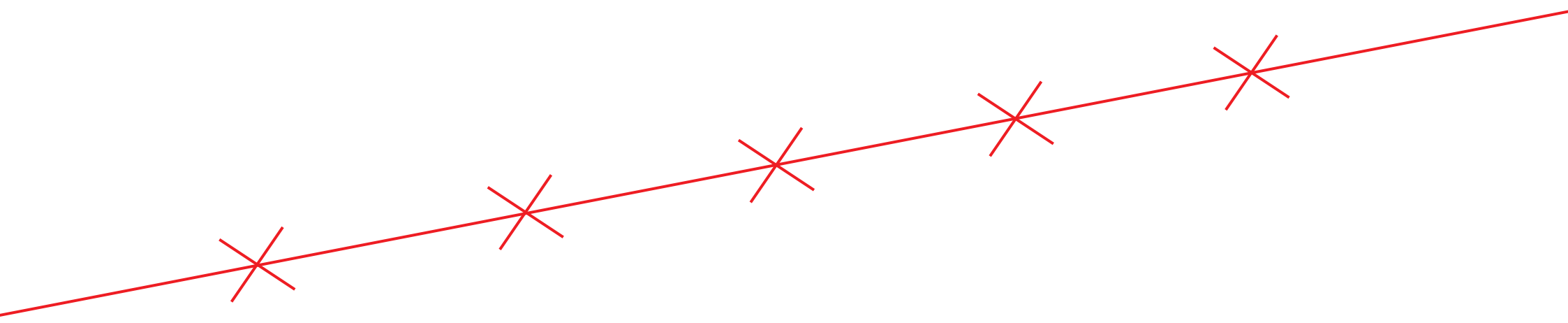


European Memory of the Gulag

– Extended Reality as an Educational Tool

*Analysis on the teaching of Soviet repression
and the use of new technologies in schools in
the Czech Republic, Poland, Germany and Slovakia*



GULAG X-R

European Memory of the Gulag

– Extended Reality as an Educational Tool (Gulag XR)

Partners:

GULAG-X-CZ

Gulag.cz (Czechia)



Scio (Czechia)



Kolegium Europy Wschodniej (Poland)



Memorial Germany



Post Bellum SK (Slovakia)



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The project is supported by Erasmus Plus Programme
of the European Union

This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Erasmus Plus cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

www.gulagXR.eu

About Gulag XR

It has only been 30 years since the countries of Central and Eastern Europe started dealing comprehensively with Soviet repression. Long decades of totalitarian communist regimes in Eastern Bloc countries successfully suppressed broad knowledge of the history of the crimes of communism, and it may be said that awareness of Soviet repression is still not widespread even today.

In response to this situation, we decided to create the Gulag XR project, which brings together representatives from Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Germany to help teachers and students become acquainted with archaeological and oral-historical research, as well as analytical approaches in dealing with Soviet repression.

Our project aims to commemorate victims of Soviet repression and to provide teachers with innovative tools and methods, including virtual (VR) and extended (AR) reality, and didactic materials; students should also learn about the roots and the dangers of totalitarian communism.

In Gulag XR, we focus on the mechanisms of repression in the Soviet Union from the second half of the 1920s to the end of the 1950s. Tracing the stories of victims from Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland, we reveal the effects that the Soviet ideology and regime had on the international level – and show how they are entangled with local histories.

GULAG X-R

About our research

It is widely believed that the teaching of modern history in our countries is insufficient, and important moments of recent history – such as Soviet repression – are given rather marginal attention. To find out what the situation is like, at the beginning of the project we conducted a short survey in all member countries. This included a questionnaire and interviews with teachers, as well as an analysis of the curricula and most common textbooks.

We wanted to find out to what extent teachers in our countries deal with the topic of Soviet repression and what methodological support they have from textbook publishers. We subsequently investigated the experience of history teachers with digital tools, especially focusing on XR.

Our research went through three phases. First, we focused on desk research into existing curricular and other documents. Subsequently, we created an identical online questionnaire in our national languages, which was sent to both cooperating and randomly selected teacher groups. In the third phase, we undertook in-depth interviews with teachers and other history education experts.

Though this was not our original plan, the research was conducted during the lockdown period in all our countries, so it cannot be considered statistically representative in terms of traditional sociological standards. The return rate of the questionnaires was relatively low, usually several dozen in each country.

A total of several dozen teachers took part in the subsequent interviews. Nevertheless, we believe that it provides a sufficiently detailed and credible picture of what teaching about Soviet repression looks like in individual countries and can serve as a basis for deciding on the further direction of the Gulag XR project. In the research, we looked for answers in the following areas:

- *what is the general educational situation in the country, especially with regard to history education*
- *what place does Soviet repression occupy in teaching plans and curricula in each country*
- *what are the goals of history education usually set by teachers or the state, especially with regard to Soviet repression*
- *what messages do teachers want to convey when teaching about Soviet repression. How do these messages correspond to narratives about the Soviet Union and the countries' own communist pasts*
- *how the most frequently used textbooks in individual countries deal with Soviet repression*
- *what are the conditions for the use of digital tools in teaching*

The main conclusions of our observations are given below.

The Czech Republic

Country specifics

The Czech education system is relatively liberal, with school management or teachers themselves having a high degree of responsibility for what is taught at a school.

The Czech educational system defines the goals of education for individual areas in what is called the Framework Educational Plan. Each school must then incorporate this into its own so-called school educational plan. At the same time, it is not necessary to maintain a separate subject such as History. In some schools, for example, historical topics are taken into account in broader subjects, such as Man and Society or The World in Context, etc. A great deal of responsibility for the implementation of the general goals set by the state lies with schools, and especially with teachers.

Even though teachers in the Czech Republic are autonomous in composing their teaching plans themselves, usually only a single lesson, usually in 9th grade (age 14–15), is devoted to repression in the Soviet Union. The topic is usually given further attention in secondary school (age 15–19), but again mostly to a very limited extent (1–3 lessons).

Didactic concept

The conception of history teaching in the Czech Republic is currently undergoing reform. Expert discussions are taking place on the need to place more emphasis on transferable skills; the share of synthetic explanatory text should decrease at the expense of the analytical part (pictures, newspaper or professional texts, memoirs, etc. – supplemented by questions and tasks), while the plurality and constructivism of historical knowledge is emphasized.

In the case of history, according to the available information as of September 2021, it is planned to use Peter Seixas' concept of the Big Six Historical Thinking Concepts, which are currently being adapted for the needs of Czech education within the framework of the extensive project History+. The new concept of teaching history assumes that students will be able to answer, i.e., the following questions: Why do events happen and what are their consequences? How to find logic in complex historical processes? How to better understand the people who lived in the past? What is history for?

Therefore any new project that brings the past closer to students, including the history of Soviet repression, should not only stick to the factual; it should also move to the level of analysis and interpretation and aim for higher cognitive goals.

Soviet repression in history lessons: teaching objectives and main messages

In the research we did at Czech schools in spring 2021 we received very different answers as to what students should take away from a teaching unit on repression in the Soviet Union in particular and communism in general.

One of the most frequent messages teachers want to convey is unfreedom as a peculiar feature of totalitarian regimes. When it comes to material on Soviet repression, teachers may also try to investigate how totalitarianism originated. However, national socialism and the Holocaust are considered to be a bigger topic and get more teaching units, so teachers usually examine totalitarianism and its historical roots as a part of teaching units on national socialism.

There is a lack of interpretation of general history through specific human stories and there is a complete lack of data on ethnic Czechs in the Soviet Union (e.g., the Reflektor/Interhelpo cooperatives, or the Volhynian Czechs community).

Lacunae of the curricula may correspond to the general situation with remembrance of Soviet repression in the Czech Republic, when the memoirs of Communists in pre-war Czechoslovakia are rather set aside. Communist ideology reinforced by the Soviet Union after WW2 is portrayed as alien to Czechoslovakia, even though there was an established Communist movement in the country.

In Czech schools, of course, great attention is also paid to

the onset of the communist regime in the country after 1948. Teachers tackle the circumstances under which the Communists came to power in Czechoslovakia, what the characteristics of their rule were, and why and how the regime collapsed. The attention paid to the beginnings of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia is sufficient and clearly compiled in school textbooks. However, there is a lack of closer links with other European countries to understand the more immediate context. Political repression is illustrated by the story of Milada Horáková, a political opponent of the regime who was sentenced to death in a show trial and executed in 1950. At present, her day of execution is marked as Remembrance Day for the Victims of the Communist Regime.

However, our study showed that there is a complete lack of information about Czechoslovaks sent to the Gulag, which is probably the biggest shortcoming of Czech textbooks in relation to our theme.

Although the topic of Soviet repression appears in the analyzed textbooks, more attention is paid to events that took place in Czechoslovakia itself. The connection between repression in the Soviet Union and the history of Czechoslovakia is very insufficiently conceived, or completely lacking.

As mentioned in the introduction, the Czech education system is relatively liberal. Schools can use any textbooks or materials, or they can teach completely without textbooks. As part of our research, we went through several textbooks that were identified by teachers as the most frequently used. A more detailed analysis performed by Czech historian Jiří Klůč is available [here](#).

Due to the fact that in the Czech Republic history teachers are free to compose their curricula themselves, there is a certain divergence between schools in terms of time devoted to Soviet repression and where the focus is put.

With more time at their disposal, and hence more chances to address the topic of the repression more profoundly, teachers can convey such topics as the “non-black-or-whiteness” of attitudes, and furthermore, “what is freedom and democracy?”.


Historical awareness of this period is supported by a variety of relevant sources, different interpretations of the communist past are taken into account and students investigate why they differ.

Below are examples of some of the tools used by schools to teach topics related to, among other things, Soviet repression.

