

Catholicism behind the Iron Curtain: Czechoslovak and Hungarian Responses to Humanae Vitae

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In traditionally Catholic countries, or countries with large and distinct Catholic populations, *Humanae Vitae* (*HV*) characteristically sparked public discussion, as well as generating heated internal Catholic debate (typically between conservative and liberal wings) over the morality or otherwise of Pope Paul VI's notorious encyclical on the regulation of birth. In European countries ruled by one-party Communist regimes,¹ where the Church was monitored and infiltrated and public dialogue was constrained, uncovering and evaluating responses to the new Vatican directives on birth control is especially complicated.² In the Hungarian People's Republic, where the regime was embarking on a relatively liberal phase under Kádár, a semi-independent Catholic church was able to discuss and consider the implications of the papal encyclical and to seek a *modus vivendi* with the Communist Party.³ In the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, where the Prague Spring was just entering the crisis phase that climaxed in the Warsaw Pact invasion on 21 August 1968, the initial response of the Communist-controlled press to the publication of *HV* was silence.⁴ Although some minimal reporting and muted discussion did follow, it was not until the next thaw, and the passing of the 1986 abortion law, that there was any clear church reaction in Czechoslovakia.⁵ The Hungarian and Czechoslovak cases therefore illuminate some of the methodological and historiographical, as well as theological and institutional, problems in seeking to bring the 'other' Europe into our understanding of European Catholic responses to *HV* and the connections between faith, sexual ethics and politics in the lives of Catholics under State Socialism.⁶

This chapter will begin by presenting the historical background to Church-State relations, first in Hungary and then in Czechoslovakia. It will also introduce the reader to each state's

population policies, birth control and reactions to *HV*. The specific cases surrounding Szabolcs Vigh in Hungary and the 1968 political crisis in Czechoslovakia will be used to explore some of the complications of Church-State relations in Communist and Warsaw Pact states at the time of *HV*. Czechoslovak and Hungarian official Communist Party and Catholic newspapers, among other sources, will be gleaned for public responses to the new encyclical. The chapter will conclude by highlighting points of similarity and difference in public Catholic responses to *HV* between two neighbouring countries that were at once historically Catholic and officially Communist, at a time when it was not [straightforward possible](#) to canvass private [opinions responses](#).

The Catholic church in Socialist Hungary

There are various tropes used to tell the story of the Catholic church under Socialist Hungary. In one version, as promoted for example by Ferenc Tomka, a priest and sociologist, this period was characterised by a long bout of persecution and suffering with the church holding out heroically.⁷

What is emphasized in this narrative is that initially the Stalinist regime confiscated Catholic property, demolished churches, dissolved religious orders and imprisoned Cardinal Mindszenty, leader of the episcopal hierarchy of the Hungarian catholic church. With the transition to the Kádár régime, there continued a story [of a continuation](#) of persecution, but with more refined methods, and various examples of resistance are shown in which many Catholics remained uncompromising enemies of the regime, and even those, who cooperated with the regime did so under momentous duress and with a clear (and sole) intention of saving the Church.⁸ Other narratives focus on the collaboration between leading church authorities like Cardinal László Lékai, who was head of the Church between 1976 and 1986, and demand the opening of the secret service files to reveal the extent to which the clergy were involved as secret agents.⁹ There have been demands for a thorough *Vergangeheitsbewältigung* (coping with the past) in the

church, especially after 2005 when the historian Tamás Majsai revealed in the weekly *Magyar Narancs* a list of named agents who were members of various Christian churches.¹⁰

However, amidst the in-fights which invariably centre on ‘who was’ or ‘how many were on the lists’ and whether the individual was a perpetrator or merely ‘an agent-but-victim’, one issue has remained on the margins: the effect of socialism on Catholic theology. Máté Gárdonyi, one of the pre-eminent scholars of the history of the twentieth-century Catholic church in Hungary, has recently published a study in which he claimed that, as of the mid-1960s in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, it is possible to delineate a struggle to produce an indigenous, tailored theology that remained both genuinely Catholic yet took into account the realities of the situation of the church in Socialist Hungary.¹¹ This theology had its foreign influences, including first and foremost the German Jesuit Karl Rahner, but there was also a distinct ‘Hungarian theology’, which could be linked to people like Ferenc Gál, Tamás Nyíri or András Szenney.¹² Rahner’s popularity in Hungary is partly attributed to his personal connections to Hungarian theologians, - especially Rahner’s former student from Vienna, Tamás Nyíri¹³ - who were anyway keen on following new ideas in German language theology. Nyíri in a 1972 tribute to Rahner emphasized, among others, the role of the “free person” and this person’s freedom to decide about himself,¹⁴ along with Rahner’s stress on historicity and change, stating that the Church itself is not “a house that has been built up and fully furnished for good.”¹⁵

One factor that enabled these developments was the changed political strategy following the 1956 revolution, resulting in the Hungarian Socialist regime adoption of a ‘popular front’ politics, repudiating purges and class warfare and seeking to integrate former enemies – including Christians – into a cohesive Socialist society. In testimony to this reorientated approach, in 1964 the Vatican signed an agreement with Hungary which normalized relations and gave way to interpretations that were based on the peaceful coexistence of Marxists and Christians.¹⁶ Another factor generated within the church itself was Second Vatican Council, which encouraged dialogue

with social forces outside the church and gave permission for inculturated interpretations of general theological premises.¹⁷

Gárdonyi contends that there was therefore no conservative-progressive stand-off within the Catholic church in Hungary after the Council, unlike so many of the other countries surveyed in this volume, and that a policy of moderation prevailed with a ‘centrist’ theology that did not attempt radical modernization, but proposed careful reforms if there was too marked a divergence between the modern world and Catholic values. The three theologians from the Pázmány Péter Theology Academy (Nyír, Gál, Szennay) were key in spreading and cultivating this centrist theology both as professors and as authors and editors of key periodicals. Interestingly, as becomes clear from the archives of the State Church Affairs Office – the Communist umbrella organization that had a controlling function over all churches – these state officials were in favour of what they called the ‘Gál-Szennay’ line because it was feared that, should the progressives take control, there would be an undesired revival of church life.¹⁸

Humanae Vitae, contraception and Hungarian Catholics

The ‘centrist’ theology in Catholicism, just described, is important for understanding the Hungarian reception of *HV* and Catholic views on contraception. One of its leading proponents, Szennay, was not just a theologian but founder and editor of the influential Catholic periodical *Teológia* as of 1971 and a leading church dignitary, the Head Abbott of Pannonhalma after 1972. Thus, in the 1970s Szennay had an outreach to both the church leadership and to a wider range of Catholic intellectuals, who read his books and his periodical.¹⁹ Also, the periodical *Vigilia* was significant for Catholic thinking at the time. It was a monthly paper that dealt with contemporary issues, culture, literature and was one of the few Catholic voices that was not banned and could uphold a certain level of independence. At the time the writer and poet György Rónay was chief editor (between 1969 - 1978) with journalist and translator Károly Doromby, the influential

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literary editor of *Vigília* supported a group of 'polgári' (*bourgeois-bürgerliche*) writers and poets, who were otherwise silenced in publishing their poems and short stories, through which *Vigília* acquired a name beyond Catholics, for its literary quality.²⁰ *Vigília*, founded in 1935, was a progressive voice of Catholicism even before the Second World War, when it gave a voice to the literati who were in opposition to the right-wing authoritarian political system.²¹

Rónay and Doromby, inspired by the Second Vatican Council and the Vatican's *Ostpolitik*, themselves sought a dialogue with Marxists in the 1970s and were ready to open up discussion on issues such as the family and sexuality. In March 1972, the entire issue of *Vigília* was dedicated to the topic of 'sexuality, family, society,' in which some articles reflected more progressive views on sexuality²². The editors' introduction to the issue reveals a great deal about the underlying philosophy of their endeavour:

If we need to observe this in the whole system of personal-social contexts, then we have to observe it 'here and now', in the reality of the big and deep Hungarian demographic problem, seeing and sensing both the personal questions of family planning and the national question of fertility [...]. How this does not go against the objectives, intentions and the discussions and examinations that have arisen around the official church statement [Humanae Vitae] – this does not need to be explained, either to those, who look for orientation in an adult and responsible way, based on the objective knowledge of facts and not mis-explanations, fake news, sometimes even slander or damaging passions that dim the facts.²³ [ref – volume number, page no]

The editors later commented that in the periodical they regularly attempted at bringing in Marxist voices. In this instance, it was the Head of the Sociology department of ELTE University, Tibor Huszár, who, by contributing to the volume, with an interview discussion gave the impression of the Marxist-Catholic dialogue extending as far as family and sexuality. but the emerging

sexologist and later sexual radical Vilmos Szilágyi also published in *Vigilia* in 1974.²⁴ With regard to sexuality, as the people behind *Vigilia* supported views that were more acceptable to the Marxist mainstream, the threat of censorship was less direct and the effort to bring in experts on the family and sex – irrespective of their political/religious convictions – seems genuine.

In respect to its stance on *HV*, the periodical had been fairly consistent in taking the side of the internal church critics (and the Majority Report) who promoted a more permissive view on contraception. *Vigilia* published the whole text of the encyclical in November 1968 and then, after some silence, in June 1969 it published an extended summary (with lengthy quotes) of Dr Karl Hörmann's '*Humanae Vitae* and Pastoral Care' which had appeared in the *Wiener Kirchenzeitung* and was sanctioned by the Austrian Bishop's Conference. Hörmann held that it was sinful not to have children just for love of comfort and fear of sacrifice,²⁵ [rf page in journal] but permissible if in conformity with the principle of self-love and love for one's neighbour.²⁶ [ref - Doesn't "Ibid" work here?] If spouses were forced to make an 'urgent decision', they would be allowed to choose a path that they believed harmed love the least.²⁷

In October 1969 Doromby gave a comprehensive overview in his article 'One year after *Humanae Vitae*', taking similar precautionary measures. He abstained from taking a clear stance and settled for giving extensive summaries of opinions from Catholics around the world. As the bulk of these were critical of the encyclical, it was not necessary to actually quote any Hungarian church dignitary or theologian in order to give an idea of what the editors of *Vigilia* thought about *Humanae Vitae*.²⁸

Doromby focused on the reactions from within the universal church, emphasizing that this was a theological question about which the opinion of journalists or other lay commentators was less important. He mentioned that the criticisms had mostly been directed at the Pope for taking up the minority position on contraception, i.e. endorsing the Knaus-~~Onigo-Ogino~~ method as the only

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method that kept the act of marriage open to conception.²⁹ If in theory family planning was permissible morally, he quoted the critics, it was hard to find a convincing argument to separate ‘natural’ and ‘artificial’ methods.³⁰ He then gave a long summary (around 1,300 words) of the bishops’ councils of Austria, Belgium, Canada and Germany (critical) and a short one (less than 200 words) of the bishops of Italy and the United States (supportive).³¹ Over three subsequent pages discussed criticism of the concept of ‘nature’ employed in the encyclical, quoting German, Swiss and French theologians Alois Müller, Hanno Helbling, Jean-Marie Paupert and three medical experts who published their views in Catholic periodicals (G.A. Hauser, Friedrich, H. Koester and Friedrich E. Freiherr von Gagern), while the final part of the article discussed the question as to whether or not the encyclical would be binding on consciences. The experts Doromby quoted tended to emphasize that this encyclical was not deemed infallible and therefore Catholics had a right to question it and even to assume that it was ‘fallible’. The commentary piece ended with a long quote from the renowned Christian socialist thinker, German catholic theologian and journalist Walter Dirks’s article in *Frankfurter Hefte*, stating that those Catholics who follow their conscience in family planning instead of obeying the *HV* need not leave the church, because ‘if the pope does not understand them they can still understand the pope as it is not easy to get rid of a system of values that has developed in the quarantined experience of a group that has lived in celibacy for hundreds of years’.³²

In the January 1970 issue of *Vigilia*, Béla Udvarhelyi, a Catholic priest, initiated a controversy in print claiming that Doromby gave too much space, comparatively, to the critics of *HV*.³³ Udvarhelyi questioned the legitimacy of bishops, theologians and, ultimately, married people following their own consciences instead of the papal directive and complained that the Pope was depicted as anachronistic, standing in the way of a transition from the male celibate-led church to a modern church. He referred to the Second Vatican Council (*Lumen Gentium* §25 and

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Dignitas Humanae §14.) to suggest that even the non *ex cathedra* statements of the Pope should be followed both in will and in mind.³⁴ [Again, „Ibid“? Referring to the previous footnote ref]. He saw the real crisis of the church in all the wasted energy that came from misunderstanding and misapplication of theological pluralism, freedom of research and of conscience: ‘if negative critical activity becomes overbearing in any branch of theology, then such theological strands might dissolve the faith and loyalty to the church in many’.³⁵ Udvarhelyi’s notes triggered two reactions: firstly, Doromby formulated a more straightforward opinion of his own, and secondly, he asked the leading theologian, András Szennay for assistance. In other words, the indignation of a rank-and-file priest helped the cautious, centrist Hungarian theology of the time to ‘come out’ on contraception and *HV*.

