" (Machar 1927, 91).[3] In his fictionalized memoir *Rozchod!* (Konrád, Karel, 1954), the novelist Karel Konrád describes the attitude many soldiers had towards their service: "They say a lot of men volunteer every day to be issued with clothes, coat, boots, tarp, and are not seen anymore. About two thousand men have enlisted in the regiment so far, but there are little more than six hundred heads present" (Konrád 1954, 231). Another writer, Stanislav Kostka Neumann, presented a similar picture in his account of the return of the reserve battalion of k.u.k. Infantry Regiment 35. When their train arrived in Plzeň (Pilsen), the men just went home, and even though they mostly heeded the call and reported for duty in a week or two, Neumann noticed their presence was a mere formality: "Rank-and-file was there, but only on paper. Discipline went out of the window … sergeants were unable to get enough men to change posts" (Neumann 1921, 66–67). Some men were forced to spend as much as 48 hours on duty because of the situation. To solve the problem, the battalion commander decided to issue soldiers' pay on a daily basis, as money seemed to him the only motivation available. The Committee of National Defence might have felt similarly, as on November 15, it has increased soldiers' pay to 1 K per day for privates.[4] Apparently, republican enthusiasm had its price, as shown by numerous conflicts over pay between the soldiers and Czechoslovak authorities (*Kamarádství*, October 25, 1935, 196; Lexa 2016, 162).

In spite of these un-heroic issues, the improvised Czechoslovak army was able to scrape up just enough men to tackle the dangers of the new regime. At the end, it seemed to be a more effective fighting force that most of its early opponents, succeeding in quick pacification of the so-called "Germanized provinces," which was a title given by Czech nationalists to the border regions where German-speaking elites tried to hold on to power in spite of weary indifference of the citizenry. By December 20, the short-lived experiment of Czechoslovak Germans' independence was over (Coufal 1937). Also, after the first official military incursion into Slovakia was beaten back by the reinvigorated Hungarians in mid-November, a more substantial offensive of two dozen battalions, followed by the timely arrival of the Czechoslovak Legion from Italy (commanded by Italian officers led by General Luigi Piccione, who took over the overall command of the campaign), succeeded in clearing Slovakia of Hungarian troops, crowned by the "liberation" of Bratislava (Pozsony/Pressburg) on January 2, 1919.

In spite of these successes, however, the army—the highly motivated legionaries notwithstanding—was still plagued by low morale, which seemed to reach its nadir by the end of the year. When one of the Italian officers reported his first encounter with the volunteer and home army troops, he described "units obviously undisciplined" and "mostly made up of strange elements," with officers "having no authority or power over them."[5] While in Bohemia, soldiers often seemed to be demoralized by sheer inactivity and projected eagerness to "go to Slovakia" and "give it to the *honvéds*!" (Konrád 1954, 232). But after they finally got there, sparse but chaotic engagements and the tiresome role of occupation force did not do them any good. Piccione's predecessor in command of the army in Slovakia, Colonel Schöbl, was clearly exasperated when he wrote in mid-December, "I cannot believe that soldiers sent to free Slovakia from Hungarian yoke would behave in a way that would put them on equal footing with the Magyar barbarians… . [It is reported from Trenčín that] people are fed up with this elite army… . Soldiers do not pay for goods, they just take them. They hold up stores and steal at broad daylight."[6] Schöbl repeatedly issued orders trying to improve discipline, but to little avail. After he was subordinated to Piccione, the Italian commander openly chastised the behavior of his troops, especially officers.[7] The gravity of the situation is obvious from the disillusioned report Schöbl sent to the HQ in Prague on January 10, 1919: "There was a Bolshevik movement in the ranks of the III Battalion, 1st Moravian [Volunteer] Regiment. Part of the battalion has been disarmed… . the other one will be too, and the whole battalion will be sent back to Brno. Group Schöbl is currently unable to keep things in order in such a situation … ."[8] This situation was mirrored among troops still waiting to be sent to Slovakia, as reported by one of the army inspectors, who described "unbelievable moral shabbiness and debauchment," while police reports noted, among other complaints, "talks about the lack of discipline in the army" among the population, and citizens filed complaints over the behavior of garrison troops described as "not an

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army," but a "bunch of saboteurs of our good republican cause" and "punks who only get drunk and behave brazenly".[9]

