

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF JACOB, THE GLASSWORKER: DOMINANT AND RESISTANT MEANINGS IN TELEVISION POPULAR FICTION AFTER 1985¹

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the TV series “Synové a dcery Jakuba skláře” (Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker) as an item of popular television fiction produced and broadcasted by the Czechoslovak television in 1980s. Consequently, it examines the series production and textual categories in their connection to the communist ideology. The concept of ideology is also reviewed with an eye to its development in cultural studies in last two decades.

The series represents a form of film historiography as it covers almost sixty years of Czechoslovak history from 1899 to 1957. The textual content is examined from the methodological perspective of textual orientators – narrative features that refer to the historical reality and simultaneously also refer to the moment of production by paradigmatic choices. Ideological choice of the textual orientators is seen in an ascribed role of the social democratic party and the communist party, as well as in the division of two communist period phases: times of struggle and times of power. However, the central textual category is disconnected from the communist ideology. It represents the universal modernist essentialism and postulates the inner human qualities (in contrast to the surface) as a marking sign of main good characters.

KEYWORDS

ideology – communism – television – television series – history – textual orientator – essentialism – modernity

1. Introduction

The series *Synové a dcery Jakuba skláře* (Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker, SDJG)² was produced³ and broadcasted⁴ by the Czechoslovak Television in 1986. The screenplay of the series was written and amended by Jaroslav Dietl between 1983 and 1984, the shooting took place between 1984 and 1985 under direction of Jaroslav Dudek, and the screenplay was written and amended by Jaroslav Dietl between

1 The study was created within the MSM 0021620841 research intent: Development of the Czech Society in the EU: Challenges and Dangers.

2 Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker. Further only SDJG, according to the stylistic needs, especially in the notes.

3 Czechoslovak Television (CST), 1986, 13 episodes, screenplay: Jaroslav Dietl, directed by: Jaroslav Dudek, script editor: Jaroslav Homuta, and director of photography: Alois Nožička.

4 The individual episodes were broadcasted in 1986 on Sundays in the prime time around 8pm from February 9th till May 3rd. Only the last episode was shown on Saturday.

1983 and 1984. The saga of the Cirkls, a blue-collar family line, perhaps does not rank amongst the works that are immediately associated with the personality of Jaroslav Dietl⁵, by the audience, due to its extent and significance of belonging to the “prime time” series, it, however, wonderfully demonstrates the time of its origin and the corresponding attendant production circumstances. This fact is even more interesting, as the historical situation, whose selected parameters were “absorbed” by the process of series formation and the structure of its text, did not last that long in the Czechoslovak society, nor in the Czechoslovak Television. The period between the time, when Dietl started to celebrate the story of the Cirkls family and the time of the broadcast of the completed series spans the first and second half of the 1980s, i.e. the transition between a “stabilized normalization”⁶ of the first half and the disturbing “import” of Gorbachov’s so-called perestroika in the second half of the 1980s.⁷

In case of the SDJG series, we thus encounter a representative television product, whose inception and premiere so deeply interfered to the period of so far undisturbed normalization, as well as the time that had already known the reform ideas of Mikhail Gorbachov (and which took only four years – to the overall social and political transformation in 1989). We therefore believe that the process analysis of the series inception and the meanings of its narrative structure will comment the phenomena that are typical for dramatic TV texts, their contents and their control in the Czechoslovak Television at the end of the communist governance.⁸

2. Intentions of the ideology analysis in the series “Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker”

The series of SDJG is based on the mutual reconstruction penetration of the historical events and fabricated stories of the fiction characters. The period reviews that were published after the premiere of the last part label the series as a chronicle.⁹ The extent of the film historicism (that is the version of the history recorded by a non-academic, but for historiography a significant film method) is exceptionally high in consideration of the genre and the categorization to the popular television dramatic production.¹⁰ (Rosen 2001) An important part of each episode is represented by non-diegetic¹¹ information in the form of the exact datation, which appears on the screen immediately after the episode name.

5 The series was watched by 85% of the audience on average, i.e. by 6.6 million people. APF CT, f. INF, Inv. No. 302, Television programme of 1986 at the CSR audience response. According to Jaroslav Dietl’s standards, the series was at the lower level of success. At the interview with Jiří Janoušek he says: “it [the television series – author’s comment] has to be watched by at least seven or better by nine or ten million...” (Janoušek 1985: 21)

6 “Formation” and “stabilization of the normalization regime” is distinguished by Milan Otáhal. (Otáhal 2002: 54)

7 Launched by the election of Michail Gorbachov as a General Deputy of the UV KSSS on March 11 1985 after the death of Konstantin Cernenko. On March 13 1985, Gorbachov speaks of the “continuity and necessity of changes” at the meeting with the representatives of Warsaw Agreement communist parties. (Suk – Cuhra – Koudelka 1999: 13)

8 It is quite interesting that the SDJG is Dietl’s first series broadcasted after his death. The screenwriter died during the production on June 29 1985, aged 56 years. (Smetana 2000: 68)

9 For example, the abbreviation mp. 1986. “Chronicle of the Glass Family”. Lidová demokracie, 13 May 1986. Or Blahota, Jiří. 1986. “Chronicle of a Proletarian Family.” Mladá Fronta, 14 May 1986.