In his brief reply Doromby acknowledged that critical voices towards the *HV* received a disproportionate attention in his report. He put forth that most critics pointed out one fundamental contradiction: contraception itself was deemed morally acceptable, but in turn, technologies that were considered “morally neutral” - as they did not fundamentally differ from other medical interventions like taking pills or undergoing plastic surgery – rendered it immoral, according to the *HV*. Doromby claimed that he was “unable to find among the statements supportive of the *HV* attempting to properly addressing this crucial issue from a scientific point of view” and this is why one side received more attention.³⁶

András Szennay’s ‘The theologian’s opinion’ provided a thorough analysis of the *HV* and contraception.³⁷ He put forward the notion that “there has not yet been a papal encyclical that would receive such passionate and sensitive reactions” as the *HV*

; and added that *HV* did not cite the bible and was acknowledged as not an ‘infallible’ statement. The key message of his argument – partly drawing on the Second Vatican Council’s principle of the primacy of conscience - was that even though one needed to stay loyal to papal decrees, if there was an internal conflict ‘each individual, after having weighed all arguments

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most consciously, has to follow their own internal conscience. This is their obligation even if this conviction would differ from the pope's message.³⁹ According to Szennay, the controversy ensued partly because a 4/5 majority of the Pontifical Commission had a dissenting opinion and because 'the faithful people of God – knowing the weight of the question from the practice of life – mostly had a different opinion, and according to surveys, followed a different practice with regard to birth control'.⁴⁰ He referred to a 1964 speech by Cardinal Albert Gregory Meyer, the liberal-minded prelate of the USA and senior delegate at the Second Vatican Council, in which he claimed that not all tradition within the church is legitimate apostolic tradition, there can be dead ends, like moralism and therefore church tradition needed to be observed critically.⁴¹ Also, he returned to the issue of fallibility, going back to idea that the bible did not make claims about certain 'marital ethics and biological' questions and therefore, in the here and now, one did not have the right (or the need) to make such an adjudication [judgement? Adjustment?].⁴² Szennay also posed a rhetorical question concerning transparency and participation:

three years after a council that promoted internal and external dialogue of the Church, for such a difficult question, shouldn't they have involved to a much larger extent Christian married people, who in the end bear the burden of the heat of the day?⁴³

In conclusion, he claimed that the calling of the theologian was to 'serve and help the suffering, praying, contemplating pope, just as he serves and helps all other members of the faithful people of God'.⁴⁴ In other words, in Szennay's interpretation, the Pope had shown himself to be a fallible human being who had made a mistake in following the opinion of the conservative minority probably to save face for the Vatican, and that it was the right and the duty of a 'progressive' theology to correct this mistake in practice.

Szennay was the editor and founder of the other Catholic periodical, *Teológia* and, predictably, *HV* received a similar reception there. An anonymous article in the 1968/2 issue (the

only authorless one in that issue), entitled 'Marriage yesterday and today', appeared before the encyclical was issued⁴⁵. Just as with Doromy's first piece in *Vigilia*, this article, in addition to being unattributed, was mostly a compilation of foreign theologians' ideas. It cited Fr. von Gagern's book (*Das neue Gesicht der Ehe*) from 1966, indicating that 'the 'burden' of individual choice and responsibility has increased', as well as Georg Teichtweier, the chair of the Theology Faculty in Würzburg, Germany, who claimed that there was not always a recipe for new questions and that for new answers, Catholics needed to turn to experts (doctors, biologists, sociologists, etc.) for assistance. In addition to experts, the author pointed out, Christian married couples also needed to be consulted about contraception, since 'God's people means the whole of the people' and therefore not just the experts but also the people most affected.⁴⁶ Both Denis O'Callaghan and Bernhard Haering were cited for their emphasis on love as the most important aspect of marriage, the first claiming that children have to be a result of responsible parental decisions and not tragic 'coincidences'⁴⁷ and the second referring to the pre-eminence of the conscience of the married couple in the decision.⁴⁸

In the December issue of *Teología* contributors already had a chance (anonymously) to comment on *HV*, which had been issued in the meantime.⁴⁹ It is mentioned that the encyclical is hesitant and that in comparison with *Casti Connubii* (1930) it is a 'pastoral document' rather than a decision that came from above⁵⁰ which does not want to demonize married couples using birth control as persistent sinners. According to this interpretation of *HV*, the encyclical condemns the behaviour of those employing artificial methods, but does not judge the people themselves.⁵¹ The prohibition should thus only be seen as a "prophet's message" on marriage and love that many misunderstand and endanger.⁵² The article ended with a quote from the Jesuit theologian Gustave Martelet, which emphasized that the encyclical needed to be taken seriously in accordance with one's conscience, but should always be interpreted according to individual circumstances.⁵³

Just as in *Vigília*, a lower rank priest sent an (anonymous) article to *Teológia* as a way of protesting against the leniency of the journal's approach to ~~the~~ *HV*. His arguments were published but, similarly to the method applied in the other journal, the counter-arguments were published in the same issue⁵⁴.~~[ref]~~ In *Teológia*, instead of resorting to the authority of the theologian, eight commentators⁵⁵ were brought in as representative of the “rank and file” church membership.⁵⁶

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The dissenting priest's arguments were quite obviously anachronistic: he cited references from the interwar era and made statements that could be refuted without much effort.⁵⁷ Among the arguments related to health, he mentioned that for pneumonic tuberculosis there was an indication that sometimes being pregnant has a healing effect and that 'medicine has made it clear that a healthy woman, if she lives a sexual life, sometimes needs the modified neurohormonal state that comes about due to pregnancy.'⁵⁸ For 'social reasons' he speculated that the Earth could serve around 200 billion people with food and that humans were made to rule and populate the earth, so actually there was no danger of overpopulation.⁵⁹ As for eugenics, he quoted a 1928 German article which mentioned that the 'willingness of the white races to procreate was very low,' adding that even though the social measures of the Hungarian government⁶⁰ helped avoid the worst, the population still needed many more children.⁶¹

The reactions came from a 'village priest-teacher,' a 'father of seven,' a '25 year old university student,' a 'theology academy teacher,' a 'young priest,' a 'Budapest priest' and two 'mothers of four.' All eight were unequivocally critical of the priest's opinion, saying among other things, that he is 'anachronistic, not a good Christian when he is lecturing others,' and that he 'looks to the '20s and '30s for literature,' and 'does not even try to clear up the related concepts'⁶² The theology academy teacher emphasized that 'Marriage and the female body are not a breeding institution set up to give birth', while the mothers stated 'a woman is also a person and not a farm animal or slave or object of male consumption.' The father of seven mentioned love ('It is unnatural and

unrealistic to want to have all aspects of love focus on creating offspring.') and the Budapest priest reminded readers that it was a 'very disputed question if the calendar method was natural at all.'⁶³ As this survey illustrates, both major Catholic periodicals published at the time in Hungary took up an overall critical position towards *HV*. Both were linked to a handful of centrist-progressive theologians, who rarely confronted the – presumably – conservative ecclesia⁶⁴ directly but opted rather for quoting Western European and North American theologians extensively and publishing anonymous opinions. The above texts can be taken as representative because they mirrored the views of leading theologians, who ran the contemporary Catholic press at the time. Catholic publicity was heavily restricted and therefore Catholic intellectuals in Hungary, who would have been interested in reading and debating about the *Humanae Vitae*, were informed about it primarily in the pages of *Vigília* and *Teológia*.

The troubled history of the Catholic church in Czechoslovakia

In neighbouring Czechoslovakia, reactions to *HV* were rather different than those in Hungary. The story of Catholicism in Czechoslovakia at around the time of the Second Vatican Council is especially complicated for a number of reasons. First of all, in 1968 the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was in the process of being federalised into distinct Czech and Slovak socialist republics.⁶⁵ Secondly, there was a long history of Czech anticlericalism that predated Communism. This mattered, even in traditionally observant Slovakia, because Czechoslovak Communism was built on a traditionally anticlerical Czech nationalist discourse. Finally, the Slovak and Czechoslovak Communist Party reforms known collectively as 'Socialism with a Human Face' (the 'Prague Spring'), which coincided with the timing of the Second Vatican Council, were thrown into crisis by the Warsaw Pact intervention, and subsequent enunciation of what came to be known as the Brezhnev doctrine, in the last third of August 1968, just as discussion of the encyclical was at its height around the Catholic world.

Czechoslovakia, federated from 1969 until it split completely in 1993, consisted of two socialist republics: the Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic. Although theoretically of equal standing, in practice the two socialist republics were of unequal political importance, since all federal powers were held in Prague, which was simultaneously the capital of the regional Czech republic and also the national Czechoslovak state. Similarly, the Catholic hierarchy in Czechoslovakia was notionally divided into a Czech Catholic hierarchy and a Slovak Catholic hierarchy; but state policy towards the Vatican, and indeed towards the domestic church(es), was dictated from the central government based in Prague which was overwhelmingly Czech (rather than Czech and Slovak) Communist in outlook. [This remained the case](#), even under the leadership of Dubček, the rising Slovak Communist star who was promoted from leadership of the regional Slovak Communist Party to that of the statewide Czechoslovak Communist Party on 1 January 1968.⁶⁶

The Czechoslovak state's relationship to the Catholic Church – with a brief exception during the Second Czech-Slovak Republic of 1938-9 – had never been good. In 1918, the state's founding father, President T.G. Masaryk, a lapsed Catholic and self-conscious [visionary and progressive](#), confiscated church property, abolished the aristocracy and restricted religious education.⁶⁷ Drawing on Czech nationalist understandings of the Hussite past, and inspired by Henry VIII's break with Rome, Masaryk sought to replace the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia with the Anglican-style church known as the Czechoslovak Hussite church. Masaryk's watchword 'Away with Rome!' was understood in the 1920s not only as a republican, anticlerical and Czech political rallying-cry, but also as a practical means to help Czechs and Slovaks overcome Austrian and Hungarian 'imperial' attitudes as well as peasant '[backwardnessbackwardness](#)', including some embarrassing superstitions about Jews.⁶⁸ The result was that Czechs, although formally Catholic, tended to identify with positions more usually associated with self-consciously progressive Protestants, socialists or atheists. This could be seen

in many Czech nationalists' anticlericalism, notions of scientific, political and social progress, theoretical feminism, and relatively liberal attitudes towards [marriage, sex and](#) ~~contraception,~~ ~~and even abortion~~.⁶⁹

Church-State tensions, ~~which were~~ acute enough in the 1920s for relations with the Vatican to be broken off entirely, were further complicated, from the late 1930s and throughout the Second World War, by the rise to power in Slovakia of a clerical-fascist régime – the only fascist regime in Europe to be led by a Catholic priest - which was closely allied to Hitler's Germany. This first Slovak Republic, led by the Slovak Populist Party leader Fr Jozef Tiso, took an energetic and well-publicized part in the invasion of Poland, the forcible expulsion of Czechs from Slovak territory, the removal of Communists and persecution of Jews, before being briefly overturned by mainly Communist and Jewish Slovak partisans in 1944 ~~and~~ ~~saved~~ ~~restored~~ by German [military](#) intervention in Spring 1945. Czechoslovakia's wartime experiences, when the post-Munich state was divided into a German Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia and a nominally independent Slovak Republic, further sharpened pre-existing tensions between self-consciously progressive, socialist-minded Bohemian Czechs in the western provinces and self-consciously conservative, Christian Slovaks in the east.⁷⁰

Patriotic approval of Hussite/proto-Protestant critiques of the Catholic church which were energetically fostered during the interwar Czechoslovak state under the leadership of President-Liberator T.G. Masaryk and his circle of intimate advisors known as the Castle Group (*Hrad*), were taken up with zeal, but subtly transformed, by the postwar Czechoslovak Communist Party (*Komunistická strana Československa*, hereafter *KSČ*). The Communist régime, which continued to honour Jan Hus, made a particular hero of the one-eyed Hussite warrior Jan Žižka, who was simultaneously presented as a Czech patriot, an anticlerical, and a proto-Communist radical reformer. The Hussite emphasis on the importance of the use of the Czech vernacular and communion in both kinds (as reflected in the Hussite symbol of the chalice) meant that the

Second Vatican Council removed some important barriers to Catholicism in Czech nationalist thinking. It thus made the Catholic church potentially more acceptable to Czech nationalists as well as to reform Communists.⁷¹ As James Felak has recently noted, the democratizing and liberalising aims of both the papacy during the Second Vatican Council and the Czechoslovak Communist leadership during the Prague Spring gave the two 1960s reform movements, which roughly coincided, a good deal in common.⁷²

Although opinion polls and surveys undertaken by the Communist régime need to be treated with caution, the pattern of contrasting attitudes to religion between the Czech and Slovak republics, which continues to the present day, emerge clearly from all the available evidence. According to a survey conducted by *Sociologia* between January and March 1970, Slovakia's adult population in 1970 consisted of 70.7% believers, 14% atheists, and 15.2% 'uncommitted'.⁷³ In a poll taken in 1968, 71% of Slovaks identified as believers, whereas in 1974 just 13% of Czechs so identified.⁷⁴ How many Slovak Catholics took a reform position or liberal attitude to *HV* is impossible to know for certain; but the presumption is that a higher proportion of Slovak-speaking than Czech-speaking Catholics in Czechoslovakia were conservative; that Czechs from Bohemia were mainly liberal or progressive; and that Czechs from Moravia fell somewhere in the middle.