Large-scale military operations mostly stopped after the short Seven Days' war against Poland between January 23 and 30, in which fifteen-thousand-strong Czechoslovak army made of several legionary regiments, three home army battalions and several battalions of volunteers swiftly and effectively occupied the industrialized part of the former Duchy of Těšín (Bílek 2011). In the meantime, the occupation of Slovakia turned into a prolonged policing campaign which invariably brought a massive attrition of morale to the ranks of men who, more often than not, hoped to get home as soon as possible. Instead, they were tasked with a number of ungrateful duties, which not only further angered the local Magyar and German elites already estranged from the Czechoslovak project, but made the rather indifferent Slovaks an easy target for Hungarian propaganda as well. The unpopular policies Czechoslovak units had to enforce included manning numerous checkpoints, keeping tabs on smuggling, requisitioning basic supplies which often amounted to stealing, enforcing currency reform by stamping banknotes (thus lessening their real value in the process), and often forceful disarming of the population that made soldiers hardly popular in communities fearing for safety. With hostage-taking becoming official practice to pacify discontent among unruly Magyar elites or in whole communities as early as November 1918,[10] and random violence becoming the language of choice wielded both by the Czechoslovaks and their opponents with Jews often being the target (Szabó 2011 and 2015), the general population quickly came to see the Czechoslovak army as an occupation force delaying the prospect of long-desired peace. For many, the Czechoslovak Republic was just "one big stopgap" that was "turning their land into a battlefield," while others probably "did not care to which state they will belong," as long as the question was settled quickly (Kaiser 1931, 136; Mráz 1928, 162).[11] Already at the end of January 1919, Slovak cities were plagued by numerous protests, strikes and sometimes riots stoked by pro-Hungarian elites (Ježek 1928, 71–77).

While many were eager to blame the ongoing problems on the Italian commanders, to the point that Czechoslovak leadership tried to overrule General Piccione by installing the French military mission into a position of overall command in late March (Klípa 1995, 59–61), it seems clear that uneven levels of morale and discipline among the troops were ongoing issues that spilled over from the early days of the transition in 1918 and got only worse thanks to the conditions of service described above.[12] Lack of heavy weapons, ammunition, and provisions; inexperienced officers; little prospect of final demobilization; lack of material support for the soldiers' families at home; and the indifference or outright hostility of locals led to increased absences without leave, which in turn led to the demoralization and sheer exhaustion of those who stood in for these "shirkers." Alois Kaiser captured the mood on the verge of Hungarian offensive in his autobiographical novel, where soldiers of a volunteer battalion complain of "the neverending service" and ask rhetorically: "What do I care about— about Slovakia" (Kaiser 1931, 139 and 219)?

Looking at Czechoslovak newspapers of the period, it seems not many at home cared. As a result, soldiers often felt that they were guarding a forsaken post in a forgotten war. *Národní listy*, a mainstream centre-right daily, hardly mentioned the situation in Slovakia between mid-January and 3 June, 1919. It seemed everyone was too tired of war and too focused on the internal strife that accompanied state-building in Bohemia and Moravia to care about the minute details of soldiers' experiences. As long as Czechoslovakia was apparently secured, the suffering, oppression and violence that accompanied the process were pushed out of the public discourse, conveniently forgotten and ignored. With the local elections taking place on June 15, there were other topics to discuss: "Long inactivity gave birth to thoughts that were not helpful to our fighting spirit," noted a legionary in his diary at the end of May. "News we get from home are ambiguous … Newspapers are full of election campaigns … Why don't they mobilize the army?" (Dudek 2019, 220). His comrade later remembered,

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> No wonder that the spirit of our troops had deteriorated, especially if one realizes the depressing feedback from the hinterland. Furlough became especially harmful… . [A soldier came home] only to bitter realization that people over there live worlds apart from what he has imagined … They talk only of war profiteers, complain of the currency reform, hold election meetings … And the soldier who dreamt of his home for so long felt the pain in his heart of being a stranger in his own village… . Instead of being rejuvenated, his spirit was broken, poisoned … . (Kalva 1920, 34–36)