2/5

Co žáci vyjádřili svým podpisem?

Označte v textu tři pasáže, které osvětlují význam rezoluce. Vybírejte z předznačených výrazů.



Rezoluce žáků národní školy v Újezdě, pošta Vizovice.

Státnímu soudu na Pankráci, Praha.

Žáci národní školy v Újezdě, pošta Vizovice, okres Val. Klobouky žádají, aby Státní soud potrestal co nejpřísněji rozvratníky, kteří se proti budovatelským snahám pracujícího lidu i pracujících dětí staví nepřátelsky a chtějí přivolat nové Lidice, Ležáky a Ploštiny. Co dělala obžalovaná Horáková, Zemínová, Hejda a všichni jejich společníci, když tyto osady hořely a s plameny požárů šlehalo k oblakům i bolestné hlasy mučených? Zapojoili se mezi fašistobijce? Ne, jistě „nemohli!“

Děti těchto obžalovaných jistě pláč, že mají takové rodiče, kteří kopou nové společné hroby pro ně a pro nás všechny.

My však prohlašujeme, že si republiku rozvracet nedáme a že každého podezřelého ohlásíme.

An example from the online exercise of the Historylab application, created by the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes. In the exercise, students analyze a resolution of the 1950s in which pupils ask the State Court to punish alleged enemies of the state and subversives.

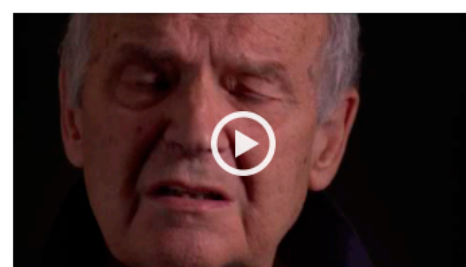
An example from the online methodology of Myjsmetonevzdali.cz, created by the Memory of the Nation organization. In the given exercise, students analyze the recordings of witnesses of the period in the 1940s and 1950s when the Communists took power.

An example from the comic book We Are Still At War: Stories of the 20th Century (published by Post Bellum, Argo and the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes in 2011) illustrating the story of a Czechoslovak victim of the Gulag. Active teachers also use this resource as teaching material in their class.



Josef Bartošek: Nesplnitelné dávky pro soukromé zemědělce

[My jsme to nevzdali \(YouTube\)](#)



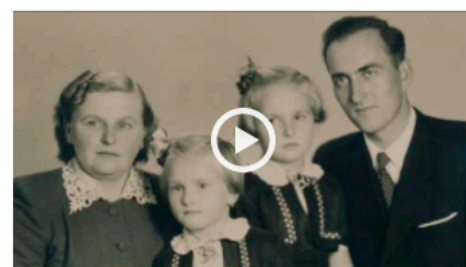
Jiří Anderle: Rozorávání mezi

[My jsme to nevzdali \(YouTube\)](#)



Karel Beneš: Vydělali dobytek ze stavení, lidé nařikali...

[My jsme to nevzdali \(YouTube\)](#)



Lydie Kovářová: Nevstoupíte do družstva - dcera přestane studovat

[My jsme to nevzdali \(YouTube\)](#)



Vladek Lacina: Kolektivizace

[My jsme to nevzdali \(YouTube\)](#)



Jan Sedláček: Jestli nepodepiš, máš pozemek na Valašské Bystřici

STALINŮV TEROR 30. LET

Konec 20. let je označován jako počátek éry stalinismu, kdy Stalin upevnil svou pozici ve vedení strany (kam dosadil své přívržence) a kontroloval i vládu, armádu a celý stát. V roce 1933 byli zpět povoláni **Grigorij J. Zinověv** a **Lev B. Kameněv** – povinně se přiznali k vlastním „omylům“ a vyzvali zbývající opozici, aby se podřídila. Některé členy opozice přesvědčily i proklamované úspěchy při budování průmyslu.

Které nástroje perzekuce a proti komu užívala Stalinova vláda ve 30. letech 20. století?

V lednu 1934 se sešel XVII. sjezd bolševické strany, zvaný „sjezd vítězů“, na němž byli bývalí členové opozice donuceni se kát. Účastnilo se ho 1966 delegátů z celého Sovětského svazu (z nich bylo během následujících let 1108 popraveno). V červenci 1934 vznikl

reorganizací **Sjednocené státní politické správy (OGPU) Lidový komisariát vnitřních záležitostí (NKVD)**, který měl na starosti vnitřní bezpečnost státu a spadala pod něj také **Hlavní správa nápravně-pracovních táborů** – zkráceně **GULAG**.

Zavraždění populárního tajemníka leningradského výboru strany **Sergeje M. Kirova** v prosinci 1934 (snad na tajný Stalinův pokyn) se stalo záminkou k rozpoutání teroru. Ještě v den atentátu Stalin vydal výnos, který nařizoval urychlit vyšetřování případů těch, kdo byli obviněni z přípravy nebo provedení teroristických akcí. Rozsudky smrti měly být vykonány ihned po jejich vynesení. Tisíce lidí, které NKVD vedla



Obžalování v procesu s kulaky (1930)

ve svých seznamech jako nespolehlivé, byly zatčeny a popraveny. Ve straně proběhla čistka a hned v lednu 1935 byly zahájeny **tajné i veřejné soudní procesy** s často jen domnělými nepřáteli (mnozí však byli popraveni bez jakéhokoli procesu). První „vzorový“ proces se konal v Moskvě a dle něj se pak odehrávaly další v celé zemi. Změnila se legislativa – nově bylo možno odsoudit k smrti i děti starší 12 let.

V roce 1936 se rozbehly tzv. **moskevské procesy**, přičemž první bylo souzeno tzv. teroristické trockisticko-zinověvské centrum (srpen 1936). 16 osob obviněných z účasti na vraždě Kirova a ze styku s **Lvem D. Trockým** (pobývajícím již mimo SSSR) se muselo přiznat, že připravovali převrat a chtěli svrhnout Stalina. Všichni byli odsouzeni k smrti, včetně Zinověva a Kameněva. V dalších dvou letech se konaly ještě dva procesy s bývalými stranickými špičkami. Vlna represí a čistek ve velení armády, zahájená v květnu 1937, připravila o život 3 z 5 maršálů, 14 ze 16 velitelů armád a všech 8 admirálů. Celkový počet obětí **velkého teroru z 1937–1938** se odhaduje na přibližně 1 milion mrtvých.

ZAHRAŇIČNÍ POLITIKA SOVĚTSKÉHO SVAZU

Zahraniční politika Sovětského svazu se ve 20. letech vymanila z diplomatické izolace, zapříčiněné původní snahou bolševiků o šíření socialistické revoluce do světa. Tento cíl sledoval zvláště **Lenin**. Když se v první polovině 20. let ukázalo, že se záměr nezdaří (např. neúspěch německých revolucí) a **pokus o vybudování komunistické společnosti zůstane zatím omezen na Sovětský svaz**, přišla na řadu normalizace vztahů se západními státy, od nichž Sověti potřebovali hlavně technologie. Klíčovými protivníky bolševismu byly nadále Francie a Velká Británie. Na počátku 30. let se však poměr Francie k SSSR zlepšil a sovětský ministr zahraničí **Maxim M. Litvinov** se zapojil do jednání odzbrojovací konference v Ženevě. Od roku 1931 klesal vývoz ruského zboží a **Stalin** se snažil najít vedle Německa (země spolupracovaly na základě smluv z Rapalla) další **obchodní partnery**. Také tato snaha vedla v roce 1934 ke **vstupu Sovětského svazu do Společnosti národů**. Největší úsilí sovětské diplomacie směřovalo ke sblížení s Francií a vyvrcholilo v květnu 1935 **podpisem francouzsko-sovětského paktu o vzájemné vojenské pomoci**. Ten byl následován podobnou smlouvou

Které cíle sledovala sovětská zahraniční politika ve 30. letech 20. století?

československo-sovětskou, jež zavazovala SSSR k pomoci Československu v případě jeho napadení, ale jen za podmínky, že pomoc poskytne i Francie.

V létě 1935 **Kominternu** (Komunistická internacionála; organizace koordinující a v podstatě z Moskvy řídící národní komunistické strany) vyhlásila tzv. **politiku lidové fronty** čili spolupráci komunistických stran s levicovými stranami proti fašismu. Politika se krátce uplatnila např. ve Francii nebo za španělské občanské války. To však nebránilo Stalinovi, aby udržoval diplomatické vztahy s Německem i Itálií a v roce 1939 obrátil kurs od politiky kolektivní bezpečnosti ke **sblížení s Hitlerem**. Litvinov byl nahrazen ve funkci **Vjačeslavem M. Molotovem** (1890–1986), jenž zahájil **agresivní zahraniční politiku** vedoucí k vyloučení SSSR ze **Společnosti národů** po vojenském napadení Finska v listopadu 1939.

Stalinismus

– termín označující politickou teorii a metody vlády uvedené do života Josifem V. Stalinem. Jedná se o politický systém, který je založený na jediné vládnoucí straně, centrálním řízení ekonomiky (s programy kolektivizace a industrializace) a na jednotné, státem prosazované a vyžadované kulturní a ideologické linii. Charakteristický je masivní represivní systém zaměřující se na odstranění skutečné i smyšlené opozice. Stalinismus bývá označován také jako tzv. teorie výstavby socialismu v jedné zemi. Systém byl po druhé světové válce uplatňován i v jiných socialistických zemích (a to i dlouho po Stalinově smrti).