What this fraught historical background and religious contrast meant politically was that an instinctively anticlerical Czech Communist elite, acutely conscious of the degree to which Slovak Catholicism, fascism and conservatism had led to Czechoslovakia's downfall in 1938-9 and the subsequent rise of an independent clerical Slovak state (1939-1945), was particularly determined to curb the Catholic church's influence, especially in Slovakia, where Catholics appeared as a potential Fifth Column of reaction (and won little sympathy from Czech or Slovak Communists who had spent the war in domestic as well as foreign concentration and labour camps). It was no accident that the Catholic church was generally treated more harshly in

Communist Czechoslovakia than elsewhere in the Eastern bloc,⁷⁵ and that it remained problematic for Czech nationalism but continued to be closely tied to Slovak nationalism.

After the Czechoslovak Communist takeover in February 1948, when the *KSČ* no longer needed to woo the Catholic vote and the Vatican was backing the West in the Cold War, the repression of the Catholic church in Czechoslovakia was resumed in earnest. Party propaganda, intimidation, arrests and show trials not only presented Catholics as agents of a foreign power, but also laid stress on supposed class divisions between the hierarchy (treated as a reactionary aristocrats) and ordinary priests or laypeople (treated as only partially misguided proletarians or peasants).⁷⁶ The latter, wherever possible, were co-opted into the position of speaking out as ‘progressives’, in other words, trained as Marxists prepared to speak out in praise and support of any initiative undertaken by the Communist Party or the Communist Party-controlled National Front government. In addition to those who may sincerely have believed in dialogue and overlap between Marxism and Christianity, others were acutely aware of who paid their salaries and guaranteed their security. A certain number were StB (state security or secret police) informers or agents, some of whom masqueraded as priests, monks or laymen in order to better monitor, influence and denounce.⁷⁷ In Czechoslovakia, the nadir of Church-State relations came in about 1950, when a mass show trial of so-called ‘Vatican Agents’ (mainly the leaders of Czech and Slovak religious houses) was staged.⁷⁸ The show trial was preceded and accompanied by a virulent anticlerical campaign, including such astonishing features as the staging, by the secret police, of a faked miracle to discredit the local parish priest; the routine use of torture (mainly sleep deprivation) to force priests to pen written confessions to sabotage, corruption, homosexuality or paedophilia; and *Operation K*, the forced closure of all monasteries and convents across the state and the dumping of their former inhabitants into prison camps, including the infamous ‘concentration monastery’ at Valdice.⁷⁹ The fact that Slovak villagers, who had witnessed Jews being rounded up just a few years before, assumed that the monks being

loaded onto coaches at gunpoint were being taken away to be gassed, gives some idea of the atmosphere.⁸⁰

Czechoslovak Catholics, population control and *Humanae Vitae*

Although the development of population control followed roughly the same path in socialist Czechoslovakia as in socialist Hungary, it was not subject to the same levels of public debate under the two Communist regimes. The initial response to *HV* in Czechoslovakia appears to have been almost complete silence. Although the régime-approved weekly Czech Catholic newspaper *Katolické noviny* had been routinely publishing ‘Documents from the Second Vatican Council’ and was favourably disposed towards the Vatican’s *Ostpolitik*, the full text of the encyclical was not made available to Czechoslovak Catholic readers, either in the original Latin or in Czech or Slovak translation.⁸¹ In the months that followed the publication of *HV*, only a handful of articles in the Czech and Slovak press – even in the official Catholic press – so much as mentioned the encyclical.⁸² It is possible, indeed likely, that the StB (state security) agent who is known to have been present throughout the Second Vatican Council reported to the Ministry of Interior and advised on the matter of birth control; but since his entire file has been destroyed and can no longer be consulted in the State Security archive in Prague, we can only speculate as to what it might have contained.⁸³ Unfortunately, Radio Free Europe Situation Reports, researched and written between 1968 and 1972, which were funded by official and unofficial US government sources and which include fairly comprehensive press surveys, do not so much as mention *HV*.⁸⁴ The only obvious sources to gauge contemporary Czech and Slovak Catholic reactions to *HV* are therefore to be found in a tiny handful of methodologically problematic newspaper articles which addressed the topic directly.

The encyclical and the end of the Prague Spring

HV was published on 25 July 1968, just as Soviet, East German and Polish Communist concerns about the Czechoslovak Communist Party's experiments with Prague Spring reforms were reaching crisis point. Preparations were already being made for the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact intervention that took place on the night of 20-21 August 1968, when the leaders of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic were arrested and the country invaded from all sides by between a quarter and half a million Soviet, Hungarian, East German, Bulgarian and Polish troops.⁸⁵

Instead of being shot, the *KSC* leaders were brought to the Kremlin for 'negotiations'. These ended, after three days, with the signing, on 26 August 1968, of a document known colloquially as 'the Moscow Protocol'. The Moscow Protocol's stated aim was to 'normalise' the political situation in Czechoslovakia as a precondition for the withdrawal of Warsaw Pact troops (ostensibly brought in to defend their Socialist ally from Counterrevolution), and the restoration of the Czechoslovak Communist leadership to their positions. The *KSC* leadership, half-guests and half-prisoners in the Kremlin for several days, bowed to Soviet pressure. Nearly all of the Prague Spring reforms – with the notable exception of federalization, which went ahead as planned at the end of 1968 – were signed away secretly in Moscow and gradually rescinded over the course of 1969 and 1970, after the Dubček leadership's return to Prague. On 1 January 1969, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (ČSR) became a federation of two Socialist Republics: the Czech and Slovak Socialist Republics (ČSSR).⁸⁶

Between late 1968 and 1971, the *KSC* was thoroughly purged, with every single Party member required to fill in a form and be called for interview (screened) for political reliability. Dubček himself was initially allowed to preside over the dismantling of his own Central Committee's reforms; then demoted; and finally expelled from the *KSC*.⁸⁷ It only gradually became apparent to the general public that the April 1968 (Prague Spring) reforms were neither to be retained nor reinstated. At first, in the initial weeks and months after the Warsaw Pact invasion, when Dubček still remained at the helm of the *KSC* and the terms of the Moscow

Protocol were not known to the public, it seemed possible that a tactical withdrawal of the reforms would be followed, in time, by cautious reattempts at milder reforms. As things turned out, no such second attempt at liberalization was to be made by the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia until at least as late as 1986-1987, when signs of reform began to be sensed from Moscow, and arguably not until the KSC's own brand of *perestroika* – known as *přestavba* – was officially adopted in January 1989.⁸⁸

The Catholic Church, Central Committee and the Prague Spring

The fortunes of the official Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia during the Communist dictatorship were almost entirely bound up with the KSC's Central Committee politics of the day. After January 1968, when Alexander Duček was brought in to replace Antonín Novotný as KSC's First Secretary, the Catholic church began to benefit from the newly reformist, self-consciously 'anti-Stalinist' atmosphere. According to an anonymous intelligence analyst working for Radio Free Europe, this 'process of rebirth' affected 'every aspect of religious life in Czechoslovakia'.⁸⁹ On 25 March 1968, the old school director of the Secretariat for Church Affairs, Karel Hruža, was sacked after denying that priests had been jailed for their faith and insisting that 'freedom of religion had been strictly observed in the past'.⁹⁰ His replacement, Dr Erika Kadlečová, a sociologist from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, was a much more conciliatory figure, and it was she who directed the astonishingly wide-ranging religious reforms that were to follow.

The 1968 religious reforms in Czechoslovakia appear, for the most part, to have represented the direct, self-conscious reversal of the 'Stalinist' legislation of the 1950s. Religious orders for men and women, which had been closed by decree in April 1950, were reopened, the Prosecutor General's Office in Prague having declared that since the monasteries and convents had not been abolished by a law, but only administrative decree, there was no legal obstacle to their reinstatement.⁹¹ The Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church, which had been forcibly disbanded in

1950, was reestablished.⁹² The Old Catholic church, the small offshoot of the Roman Catholic church which broke away in protest after papal infallibility was made dogma at the First Vatican Council of 1869-1870, was once again allowed to practise in Czechoslovakia. The Communist-controlled 'Peace Movement' of collaborationist Catholic clergy, which had been headed by the particularly loathsome Josef Plojhar, leader of the Czechoslovak People's Party and later found to be working for the StB, was abolished.⁹³

On 14 May 1968, a new 'Work of Council Revival', headed by the Prague 'administrator-bishop' František Tomášek, was established at the Velehrad Congress, evidently as a replacement for the detested 'Peace priests'.⁹⁴ Formerly imprisoned bishops in ordinary returned to their dioceses: Karel Skoupý to Brno in Moravia; Josef Slouch to České Budejovice in Bohemia; Štěpán Trochta to Litoměřice in the former Sudetenland; Kajetán Matoušek to Prague.⁹⁵ Hundreds of priests were released from prison, where they had been held for 'anti-state' activities: according to *Lud*, 'the last clergyman walked out of the prison gates in July 1968'.⁹⁶ On 20 August 1968, the day before the Warsaw Pact invasion, all restrictive regulations on the teaching of religion were rescinded.⁹⁷ As a result of these combined reforms, according to RFE, Catholic church activity 'increased greatly, mainly as a result of the return of the bishops to their residences in Bohemia and Moravia', together with the expansion of the Catholic press 'the size and circulation of the papers and periodicals having practically doubled' and the Faculty of Theology in Olomouc reopened.⁹⁸

When the KSCĚ Central Committee decided, on the fateful night of 20-21 August 1968, to protest rather than accede in the surprise 'fraternal assistance' provided by the incoming Warsaw Pact armies, Catholics joined their Czech and Slovak compatriots in supporting the position of the Dubček leadership and opposing the invaders.⁹⁹ A few days later, when the Czechoslovak people were called upon by the Dubček leadership to stop protesting and accept the political realities spelled out in the Moscow Protocol, they obediently did so, presumably to avoid

violence and in the belief that this was the best way to keep what could be salvaged from the reform package. As Dr Erika Kadlecová, head of the Secretariat for Church Affairs, put it, 'Christians' behaved during the August days that followed the Warsaw Pact intervention 'exactly like all the other citizens, i.e. fantastically. They showed a high degree of civic conscience, courage and discipline; if anybody had doubts about their positive attitude to the socialist state, August must have proved to him that the very opposite was true'.¹⁰⁰

At first, the tactic advocated by the Dubček leadership and accepted by the population at large, appeared to be working. Members of the Dubček leadership were allowed to return to their posts. The Prague Spring reforms slowed – in a few cases reversed immediately – but did not grind to a complete halt. 'Progress in the religious field', according to Radio Free Europe, 'did not end with the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops', but the fact that the Catholics lost 'their chief ideological base', the Work of Council Revival, was an ominous sign.¹⁰¹ Eleven months later, on 26 July 1969, there was an even more worrying sign: Erika Kadlecová was dismissed as head of the Secretariat for Church Affairs at the Ministry of Culture.¹⁰²

On January 1970, *Rudé právo*, the Communist Party daily, ran a first, as yet only mildly, anticlerical story with the provocative title 'An Uprising against the Pope?'¹⁰³ Over the course of the year, Church-State relations began rapidly to deteriorate and the press began to step up its anticlerical attacks. By September 1970, a propaganda display, reminiscent of the 'Stalinist' 1950s, entitled 'A Thwarted Attempt', which included documents from the Vatican purporting to show that Czechoslovak Catholics had been involved in anti-state activities and in illegal contact with Catholic émigrés, was made public. *Duchovní Pastýř*, the Czech Catholic monthly brought out by the Catholic *Caritas* society, hastily declared that it would return to its 'former traditions', in other words, refrain from 'touching on topical religious problems' and refuse to allow Catholic laymen to write for the periodical.¹⁰⁴ The pressure evidently continued, because the Czech

Catholic weekly *Katolické noviny* evidently felt obliged to publish, on 18 October 1970, a formal denial that it was 'anti-state' or maintaining illegal contacts with Czechoslovak émigrés abroad.¹⁰⁵ Editors of the briefly reformist Catholic newspapers were nevertheless removed and replaced.¹⁰⁶

In August 1971, precisely three years after the Warsaw Pact intervention, the so-called 'ideological-professional associations of Catholic clergy', cunningly named *Pacem in Terris* after the title of Pope John XXIII's 1963 encyclical on nuclear non-proliferation, were simultaneously established in Prague and Bratislava by the Czechoslovak Ministry of Culture. In a policy statement, Miloslav Bružek, the Czech Minister of Culture, declared that the association would be 'a voluntary societal and common-interest movement which will unite the Catholic clergy in Bohemia and Moravia'.¹⁰⁷ The formation of *Pacem in Terris*, he further explained, 'represents an important step in the relations of Church and State and, at the same time, proof of the successful consolidation of Czechoslovak society' (Radio Prague, 31 August 1971).¹⁰⁸ *Pacem in Terris* seemed to be intended, as an RFE analyst put it, 'to take up the reins dropped by the former Peace Movement of Catholic Clergy', originally set up in the 'Stalinist' 1950s and which had been 'completely compromised because of its servile procommunist line' and therefore forced to cease operations in 1968.¹⁰⁹ The peace priests were back.