The fact that Hungarian Bolsheviks were making increasingly bold armed incursions into the territory claimed by Czechoslovakia since their May Day assault on Komárno (Komárom) left little trace in the Bohemian and Moravian public space. The newspapers only took note by panicking over the full-scale Hungarian offensive of May 30, 1919, when almost half of Slovakia was lost after the demoralized and overstretched Czechoslovak army crumbled. At the end, the "red tide" from the south was only stemmed after the panic in Prague led to a quick mobilization of resources in the hands of the French military mission under General Maurice Pellé. While the Hungarian advance petered out, French-commanded Czechoslovaks counter-attacked on June 7, and while the operation met with success, the great powers intervened and forced Hungary to return her troops to the borders which were soon to be established at Trianon (Steiner 2005; Lojko 2006). But the damage in terms of remembrance was done. Not only was the whole process of occupying Slovakia—with the total number of 7,500 and 11,500 military casualties on the Czechoslovak and Hungarian side, respectively (Ježek 1928, 136)—an unwelcome intrusion upon the supposedly finished process of progressive state-building, but also, with the exception of a few moments, it was decidedly an inglorious one, reflecting its own nature of a policing operation, the war-weary and demoralized troops, even the legionaries, often failing to fulfill the standards of enthusiasm, combat efficiency, or even basic discipline the national mythology was looking for. As a result, from the point of view of the emerging culture of victory, this violent period of transition was an obvious candidate to be marginalized in the way the Great War and subsequent events came to be remembered. At the same time, while many of the participants might have agreed on its inglorious nature, they were faced with dearth of other options of how to join in the official discourse and become "victors" as well.

Forgotten, Ignored, Retold

On July 20, 1919, the Minister of National Defense Václav Klofáč gave a speech in the Czechoslovak National Assembly, in which he summarized the campaign in Slovakia which had ended a month earlier. Not mentioning any failures on the part of the Czechoslovak army, he set out to identify those who deserved praise for the ultimate success: "Offer a firm handshake to all those who will come back from the fight: to the legionaries, to the home army, to the Sokols, members of Workers Gymnastic Associations, of riflemen associations and of Orel [the Catholic equivalent of Sokol], students, professors, Slovak Jánošík assault companies and other volunteers… . If someone says: 'I fought in Slovakia in 1919,' let's answer them: 'Alas, a good citizen of the republic who did his duty."[13] His speech may well be seen as a cornerstone of the official memory of the conflict. Indeed, Klofáč ignoring the contribution of the Italian commanders—not mentioned in the speech whatsoever, in contrast to the praise heaped at the French—and the claim that it was the pressure of the great powers and Romania which made the Hungarians flee both became its integral elements. On the other hand, his concept of laurels shared by all the "good citizens" did not catch on that well. First of all, the Czechoslovak public was tired of war, and the conflicts of the transition period disappeared from public interest the moment Slovakia was secured, as they did not fit either the mood of the time nor the narrative of a clearly defined nation-state and its clean break from the war-torn, violent pre-Republican past. As noted by one of the dismayed ex-volunteers, "looking at the newspapers of 1918 and 1919, I realized that there are almost no news on the conflicts in Slovakia, especially after the Bolshevik invasion was over" (Ryšavý 1938, 5).

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Soon, the army became what its Inspector General would call "the most hated institution in our young state," a symbol of old values to be forgotten (Machar 1927, 108). Choosing Klofáč, the pre-war anti-militarist leader of the National Socialist Party, for the job of a Minister of Defense was only a symptom of this tendency, as was his and others' insistence that in the brave new world of peace and progress, a regular army has no place and militia would suffice (Koldinská and Šedivý 2008, 146–164). Ironically, it was he who had a hard time explaining the need for a military budget to the public bent on belief that this kind of expenditure was a thing of the past, along with war and monarchy, in May 1919.[14] And it had been this attitude which soon shaped the memory of the transition in those few moments it was not ignored altogether: "Battalions made of Sokols poured into Slovakia," wrote former Inspector General Josef Svatopluk Machar in 1927, "volunteers reported for duty in droves… . So much of inner fire there … much less on the frontline, though. Which we do understand, of course, as men who went through the horrors of the world war were fed up with soldiering and fighting … And while the legionaries had the 'holy fire' in them, there was too few of them …" (Machar 1927, 100). For him, it was the enthusiastic volunteer units supporting the elite legionary troops who saved the republic from being taken apart, while the "volunteered" or mobilized home army troops slowly disappeared from the picture.