Původní souostroví Gulag

V roce 1923 byl v prostorách kláštera na Solověckých ostrovech, ležících v Bílém moři, vytvořen vzorový **Solovecký tábor zvláštního určení**, první z tisíců podobných komplexů rozestřených po celé zemi, známých jako gulagy. Na „Solovkách“ byli zavřeni i vězni pracující v letech 1931–1933 na stavbě kanálu spojujícího Baltské a Bílé moře; zde pracovalo až 160 tisíc vězňů vystavených bití, mučení a krutým životním podmínkám. Tábor byl zrušen roku 1933, poté zde byla vybudována vojenská základna. Postoj správců táborů a bachařů k vězňům charakterizuje výrok organizátora práce v táborech Naftalije A. Frenkela: „Z trestance musíme dostat vše v prvních třech měsících – pak už ho nepotřebujeme.“



Vězni pracují na Běloruském přelivu

Běžná praxe v Kominterně

V květnu 1927 byl **výkonnému výboru Kominterny** předložen návrh, aby odsoudil Trockého dokument o čínské otázce. Všichni členové výboru se to chystali bez řeči udělat, pouze delegáti italské komunistické strany Palmiro Togliatti a Ignazio Silone namítli, že dokument neviděli. Ukázalo se, že ho neviděl ani nikdo jiný. Italští zástupci sice uznali, že se Trockij nepochybně mýlí, ale přesto nemohou podepsat oficiální odsouzení něčeho, s čím se neseznámili. Nakonec jim bylo vysvětleno, že smyslem není nalézání pravdy, ale rozhodnutí ve shodě s poměry v sovětském vedení. Kominternu se musí přizdat k většině v sovětském politbyru. Italové ale trvali na svém a Stalin musel návrh stáhnout. Silone ze strany odešel. Togliatti si mohl buď zachovat čest a padnout, nebo se podrobit Stalinovi a udržet se u moci. Vybral si to druhé.

Operační rozkaz NKVD SSSR č. 00447, s. 184

MEZIVÁLEČNÉ OBDOBÍ

57

Moderní dějiny pro střední školy © Didaktis 2014

Page from the textbook “Modern History for Secondary Schools” published by Didaktis in 2014. The text explains the terms Gulag, Stalinism, NKVD, etc. The textbook lacks any mention of the repression of Czechs living in the USSR, as well

as the post-war deportation of Czechoslovak citizens to the Gulags from liberated Czechoslovakia. Nor is there any mention of the participation of Gulag survivors in the Czechoslovak army abroad.

Use of technologies and extended reality

Schools in the Czech Republic commonly use tablets, 3D printers, computers and projectors, while some also use VR. Each school participating in the Gulag XR survey has a minimum of a computer and a projector. At the same time, recent research by the Czech School Inspectorate suggests that for the majority of schools in the Czech Republic, basic ICT equipment and internet access is not a major problem (90% of schools considered the state of their technical equipment to provide online distance learning following the use of exceptional ICT funding to be sufficient). Regarding the possibility of using their own mobile phones in teaching, according to this survey 28.87% of respondents answered that students cannot use their own phones in teaching. This does not mean that everyone else uses mobile phones in class, but at least it is not forbidden by the school.

VR devices are starting to appear in Czech schools. There are still relatively few of them, but it is not an unknown concept. Moreover, thanks to the availability of funding through small grants (e.g., link to the website of the largest ICT vendor specifically designed for schools where they can order anything from “tablets to 3D printers”), it is not difficult for schools to order such equipment. The problem, however, is the usability of these devices.

Other aspects that concern teachers are a lack of quality content and an absence of methodology and best practice examples, which makes teachers rather cautious with using XR tools.



Germany

Country specifics

There is no national school programme in history in Germany; every federal state has its own. However, there are similarities in the handling of the topic of Soviet repression in school programmes.

The umbrella term under which Soviet repression between the 1920s and the end of 1950s is addressed in curricula and textbooks is “Stalinism”. This refers to the dictatorship regime in general and specific crimes such as repression against specific groups, artificial famines, forced labour camps, etc.

In the “new” federal states (former German Federal Republic), the crimes of communism in the USSR take slightly bigger space in the curricula compared to the curricula of the “old” states. We can attribute this to the influence of the social order established in the USSR on the parts of Germany where the Soviet occupation zone was located. In the “new” states Stalinism may be handled twice: once in secondary school, either in the 8th, 9th or 10th grade (14–16 y.o.); and once in high school, in the 11th or 12th grade (17–18 y.o.).

Didactic concept

The prevailing concept of history teaching in Germany may be defined as aiming at developing historical consciousness. The approach was introduced by Karl-Ernst Jeismann and Jörn Rüsen, and developed by the research group FUER, with a research project focusing on the fostering and development of a reflective and historical consciousness.

The concept refers to not only knowing facts but also being able to make sense of them. Historical consciousness is understood as mental operations by which perception of the past is used to orient practical life and guide people in making decisions.

Within the framework of this approach, historical consciousness is believed to be expressed through narratives. Narratives are not understood as a simple enumeration of specific facts, names and dates in a defined order. Rather they are meant to give a broader understanding of the historical contexts and actors, and their motives and reasons. The FUER authors bound “narration” to “deconstruction”. Distinguishing and comparing the narratives should thus provide an understanding of the complexity and controversy of historical processes, and also that there

is no such thing as the only right historical narration. Historical thinking is considered to be a dynamic process in this approach – reconstruction leads to findings, the produced knowledge is to be questioned and analysed using methods, etc., leading to new findings.

Soviet repression in history lessons: teaching objectives and main messages

The first encounter with the topic of communism can occur as part of learning about the history of the Soviet Union between the two wars in the 20th century. Usually, it is one of the optional topics teachers can choose from:

- *either it is one of the topics in a bloc about the Soviet Union (alongside the Bolshevik Revolution, art in the 1920s in the Soviet Union, and the Hitler-Stalin Pact)*
- *or the history of the Soviet Union between the wars is an optional topic alongside other broader fields like local history, developments in the USA or China.*

Naturally, teachers have very few means to go deeper into matters if they decide to handle Soviet repression. Teachers can only provide their students with a general overview of the crimes of the Soviet regime. The lack of time makes a detailed and thorough analysis of forced labour camps, their origins, their economy and biographies of the victims almost impossible.

The topic of the crimes of communism may be handled in high school, in the upper classes of gymnasia (11th–12th grade); usually in qualifying courses students do an “Abitur” exam, a requirement for a university entry. Soviet repression may be also addressed as a part of a less historically specific topic, such as Totalitarian States. In these upper grades, the curriculum focuses less on learning facts about specific historical periods, though a case study of Soviet repression may be embedded into a broader and less historically specific topic, such as juxtaposition of democracy and dictatorship, means of narrating history, etc. Educational objectives can be quite versatile then, including an ability to work with sources and to form an understanding of social institutions.

Regarding the curricula of Germany’s “old” federal states, they mention “Stalinism” in the Soviet Union even less than the curricula of the “new” states. Almost the only chance to address Soviet repression comes in higher years at gymnasia, as a part of a broader topic such as civil rights, “anti-democratic” regimes between the two wars in Europe, culture of remembrance, etc.

If teachers do focus on Soviet repression, some of the messages they try to convey are:

- *The repressive side of communism, human rights under communism and the problem of collective ideology*
- *Differences in communist regimes, the USSR as an example of an authoritarian communist regime (comparison of USSR and China...)*

A peculiar feature of teaching about communism in Germany is a spotlight on the persecution of Communists during the Nazi regime – influenced by the perceived importance of remembering the crimes of the Holocaust and its victims.

Both in the “new” states and the “old” states, curricula turn to Soviet repression one more time when it comes to learning about the Soviet occupation zone and the GDR. The historical context of the establishment of the GDR is addressed in academic lessons.

Both the “old” and the “new” states use, among other materials, the same textbooks. The full list of textbooks reviewed is available here. All the textbooks, both secondary school and

high school, address the topic of Soviet repression. However, the textbooks tend to treat the topic in a superficial way. They may address mass terror and mention that under Stalin there was persecution of political opponents. In several textbooks, the show-trials, the brutal methods of the secret police and the victim groups are referred to. Alleged opposition to the regime is given as an explanation for their persecution. However, in more than half of the examined books, forced labour camps and the Gulag as a concept was not presented.

Following the didactic aims of the German educational system, textbooks may provide students with materials that should help them work with historical sources and form their own judgments. Two textbooks have a multi-perspective approach by juxtaposing Stalin’s account of the development of the USSR with an excerpt from Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s “Gulag Archipelago”.

Since the focus of the presentation in all textbooks is not explicitly on the Gulag, the books are correspondingly poorly equipped with visual sources that can help students picture forced labour camps: maps depicting the camp system as well as photographs depicting forced labour camps are generally missing.

The main narrative about communism in the USSR that is followed in the school books and curricula (and that dominates cultural memory about the Stalin era) can be defined as recollections of the repressive and inhumane character of the regime, arbitrariness, absence of civil freedoms and human rights violations. However, this is often only done in an overview fashion. Either crimes like the mass terror of the 1937–1938 collectivisation and Holodomor are directly addressed or an awareness of the regime is derived from inclusion into broader topics, such as the juxtaposition of democracy and authoritarian regimes. In addition, the description of the Soviet occupation zone that is to be found in curricula and school books follow a similar pattern: remembrance of the crimes of the regime is underscored.

However, other topics aside from repression in the USSR – such as art and culture in the 1920s and the fight for women’s rights – may be a part of facultative units at high schools. Recollections that are not centred around the inhuman, arbitrary nature of the Soviet regime intervene into “bigger” narratives that are strongly represented in the German cultural memory. Remembrance of the persecution of Communists in 1933–1945 complements responsibility for the crimes of the Nazi regime. There is also the strong tradition of “leftist” critical thinking that leads to interest in achievements in the field of women’s rights in the Soviet Union and movements in early Soviet art and architecture, such as constructivism and futurism.