As dissident intellectuals Milan Simečka and Václav Havel observed, 'Normalization' in Czechoslovakia under the post-Dubček régime led by Gustáv Husák, another Slovak Communist, turned out to mean something more subtle and pernicious than the outright terror of the 1950s: although it had many of the same aims, its methods were more refined and its ends more cynical. This was a 'civilized violence',¹¹⁰ violence 'with its ideological gloves on',¹¹¹ whose aim was the consolidation of power for a Communist Party elite rather than a genuine, if brutal, attempt to bring about a socialist paradise. Pressure on believers outwardly to conform to the new political imperatives was steadily stepped up. In anticipation of the 1971 elections, for example, the

regime requested formal statements of support for the National Front from various religious organisations, including the Czechoslovak Hussite Church and the Czechoslovak Orthodox Church. The congregation of bishops (such as it was: there was only one bishop in Slovakia by this point)¹¹² obediently issued pastoral letters expressing the ‘conviction that believers will support the internal and foreign policy of the country and, making use of their civic rights, will cast their votes for the candidates of the National Front’.¹¹³

After religious periodicals and hierarchies were brought back into line, the next Prague Spring reforms to be undone were those concerning the religious education of the young. On 30 July 1971, new instructions concerning religious education in schools were issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture (20 September 1971). ‘In essence’, an RFE analyst judged, these represented ‘a return to the situation that prevailed in the 1950s’. If parents, as RFE pointed out, ‘wish a child to attend religious instruction they must apply to the principal of the school’. On the other hand, ‘the “political erudition”’ (i.e. Marxist-Leninist interpretation) demanded in the 1950s was ‘not required: the decree only makes it obligatory that teachers charged with giving religious education be “reliable citizens”’, an appellation which could not, of course, be tested in law.¹¹⁴

Religious congregations were the next ‘problem’ to be dealt with by the regime. In November 1971, according to the Austrian press agency *Kathpress*, the Prague Office for Church Affairs informed the clergy that the November 1968 decree permitting the restoration of religious orders in the Czech and Slovak Socialist Republic was no longer valid. The monasteries and convents were again to be closed. Meanwhile, students of theology were required ‘to sign a declaration that they were not members of any order, that they had no intention of joining an order, and that they were not in touch with persons abroad’.¹¹⁵ The Prague regime simultaneously took ‘far-reaching measures’ to ‘prevent the importing of religious literature, especially publications in Czech issued by the Christian Academy in Rome (*Academia Cristiana*

Cecoslovacca), and broke off negotiations with the Vatican. Again according to *Kathpress* (9 November 1971), it was planned to resume talks with the Vatican only once the state had ‘all religious life under strict supervision’.¹¹⁶

By the end of 1971 and beginning of 1972, religious activity in the Czech-speaking lands of the Bohemian Crown (Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, the territory of today’s Czech Republic) was legally constrained and kept under close supervision. It was only rarely interfered with obviously and directly, however, in a way that might galvanise protest. Rather, from what local RFE analysts could see, the ‘struggle against the Church’ was mainly ‘being waged on the ideological plane’, which took ‘the form of more extensive atheistic propaganda in schools and among young people generally’, for example through articles on ‘Scientific Atheism’ and ‘The Foundations of the Marxist-Leninist Views – Religion as a World Concept’ published in the professional teaching journals *Učitelské noviny* 1 (6 January 1972) and *Vědy ve Škole* 3 (November 1971).¹¹⁷ Similarly, the theology faculties were not officially banned: but a rigorous *numerous clausus*, to keep the number of ordinands down, was introduced in both the Czech and Slovak socialist republics.

In Slovakia, where the number of observant Catholics was much larger than in the Bohemian Crown Lands and the perceived threat to the regime substantially greater, the Bratislava seminary for priests was closed down on the pretext that the heating, which had not been functioning for over three years, suddenly needed urgently to be repaired.¹¹⁸ Some 33 Slovak clergymen, mainly young, were refused, without explanation, to be allowed to take an active part in church administration. Several hundred priests were reassigned, often to remote districts, by the Bratislava Secretariat for Church Affairs at the Slovak Ministry of Culture.¹¹⁹ According to the RFE analyst, ‘the administrative measures being taken against the Catholic Church in Slovakia’ had ‘to all intents and purposes put an end to the relative freedom won during the Dubček era.’ The present situation in regard to religion in Slovakia,’ the analyst

commented, 'is reminiscent of that of the 1950s, though atheistic propaganda is carried out in a more intelligent manner and no longer follows the Soviet example blindly.'¹²⁰

By March 1972, the Catholic church in Czechoslovakia had reached what the Radio Free Europe considered to be 'a critical situation' since out of ten Czech and Slovak dioceses, 'only Litoměřice [had] an incumbent bishop (Štěpán Trochta), while the two archdioceses of Prague and Olomouc [were] vacant, Bishop František Tomášek acting as administrator of the former.'¹²¹ In May 1972, students at the seminary in Bratislava went on hunger strike to protest against the expulsion of seven of their fellow-students shortly before their ordination, at a time when 50 out of 80 students who applied to study for theology degrees were refused admission.¹²² Elementary school teachers, meanwhile, 'began visiting the homes of their pupils and talking with their parents, and "by systematic agitation, persuaded some pupils to cancel their pending confirmation."¹²³ Banksy claimed that the teachers had succeeded in influencing not only the pupils but also their parents.¹²⁴ In such a context, when links with the Vatican were suspended, reformists purged, and the 'Peace' priests back in charge, it is not surprising that there was no more public discussion of *HV* in the Czech or Slovak religious press. Caution and self-censorship were logical responses in a climate in which expressing views that ran counter to the official line were almost certain to be reported to the authorities by undercover agents and informers and could lead to trouble of all kinds, from petty inconveniences and difficulties, such as having a decent flat or being allowed to travel abroad, to more serious obstacles such as keeping one's job or having one's children be allowed to attend university. In extreme cases, dissent could lead to secret police monitoring and harassment, and ultimately to prison or forced-labour sentences.

In Hungary, meanwhile, where an equivalent political crisis in domestic and international socialism had come and gone in 1956, the period of relative liberalism continued, uninterrupted, in 1968.

Hungarian Population Policy in the 1960s and 1970s

In Hungary, where there was a much more peaceful moment in State-Church relations than in contemporary Czechoslovakia, there was also considerably more discussion of *Humanae Vitae*. In Hungary the State did not need to undertake a similarly a direct and brutal intervention into Church affairs, because it mostly got the cooperation and understanding it wanted from Church dignitaries. If there was tension between Church and State, it lay hidden beneath the surface of ‘Marxist-Christian’ dialogue. For Hungary, instead of telling the story of post-1968 repression, it seems rather important to discuss how State policies vis-à-vis contraception changes. For, the issuing of the *HV* coincided with an era where the Hungarian State was concerned both with qualitative and quantitative change in population (more and better bred children) and reducing abortion numbers by propagating birth control. In this sense, at that time the cautious but critical line of the centrist-reformist Catholics from the Theology Academy - seemingly representing the only Catholic voice publicly - was highly convenient for the State, partly because it represented a split in the Church, but partly because it supported its population policy goals. Instead of underlining State-Church tension, providing a sketch of the contemporary Hungarian population policy aims and measure seems more relevant here.

“By propagating and fostering the program of having children we need to aspire to make the methods of prevention known as widely as possible. Its objective is to foster family planning but at the same time not reduce the number of births.”¹²⁵

Dr András Kovács, a renowned gynecologist at the Budapest Medical University, and author of numerous books and articles on contraception and ‘women and mother protection’, penned the above sentences in 1973. In the same book he dedicated hundred of pages to publishing the most important documents relating to the 1973 ‘complex population policy decree’ which the socialist

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State had determined in an aim to boost falling birthrates and put an end to the proliferation of abortion as a result of a liberal abortion decree from 1956. The working community of the Health Ministry recommended to the abortion committees that now had considerable power to decide if a woman had the right to terminate her pregnancy to primarily consider 'beside the protection of the health of the mother and the unborn children their contribution to accomplishing the common goal of our whole society, establishing the three-child family type.'¹²⁶

The 1973 legislation included various economic measures: increased sums for maternity care, children's benefits and newborn's benefits. It also introduced mandatory premarital counseling where couples were to visit a doctor who then provided them with 'appropriate advice and education on family planning' and 'if needed, they would be told about the contraceptive methods suitable for them and provided with protective devices – as stipulated by the law.'¹²⁷ Importantly, mandatory sex education (under the euphemism "education family life"¹²⁸) was to be introduced at all three levels of education, where both biological-ethical knowledge on sexuality, as well as a push towards the "three-child model" was to be introduced. As, among others, János Tischler maintains, this decree constituted a watershed for the oral contraceptive pill, as well. What was originally introduced as Infecundin and produced locally in the Kőbánya (former Richter) factory as of 1967, remained largely unknown to most women for a number of years, mostly due to the muted press around it.¹²⁸ The journalist Judit Kovács contended in 1969 that the pill in Hungary was not used widely because 'it was given bad publicity' as medical journals published instances when it was harmful to health and some doctors did not prescribe it 'out of conviction', resulting an estimations that only 20,000 women used oral contraceptives in 1968.¹²⁹ By contrast, in 1969 there were 150,000 live births and 200,000 abortions.¹³⁰ From this it is clear that the main method of birth control for Hungarian women was terminating their pregnancy.

What is notable about the 1973 package is that it addressed the problem of population growth in a complex manner and, as such, the tendency of counter-correlation between the number of abortions and the number of live births soon turned into correlation (that is, both the number of abortions and of live births was in a constant decline as of 1975). The package introduced eight key policies that made it easier for large families to economize, ranging from increased amount maternity leave pay and up to 9 extra days of leave each year for mothers with children. As for contraceptive pills, before 1973 these could only be prescribed to adults, by the gynecologist, who had the right to demand regular examinations¹³¹ [Ref] Distribution was also very limited, as in most cities they were sold in a single pharmacy as well as one pharmacy per district in Budapest.¹³² The population policy reforms made contraceptives available in most pharmacies, one could have it prescribed by any doctor – including one's GP – it was free, and even 16-18 year olds could apply for it.¹³³

Thus, in the years following *HV*, the population policy objectives of the Hungarian socialist State shifted considerably and one of the major outcomes of the new, 'complex' approach was the mass availability and the widespread promotion of oral contraceptives to large segments of the Hungarian population. It was clear by the mid-1970s that the State wanted couples to have more children, but if births were to be avoided, this should be achieved with the very method that *HV* forbade. In the next subsection a case study will be presented, which, shows how the Catholic debates around *Humanae Vitae* played a role in the struggle for the outlook of the Hungarian Catholic church, including the State's opportunism in terms of its population policy goals.

Case study: Szabolcs Víg

The story of Szabolcs Víg works well as a case study to highlight the internal strife within the Catholic church with regard to birth control after *HV*. It can also to a certain extent put into

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context the cooperation between church and State and the reach of the “centrist revolution”²² within the church.

Szabolcs Víggh was among the group of theology students, who during the revolution of 1956 participated in occupying and relocating the secret archive of the State Church Affairs Office and was therefore given a short prison sentence. He started his career as a local parish priest in 1958 and after serving various smaller towns he returned to Budapest in 1965.¹³⁴ He had already worked out a sex education curriculum based on contemporary sexological work in his local parishes before he came to Budapest, and after 1968 he started a PhD at the Budapest Catholic Theology College on the church and the history of birth control.²²¹³⁵ He decided to pursue a PhD because as parish priest he was thinking about an acceptable regulation of birth control that remained true to the church. As he was dealing with confessions regularly, he also saw that Catholic couples ‘were in a difficult situation because of Casti Conubii.’¹³⁶ It was theology professor Márk Kecskés, who suggested that he approach the issue of family planning from a historical perspective.