First of all, the home army had mostly disappeared from the public space. All symbols of the old empire, including uniforms, were banned from public use, and while some of the "old" regiments' veterans organized themselves into associations, very few became active immediately after the war, lacking any positive message to equal the official "culture of victory" and focusing mostly on social support for their membership (Šmidrkal 2020, 84–89). It seems that in the first post-war decade, most had chosen silence as a way to remember the World War and its aftermath, while some tried to exonerate themselves by accepting the image of "Švejks" (Fučík 2006). On the other hand, the "true" volunteers of 1918–1919 (i.e. those who did their duty in the ranks of volunteer units) were a bit more active and also successful in keeping the memory of their part alive: "[It is our goal] to bring to life the memory of the first soldiers of the republic in those troubled post-revolutionary times, and to give credit to those how without any outside pressure volunteered and stood under the banner" (Zapletal 1928, II; see also Havlíček 1929). Of course, the fact that existing institutions of Czech nationalism such as Sokol and other associations formed an institutional background of the volunteer units had helped, as most of the early publications praising these troops entered market with financial support from the very same associations. In the process, they could claim—for their membership—the role of "conscious citizens, republicans in the truest sense of that word, of an educated citizen, one that craves knowledge, order and is thoroughly honest … A truly Czech soldier" (Loubal 1919). In this narrative, the transition period served a purpose, as it was the evidence that Sokols were indeed the ideal Czechoslovak citizens, harbingers of progress and the republican future. Symptomatically, any excesses and disorderly conduct, which we have seen was quite widespread especially during the "policing campaign" in Slovakia in early 1919, is invariably blamed on individual failure of "elements, who did not belong," causing "discipline to be quite poor at the beginning," only to improve after these were "energetically" purged (Zapletal 1928, 26, 85; see Ježek 1928 for a more realistic assessment).

These accounts more or less succeeded in having volunteer unit share some of the laurels side by side with the members of the Czechoslovak Legion who, of course—as illustrated by the Machar quote—still remained *the* indisputable heroes of the transition, with the narrative highlighting their speedy arrival in time to save the republic, and their heroics in the process (Vachek 1922; Kalva 1920). Consequently, when the *Soldiers' Calendar of 1930* (Vojenský kalendář; 1929), a yearly dose of propaganda and civic pedagogy hurled at the conscripts and regulars of the Czechoslovak army alike, included a series of illustrations outlining the most heroic moments in the army's history, it actually did not omit the transition period. Right next to the famous legionary battles like Zborov, two vignettes illustrate the war against the Hungarian Soviet Republic. One is celebrating a Slovak batman saving the life of his Czech officer under fire (i.e. Czecho-Slovak brotherhood in practice),

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while the other shows "an unknown captain" leading a counterattack at Komárno on May 1, 1919. In both pictures, soldiers are dressed in a mixture of uniforms, some of them clearly Italian (i.e., the Legion), others with distinctive Austro-Hungarian field caps, which identifies them either as volunteers or members of the home army. With no further identification given, it shows that in those rare moments the transition period was actually remembered, volunteers and home troops somewhat blended into one entity playing a secondary, supporting role to the legionary myth.

This blending was finally made official when on October 28, 1937, *Důstojnické listy* (Officers' Papers), a bi-weekly journal published by the Czechoslovak Officers' Association, announced with a certain degree of satisfaction that "by the resolution of the Czechoslovak government made last Friday, a 'Memorial Badge for Volunteers of 1918–1919' has been established." In the eyes of the editors, it meant that "the proposals for establishment of medals, orders, and badges of honour" repeatedly submitted to the Ministry of National Defence as well as to the President's Office by the association over the past decade were finally answered, and the long-standing grievance many veteran members held against the government had finally been rectified (*Důstojnické listy*, October 28, 1937, 9). The campaign medal took on a simple appearance designed by Oldřich Pilz, with the Czechoslovak coat of arms on the obverse and the inscription *V těžkých dobách 1918 1919* (In Troubled Times 1918 1919) on the reverse (Měřička 1973, 64).

Establishing the badge was a symbolic expression of the fact that the state would from now on include volunteers in its culture of victory. During 1938 and early 1939, it was issued to thousands of ex-servicemen, along with certificates proving that its recipients were "Czechoslovak volunteers of 1918–1919 who, while not subject to compulsory military service, volunteered to serve" sometime between October 28, 1918, and July 31, 1919. This, importantly, included the men who *voluntarily* remained in the ranks of the old regiments after the First World War was over, while excluding those who were "merely" conscripted (Šmidrkal 2020, 97). The title of being an officially recognized volunteer of the 1918–1919 era entailed more than just a symbolic capital, as its bearer was entitled to preferential treatment when applying for government jobs.[15] The divisive nature of the official recognition which left many veterans out led to many frustrated protests, especially by the associations linked to the veterans of old Austro-Hungarian units, where the numbers of official volunteers were rather low (Šmidrkal 2020, 98). In their own words, they aimed at "our wartime and peacetime service" being taken into account—symptomatically, "peacetime" meaning the transition period described above—"to get campaign medals to those who had served in combat in Slovakia, and to emphasize concurrent social demands" (*Kamarádství*, January 31, 1937, 25).