Use of technologies and extended reality

Digital tools are widely used in German schools, though there are some big differences among them. Every second teacher regularly uses a projector. More than one in four even does so on all teaching days. Every fifth teacher uses an interactive whiteboard daily and every third regularly. 14% of teachers use tablets regularly¹.

Birgit Eickelmann, head of the German International Computer and Information Literacy (Icils) study, claims that only a quarter of students in Germany attend a school where both teachers and students have access to WLAN, compared to 64% internationally and 100% in Denmark. Another example is computer equipment: in Germany there are on average 10 learners per classroom for every computer provided by a school².

According to a survey by the German Association for Information Technology, Telecommunications and New Media (Bitkom), the majority of teachers see advantages in the digitalisation of schools. For example, 88% of them say that students are more motivated by the use of technology and 87% think that content and contexts can be presented and taught more clearly if digital tools are used in lessons.

¹ Drammeh N. Digitalisierung der Schule – Alles, was Sie wissen müssen. In: Kommunal, 14.02.2020, <https://kommunal.de/digitalisierung-Schule-was-Sie-wissen-m%C3%BCssen>

² Sadigh P. Alles nur Infrastruktur. In: Zeit, 10.02.2019, <https://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/schule/2019-02/digitalpakt-schulen-digitalisierung-bildung-bund-laender>

More than half of the teachers (54%) would like to use digital media more often, but do not do so for various reasons. Other reasons are the lack of equipment, insufficient knowledge of technology and fear of the technology failing in the middle of the lesson. The lack of a pedagogical concept leads to digital media being used by teachers less often than desired³.

The solution of the current problem with the lack of digital gadgets is seen in the adopted Digital Pact⁴. It states that schools can apply for the financing of digitalisation and the costs will be covered either by federal states or by the federal government, if states don't have enough financial means for it.




It might even be possible to finance further training for teachers with federal funds in this way. Further training is seen as key to the success of digital education. Under certain circumstances, temporary school staff may be paid; this was previously considered taboo. A paid system administrator, for example, would be a great relief for some schools where a maths teacher or a physics teacher currently have to take care of the equipment on the side.

³ Drammeh <https://kommunal.de/digitalisierung-Schule-was-Sie-wissen-m%C3%BCssen>

⁴ <https://www.datenportal.bmbf.de/portal/en/education.html>



Inhaltsverzeichnis

1. Von der Oktoberrevolution zum Stalinismus 6	2. Die Weimarer Republik 26	3. Der Nationalsozialismus 56
		
Revolutionen in Russland 8 Der Sturz des Zaren 9 Die Oktoberrevolution 1917 10 Aufbau der bolschewistischen Diktatur 11 Bürgerkrieg zwischen Rot und Weiß 12 Die Entstehung der Sowjetunion 13 Die Diktatur Stalins 14 Herrschaftssicherung durch Terror 15 Der Gulag – Zwangsarbeitslager 16 Industrialisierung und Kollektivierung 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Methode: Fotos analysieren 20 <input type="checkbox"/> Methode: Internet-Informationen für ein Referat 21 Sowjetunion 1945–1991 22 Zusammenfassung 23 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard-Check: Das solltet ihr wissen 24	Die Novemberrevolution 28 Die Ausrufung der Republik 29 Räte und Regierung 30 Januarkämpfe und Nationalversammlung 31 Die Weimarer Verfassung 32 <input type="checkbox"/> Methode: Verfassungsvergleich 34 Der Versailler Vertrag 36 Ein „Diktatfrieden“? 37 Die Neuordnung Europas 38 Der Völkerbund 39 Krisenjahre 1920–1923 40 <input type="checkbox"/> Werkstatt Geschichte: Parteienvielfalt in der Weimarer Republik 42 Außenpolitische Entspannung 44 Aufnahme in den Völkerbund 45 Die „Goldenen Zwanziger“ 46 <input type="checkbox"/> Methode: Biografien erstellen 47 Von der Republik zur Diktatur 48 Die Weltwirtschaftskrise 49 Die Schwäche der Parteien 50 Das Scheitern der Republik 51 <input type="checkbox"/> Methode: Wahlplakate untersuchen 52 Zusammenfassung 53 <input type="checkbox"/> Standard-Check: Das solltet ihr wissen 54	Rechtsextremismus heute 58 Der Faschismus in Italien 60 NS-Ideologie 62 Hass auf die Demokratie und Führerprinzip 63 Errichtung der NS-Diktatur 64 Die ersten Notverordnungen 65 Die Aufhebung der Grundrechte 66 Die Zerschlagung des Rechtsstaats 67 Die nationalsozialistische Herrschaft in Brandenburg 68 Die Zerstörung der Demokratie in Brandenburg 70 Alltag im Nationalsozialismus 72 Die Erfassung des Volkes 73 Frau und Familie 74 Hitlers neue Jugend – ... „hart wie Krupp-Stahl, zäh wie Leder“ 76 HJ und BDM 78 Der NS-Terror 80 Die ersten Konzentrationslager 81 Die Verfolgung der Juden 82 Die „Nürnberger Gesetze“ 83 Judenpogrome 84 Die „Endlösung der Judenfrage“ 85 Massenmorde in Vernichtungslagern: ... „Juden und andere Opfer“ 86 <input type="checkbox"/> Methode: In Archiven recherchieren 88 <input type="checkbox"/> Methode: Besuch einer Gedenkstätte 89 Konzentrationslager 90

Poland

Country specifics

In 2012 education reform was implemented in Polish schools. Curricula were modified and an option for learners to choose the subjects in which they wanted to specialise was introduced. The reform came into force and, in the case of history, involved a partial break from repeating the history course at each stage of education. In PSs, history teaching remained unchanged and covered the period from ancient times to modern times. In LSSs, students had to learn history from ancient times until 1914. In all types of USSs, history was obligatory in the first grade and covered the period from 1914 to the present day. After completing the first grade, students could decide whether they wanted to learn history as a major subject, which ended with an exam in the last grade. If they chose this option, they learned history from ancient to modern times, but on a more detailed level. Learners who did not choose history as a major subject but decided, for example, to focus on physical sciences had to study the compulsory subject History and Society. This subject consisted of thematic modules focused on some historical periods, processes, or issues (e.g., early modern history, family history, and media history) (Polish EURIDICE Unit, 2012).

The subject's teachers are free to choose teaching methods and approaches, though this is partly determined by the number of students per class and teaching and learning facilities and resources available in the school (for example, the number of computers or other teaching aids). Classes should be divided into smaller groups for some subjects (for example, foreign language, technology or computer science / information technology). For more information, see here.

The curriculum can be:

- *developed by the teacher individually or jointly with other teachers;*
- *chosen from among the set of curricula developed by another author/other authors; for example, from among those available on the market;*
- *developed by other author(s) and modified by the teacher.*

The curriculum proposed by the teacher should be adapted to the needs and abilities of the students. Curricula are approved for use at school by the head of a given school at the request of the teacher or the team of teachers concerned and after consultation with the school's teaching council (composed of the head and all teachers).

Teachers may choose a textbook from among the textbooks approved for the use at school by the minister responsible for education. The school head publishes a list of textbooks to be used at a given school from the beginning of the next school year. The legislation also allows teachers to implement curricula using educational resources / materials which are not considered textbooks in legal or practical terms. Costs of textbooks are, in general, covered by students and their parents (legal guardians).

Schools are required to install special internet safety software on computers used for teaching and learning. The software should protect students, in particular, against pornography, brutal and aggressive content and content breaking social norms and promoting hatred and discrimination.

Didactic concept

The Polish Ministry of Education suggests that schools should take care that the student does not get lost in a maze of details; rather by learning the most important of them they should be able to explain the rules governing the past: political, social, economic, religious, and cultural. Such an approach to teaching history is supposed to help students understand the mechanisms of modern times. It is also about the student consciously and responsibly co-creating in their adult life a European community of values with the overriding idea of freedom, which is particularly close to Poles. Freedom which in recent centuries has been expressed in the struggle to regain independence and maintain national sovereignty.

History education serves important educational purposes. In particular, it makes it possible to:

- *deepen knowledge of important events regarding the history of the Polish nation and general world history, in order to refer to the past more critically and to understand better the present and build the future in a responsible way*
- *enhance the feeling of love towards the fatherland through the respect and attachment to tradition and history of own nation and its achievements, culture and mother tongue;*

- *shape the connection to the homeland, civil consciousness, a respectful attitude and responsibility for one's own state; strengthen national pride, forming respect for other people and the achievements of other nations and states;*
- *shape respect for cultural heritage and historical monuments;*
- *spark interest in one's own past, one's family's past and local history;*
- *develop historical thinking and moral and aesthetic sensitivity;*
- *shape skills in humanities, linguistic skills, collecting data and using different sources of information, critical formulation of opinions.*

In elementary school, students primarily learn about the history of their homeland. In the core curriculum for secondary schools, the history of the state and the nation is much more strongly inscribed in general history, although, obviously, the thread of national history remains the most important⁵.

⁵ Załącznik do rozporządzenia Ministra Edukacji Narodowej: Zał. Nr 1 – PODSTAWA PROGRAMOWA KSZTAŁCENIA OGÓLNEGO DLA CZTEROLETNIEGO LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCEGO I PIĘCIOLETNIEGO TECHNIKUM

Soviet repression in history lessons: teaching objectives and main messages

In Poland, Soviet repression is a topic that fits well into the bigger narrative of “Polish martyrology” – the Polish state and the nation being a victim of its more powerful neighbours, in this manner the memories of communist crimes contribute to a “bigger picture”. Soviet repression resulted in the death of hundred of thousands of Polish citizens and members of the Polish minority in the Soviet Union killed between 1917 and 1947 (including the NKVD’s so-called Polish Operation, which resulted in the genocide of people of Polish origin in the USSR in 1937 and 1938), massive deportations, imprisonment and torture. Moreover, Polish sovereignty was especially strongly affected by Soviet politics, because as a consequence of the Second World War it lost half of its territory to the Soviet Union and became its vassal state.