His research led him to understand that the church had a constantly shifting opinion towards birth control historically and as such there was no such thing as the ‘eternal teaching of the Church.’¹³⁷ His PhD supervisor and moral theology expert György Zemplén warned him to re-write certain more radical elements of the thesis in order to avoid dismissal as these ‘would not fit into Catholic theology’.¹³⁸ He received his degree, however, with distinction in 1971 and, as an expert on birth control, was asked by various centrist theologians to contribute to the discussion of *HV*.¹³⁹ Tamás Nyíri, who also worked for *Vigília* at the time, asked him to contribute to the *Sexuality, Family, Society* special issue in 1972. Subsequent to this, Szennay asked him to submit an article in *Teológia* in the special issue *Christian Marriage and Family*, while in 1974 he repeatedly published there on the practical question of Catholic confessions and

the issue birth control.¹⁴⁰ Víg maintains that his 1972 article was about to be published in 1970 but the Catholic censor of Esztergom stopped its publication last minute – still, two years later it was given the go-ahead.¹⁴¹

The early 1970s represented a peak both for centrist theology and for Víg at least in terms of the public discourse on *HV*. Subsequently, Víg found himself very quickly on the margins of the Hungarian Catholic church and this process, it seems, was done with the knowledge of the secret service, as they had been keeping him under close scrutiny. Szennay in 1972 recommended him to be part of a group of young theologians in and around *Teológia* in order to create a modern Hungarian Catholic theology, but the secret police, through the State Church Office, was able to stop this process, which Víg explains with the fact that he was seen as a hostile priest, most probably because of his 1956 activities.¹⁴² Soon afterwards, in Autumn 1973 there was a clerical conference on birth control¹⁴³ and Víg both spoke at the meeting and submitted a written opinion upon request.¹⁴⁴ Subsequently, he received a scolding reply from the bishop as his paper differed from Catholic teaching, which resulted in an exchange of several letters¹⁴⁵. Víg then requested a meeting with the bishop but was not received. Rather, he was moved to a new parish in July 1974. He decided to emigrate as his whole family was already in the Netherlands (they had left in 1956) and in 1976 he left the Catholic church. According to his explanation, the bishop's reaction 'was due to the fact that I was not fooled, I did not join the (*pro-Communist – G.Sz.*) peace priests, they were unable to make a secret agent out of me and at the same time I was a progressive voice among the priests. Also, I started a church religious study program in 1971, to have topics ready for the Sunday student masses. Because of these I had a certain reputation and the timid and closed church leaders didn't like it.'¹⁴⁶ In the oral history interview Víg mentions another case, one from 1976, that of László Pauka. Pauka was doing a great deal of work among young people and as a consequence received similar treatment:

being moved from one parish to another and not getting a hearing from the archbishop. At this time the State Church Office was clearly putting pressure on the bishops to control those priests who were close to the young and were trying to build up [base] communities.¹⁴⁷

As for Víg's position, it was not significantly different from what appeared in *Vigilia* after 1968, and was consistent with the Doromby-Nyíri-Szennay line. He also emphasized that marital love was on an equal footing with procreation according to the encyclical and that therefore contraception was 'certainly the lesser evil' if love would suffer and cause damage in the family. He concurred that being 'selfish' and using contraception for comfort was morally unjustifiable but that it was 'the believer, who was in the existential situation' that had to make the decision because they were responsible for their decision before God.¹⁴⁸ In his 1972 *Teológia* article, he highlighted the same point from an historical and scriptural angle. He wrote that whereas the Bible does not write explicitly about birth control¹⁴⁹ it laid emphasis both in the Old and New Testaments on marital love and satisfaction. His overview of how birth control was seen within the Catholic church underlined how change occurred and therefore, just as Szennay, he emphasized that the Pope's encyclical was 'fallible' and that it rather was a good sign that further research was needed on birth control. Importantly, Víg in his 1974 ["The Problems of Family Planning in the Confessional Practice"](#)²² put in a word for treating believers as adults and full equals, so that in the confessional the priest should to give them information to think and decide for themselves. He explicitly stated: 'they need to be told that there are contradictory prescriptions within the Church and the prohibition of birth control is of a kind, from which one can deviate in certain, individual situations.'¹⁵⁰

The case of birth control, and specifically that of Szabolcs Víg, seems useful for pointing to the limits of a 'centrist' line in Hungarian Catholicism in the Kádár era. The State Church Affairs Office, admittedly, supported a moderate theology that was pursued by Szennay, Nyíri

and Gál, which took into account the realities of the Church within a Socialist state and sought to reach out to atheists and Marxists. However, once voices within the Church appeared to be too progressive and possibly too popular among the young, there was a need to intervene. In the case of contraception, there seems to have been a temporary alliance between the Interior Ministry and the more conservative church leadership, who were keen on a correction of the initial line of *Vigília* and *Teológia*. The articles of these two notable Catholic periodicals in the early 1970s showed a critical tone towards *HV*'s approach to contraception and indicated a mini-revolution favoring the emancipation of Catholic families in decision-making regarding procreation. This stretched the boundaries of the higher echelons of the Hungarian Catholic church as they were not ready for such a direct criticism of the Pope and such a jump in individual adjudication in the field of sexual ethics with regard to theorizing over contraception. At the same time the State Church Affairs Office – even if Vígh or Szennay were in line with the contemporary, Marxist ‘our child is a wanted child’ policy – probably wanted a less emancipatory church that would be distant from its followers, especially young people both in theory and practice.

Czechoslovak population policy and contraception

In Czechoslovakia, the background to population control was a little different than in Hungary since there was a long interwar tradition of Czech anarchist and Communist (as well as German Social Democrat) parliamentarians proposing abortion laws in the Czechoslovak Parliament, none of which, however, were successfully passed during the [First Czechoslovak Republic \(1918/1920-1938\)](#).¹⁵¹ It was not until 1957, a couple of years after abortion had been legalized in the Soviet Union, to considerable protest from the Catholic church, that abortion was made legal in the then Czechoslovak people's democracy. [As in Hungary](#)! [As in Hungary](#), the *KSC* leadership evidently came to see the best way simultaneously to control population growth and to

avoid unnecessary abortions would be to develop, adopt or spread artificial anticonception methods. The first Czechoslovak anti-conception drugs, *Depo-Provera* (which was injected) and *Antigest* (which was taken orally) were developed in 1963 and 1965 respectively, just as the baby-boomer generation was coming of age. The first so-called ‘mini-Pill’, *Nacenyl*, was released in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the same year as the encyclical *HV*, and a little after the release of *Infecundin* in neighbouring Hungary.¹⁵²

In January 1968, after Alexander Dubček had replaced Antonín Novotný as First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, but before the new *KSC* leadership had launched its socialist reforms or the Vatican had published *HV*, *Duchovní Pastýř*, the official Catholic newspaper of the Communist-controlled *Caritas* movement in Czechoslovakia, brought out what purported to be a think-piece on ‘The Second Vatican Council on Marriage and the Family’.¹⁵³ Despite its promising title, the article, although presented in a friendly tone and written by a qualified theologian, offered little more than vaguely humanistic and socialist clichés without actually saying anything of significance about the discussions on the family taking place in the church. Jaroslav Michal, an expert on canon and family law, informed *Duchovní Pastýř*’s Catholic readership, in tones reminiscent of the Communist Party jargon of the day, that ‘today’s problems concerning marriage and the family’ were ‘neither new nor surprising’ and were of importance to ‘the whole of human society’.¹⁵⁴ Praising the Second Vatican Council for raising the important question of marriage and the family, it stressed that ‘the question of marriage and the family is not simply a theological question’ because it is a ‘question that touches the whole of humanity’.¹⁵⁵ The essentially secular, pro-regime premises and tautological logic of the article were clear: the Pope, the Vatican and the church ought to be ‘progressive’ in all things because it was always right everywhere and in all things to be ‘progressive’. However ‘good’ the Vatican’s ‘intentions’ might be in raising the question of marriage and

the family, Michal argued, the church should always bear in mind that the most important thing was to place such questions in the ‘wider’ and more ‘significant’ contexts of the ‘prosperity of the people’, the enrichment of ‘the land’ and the promotion of ‘world peace’.¹⁵⁶ According to the well-known signifiers of the day, what this expert theologian’s assessment conveyed to its readers was that the Catholic church should be measured by material, humanistic and secular standards as espoused by the *KSČ*, the National Front, the Peace Priests and all other approved organisations in the *de facto* one-party authoritarian state. Canon law, earlier encyclicals, and traditionally Catholic spiritual, moral or theological teaching were not alluded to, let alone discussed in print, even by a man who had dedicated his life to the study of family life, been awarded a doctorate for a thesis on ‘Natural and Sacred Marriage Law’ (*Manželství práva přirozeného a svátostné*; 1956; degree awarded in 1960)¹⁵⁷ and published theological works relevant to the discussion.¹⁵⁸

During the brief lapse in Party control brought about by the removal of pre-publication censorship as part of the Prague Spring reforms of April-August 1968, it was suddenly possible to speak, and even publish, more freely. The first article to appear in the press on the subject of conception and abortion, about a week before *HV* was published, gave an uncompromisingly conservative Catholic view. This article, published in the Czech version of *Katolické noviny* by a ‘Catholic doctor’, took an ‘entirely negative’ stance to the existing Czechoslovak (1957) abortion law, arguing that the church was ‘entirely logical’ in its argument that ‘all living things come from living things’ with the inference that the interruption of a pregnancy, at any stage, represented an ‘interruption’ of God’s plan.¹⁵⁹ This appears to have been the only overtly conservative Catholic article published, at least legally and publically, in Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The first direct mention, by name, of *HV* in the Catholic press in Czechoslovakia came, on 11 August 1968, in the form of a brief news report on the ‘Encyclical on Birth

Control'.¹⁶⁰ This time, the article was buried away on page three in the Slovak-only version of the Catholic newspaper *Katolícke noviny*.¹⁶¹ The paragraph did little more than to state that an encyclical on the subject of birth control, opening with words 'Humanae Vitae', had been published 'in the last few days' (in fact nearly three weeks earlier); that it consisted of three parts; that it was not an infallible or dogmatic *ex cathedra* statement; that every believer was free to follow his or her own conscience in the matter; but that the church, in line with its earlier teachings, did not approve the use of anticonception drugs, sterilization (whether short-term or permanent) or the interruption of pregnancy, including by means of 'therapeutic' abortion.¹⁶² The tone of the article was studiously neutral. It did not invite comment or discussion. Nor did it publish the full text of the encyclical, so that Catholic readers might be in a position to consider the arguments for themselves.

On 18 August 1968, just a couple of days before the arrival of the five Warsaw Pact armies, the Czech Catholic press followed with the first in a three-part article on 'the gift of life' by Oto Mádr, a victim in the 1950s show trials who had been recently been rehabilitated and therefore had excellent 'Prague Spring' credentials. Mádr's views are especially significant since he was working closely with František Tomášek, the only Czechoslovak bishop permitted to attend the Second Vatican Council.¹⁶³ The article, whose opening section appeared on the front cover of the Czech-language edition of *Katolícké noviny*, gave a relatively balanced summary of both conservative and liberal Catholic positions with regard to the encyclical, but made clear its own 'liberal' position. It explained that the encyclical had been prompted by concern over the current population explosion together with the recent development and spread of artificial means of birth control. It expressed surprise that the papacy felt it to be within its remit to pronounce on such an 'intimate' question as birth control and disappointment that it took such a conservative and hard-line view, ignoring the majority of theologically respectable opinions

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that ran counter to his own.¹⁶⁴ Although clearly placing himself on the liberal Catholic, and simultaneously more régime-friendly side of the debate, Mádr seems to write sincerely, as a Christian rather than a Communist stooge, and sympathized with the Pope's 'heaviness of heart' in reaching a decision that was 'difficult' and that he knew would be unwelcome by a majority of Catholics.¹⁶⁵ He concluded with the conciliatory view that neither 'the Christian life' nor 'human progress' had ever 'advanced' without some element of 'sacrifice' and finished with the disclaimer that 'this was roughly how, at a first reading' he 'understood the Encyclical *Humanae Vitae*'.¹⁶⁶ Mádr, although implicitly supporting the Communist régime's view that birth control was to be welcomed, nevertheless sought to present the Pope's arguments fairly, repeating his stated concerns that, by interfering with the possibility of conception, 'men might lose respect for women' and that, according to the papacy, 'married couples were responsible not only to themselves, but also to God, their families, and society.'¹⁶⁷ They should, the encyclical stressed and Mádr faithfully reported, remain 'open to the gift of life' and remember that human beings do not have 'unlimited rights' to their own bodies.¹⁶⁸

By 22 September 1968, when the third and final portion of Mádr's reflections on the encyclical were published in *Katolické noviny*, Mádr came across as markedly less accommodating and was perhaps showing signs of interference from the editor or pressure from the secret police. This time, instead of sympathizing with the papacy, he put forward the Pope's 'own acknowledgement' that *HV* was 'controversial' (a word which, in Czech, carries exclusively negative connotations). He further commented waspishly on how 'interesting' it was that the main religious bodies in agreement with the Vatican on the question of birth control were the orthodox Jews, Muslims and orthodox Christians (none of whom had a good reputation in traditional Czechoslovak Catholic circles). The Church of England, he pointed out, although 'sympathetic' to the conservative Catholic position,

judged the matter best left to parental conscience. Doctors, philosophers and politicians, Mádr further noted pointedly, had yet to pronounce on the matter.¹⁶⁹ As if all this were not enough, Mádr – although, even now, his readers did not have access to the actual text of the encyclical in Czech or in Slovak - quoted at length from the objections to *HV* set out by the Viennese Cardinal Franz König,¹⁷⁰ as explored in more depth in Ebner and Mesner's chapter within this volume.