These efforts went all the way back to the tenth anniversary of Czechoslovak independence in 1928, which brought a wave of interest in everything connected to the "national revolution" of 1918. It also painfully reminded many of the Czechoslovak veterans that besides their problematic service under the Austro-Hungarian banners, the conflicts of the transition era were their only hope for recognition and inclusion in the culture of victory, with all the potential of symbolic or even real capital attached. The anniversary prompted Václav Klofáč, then the President of the Senate of the National Assembly, to propose "a medal of appreciation and gratitude" on the floor on the Senate Defence Committee for those, who "by the end of 1918 and in 1919 voluntarily continued their service and fought in the conflicts of that era." Klofáč called it "a matter of decency" to pass such a resolution (*České slovo*, July 13, 1928, 3), and pass it did, but the measure was stalled and all but forgotten after leaving the Senate floor, to the dismay of many of the veterans of the transition-era conflicts: "It is sad that we literally have to beg for such a medal, that we have to remind the state what it owes to us. Do we really deserve only a sneer for being the soldiers of the 28 October? Did we not shed our blood in Těšín, in Slovakia and in the Germanized provinces with true enthusiasm? Was it not us who defended the republic in danger" (*Národní politika*, May 21, 1933)?

These calls fell on deaf ears, at least for a while, as not many beyond the direct participants seemed to care too much about the experience of military violence in a supposed "peacetime." Seeing the otherwise massive official celebrations of the Republic's decennial during 1927 and 1928,

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many of the concerned veterans succumbed to anger and despair, repeatedly putting those emotions in print on the pages of papers published by various veterans' associations. Those who felt the most "forgotten" and "ignored" were the ones who called themselves the "frontline soldiers" of the Great War: "It would be appropriate and proper to remember those, who after the collapse of the Austrian frontlines, after the four years of war, hardships and suffering, volunteered under the banners of our liberated motherland, and in the troubled times of the early republic went on to … fight for the national freedom and existence with the utmost patriotic fervour and zeal… . The grievance caused [by the original proposal of 1928 being stalled] must be redressed" (*Národní politika*, May 21, 1933)!

It was particularly the veterans of the former Austro-Hungarian units, which took part in the transition conflicts, who saw their post-war service as a unique possibility to finally become part of the national memory. They were seeking to exchange their commemorative limbo, a hidden culture of defeat where the only thing they could offer upon the altar of independence was passive suffering in the ranks of the Imperial and Royal army, for at least a small part in the culture of victory substantiated by their *active* participation in the process of state-building, redefining themselves into "zealous and patriotic" volunteers in the process – because in their own eyes, they *were* volunteers, even though many of them actually did not fit the official definition and were seen as mere conscripts. They had no desire to completely erase the memory of their suffering of 1914–1918, as it was too important a part of their life experience. However, it was much more difficult to make that into a really substantial part of the official memory of the First World War, one where they would be able to *almost* claim symbolic parity with the legionaries or at least with the volunteers not burdened by the previous service in the wrong army (Hutečka 2014). Their post-war record, interpreted in the right way, was a completely different matter.

While some of the veterans become more publicly active during the tenth anniversary of the independence, the main wave of activity came in early 1930s, when more veterans' associations sprung up in the wake of the Great Depression. Their original intention was not to shape collective memory as much as to provide social support to ex-comrades in need, or to lobby for it; however, calls for symbolic acknowledgment of their service to the republic's cause quickly became part of the same effort, and the transition conflicts of 1918–1919 became a convenient vehicle. In 1932, a monument commemorating "the fallen of Prague," co-sponsored by the regimental association of k.u.k. Infantry Regiment 28, was unveiled on October 28. It was designed so that it specifically commemorated only those who died fighting in the ranks of the Czechoslovak Legion, which led a reader of the veterans' magazine *Kamarádství* (Comradeship; published since 1932 by the largest association of the former ex-Austro-Hungarian servicemen) to a disgruntled question: "Is there going to be a memorial to those sons of Prague who had sacrificed their lives in Slovakia while defending the emerging Czechoslovak republic" (*Kamarádství*, October 1932 (8), 123)? In the following years, numerous editors and authors of magazines, memoirs, collections, and novels expressed the same disappointment. In a novel published in 1931, Alois Kaiser decided to "restore the true memory" of the troops who fought for Komárno and Nové Zámky, men who did not get any laurels as "these all went to the depot garrisons" (Kaiser 1931, 253).