This is why Stalinism and the Nazi regime are often equalized in Poland. Soviet Russia till 1953 is portrayed as the paradigm of a totalitarian state and mass repression system in general. It should be also added that in the Polish historical narrative and historical memory Soviet repression is often placed in the wider context of Poland’s difficult relations with Russia in the past as well as today. Currently, the Polish perception of the Soviet Union is influenced by Russia’s neo-imperial foreign policy and its “revisionist” and “denialist” politics of memory concerning Soviet heritage and Stalinism.

As an important milestone in the creation of Polish identity, communism gets six history lesson topics at primary school (8th grade). In high schools the topic is described and taught also during literature classes while analyzing, i.e., “A World Apart” by Gustaw Herling-Grudziński. His diary is compulsory reading for all pupils. In history lessons teachers have enough time to accomplish the agenda. At school, teachers try to convey messages about the utopian roots of the communist system and the fact the reality is far from the ideas declared by the ruling class, stressing the lack of freedom and the crimes committed by the totalitarian regime.

As both literature and history lessons shape pupil’s knowledge of Soviet repression and the Gulag, we analysed both history and literature textbooks. The results of the analysis are to be found here.

In spite of the several teaching units and the emphasis on the repression in the USSR, the Gulag itself is, if anything, briefly mentioned during lessons dedicated to the Soviet Union and the Stalinist era as the example of a brutal regime.

Use of technologies and extended reality

According to the survey conducted by Gulag XR in May 2021, teachers in Poland use laptops and projectors, though for them interactive whiteboards are relatively new devices. Teachers also mentioned many specific apps and platforms they have recently been using during the pandemic and remote work. Some of them are implementing YouTube videos into their lessons. None of the teachers that took part in the Gulag XR survey had ever used VR. However, there is a lack of necessary equipment and Wi-Fi connection at some schools.

In Poland, there are big differences concerning the use of technologies between private and public schools. Teachers at private schools are used to using gadgets and digital content, while teachers at public schools have fewer resources and hence use technologies in their teaching units less frequently. There is also a big difference between cities and small towns/villages. Not every school in Poland has Wi-Fi access and computers, though mostly there are libraries with computers and Wi-Fi.

Content for digital gadgets is also a weak point. The content provided by the Institute of National Remembrance plays a significant role; without it, teachers could not refer to any other sources of digital content.



7

Polska pod okupacją sowiecką

49

■ Przypomnij sobie główne ustalenia w sprawie Polski traktatu o przyjaźni i granicy zawartego przez ZSRS i Niemcy we wrześniu 1939 r.

Wschodnie tereny II RP wcielone do ZSRS

Sowieci zaatakowali Polskę 17 września 1939 r. Swoją agresję uzasadnili chęcią wzięcia w obronę bratnich narodów: białoruskiego i ukraińskiego w obliczu upadku państwa polskiego (patrz tekst źródłowy na s. 50). W rzeczywistości realizowano w ten sposób zawarty w sierpniu pakt Ribbentrop-Mołotow.

Zająwszy polskie Kresy Wschodnie, władze sowieckie przyłączyły je do swojego terytorium. Jedynie Wilno i okolice wcielono do Litwy. Jednak latem 1940 r., po sowieckiej aneksji państw bałtyckich, również Wileńszczyzna znalazła się w granicach ZSRS.

Na pozostałych terenach Polski zajętych przez ZSRS władze sowieckie przeprowadziły w październiku 1939 r. zmanipulowane wybory, które poprzedziła antypolska kampania przedwyborcza. Była ona mieszaniną propagandy i kłamstw. Miała na celu oczernienie państwa polskiego i pokazanie w jak najlepszym

świecie stosunków społecznych panujących w ZSRS. Ludność zmuszano do udziału w wiecach przedwyborczych. Opornych zastraszano i szykanowano. Pod nadzorem NKWD w wyborach wyłoniono Radę Delegatów Ludowych Zachodniej Ukrainy i Zachodniej Białorusi, czyli wschodnich obszarów II RP. Następnie władze sowieckie na wniosek Rad wcieliły te tereny do Związku Sowieckiego. Mieszkańcom siłą nadano obywatelstwo ZSRS, co skutkowało poborem do Armii Czerwonej.

Kresy pod władzą sowiecką

Polityka władz sowieckich na zajętych terenach II RP miała charakter antypolski. Rządzący zlikwidowali polskie urzędy i zastąpili je rozbudowaną administracją sowiecką. Zakazali używania języka polskiego w urzędach i usunęli polskie nazwy ulic i placów. Wprowadzili nowe programy nauczania do szkół, które stały się miejscem sowietyzacji dzieci i młodzieży. Polski

▼ Część obywateli II RP wywodząca się z mniejszości narodowych z radością witała Armię Czerwoną. Wynikało to z niechęci do państwa polskiego, które nie zawsze potrafiło rozwiązać problemy narodowościowe. Wielu z nich bezkrytycznie wierzyło w zapewnienia propagandy sowieckiej o lepszym bycie i równości społecznej. Scena została prawdopodobnie zaaranżowana na potrzeby sowieckiej propagandy, ponieważ część witających nie patrzy na czołgi, ale w stronę fotografa.



50

POLSKA W LATACH II WOJNY ŚWIATOWEJ

TEKST ŹRÓDŁOWY

Nota ministra spraw zagranicznych ZSRS doręczona ambasadorowi Polski w Moskwie w nocy z 16 na 17 września 1939 r. (fragment).

Wojna niemiecko-polska ujawniła wewnętrzne bankructwo państwa polskiego. W ciągu dziesięciu dni operacji wojskowych Polska straciła wszystkie swoje okręgi przemysłowe i ośrodki kulturalne. Warszawa, jako stolica Polski, już nie istnieje. Rząd polski uległ rozkładowi i nie okazuje przejawów życia. Oznacza to, że państwo polskie i jego rząd przestało faktycznie istnieć.

Dlatego też straciły ważność traktaty, zawarte pomiędzy ZSRS a Polską. [...] Rząd radziecki [sowiecki] nie może również pozostać obojętny na fakt, że zamieszkująca terytorium Polski pokrewna ludność ukraińskiego i białoruskiego pochodzenia jest bezbronna i została pozostawiona swojemu losowi. Rząd radziecki polecił wobec powyższych okoliczności Naczelnemu Dowódcy Armii Czerwonej, aby nakazał wojskom przekroczyć granicę i wziąć pod swoją opiekę życie i mienie ludności zachodniej Ukrainy i zachodniej Białorusi.

1. Powiedz, jak sowiecki minister Wiaczesław Mołotow uzasadnił agresję na Polskę. Jakie podał argumenty?
2. Przypomnij, czy Warszawa faktycznie nie istniała jako stolica Polski w dniu przestania noty. Co się wtedy działo w mieście?
3. Wyjaśnij, w jakim celu, według autora noty, Armia Czerwona wtargnęła na terytorium II RP.

Uniwersytet Jana Kazimierza we Lwowie został zamknięty, a na jego miejsce powołano Uniwersytet im. Iwana Franki – ukraińskiego poety i pisarza. Zlikwidowano także polskie instytucje kultury, zakazano nauki religii, a część kościołów przemieniono w kina lub magazyny. Na wzór sowiecki wywłaszczono polskich właścicieli i znacjonalizowano banki, fabryki oraz warsztaty pracy. Rozpoczęto również proces kolektywizacji rolnictwa.

Sowieckie represje

Na ziemiach zajętych przez ZSRS rozpoczęły się prześladowania ludności polskiej. W pierwszej kolejności dotknęły one polskie elity: nauczycieli, urzędników, duchownych, działaczy politycznych i społecznych, policjantów i wojskowych. Część inteligencji II RP została zabita. Innych aresztowano i wraz z rodzinami wywieziono w głąb ZSRS – na Syberię bądź do Kazachstanu.

Deportacje miały zazwyczaj taki sam scenariusz. W nocy bez uprzedzenia Sowieci okradali dom i dawali ludziom kilkadziesiąt minut na spakowanie najpotrzebniejszych rzeczy. Następnie odstawiano ich na

stacje kolejowe. Tam czekały na nich nieogrzewane wagony towarowe. Nie tłumaczono nikomu celu wywozów. Podróż w nieznane trwała całymi tygodniami i była pasmem cierpienia. Żywność, a nawet wodę, wydzielano rzadko i w niedostatecznej ilości.

Część deportowanych trafiała do łagrow (obozów), m.in. w okolicy Workuty i Magadanu (patrz mapa na s. 51), gdzie zmuszano ich do niewolniczej pracy w kopalniach i kamieniołomach. Innych przymusowo osiedlano na Syberii i w Kazachstanie, aby pracowali przy wyrębie lasów i w kółchozach.



▲ Zesłancy na Syberii.
■ Opis warunków pracy zesłaneńców.

SŁOWNICZEK

deportacja – przemieszczanie państwem obywateli z jednej grupy ludności z jednego obszaru na drugi z powodów politycznych

52

POLSKA W LATACH II WOJNY ŚWIATOWEJ

Trudne warunki atmosferyczne, wyczerpująca praca, słabe wyżywienie, brak opieki lekarskiej i odpowiednich mieszkań przyczyniły się do ciężkich chorób i śmierci kilkudziesięciu tysięcy Polaków.