On the same day that the Czech Catholic press brought out the first of Oto Mádr's reports, the Slovak Catholic press published two articles on the topic: one by Dr Cyril Dudáš, on 'The Encyclical on population control' and another, by Dr Ján Gunčaga, on the 'The living source of the Catholic family'.¹⁷¹ Dr Cyril Dudáš reported simply that Paul VI had forbidden the use of *Antigest* (the 'Catholic pill') and that 'those who had hoped' that the Pope would permit 'modern people' to use birth control would be disappointed. Instead, as the article pointed out, the Pope affirmed the earlier teaching of Pius XI that allowed the Ogino-Knaus (rhythm) method as the only means of controlling fertility, thus giving a 'negative' response to those who had hoped for a 'compromise'. The article, although taking care not to contradict the Pope directly, nevertheless made it clear that it disapproved of the encyclical, and laid stress on the fact that the Anglican Church took a different view of artificial birth control,¹⁷² as Harris' chapter expounds. Gunčaga's article, presumably heavily edited, made little sense, beyond insisting, without clear context, that a Christian's life consisted not only of his or her physical body, but also an interior spiritual life which was 'nourished' through 'prayer, spiritual exercises and spiritual renewal'.¹⁷³ The article, although evidently theologically Catholic in intention, did not put forward a coherent, sustained argument.

In January 1969, five months after the return of press censorship and as the Normalization régime began to crack down on the church in earnest, *Rudé právo*, the

Communist Party daily, began its negative campaign to discredit the Vatican. This began with a subtle piece, simply noting Dutch Catholic opposition to *HV*.¹⁷⁴ Within a few days, its stance had become more aggressive, with articles in both *Rudé právo* (the *KSC*'s official mouthpiece and the newspaper with the largest circulation in the country) and *Pochodeň* with lurid titles featuring the words 'the Vatican' 'the Pill' and 'Money', casting aspersions on the papacy and repeating anticlerical Italian reports that a Jesuit from the papal commission responsible for *HV* had been taking bribes.¹⁷⁵

It was not until some seventeen years later, in 1986, that the existing (1957) Czechoslovak abortion law, which had made provision for terminations of pregnancy only with medical permission, was amended to allow for abortion 'on demand' up to 12 weeks of pregnancy.¹⁷⁶ Cardinal Tomášek, by then a more independent figure,¹⁷⁷ publically opposed the new abortion law. A petition protesting 'abortion on demand' managed to gather 15,000 signatures,¹⁷⁸ an entirely exceptional number, and a sign of growing Catholic opposition to a regime as yet untouched by *perestroika*, known in Czech as *přestavba*, but partially aware of the quiet revolutions taking place in Catholic Poland and Hungary. In December 1987, Augustin Navrátil's 31-point petition, whose primary demand was for 'the separation of the church from the state so that the state would not interfere in the church's organization and activities' began to circulate.¹⁷⁹ By May 1988, more than half a million people, mainly Catholics, had signed it. The petition, which demanded an end to the jamming of Vatican radio, unhindered access to religious literature, freedom of religious assembly, the full restoration of religious orders, hierarchies and theological faculties, the decriminalization of *samizdat* literature and much else besides, made no reference to abortion or, indeed, to sexual and social matters of any kind.¹⁸⁰

After the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia was overturned, in 1989-1990, some criticism of the 1986 Czechoslovak abortion law and its premises was published. But

it is noteworthy that the only pamphlets to be found in the formerly Czechoslovak (now Czech) National Library were translations from articles by Polish priests or religious rather than native productions. Nor does any notable ‘pro-Life’ lobby or protest movement appear to have followed the ‘fall’ of the Communist regime.¹⁸¹ The same 1986 abortion law remains in force, unchallenged, in both the Czech and Slovak republics to the present day (2017), suggesting continuity in attitudes. Birth control is legal and readily available in both states, although it has been pointed out by Women’s Rights groups around the world that although contraception is subsidized, and therefore made universally available, in the Czech Republic, it is not subsidized by the state in Slovakia, meaning that it is nevertheless harder to have an abortion in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic.

Conclusion

An examination of reactions to *HV* in two neighbouring socialist states – Czechoslovakia and Hungary – points to a number of conclusions. Research into the topic of public reactions to the 1968 encyclical underlines the importance of Communist Party leaderships in the Warsaw Pact countries in enabling, encouraging, restraining or otherwise shaping public debate on the topic of birth control. During liberal phases, such as the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia, when censorship was lifted and free expression encouraged, or the late 1960s – early 1970s in Hungary, opposing points of view could be heard and compromise positions reached. At other times, when the state considered civil society to be threatening to Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy, Catholic newspapers toed the line and either kept silent or else echoed Party directives.

In Hungary, *HV* was carefully rejected as an anachronism by centrist theologians, who wanted to modernize the church from within, but by the mid-1970s church conservatives silenced these voices, which – even though it clearly contradicted its official

population policy goals - was also in the interest of a State that did not want a grassroots revolution in an otherwise feudal and highly hierarchical institution. In Czechoslovakia, *HV* was useful as one more propaganda item with which to seek to discredit the Vatican in order to better undermine and control the Catholic church. Even so, the new abortion law of 1986, passed at a time when external pressure to liberalise was just beginning to be felt by the *KSC*, sparked some protest.

In both socialist states, the general pattern of state attitudes to birth control was similar. Both promoted 'the Pill' as a means of controlling population growth (in preference to abortion) in the 1960s (the pill was introduced by the Communist regime in Hungary in 1967 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968); and both ignored conservative Catholic scruples or protests. Abortion regulations, however, diverged. In Hungary, on demand abortion was introduced in 1956 and this liberal approach was then somewhat curbed by the 1973 population policy decree and the introduction of abortion committees. Access to abortions was liberalized after the regime change in 1992. By contrast, in Czechoslovakia abortion committees were in place from 1957 to 1986. The 1986 Czechoslovak abortion law still stands in both the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. Meanwhile, use of the pill and other forms of artificial birth control, although available in all three states, can still be influenced by the presence, absence or level of state subsidy.

There was a broad similarity in the experience of Catholicism in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and indeed, society as a whole, in the immediate post-war years and so-called 'Stalinist' 1950s, with the notable exception of the Hungarian events of 1956. The late 1940s and first half of the 1950s was the period when both states were actively seeking to control and dominate the Church. Liberalization occurred, in both states, in the 1960s, although the Czechoslovak disaster in 1968 meant that Hungary continued in a more liberal direction than its neighbor throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Liberal Centrists in Hungary,

like the few lone voices to speak out in Czechoslovakia, were cautiously critical of the encyclical, citing the criticisms put forward by German and Austrian bishops rather than courting direct controversy. Catholics in both countries were constrained not only by internal disagreements over questions of morality and theology and broader divisions within the universal church but, more obviously and directly, by the risks of subversion, betrayal or collusion with a fundamentally antagonistic, manipulative and watchful regime at home.

¹ See, for example, O. Chadwick (1993) *The Christian Church and the Cold War* (London: Penguin), S.P. Ramet (1998) *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia* (Durham: Duke University Press), M. Tomka and P. Zulehner (2000), *Religion During and After Communism* (London: SCM Press).

² For a broader overview of religion and politics in Socialist Eastern Europe, see: S.P. Ramet (1998). *Nihil obstat*. For the relationship between the state secret services and organized religion in Hungary, see K. Ungváry (2014) 'The Kádár Regime and the Subduing of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy' in S. P. Ramet (ed) (2014), *Religion and Politics in Post-Socialist Central and Southeastern Europe* (London: Palgrave), pp. 86-114.

³ The writer, Péter Esterházy, when receiving a peace prize in Frankfurt in 2004 wryly commented that 'it is no wonder there is no equivalent for Vergangenheitsbewältigung in Hungarian' referred to a lack of effort in this department in post-communist Hungary. See: M. Todorova and Zs Gille (2010) 'Post-Communist Nostalgia' (New York, Berghahn), p. 4. The Catholic Church has been no exception to this lack of effort in confrontation. See: Ungváry, 'The Kádár Regime'. For a more general overview of Kádárist Hungary see: R. L. Tokes (1996) *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution: Economic reform, social change, and political succession, 1957-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

⁴ On the immediate context, see especially K. Williams (1997) *The Prague Spring and its Aftermath* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) and the relevant chapters in S. Balík and J. Hanuš (2007), *Katolícká cirkev v Československu 1945-1989* (Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury), M. Heimann (2009) *Czechoslovakia: The State that Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press) and K. McDermott (2015) *Communist Czechoslovakia* (Houndsmills: Palgrave).

⁵ R. Cigánek (2010) 'Legalizace umělých potratů v Československu v roce 1957' (Univerzita Karlova v Praze unpublished dissertation), f. 123

⁶ The phrase 'the other Europe' is borrowed from J. Rupnik (1988), *The Other Europe* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson).

⁷ See F. Tomka (2005) *Halálra szántak mégis élünk. Egyházüldözés 1945-1990 és az ügynök-kérdés* (Budapest: Szent István társulat).

⁸ Ibid. Vol I, pp. 101-102. Tomka explicitly mentions the 'grassroots communities', especially that of György Bulányi. Ibid, Vol II, pp. 124-130.

⁹ <http://magyarnarancs.hu/belpol/a-tortenelmi-keresztenyseg-igazi-arca-bulanyi-gyorgy-piarista-szerzetes-az-egy-hazi-vezetotildek-partallami-kollaboraciojarol-53416> ; <http://magyarnarancs.hu/publicisztika/majsai-tamas-palastolt-es-palastos-ugynokok-56259>

¹⁰ <http://magyarnarancs.hu/belpol/ugynokok-az-egyhaziakban-ii-resz-teljes-merekben-lekompromittalta-magat-53254>

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¹¹ M. Gárdonyi (2007) 'Katolikus Teológiai útkeresés a Szocializmus évtizedeiben' in *Az 1945 Utáni Magyar Katolikus Egyháztörténet új Megközelítései* (Pécs: Pécsi Püspöki Hittudományi Főiskola).

¹² Ibid, p. 116. Tamás Nyíri was a priest, theologian and professor of philosophy at the Pázmány Péter Theology Academy in Budapest from 1968 to 1990. Between 1969 to 1980 he was on the editorial board of *Vigília*. See: anonymous (1994) 'In Memoriam Nyíri Tamás', *Mérleg* 30 (3) (251-252). Ferenc Gál was a priest and theologian and also a professor (of dogmatics) at the Pázmány Péter Theology Academy in Budapest. He was a regular contributor to the journal *Teológia*. See. Magyar Katolikus Lexikon. Online:

<http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/G/G%C3%A1l.html> (accessed 22 August 2017). Amongst the three, András Szennay held the highest position within the Hungarian Catholic hierarchy, being the Head Abbott in Pannonhalma (1973–1991), and professor of theology between 1965 and 1988. He was also the managing editor of the journal *Teológia* between 1972–1995. See: (dl) (2012) 'Egy jelentős kortanú' *Új Ember* 68 (36) (13). After 1989 it was revealed that worked as an undercover agent for the Ministry of the Interior. See. Ungváry, 'The Kádár Regime', p. 90.

¹³ The important Catholic periodical, *Vigília*, ran a special issue in 1972 called 'The veneration of Karl Rahner' to which Rahner wrote a foreword and Nyíri an overview of his anthropology. *Vigília*, 37 (11), pp. 721-792.

¹⁴ T Nyíri (1972) 'Karl Rahner emberképe [The anthropology of Karl Rahner]', *Vigília* 37 (11), pp. 723-731 at 726.

¹⁵ Ibid, p.729.

¹⁶ Amongst other privileges, the Vatican re-gained the right to appoint bishops in Hungary but it acknowledged that it could only appoint individuals acceptable to the State, who would then take an oath to the Constitution. Also, the Hungarian Institute in the Vatican was returned to the Hungarian State. Notably, this was the first such agreement the Vatican signed with any postwar Socialist country. See: Róbert Takács, '50 éve írták alá a magyar–vatikáni megállapodást' 15 szeptember 2014, http://www.polhist.hu/index.php?option=com_jevents&task=icalrepeat_detail&evid=290&Itemid=4 (accessed 22 August 2017).

¹⁷ Gárdonyi, *Katolikus*, p. 120.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 123-124.

¹⁹ The periodical, was published with a 'staggeringly high' circulation of 4000 copies. See: I Ásványi (2011) 'A *Teológia* folyóirat történetéhez (1967-1995)' *Teológia* 45 (1-2) (4). The church historian Gárdonyi claims that Szennay and his 1966 book *Teológia és élet (Theology and Life)* laid down the foundations of a theology that sought dialog and co-existence with Marxism. Gárdonyi, *Katolikus*, pp. 123-124.

²⁰ R. Ungváry (2006) 'Doromby Károly' *Élet és Irodalom* 50 (30) URL: <http://www.es.hu/cikk/2006-07-30/ungvary-rudolf/doromby-karoly.html> UNGVÁRY – DOROMBY – ÉS [full reference] REFERENCE?

²¹ J. Gergely (2007) 'A kereszténydemokrácia Magyarországon' *Múltunk* 18(3), pp. 113-154.