While Kaiser's novel still more or less allows for the difficulties, dilemmas, and failures facing the soldiers of the "forgotten war" to come to the fore, another novel, *Neznámí hrdinové* [The Unknown Heroes], published by Petr Karmín six years later, became a full-fledged apotheosis of their humble patriotism and courage (Karmín 1937). The themes of the novel—of humility in the face of enormous hardships and suffering, of men who after four years of horrible war marched off to another one, willingly and without much complaining, to defend their new country—had been emphasized frequently in other accounts as well. "Tired mentally and exhausted physically," wrote an editorial of *Kamarádství* in 1936, "the Czech warrior enthusiastically and without a second thought volunteered for service to the National Committee" (*Kamarádství*, September 10, 1936, 189). As one veteran added with a hint of religious symbolism of Christ-like sacrifice, "they all had gone through Calvary! Their suffering was indescribable! … But this time, it was the call of a bugler

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standing under the banner of Czechoslovakia, calling out on all those who are men to take up arms and defend the endangered, barely liberated fatherland … And the soldiers went" (*Kamarádství*, October 20, 1937, 255). As we have seen, the reality of 1918 was much more complicated and often less sublime, with many men being "volunteered" rather than "volunteering" to continue their service with their regiments, but it did not stop the authors from creating an idealized image of the transition to make sure they are "no longer unappreciated and overlooked" and seen as equal to the "true" volunteers and even the Legions: "In the most critical times, we stood on the front lines … resisting vicious and cunning attacks with only limited equipment, resolved to sacrifice even our lives so the territory that belonged to the Czechoslovak republic was saved from Hungarian invasion" (*Kamarádství*, April 30, 1937, 107).

It was obviously difficult to completely ignore either the fact that the army had trouble keeping its act together or that it retreated swiftly in the face of an enemy of similar numbers and *ad hoc* nature. There had to be an answer as to why. While in 1919, it was the people not yet accustomed to new republican values who endangered "the throngs of enthusiasts and heroes hurrying to Slovakia and other endangered places of the fatherland to fulfill their duty" through their "treasonous" adherence to the "immoral Austrian spirit,"[16] in the 1930s the authors mostly went for a more direct method of "whitewashing" by specifically exonerating their own. In the collection of essays and recollections commemorating the regiment, the former members of the k.u.k. Infantry Regiment 75 repeatedly extolled the virtuous nature of their garrison re-established in Kutná Hora in November 1918, where "a new type of soldier was born. Everyone was watching in awe the maturity, the discipline and the state-forming qualities of the South Bohemians" (Říha 1935, 168). In a similar way, veterans from Vysoké Mýto happily quoted the Czechoslovak politician František Udržal who called upon "the glorious tradition of your regiment … as signified by the heroic fight at Košice in June 1919. The Thirtieth Regiment may well had been the only one which came home disciplined and full order … [with] true Czech military spirit" (*Třicátníci*, 1929, 10). For these men, the transitions of 1918–1919 could not be forgotten, as they were a key part in the process of remaking the nation (and themselves as parts of it) into true Czechoslovaks. Unfortunately for them, re-telling the story in a way that was hiding the inglorious everyday reality of the transitions was not enough, as their effort also meant digging up the violence perpetrated in the process along with the unnerving notion that not everyone was a "true Czechoslovak" as soon as October 1918.

Probably the most detailed re-invention of the transition period is to be found in a rare regimental history of one of the "old" Austro-Hungarian regiments published in the interwar period. "Wartime Stories of the 21st Infantry from Čáslav," written by its former longtime officer Karel Trenkler supported by Jaroslav Hintnaus, one of the most prolific editors of the *Kamarádství*, amounts to a complete exoneration of the soldiers if not in fact (it does call the Slovak campaign a "military expert's nightmare"), then in spirit. Of course, the authors agree that "the lion's share of the responsibility" for the creation of the republic is due "to our revolutionaries abroad headed by the President-Liberator" Masaryk, which is an obvious nod to the official culture of victory. But then they go on to give a substantial share of the laurels for *defending* the republic to the units of the home army such as the three battalions of the 21st Infantry: "The Twenty-First had never failed" (Trenkler 1936, 8)! The authors actually say things bordering on heresy, at least in the eyes of the official Czechoslovak memory: that the defeat in the hands of Hungarian communists proved that even the elite Czechoslovak Legion could not fight a modern war alone. It was "the home soldier, the returnee from the front and from the depots, the best the nation had, overlooked and ignored … [who] volunteered again, as he felt the last word was not uttered yet"—and after these men got the moral and material support they needed "a new type of Czech soldier has emerged, courageous and valorous, such as we know from recent as well as distant history" (Trenkler 1936, 99). While the inexperienced volunteers' morale faltered almost out of necessity (presumably causing most or all of the problems with discipline we have described above), "it was the hardened ordinary soldier, who may have wavered under constant pressure … [but] stood up again and again … whose steadfastness under determined [French] command has finally equaled the enemy's initial superiority, and

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he retreated no more… . [These men] were dying for the republic and for the national consciousness" (Trenkler 1936, 107–114).