Zbrodnia katyńska

Symbolem postępowania władz sowieckich wobec Polaków był los tysięcy polskich oficerów wziętych do niewoli we wrześniu 1939 r. Wielu z nich powołano do wojska w chwili wybuchu wojny. Byli to przedstawiciele polskiej inteligencji, którzy przed wstąpieniem do armii byli m.in. nauczycielami, prawnikami, lekarzami, dziennikarzami, urzędnikami. Osadzono ich w obozach w Kozielsku i Starobielsku. W pobliżu Ostaszkowa przetrzymywano oficerów Korpusu Ochrony Pogranicza, funkcjonariuszy policji i służby więziennej.

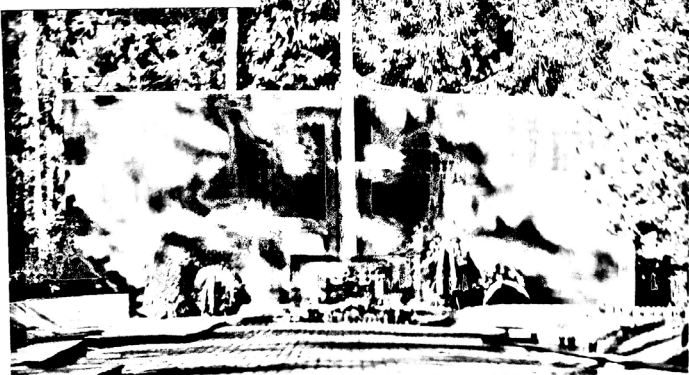
Z rozkazu władz Związku Sowieckiego w kwietniu i maju 1940 r. zostało rozstrzelanych 14 730 jeńców. W podobny sposób Sowieci wymordowali też około 7300 więźniów cywilnych, obywateli polskich wziętych do niewoli. Oprawcy zabijali ofiary strzałem w tył głowy i wrzucali do zbiorowych mogił. Więźniów z obozu w Kozielsku zabito w Katyniu pod Smoleńskiem. Jeńców z obozu w Ostaszkowie zamordowano

w Kalininie (obecnie Twer), a grzebano w Miednoje, oficerów ze Starobielska rozstrzelano w Charkowie i pochowano w Piatichatkach, ofiary mordów dokonanych na terenach dzisiejszej Ukrainy pochowano w lesie w Bykowni koło Kijowa, a zabitych na Białorusi pogrzebano prawdopodobnie w Kuropatach na przedmieściach Mińska. Jako pierwsze odnaleziono groby zamordowanych w Katyniu, dlatego dla określenia całości tego sowieckiego ludobójstwa symbolicznie używa się nazwy zbrodnia katyńska.

Kłamstwo katyńskie

Masowe groby polskich oficerów zastrzelonych przez Sowieców w Katyniu zostały odkryte przez Niemców, którzy ogłosili to w kwietniu 1943 r. Jednak Sowieci wyparli się zbrodni i winą obarczyli stronę niemiecką. Po zakończeniu II wojny światowej Polska znalazła się pod rządami zależnych od ZSRS komunistów, więc przez wiele lat oficjalnie przypisywano ten mord Niemcom. Choć wiedza o tym, kto naprawdę zabił polskich oficerów, była powszechna, to głoszenie prawdy było karane – nawet więzieniem. Władze Związku Sowieckiego dopiero w 1990 r. przyznały, że to Stalin ponosi odpowiedzialność za zbrodnię katyńską.

▼ Polski Cmentarz Wojenny w Katyniu, na którym spoczywają polscy oficerowie pomordowani w Lesie Katyńskim wiosną 1940 r.



▲ Polski orzeł wojskowy wz. 19, używany przez wojska lądowe w latach 30. XX w. Orzeł został znaleziony w 1996 r. podczas prac sondażowo-ekshumacyjnych w Charkowie. Znajduje się w relikwiarzu Muzeum Katyńskiego w Warszawie.

7. Polska pod okupacją sowiecką

53

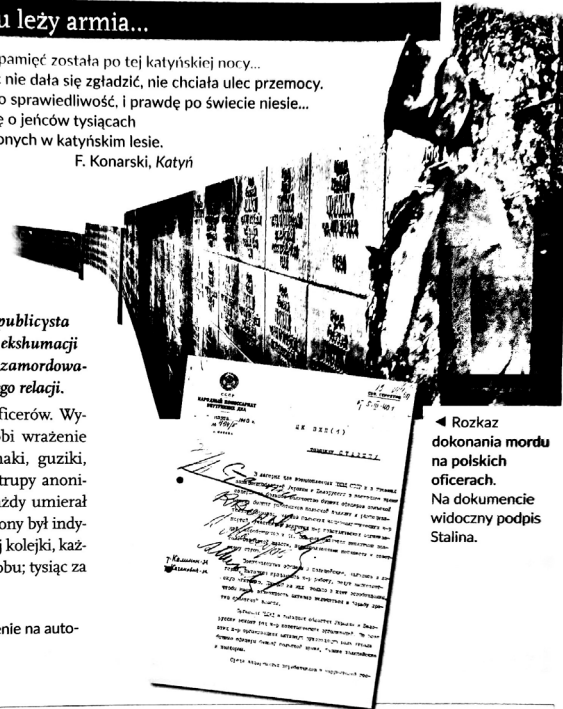


▲ Matka Boska Katyńska.
■ W jaki sposób artysta nawiązał do zbrodni katyńskiej?

Tu leży armia...

I tylko pamięć została po tej katyńskiej nocy...
Pamięć nie dała się zgładzić, nie chciała ulec przemocy.
I woła o sprawiedliwość, i prawdę po świecie niesie...
Prawdę o jeńców tysiącach
zgaszczonych w katyńskim lesie.

F. Konarski, Katyni



▲ Rozkaz dokonania mordu na polskich oficerach. Na dokumencie widoczny podpis Stalina.

Józef Mackiewicz, polski publicysta i dziennikarz, był świadkiem ekshumacji (wydobycia z ziemi) zwłok zamordowanych oficerów. Oto fragment jego relacji.

W Katyniu znaleziono [...] oficerów. Wy-mowność tego munduru robi wrażenie zwłaszcza na Polaku. Odnaki, guziki, pasy, orły, ordery. Nie są to trupy anonimowe. Tu leży armia. [...] każdy umierał długie minuty, każdy zastrzelony był indywidualnie, każdy czekał swojej kolejki, każdy wleczony był nad brzeg grobu; tysiąc za tysiącem!

1. Co zrobiło największe wrażenie na autorze tekstu?

TEKST ŹRÓDŁOWY

Wyciąg z protokołu nr 13 Biura Politycznego KC WKP w Moskwie z 5 marca 1940 r. (fragment).

Ścisłe tajne
Uchwała z 5 marca 1940 r.
Polecieć NKWD ZSRS

Sprawy znajdujących się w obozach dla jeńców wojennych – 14 700 osób, byłych polskich oficerów, urzędników, obszarników, policjantów, agentów wywiadu, żandarmów, osadników i służby więziennej [...].

1. Kogo władze sowieckie nakazały skazać na śmierć?
2. Czy wobec jeńców przewidziano postępowanie sądowe w celu udowodnienia winy? Powiedz, dlaczego Sowieci postępowali w ten sposób.

[...] jak też sprawy aresztowanych i znajdujących się w więzieniach w zachodnich obwodach Ukrainy i Białorusi – 11 000 osób, członków różnorodnych [kontrewolucyjnych] organizacji, byłych obszarników, fabrykantów, byłych polskich oficerów, urzędników i uciekinierów – rozpatrzyć w trybie specjalnym, z zastosowaniem wobec nich najwyższego wymiaru kary – rozstrzelanie. Sprawy rozpatrzyć bez wzywania aresztowanych i bez przedstawiania zarzutów, decyzji o zakończeniu śledztwa i aktu oskarżenia [...].

Slovakia

Country specifics

Education in all types of schools (ISCED 0-3) takes place in compliance with state educational programs, which define compulsory content. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, the central public administration authority for education, is responsible for the development of the content, goals and methods of education.

State educational programs define the general goals of schools and key competencies in the balanced development of students' personalities and the framework content of education. State education programs are the starting point for the creation of the school education programs of schools, which take into account specific regional conditions and needs.

The state educational program stipulates compulsory subjects, which are integrated into individual educational areas. As part of its curriculum, each school can also create its own subject (using free, available lessons). In addition to subjects, cross-cutting themes are introduced, traversing all educational areas.

History, together with the humanities component of geography and civics, forms the educational area Man and Society. However, it is a separate subject within it and, together with them in integrative relations, it represents one of the important elements in the process of the humanization of students⁶.

Didactic concept

According to the state programme⁷, *"The main function of history is to cultivate the historical consciousness of the student as a whole and to preserve the continuity of historical memory in terms of passing on historical experience, either from a local, regional, national, European or global perspective."*

Part of its transmission is, above all, the gradual knowledge of such historical events, events, phenomena and processes in space and time, which have fundamentally influenced the development of Slovak society and have been reflected in the image of our present. At the same time, it emphasizes the history of the 19th and 20th centuries, in which we can find for the most part the roots of current social phenomena and problems."

Drawing on the work of Peter Seixas and Karel Van Nieuwenhuysse, we distinguish three main models of history education: nationalist, civic, and disciplinary. These models should not be understood in a chronological sense; they do not follow one direction. It also has to be noted that the boundaries between the models are not always clear. From this point of view, the Slovak curriculum would correspond to a certain combination of the disciplinary and nationalist models.