²² *Vigília* 37 (3), pp. 143-217. One article by the Catholic sociologist Ferenc Tomka was about divorce, another about population policy, praising the State's approach and pronatalist policies. Nyíri wrote about the historical interpretations of sexuality in the Christian tradition, claiming that the Bible was never dismissive or condemning of sexuality and, importantly, contending that the main 'sexual problem' of the time was the patriarchal family, and that male rule at home was the standard both in 'marxist and Christian' families. See: T Nyíri (1972) 'A szexualitás értelmezése' *Vigília* 37(3), pp. 175-194.

²³ (1972) 'Szexualitás, Család, Társadalom [Sexuality, Family, Society]', *Vigília* 37 (3), 145.

²⁴ Szilágyi became more radical later in the 1970s, especially after the publication of his 1978 book that promoted open, non monogamous marriage (*A házasság jövője Budapest: Minerva, 1978*).

²⁵ K. Doromby (1969) 'A Humanae Vitae és a lelkipáztorkodás' *Vigília* 34(6), p.429.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ K Doromby (1969) 'Egy évvel a Humanae Vitae megjelenése után' *Vigília* 34(10), pp. 687-699.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 688.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid, pp. 689-691, ef. needed

³² Ibid., p. 698.

³³ B. Udvarhelyi (1970) 'Szeljegyzetek Doromby Károlynak az 'Egy évvel A Humanae Vitae megjelenése után' című cikkéhez' *Vigília* 35(1), pp. 44-45.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 45.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ K. Doromby (1970) 'A cikk írójának válasza' *Vigília* 35(1) pp. 46-47.

³⁷ A. Szennay (1970) 'A teológus véleménye' *Vigília* 35 (1) (47-51).

³⁸ Ibid., p. 47.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 48.

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⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 48-49.

⁴² Ibid., p. 49.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 50.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.51.

⁴⁵ 'A házasság tegnap és ma' in *Teológia* (1968)(2) pp.101-109.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 101.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp.102-103.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 104-105.

⁴⁹ L-C. 'A Humanae Vitae enciklika értékei és problémái', *Teológia* (1968)(4), pp.254-257. The anonymity does not necessarily indicate that *Teológia* authors had to be afraid of reprisals, as some of them had their names listed. Moreover, anonymity in *Vigília* did not seem to be necessary.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 256.

⁵¹ Ibid., 257.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ 'A negatív irányú születésszabályozás indokai' *Teológia* (1969)(2), pp. 117-125.

⁵⁵ Although it is not stated, the composition of the eight commentators seems to build up to a representative sample of the Catholic *ecclesia*: a village priest, a father of seven, a 25 year old university student, a mother of four, a young priest, a theology academy teacher, another mother of four and a Budapest priest.

⁵⁶ 'A negatív irányú születésszabályozás indokai' *Teológia* (1969)(2), pp. 117-125.

⁵⁷ Reference needed Ibid., pp. 118-119.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.118.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 118-119.

⁶⁰ This referred to the extended maternity leave (Gyermekgondozási Segély - GYES), introduced in 1967, one of the longest and best paid maternity benefit in its time in Europe. It was directed at working mothers and provided them with a decent, fixed sum of 600 forints per month for 2.5 years, which enabled them to stay at home to take care of their children. 75% of working mothers went on the GYES leave already in 1967. For details see: L. Haney (2002) *Inventing the needy: Gender and the politics of welfare in Hungary* (Los Angeles: University of California Press).

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 120.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 121-123.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 123-125.

⁶⁴ The centrist-progressive theologians recurrently refer to the conservative nature of the Catholic church and the laity and my interview with Szabolcs Víg (see: [Case study: Szabolcs Víg subchapter XXX](#)), confirms that they were afraid of the 'conservative majority'. In 1976, *Vigília* published a statistical overview of religiousness which found a significant negative correlation between Catholic population and abortions per 1000 women (aged 15-49), divorces per married woman and use of oral contraception (women, aged 17-49). See B. Csanád (1976), 'A katolikus vallásosság mérése hazánkban', *Vigília* 41(5), pp. 300-301.

⁶⁵ On the background to longstanding Czech-Slovak national tensions, see especially C. S. Leff (1988) *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia: The Making and Remaking of a State 1918-1987* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), J. Rychlík (2012) *Češi a Slováci ve 20. Století: Spolupráce a konflikty 1914-1992* (Vyšehrad: Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů), Heimann, *Czechoslovakia*.

⁶⁶ M. Heimann (2008) 'The Scheming Apparatchik of the Prague Spring', *Europe-Asia Studies* 60(10), 1717-34, Williams, *The Prague Spring*.

⁶⁷ See e.g. E. Glassheim (2005) *Noble Nationalists: The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), J. Kalvoda (1986) *The Genesis of Czechoslovakia* (Boulder, Co.: East European Monographs); Heimann, *Czechoslovakia*, chs. 2-3.

⁶⁸ [T.G. Masaryk] (1934) *President Masaryk Tells his Story*, ed. K. Čapek, tr. D. Round Heim (London: George Allen & Unwin); [T.G. Masaryk] (1995) *Talks with T.G. Masaryk*, ed. K. Čapek, tr. D. Round Heim (North Haven, Conn.: Catbird Press); A. Orzoff (2009) *The Battle for the Castle: The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914-1948* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); B. Berglund (2017) *Castle and Cathedral in Modern Prague: Longing for the Sacred in a Skeptical Age* (Budapest: Central European University Press).

⁶⁹ On gaps between theory and practice, see for example M. Feinberg (2006) *Elusive Equality: Gender, Citizenship, and the Limits of Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1918-1950* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press), Orzoff, *The Battle for the Castle* and Heimann, *Czechoslovakia*.

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⁷⁰ J. Felak (1994) *At the Price of the Republic: Hlinka's People's Party, 1929-1938* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press), Y. Jelinek (1976) *The Parish Republic: Hlinka's Slovak People's Party 1939-1945* (Boulder, Co.: East European Quarterly), J.M. Ward (2013) *Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press).

⁷¹ Balík and Hanuš, *Katolická církev v Československu 1945-1989*, p. 296; J. Felak, 'Vatican II and Czechoslovakia' in P. Kosicki (ed.) (2016) *Vatican II behind the Iron Curtain* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press), pp. 122; 123-4.

⁷² Felak, 'Vatican II and Czechoslovakia', pp. 100-1.

⁷³ From *Sociologia* 1 (January-March 1970), as cited in RFE 'Religion in Slovakia', Czechoslovak Situation Report/44 (13 December 1972), f. 12.

⁷⁴ K. Williams, 'The Prague Spring: From Elite Liberalisation to Mass Movement' in K. McDermott and M. Stibbe (eds) (2006) *Revolution and Resistance in Eastern Europe: Challenges to Communist Rule* (Oxford: Berg), p. 109.

⁷⁵ K. Kaplan, (1993) *Stát a církev v Československu v letech 1948-1953* (Brno: Doplněk). In English see, e.g. contemporary reports such as L. Gussoni and A. Brunello (eds) (1954) *The Silent Church: Facts and Documents concerning Religious Persecution behind the Iron Curtain* (Dublin: Veritas); V. Gsovski (1955) *Church and State behind the Iron Curtain* (New York: Frederick Praeger); T. Beeson (1974) *Discretion and Valour: Religious Conditions in Russia and Eastern Europe* (Glasgow: British Council of Churches).

⁷⁶ See e.g. Kaplan, *Stát a církev*, B.F. Abrams (2004) *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield); K. Kaplan (1987) *The Short March: The communist takeover in Czechoslovakia 1945-1948* (London: C. Hurst and Co); J.R. Felak (2009) *After Hitler, Before Stalin: Catholics, Communists and Democrats in Slovakia, 1945-1948* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press).

⁷⁷ On the whole problem of collaboration, complicity and independence see, e.g. Balík and Hanuš, *Katolická církev*; K. Kaplan, *Stát a církev*; J. Cuhra (1999) 'Katolická církev přelomu 80.let v diplomových pracích příslušníků StB' in *Securitas Imperii: Sborník k problematice bezpečnostních služeb* vol. 5 (Prague: 1993), pp. 3-145. In English, see e.g. Chadwick, *The Christian Church and the Cold War*; Ramet, *Nihil Obstat*.

⁷⁸ The full text of the Vatican show trial was published in English by the Czechoslovak state press as: Anon. (1951) *Trial of Vatican Agents in Czechoslovakia (Bishop Zela and Accomplices)* (Prague: Orbis).

⁷⁹ See, e.g. R. Ströbinger and K. Nešvera (1991) *Stalo se v Adventu: 'čihošťský zázrak'* (Prague, 1991), J. Korec (2002) *The Night of the Barbarians: Memoirs of the Communist Persecution of the Slovak Cardinal* (Wauconda, IL: BOLchazy-Carducci); K. Kaplan, *Stát a církev*.

⁸⁰ Korec, *The Night of the Barbarians*, pp. 12-13.

⁸¹ The Czech Catholic newspaper *Katolické noviny* had been publishing Czech translations of the Council's newly released documents under the heading 'Dokumenty II. Vatikánského Koncilu' almost every week in 1968. It stopped doing so from May 1968, the last 'Documents from the Second Vatican Council' item appearing in *Katolické noviny* 17 (28 April 1968), p. 2.

⁸² The records of all periodical publications for 1968 and 1969 were consulted in the Czech National Library in Prague, both via their internal online catalogue and in the bound periodical lists held in the Klementinum.

⁸³ According to the staff at the Czech [formerly Czechoslovak] Ministry of Interior's *Archiv bezpečnostních složek* in Prague, who were consulted on this point, the file is likely to have been destroyed in November-December 1989. According to Kieran Williams, approximately a third of all secret police material, from some 52,000 ongoing operations, was deliberately destroyed by employees in the Ministry of the Interior in anticipation of imminent regime change. K. Williams and D. Deletant (2001) *Security Intelligence Services in New Democracies: The Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania* (Houndmills, Basingstoke), p. 56. It is possible that some of the agent's reports may turn up elsewhere, for example in reports to the President of the Republic or First Secretary of the Party, but these have not yet so far been traced.

⁸⁴ On Radio Free Europe's Czechoslovak bureau and its official (Congress) and unofficial (CIA) sources of funding, see P. Tomek (2015) *Československá redakce Radio Free Europe* (Prague: 2015), pp. 47-53. Full text runespies of Situation Reports and Press Surveys for these years were consulted by the author in Glasgow University Library.

⁸⁵ For contemporary collections of documents on the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia see e.g. in Czech V. Prečan (ed) (1968) *Sedm pražských dnů 21.-27. Srpen 1968: Dokumentace* (Prague: Historický ústav) and in English translation R.A. Remington (ed) (1969) *Winter in Prague: Documents on Czechoslovak Communism in Crisis* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press).

⁸⁶ Law 143, 'Ústavní zákon ze dne 27. října 1968 o československé federaci', *Sbírka zákonů Československé socialistické republiky, ročník 1968* (4 November 1968), pp. 381-403.

⁸⁷ See esp. Williams, *The Prague Spring and its Aftermath*.