Not surprisingly, the *Legionářská stráž* (Legionary Watch) magazine called these ideas "useless" and "of questionable content" in its review (*Legionářská stráž*, January 15, 1937). But for the men who fought on the wrong side in the First World War, it provided a way out of the commemorative limbo they existed in for almost two decades. By extolling their participation in defense of the republic, they could still aspire to be true Czechoslovaks; their experiences during the transition retold in a way which basically omitted or sidestepped the complex (and often inglorious) reality, focusing all the positive light at them exclusively at the expense of the volunteers or even the Legion, turned out to be a perfect vehicle to make them truly deserving soldiers of the republic. As noted by *Kamarádství* in 1936, "this [the transition period] will be remembered as the most beautiful era in the history of the Czechoslovak frontline soldier ever" (*Kamarádství*, September 10, 1936, 189). The beauty, for the author at least, lies in the fact that the Czechoslovak "frontline soldiers" did not succumb to the post-war chaos usually identified with the "culture of defeat," in other words violence and revolution. For him, they went on, during "the conquest of the unreliable territories as well as in war with the Hungarians," to become a "fully conscious and mature Czechoslovak soldiers" (*Kamarádství*, September 10, 1936, 190). It seems that, in his view, the violence and chaos of the transition period became almost non-existent (or perhaps directed outside of the national community), and the transition was to be remembered primarily as the moment of national unity in the face of external threat, with the "home army" soldiers in the center of it all. Similarly, when the regimental associations of the "old" regiments finally succeeded in having a memorial built in Badín, eastern Slovakia, in 1935 to commemorate the "home army" units, it was celebrated as a moment when they finally passed their message to the wider world: that "those who were not so lucky to participate in the resistance abroad … ran to Slovakia under their old unit's number … as soon as the sun of liberty came up, to wash away the undeserved shame of being in a foreign service" (*Kamarádství*, September 25, 1936, 212).

The importance of active participation in the transition is clear here, as only that would ensure these men a place in the nation they thought they deserved—as "the most dedicated core of the Czechoslovak nation!" (*Kamarádství*, January 15, 1937, 1) However, the ongoing—indeed, increasing—obsession with this theme in the veterans' publications also shows that the issue was far from settled. Indeed, using Foucauldian concepts of counter-history and counter-memory (Foucault 1997), we may well argue that these efforts by marginalized groups tell us a lot about the nature of the hegemonic discourse itself. And it seems that more often than not, the discourse simply did not care, which only made the veterans redouble their efforts repeatedly or burst with anger: "Anyone who would like to deny the Czech frontline soldier his credit in protecting his native country is either a swine or a stay-at-home who saw little war or even himself profiteered from it" (*Kamarádství*, October 20, 1937, 255)! In the end, while Czechoslovak veterans never completely gave up on the official culture of victory and always looked for ways to become a part of it, there is often a palpable sense of alienation not dissimilar to what Maria Bucur has described in the case of many Romanian veterans rejecting the official culture of victory associated with remembrance married to political aims, preferring local commemorations instead (Bucur 2009). The difference is, of course, that the official Czechoslovak commemorative culture barely tried to celebrate these men, as they—and their calls for recognition—served as an uncomfortable reminder that all was not so straightforward, quick and clean when it came to the transition from the monarchy to the nation state.

Conclusion

The article presented here, using several parallel approaches, has tried to show that many of the traditional assumptions about the transition process in the early months of Czechoslovakia are based on a specific interpretation, befitting a culture of victory that was part of the new republic's self-image as a stronghold of progressive republicanism and a beacon of stability and relative peace

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(Orzoff 2009; Heimann 2009). Some form of a "culture of victory" was indeed part of the DNA of the major successor states of Austria-Hungary, such as Poland, Yugoslavia, or Romania, and while the Czechoslovak version was arguably the most successful in terms of longevity and persistence, it had a similarly complicated relationship with past reality, which was far more complex than the official discourse would like to admit.