⁶ https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/statny-vzdelavaci-program/dejepis_isced2.pdf

⁷ https://www.statpedu.sk/files/articles/dokumenty/statny-vzdelavaci-program/dejepis_isced2.pdf

Soviet repression in history lessons: teaching objectives and main messages

According to the curriculum, the teaching objective of history lesson is to "develop interdisciplinary competencies which will enable students not only to approach history as a closed past, but also to develop a whole range of competencies (competences) to ask themselves cognitively diverse questions in dynamic activity, through which they ask about the past through the prism of the present and gradually form their own opinion. An important means of this is a set of appropriate (also multilateral) school historical sources, which is considered an integral part of the didactic system of history teaching and history textbooks in primary schools."

In terms of theme, the current form of the State Educational Program focuses mainly on the history of the Slovak nation in the context of Slovakia. However, one of the skills explicitly states that "the pupil can characterize the Stalinist dictatorship", "states the reasons for the emergence of dictatorships" and "documents the process of Sovietization of Central and Eastern Europe".

In Slovakia, the Gulag is mentioned a few times in the curricula and in textbooks starting from the 9th grade. Textbooks present the USSR as an example of a totalitarian regime and

dictatorship. However, based on our analysis of the most used textbooks in primary and secondary schools, we can say that only a few pages are devoted to the issue of Soviet repression itself.

In primary schools, more attention is paid to the politics of Lenin and the Great October Socialist Revolution and subsequently the 1950s. More emphasis is put on nationalization after the Communist coup of so-called Victorious February 1948 and collectivization in agriculture. Less space is devoted to Soviet repression. For example, in the most used history textbook for 9th grade primary school pupils (Looking for the Past, published by Orbis Pictures Istropolitana, authors: Dušan Kováč, Viliam Kratochvíl, Ivan Kamenec, Herta Tkadlečková. 2012) the word 'Gulag' only appears once, and even then only once in a marginal text. High school textbooks go a little deeper into the matter. Even so they give rather simple generalizations about the communist regime.

The survey conducted by Gulag XR reveals that only 49.1% of teachers address the topic of Soviet repression (of which around 1–2% pay increased attention to this topic), 35.8% deal with it only partially, 7.5% do not deal with it at all, and the remaining respondents do not have the capacity for it due to insufficient time allowance. Whether teachers decide to devote time to communism or not is usually based only on a personal decision and the teacher's commitment to the topic.

However, most teachers prefer not to deal with the topic of the crimes of communism, or at least not to go deep into the matter. In Slovakia, alongside the narrative about the oppressive character of communism regime, a rather 'optimistic' narrative about socialism in the country is widely spread. This especially concerns the older generation (the narrative can briefly be sketched as follows: Everything was affordable, people were employed and had access to accommodation, education and health care, etc.). These widespread positive memories about socialism in Slovakia prevent critical analysis of the communist regime in the Soviet Union.

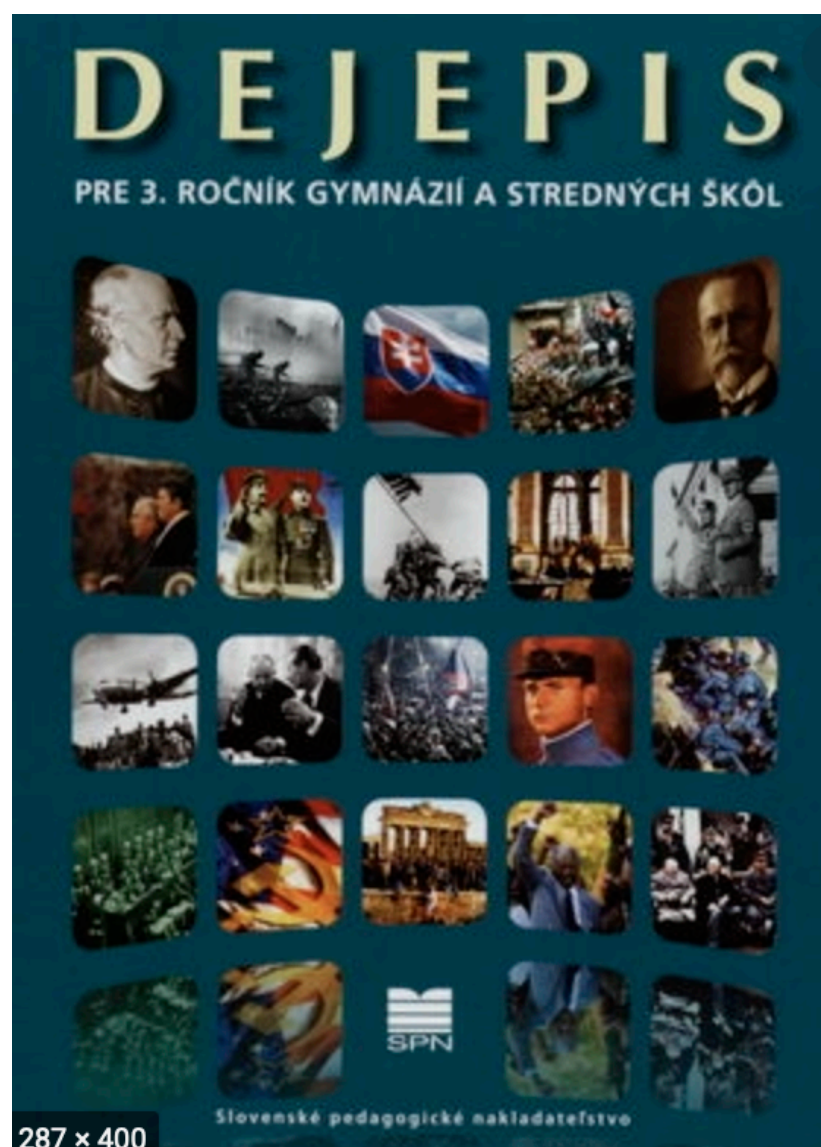
In addition the common "optimistic" narrative about communism prevents critical dealing with repression in the earlier period of Czechoslovakia under communist rule.

Older versions of Slovak textbooks address the rise of communism to power in Czechoslovakia, mentioning the occurrences of 1948, the February coup and the 1950s (nationalization, collectivization). However, textbooks merely give an overview and do not go deep into the topic. The older generation of textbooks also pays very little attention to the period after the 1950s. Newer versions of textbooks explain the impact of socialism on Czechoslovak minorities, dealing more profoundly with political mass show trials in the 1950s, normalization in the 1970s and the resistance movement that led to the "Velvet Revolution" of 1989.

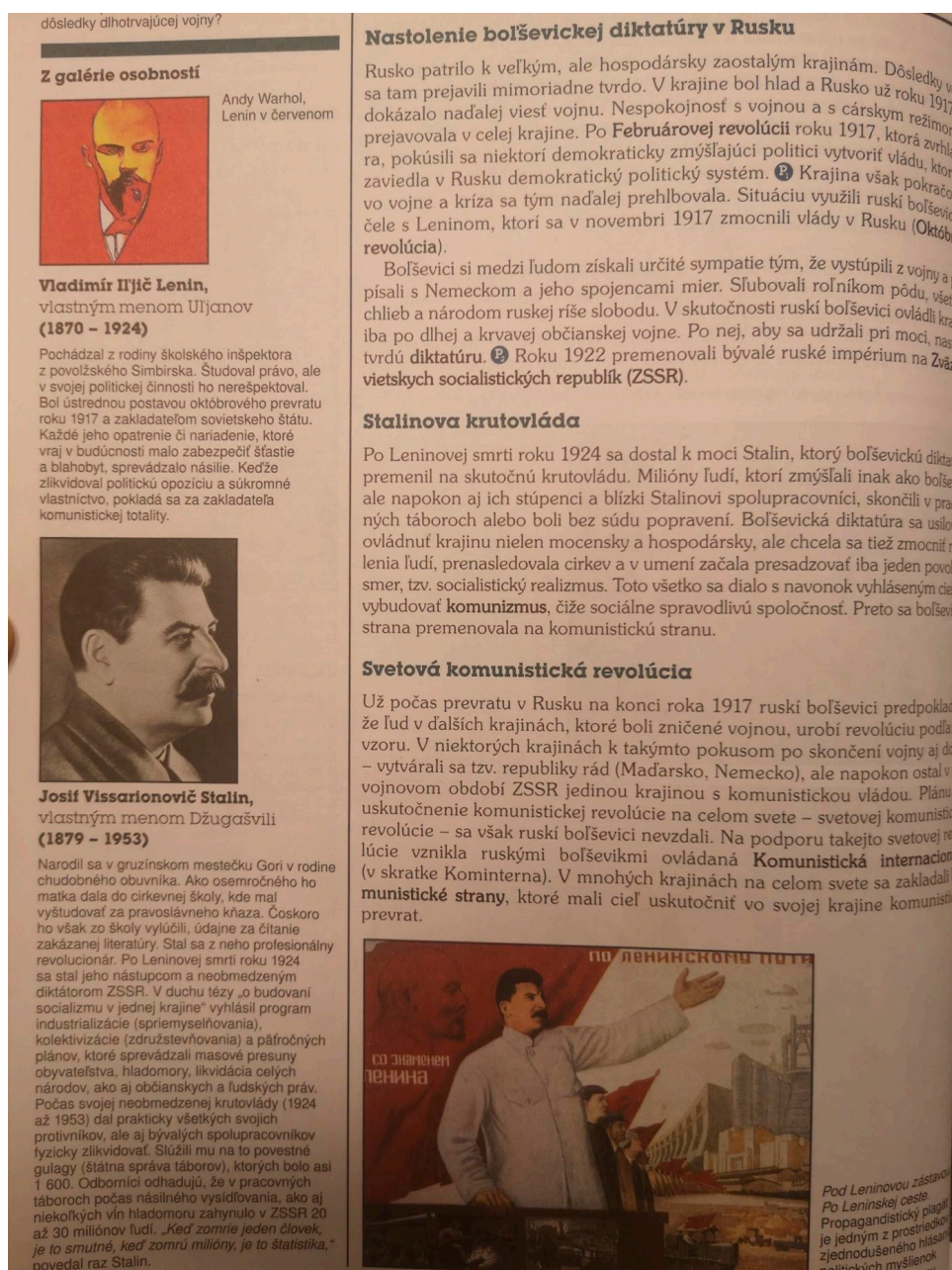
Slovak textbooks give great importance to supplementary visual materials. In the mentioned textbook "Looking for the Past", texts are accompanied by various pictures, caricatures, historical timelines and period photographs.