- ⁸⁸ M. Pullmann (2011) *Konec experimentu: Přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu* (Prague: Kosmas); D. Green (2014) 'The Czechoslovak Communist Party's Revolution' (University of Strathclyde unpublished PhD thesis).
- ⁸⁹ Glasgow University Library (hereafter GUL), unpublished Radio Free Europe situation reports, 'The Influence of the Liberalization and Occupation on the Development of Religious Life', Radio Free Europe Research, East Europe, Czechoslovakia (13 March 1969), f.2.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid., f.3, note 3.
- ⁹¹ Ibid., f. 8.
- ⁹² The Greek Catholic Church, although it keeps Old Slavonic church rites and practices, has the Pope as its head and can be seen as a branch of the Roman Catholic Church. It was considered particularly threatening in the USSR because of its obvious rivalry to Russian Orthodoxy and was therefore directed to be stamped out throughout the East-Central Europe in the late 1940s and early 1950s.
- ⁹³ Balík and Hanuš, *Katolická církev*, pp. 129-131.
- ⁹⁴ J. Němec, 'Dílu koncilové obnovy na cestu' *Katolické noviny* 19 (12 May 1968), p. 1; P.V. Zemanec, 'Progresivně, v duchu koncilu', *Katolické noviny* 19 (12 May 1968), p. 1; 'Akční program DKO', *Katolické noviny* 19 (12 May 1968), p. 3; A. Mandl, 'Pout na Velehrad', *Katolické noviny* 20 (19 May 1968), pp. 1-2; Anon., 'Velehradské setkání r. 1968', *Katolické noviny* 21 (26 May 1968), p. 1, p. 3.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid., f. 5. See also 'Death of Bishop leaves Another Vacancy', RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/8 (2 March 1972), f. 11.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid., f. 6 and note 12.
- ⁹⁷ Vestník Ministerstva Školství a Ministerstva Kultury, 10 October 1968, as cited in RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/39, 'Religious Education – An Unsolved Problem' (27 October 1971), f. 7
- ⁹⁸ GUL, (13 March 1969), f.2.
- ⁹⁹ *Sedm pražských dnů 21.-27. Srpen 1968: Dokumentace*.
- ¹⁰⁰ Anon, 'We Shall Continue in the Post-January Church Policy', *Lidová demokracie* (6 November 1968). See also RFE Czechoslovak Press Surveys 1963-1970, Radio Free Europe Research East Europe, Czechoslovak Press Survey no. 2141 (28 November 1968), ff 2-4.
- ¹⁰¹ Radio Free Europe research East Europe (13 March 1969), f. 10
- ¹⁰² Glasgow University, RFE Czechoslovakia, Radio Free Europe, Czechoslovakia/62 (29 July 1969), Anon, 'Tougher Control over Religious Life', f.3.
- ¹⁰³ Anon., 'Povstání proti papeži?', *Rudé právo* (5 January 1970), 6.
- ¹⁰⁴ GUL, RFE Czechoslovakia, Radio Free Europe, Czechoslovakia/41 (8 October 1970), Anon, 'Changes in Czech Catholic Publications', f.11.
- ¹⁰⁵ Anon 'Catholic Church under Pressure' RFE, Czechoslovakia/6 (10 February 1971), f.6.
- ¹⁰⁶ Jan Lebeda, described by a RFE analyst as 'politically noncommitted', took over the editorship of *Katolické noviny* just as Jaroslav Michal, 'who had never engaged in public affairs' and 'was unknown to the clergy at large', was made editor of *Duchovní Pastýř*. See RFE Situation Report, Czechoslovakia/32 (8 September 1971), 'New Pro-Regime Organizations for Catholic Clergy', f.4.
- ¹⁰⁷ RFE Situation Report, Czechoslovakia/32 (8 September 1971), 'New Pro-Regime Organizations for Catholic Clergy', f.4.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁰ M. Šimečka (1984) *The Restoration of Order: The Normalization of Czechoslovakia 1969-1976*, tr. A.G. Brain (London: Verso), pp. 78-9.
- ¹¹¹ V. Havel, 'The Power of the Powerless' (1978) in (1985) *The Power of the Powerless* (Armonk, New York), p. 30.
- ¹¹² RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/42 (18 November 1971), 'The Church Must Help in the Elections', f. 4.
- ¹¹³ Radio Prague, 10 November 1971, as cited in RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/42, 'The Church Must Help in the Elections' (18 November 1971), ff. 3-4
- ¹¹⁴ RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/39, 'Religious Education – An Unsolved Problem' (27 October 1971), f. 8.
- ¹¹⁵ *Kathpress*, 9 November 1971, as cited in Czechoslovak Situation Report/42, 'The Church Must Help in the Elections' (18 November 1971), f. 5.
- ¹¹⁶ Czechoslovak Situation Report/42 'The Church Must Help in the Elections' (18 November 1971), f.5.
- ¹¹⁷ 'Regime Assessment of Religious Life', RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/4 (26 January 1971), f. 9. The same impression is given in P. Michel (1988) *La société retrouvée: Politique et religion dans l'Europe soviétisée* (Paris: Arthème Fayard).
- ¹¹⁸ 'Regime Assessment of Religious Life', RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/4 (26 January 1971), f. 9.
- ¹¹⁹ 'Regime Assessment of Religious Life', RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/4 (26 January 1971), f. 9.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ 'Death of Bishop Leaves another Vacancy', RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report/8 (2 March 1971), f. 12.

¹²² 'Religion in Slovakia', Czechoslovak Situation Report/44 (13 December 1972), f. 13.

¹²³ *Rolnické noviny* (29 November 1972) as cited in 'Religion in Slovakia', Czechoslovak Situation Report/44 (13 December 1972), f. 13.

¹²⁴ 'Religion in Slovakia', Czechoslovak situation report/44 (13 December 1972), f. 13.

¹²⁵ Kovács, András (1973) *Nővédelem – Anyavédelem – Családtervezés* (Budapest: Medicina Könyvkiadó), p. 162.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 199.

¹²⁷ For the details of the measures introduced by the 1973 directive, see Ibid, pp. 237-250.

¹²⁸ This was by and large a result of Central Committee members', especially First Secretary János Kádár and Prime Minister Jenő Fock's ambivalence towards the pill: they accepted that it needed to be introduced in order to reduce the number of abortions but they abhorred from the idea of actively promoting it. See: J. Tischler (1967) 'Az Infecundin-Sztori' *Beszélő* 11(1) - <http://beszelo.c3.hu/cikkek/az-infecundin-sztori-1967> (accessed 22 August 2017).

¹²⁹ J. Kovács (1969), 'Szaporodjatok és Sokasodjatok' (Budapest: Kossuth), p.78.

¹³⁰ http://mult-kor.hu/20120521_abortusz_a_szocializmusban (accessed 22 August 2017).

¹³¹ J. Tischler (2006) 'Az Infecundin-sztori' *Beszélő* - <http://beszelo.c3.hu/cikkek/az-infecundin-sztori-1967> (accessed 22 August 2017).

¹³² J. Tischler (2006) 'Az Infecundin-sztori' *Beszélő* - <http://beszelo.c3.hu/cikkek/az-infecundin-sztori-1967> (accessed 22 August 2017). Ibid.

¹³³ S. Surányi (1975) 'A Fogamzásgátlás Jelenlegi Helyzete és Lehetőségei Magyarországon' *Demográfia*(4), pp. 521–537.

¹³⁴ I. Diós (ed) (2013) 'Magyar Katolikus Lexikon' (Budapest: Szent István Társulat) - <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/V/V%C3%ADgh.html> (accessed 22 August 2017).

¹³⁵ K. Zsuzsa (2007), Interview with Szabolcs Vigh - *Oral History Archive of the 1956 Institute*, http://server2001.rev.hu/oha/oha_document.asp?id=1020&order=1 (accessed 22 August 2017).

¹³⁶ S. Vigh, personal interview (GS), 12 December 2016.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Written email correspondence to author (GS), 12 August 2016.

¹³⁹ In fact, even before that he contributed to the discussion: He was the anonymous 'Budapest priest' who was one of the 8 respondents to the conservative village priest's article quoted in the 1969/4 issue of *Teológia* - S. Vigh, personal interview (GS), 12 December 2016.

¹⁴⁰ Written email correspondence to author (GS), 12 August 2016.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. Reference needed.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ K. Zsuzsa (2007), Interview with Szabolcs Vigh - *Oral History Archive of the 1956 Institute*, http://server2001.rev.hu/oha/oha_document.asp?id=1020&order=1 (accessed 22 August 2017). As Balogh Margit points out, in the course of the 1970s the State Office for Church Affairs handed over the right to self-censorship to the church leaders. The time of direct State intervention was over because the church leaders proved to be cooperative. In 1976 the Hungarian Bishop's Conference publicly condemned base communities for being 'sectarian' - M Balogh (1997) 'Egyház és egyházpolitika a Kádár rendszerben', *Eszmélet* 9 (2) - http://eszmelet.hu/balogh_margit-egyhazi-es-egyhazi-politika-a-kadar-rendszerben/ (accessed 22 August 2017).

¹⁴⁸ S. Vigh (1973) 'A családtervezés lelkiismereti válsága' *Vigília* 38 (3) (164-168).

¹⁴⁹ Only Onan was punished for using withdrawal, but it was not the method that mattered, rather the fact that he was not willing to contribute to the proliferation of the chosen people, or, alternatively, his was a general punishment for the Israelites who mixed with Canaanite pagans - S. Vigh (1972) 'Születésszabályozás az egyházi tanítás fejlődésében' *Teológia*, 6(2), p. 89.

¹⁵⁰ S. Vigh (1974) 'A családtervezés problémái a gyóntatási gyakorlatban' *Teológia* 8(2), p. 115.

¹⁵¹ R. Cigánek (2010) 'Legalizace umělých potratů v Československu v roce 1957' (Univerzita Karlova v Praze unpublished PhD Theology dissertation), pp. 46-54.

¹⁵² See, e.g. Jana Šlincová (2011) 'Antikoncepce očima rodičů a spolupráce s porodní asistentkou' (unpublished Jihočeská Univerzita v Českých Budějovicích BA dissertation).

¹⁵³ J. Michal, 'II. Vatikánský koncil o manželství a rodině', *Duchovní Pastýř* xvii, 1 (January 1968), pp. 9-10.

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¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 9.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p.10.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ His degree was awarded by Prague's Cyril and Methodius Roman Catholic Theology Faculty based in the town of Litoměřice in today's Czech Republic (Cyrilometodějská bohoslovecká fakulta v Praze se sídlem v Litoměřicích, usually known for short as CMBF Litoměřice).

¹⁵⁸ J. Michal (n.d.) *Kanonické právo manželské s přihlednutím k platnému právu v Československu*, vol. 1 (Část teoretická). (Litoměřice : Cyrilometodějská bohoslovecká fakulta).

¹⁵⁹ M. Pikardová, 'Katolický lékař k potratovému zákonu', *Katolické noviny* 28, 14 July 1968, p. 3.

¹⁶⁰ Anon, 'Encyklika o regulácii pôrodnosti', *Katolícke noviny* 32, 11 August 1968, p. 3.

¹⁶¹ Public newspapers, which were Communist-controlled, normally appeared in separate Czech and Slovak language versions, each subject to monitoring by the Czechoslovak (i.e. Czech-speaking) or the Slovak (Slovak-speaking) Communist Party, respectively. Just as the official Czechoslovak Communist Party newspaper was *Rudé právo* whereas the Slovak Communist newspaper was *Pravda*, one must distinguish between the Party-approved, official Czech Catholic newspaper *Katolícke noviny* as opposed to the Party-approved, official Slovak Catholic newspaper *Katolícke noviny* (note that in the Slovak spelling, the acute accent is on the *i* rather than the *e*). Anon, 'Encyklika o regulácii pôrodnosti', *Katolícke noviny* 32, 11 August 1968, p. 3.

¹⁶² Anon, 'Encyklika o regulácii pôrodnosti', *Katolícke noviny* 32, 11 August 1968, p. 3.

¹⁶³ Felak, 'Vatican II and Czechoslovakia', p. 104.

¹⁶⁴ Oto Mádr, 'O předávání života', *Katolické noviny* 33 (Prague, 18 August 1968), 1.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Oto Mádr, 'Humanae Vitae (Hlavní myšlenky)', *Katolické noviny* 36 (Prague, 22 September 1968), p. 3.

¹⁶⁸ Oto Mádr, 'Humanae Vitae (Hlavní myšlenky)', *Katolické noviny* 35 (Prague, 15 September 1968), p. 2.

¹⁶⁹ Oto Mádr, 'Humanae Vitae (Hlavní myšlenky)', *Katolické noviny* 36 (Prague, 22 September 1968), p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ For König's position at the Council, see e.g. J. O'Malley (2008) *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press), pp. 118-19; 144-5; 189; 208; 281.

¹⁷¹ C. Dudáš, 'Encyklika o kontrole počatia', *Katolícke noviny* 33, Bratislava, 18 August 1968, p. 3; MU Dr Ján Gunčaga, 'Živny prameň katolíckej rodiny', *Katolícke noviny* 33, Bratislava, 18 August 1968, p. 3.

¹⁷² Dudáš, 'Encyklika o kontrole počatia', p. 3

¹⁷³ Gunčaga, 'Živny prameň katolíckej rodiny', p. 3.

¹⁷⁴ Anon, 'Holandští katolíci proti encyklice', *Rudé právo*, 10 January 1969, p. 7.

¹⁷⁵ ČTK (Czechoslovak Press Agency), 'Vatikán, pilulka a peníze' *Rudé právo*, 13 January 1969, p. 6; Anon,

¹⁷⁶ 'Pílulka' a peníze', *Pochodeň* (13 January 1969), p. 7.

¹⁷⁶ This was law 66, passed on 20 October 1986 and published in the bulletin of laws and ordinances on 28 November 1986. See Anon, '66 Zákon české národní rady ze dne 20. října 1986 o umělého přerušení těhotenství', *Sbírka zákonů Československá socialistická republika*, 28 November 1986, pp. 484-5; 513-20.

¹⁷⁷ Tomášek's record under the Communist régime was mixed. Imprisoned in the 1950s, and restored to office in the 1960s, in 1977, Tomášek recommended that Catholics not support the human rights declaration Charter 77. In the same year, Pope Paul VI announced that he had secretly elevated Bishop Tomášek to cardinal. In 1978, the new cardinal was named Archbishop of Prague and Primate of Czechoslovakia:

<http://www.nytimes.com/1992/08/05/world/cardinal-tomasek-is-dead-cautious-prague-prelate-93.html> (accessed 22 August 2017).

¹⁷⁸ J. Broun (1998) *Conscience and Captivity: Religion in Eastern Europe* (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center), p. 96.

¹⁷⁹ A. Navrátil, 'Petition by Christians, 1987', reproduced as Appendix F: Czechoslovakia in Broun, *Conscience and Captivity*, pp. 319-21.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ See, for example, J. Salij, OP (1990) *Čtvrtstoletí zákona o přerušení těhotenství* (n.pl.:1991), originally published in the Polish *Tygodnik powszechny* in 1981.