As we have seen here, the very transition was not so much of a break as it was a fallout of the Great War, which did not end so much with a bang as with a continuum of violent events with large institutional spillover from the days of the Empire. It was not straightforward, as on October 28, 1918, conflicting options were on the table and became contested with the use of more or less organized violence. Only through this violence spanning many months did the Czechoslovak state finally establish itself, applying large scale military action and occupations. We have also seen, by focusing on a narrow issue of military mobilization in the name of the new state, that these processes received only tentative support, even from the Czech-speaking population, with soldiers being less than enthusiastic to defend their new fatherland, often doing so for reasons other than pure patriotism. And finally, by analyzing the narrative that the non-legionary veterans of these campaigns tried to put forward in the interwar period, we have seen that they were forced to both re-constitute their memory in a way that showed them in the best light possible, and to repeatedly re-state it in the face of marginalization, ignorance, and oblivion. This stemmed from the fact that *any* memory of the transition period itself did not go well with the official narrative that war and violence were a thing of the past, not of the Czechoslovak present, and if remembered at all, these were the sole preserve of the Czechoslovak Legion's final contribution to the establishment of the new state. Consequently, these campaigns, as evidence of violence enacted by the supposedly progressive state, sometimes against its own citizens, were preferred to be "forgotten and ignored" under the overall culture of victory, as were the men who perpetrated them, particularly if they could not boast any other heroics in the name of the Republic. It was particularly ill fortune for those veterans who had spent the Great War in Austro-Hungarian uniform and saw the opportunity to redeem their war record by putting emphasis on their post-October 1918 combat service. Similarly to the case of "the green cadres" mentioned above, silence seemed to be the preferred strategy in official commemoration of their participation (Beneš 2019, 302), leaving them on the wrong side of history. Their efforts to escape the culture of defeat hidden in the depths of the culture of victory mostly failed, but by analyzing them, we can see that the Czechoslovak culture of victory was in no way as ethnic-based as it is traditionally seen, as for many Czechs, it was as alien as it was for some members of national minorities. This realization perhaps made their plight in the "limbo of remembrance" only more painful.

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Notes

1 Minutes from the meeting of the Committee of National Defence, October 31, 1918, in Military Historical Archives in Prague (VHA), Výbor národní obrany, box 1.
2 See also report to the Ministry of National Defence from November 29, 1918, in VHA, Nejvyšší správce čs. vojsk, box 1, inv. no. 557.
3 See also minutes from the meeting of the Committee of National Defence, November 8, 1918, in VHA, Výbor národní obrany, box 1.
4 Minutes from the meeting of the Committee of National Defence, November 12, 1918, ibid.

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5 General Rossi to General Piccione, December 30, 1918, in VHA, Velitelství čs. vojsk na Slovensku, box 6: Operační spisy.
6 Confidential Order No. 1, December 15, 1918, in VHA, VS – Schöbl, 1918–1919, box 1.
7 Piccione to Schöbl, January 1, 1919, in VHA, VS – Schöbl, 1918–1919, box 1, inv. no. 48.
8 Telegram, HQ Schöbl to the Army HQ in Prague, January 10, 1919, in: VHA, VS – Schöbl, 1918–1919, box 1, inv. no. 110/9.
9 Report of Lt. Klor, Jičín garrison, January 11, 1919, Generální inspektorát branné moci 1919–1924, box 1, inv. no. 24; Josef Kaňka-Kaňkovský to the Army HQ, Brno, January 5, 1919, Generální inspektorát branné moci 1919–1924, box 1, inv. no. 15.
10 Confidential Order of November 18, 1918, in VHA: VS – Schöbl, 1918–1919, box 1.
11 See also First Adjutant's report to the Inspector General, May 30, 1919, in VHA, Generální inspektorát branné moci 1919–1924, box 3, inv. no. 1191.
12 Parliamentary Report, December 1, 1918, in VHA, VS – Schöbl, 1918–1919, box 2, inv. no. 122/4/15.
13 Václav Klofáč in a speech to the National Assembly, July 20, 1919, VHA, MNO Presidium 1918–1923, box 4, inv. no. 2.
14 Klofáč to the Defense Committee of the National Assembly, May 28, 1919, MNO Presidium 1918–1923, box 4, inv. no. 74.
15 Memorandum of the Ministerial Council, June 23, 1937, no. 15.318/37.
16 "Oběžník ústředí Svazu československých důstojníků," November 26, 1918, quoted in *Kamarádství* (9), November 1933, 175.

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