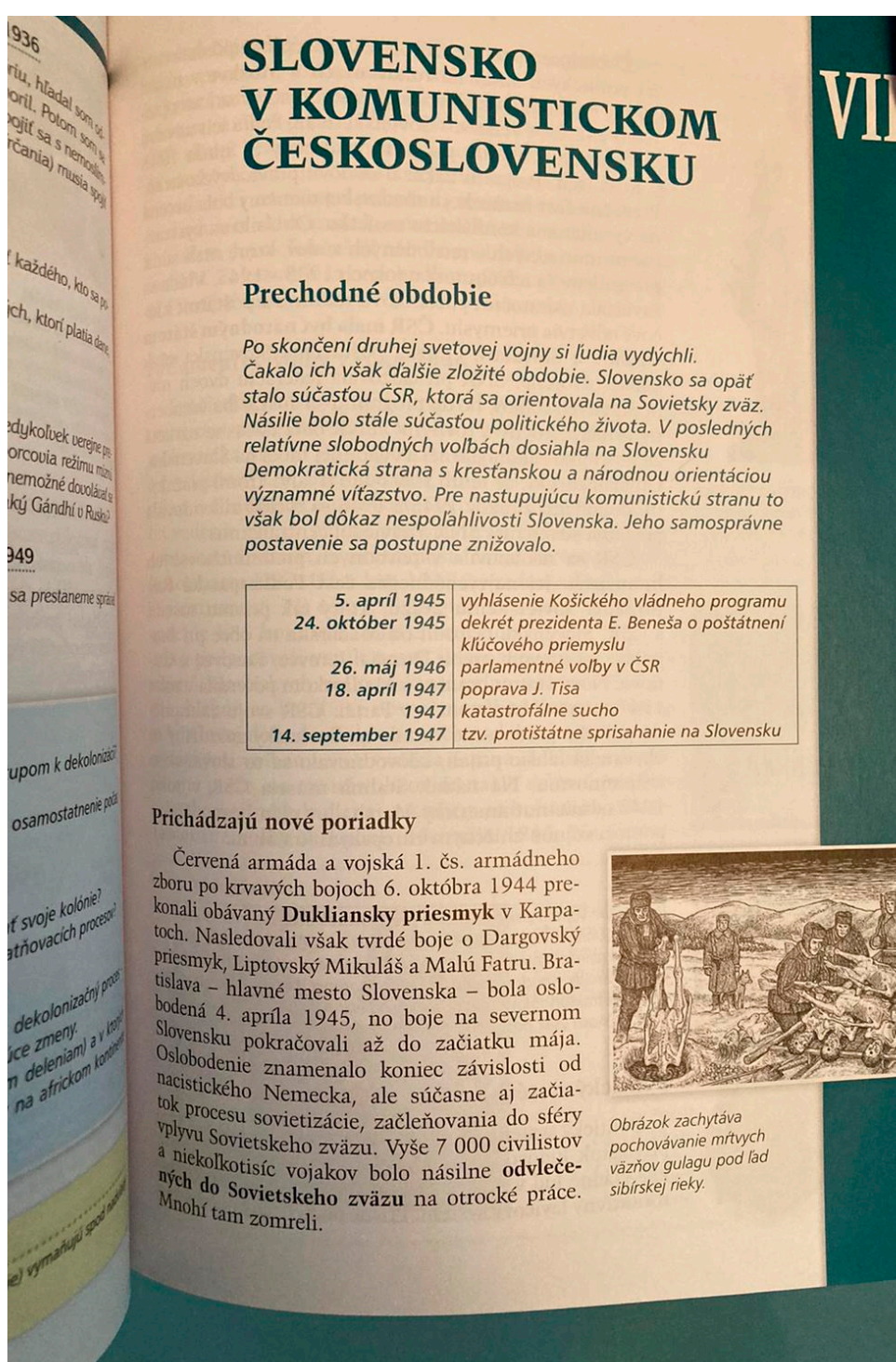
The history textbook for third grade gymnasium and secondary schools (authors: Róbert Letz, Mária Tonková, Anna Bocková. 2013, Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo) is a newer edition of the textbook for gymnasiums and other secondary schools. The textbook is elaborated with the use of illustrative and supplementary materials.

The additional materials are, e.g., period photographs, various citations of politicians and historical actors. There are also very useful tips for films and novels that can bring students closer to the material covered. The textbook gives the same space to world and national history.



History textbook for the ninth grade of primary schools and the fourth year of eight-year grammar schools (Looking for the Past), published in 2012 by Orbis Pictures Istropolitana, authors: Dušan Kováč, Viliam Kratochvíl, Ivan Kamenec, Herta Tkadlečková.





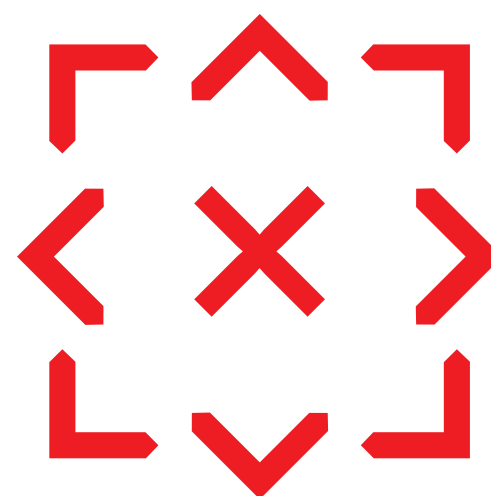
History textbook for third grade gymnasium and secondary schools. Authors: Róbert Letz, Mária Tonková, Anna Bocková. 2013, Slovenské pedagogické nakladateľstvo.



Use of technologies and extended reality

In Slovakia, digitalization may be considered to be at an advanced stage. Almost every teacher has a laptop and Wi-Fi, some teachers use VR and many schools use tablets.

In a survey conducted by Gulag XR, most respondents answered that they use the internet, interactive whiteboard, data projector, computer, movies and videos in their lessons. The teachers' answers were also influenced by the pandemic situation, so Zoom or Teams or other technologies via which distance learning was carried out online also featured. When asked whether they also use virtual reality to teach history, 51.9% answered in the negative and 35.2% in the positive. The remaining 1.9% answered that the VR was used only indirectly, rarely or they plan to use it soon. Based on the findings, we can state that VR is being used only marginally.



Summary

Our study revealed that the topic of communism in general and Soviet repression in particular is not suppressed in any of our countries. Curricular documents in all countries work to some extent with the topic. However, the extent to which they do so varies.

Existing didactic concepts (perhaps with the exception of Germany) are to some extent based on older, more nationalist-colored narratives. As a result of this, if Soviet repression does not fit into the existing narrative, it can easily remain beyond the interest of teachers.

There is a correlation in main messages and narratives about the Soviet regime in the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Slovakia. The Soviet Union after the Bolshevik Revolution and till the end of the 1950s is regarded as an example of an arbitrary and inhumane regime and a totalitarian state. This main message doesn't depend on whether or not any positive memories about communism are common in the society: e.g., "optimistic" sentiments in the case of some teachers in Slovakia.

In Germany, the word "totalitarian" is seldomly used, to avoid equalization of Stalinism with the Nazi regime; this stresses its singularity and Germany's responsibility for dealing with its Nazi past.

There is another similarity between Slovakia, Germany and the Czech Republic: the decision to learn about Soviet repression or not often depends to a large extent on a teacher and their personal interest in the topic. As a result, some teachers don't deal with communism in the USSR at all, while some go deeper into the subject.

The communist past of Poland and Czechoslovakia is often conceived separately from the atrocities of the Soviet regime. However, there are also points of contact. As a result, students (e.g., in the Czech Republic or Slovakia) may get the impression that the history of Soviet repression is something that has nothing to do with the history of their countries. This despite the

fact that the victims of this repression were thousands of citizens of the countries concerned.

We therefore believe that it is expedient to prepare an educational program that brings together the existing awareness of learners and teachers concerning the communist regime and the history of individual countries with the general history of the Soviet regime and its repression.

Regarding the fact that school curricula in all of the countries deal with the communist regimes in their own countries, it is beneficial for learners to be acquainted with the character of the communist regime in the USSR, which later spread to the countries of the Eastern Bloc.

The teachers showed considerable interest in this topic and responded positively.

In all countries (depending on the specific type of school) the subject of the Soviet regime is usually mentioned, to some extent, twice. The first time in teaching children aged about 13–15 years, the second time in the subsequent stage, at the age of about 16–19 years. As for the age limit, we decided to adapt the educational tool so that it could be used for learners aged 14–15.

The technical possibilities of schools in our countries are largely sufficient for the use of modern technologies such as virtual or augmented reality. Although most teachers do not yet have experience of the use of VR, this is something they have shown considerable interest in.

In interviews, teachers often cited a lack of time as the main obstacle to teaching using modern technology. The lack of time was also often identified as an obstacle to dealing with Soviet repression at school. We will have to take this fact into account when developing our educational tool. In response to the time shortage problem, we plan to offer several modes of use that differ in terms of time required.