10 The relevance of the film story description, film historiography is discussed in the introduction to *Change Mummified* by Philip Rosen. The historicity is, in his view, a result of the mutual relations between the way the historiography is performed and the specific history construction that results from it. (Rosen 2001: ix)

11 Nick Lacy considers the elements that are not accessible to the characters “within” narrative as non-diegetic. For example the musical background, subtitles, inserted text information, etc. (Lacy 2000: 19)

(Lacy 2000) For example, in the first episode, the viewer is presented with an introductory title called "Wanderer", followed by the year of 1899. With the thirteenth part, the name of the episode called the "Anniversary" is ensued by the year 1957.

The series thus covers the growing lineage of the Cirkls family through its story, from the family's founder Jakub to the destinies of his seven children, with all of them becoming fictional characters of the real events, i.e. in the period of the first half of the 20th century (years 1899–1957). The screenplay and its visual form originate in one specific historical moment (the transfer from the stabilized normalization to the perestroika period of 1983 and 1985), and at the same time they reconstruct other historical moments. The character of the historical events reconstruction itself, i.e. the events that are derived from the socio-political situation of the series retrospective inception, will be, for the purpose of this analysis, perceived as ideological text elements. (For more about the choice of an adequate ideology phenomenon conception, see Chapter 3). Labelling practice, in which the ideological relation between the history reconstruction and the socio-political situation of its inception is presented, will be therefore called the text orientators in the framework of this analysis.¹² (Bennett – Woolcott 1998)

We will proceed from the fact that, apart from the non-diegetic introductory information (dating of the episode event), the text further refers to the historical reality even through many other narrative or labelling elements, for example the characters and their relations, navigating the attention and securing the reference of the visual and verbal element to the mentioned dating and its historical reality. At the same time, we will not be interested in all text orientators, only those that could change, if the series history reconstruction took place in other political and social milieu. This process is known as a-technique verifiable by so-called communication test in the semiotic analysis. (Chandler 2005: 99) Some of the text orientators, for example the costumes, are rather neutral and were used in random production circumstances. On the contrary, we will consider the labelling and narrative elements in the place of paradigmatic choice as the ideologically saturated text orientators. (Fiske 2002: 58) This concerns places, where other portrayals of the historical reality occur and where the history had been reconstructed in close relation to the dominant political discourse of the series narrative inception.¹³ The text orientator is thus a labelling or a narrative element that illustrates the basic ideological principle of every artistic history reconstruction: the text orientator contains the link between the history and the present time, explains and elaborates the reconstructed past and at the same time, its choice gives evidence of the present time, from whose perspective the reconstruction is carried out.

12 The introduction of this term is inspired by an analytic tool that was introduced with the analysis of James Bond character changes in the episode *Bond and Beyond: Political Career of a Popular Hero* by Tony Bennett and Janet Woolcott, under the name of "textual shifters", that is something as "text levers" or "text switches". "The authors demonstrate this by insisting on the temporal variation of dominant readings of the Bond texts, by examining the shifts in the ideological significance James Bond carries at specific points in the figure's history. Textual shifters allow us to chart the ways in which certain aspects of the figure are foregrounded in one ideological context and another aspects in another context." (Turner 1996: 117)

13 The paradigmatic dimension of each representative code is vertical, it is dimension of selection from the set of the possible, where we can select and install to a certain position in the sequence of the positions, i.e. the syntagma. A new meaning is created by the selection from the comparable paradigm (the selection itself is, however, ideologically symptomatic, within a certain ideological coding, all paradigmatic choices are not equivalent and very often thinkable) and by the installation to the syntagma. (cf. Reifova and coll. 2004: 178)

3. Studying ideology: defining the territory and the choice of the analytic concept

After declaring the aim to search the text of SDJG for the ideology manifesting itself via text orientators, it is necessary to choose an adequate ideology conception. According to John Corner, the term of "ideology" can be used in plural as a synonym for the belief or group norms without containing any judgments. In a political debate, this can be used to negatively label unacceptably party or compromised idea content or a framework of understanding and can also be used to describe the unsettled relation of knowledge or ideas to the material conditions. (Corner 2001 : 532) The plurality of discovered meanings of this term has also been emphasized by Teun van Dijk:

Among the plethora of conceptual approaches, we see ideologies defined as system of ideas, especially those of dominant classes or other groups, as interpretation schemes for everyday life, as suffused with common sense or partisan interests, as strategies of legitimation, as hegemonic definitions of reality, as false consciousness inculcated by dominant discourse, and as dominant discourse itself.

(van Dijk 1998: 307)

Works of British cultural studies representatives presented an important tidal wave in the ideology conception operations, especially in the 1980s, i.e. in the time when cultural studies took interest in the anticipated preferred reading forming in the text structure and in the ability of this preferred reading to determine the subject position or to achieve superiority over the reader.¹⁴ In essence, the works (and their authors) may be distinguished between the "classics" of the ideology studies (particularly Marxist conception of the governing ideas,¹⁵ Althusser's essays,¹⁶ and Gramsci's versions of hegemony¹⁷), on which cultural studies were rooted, as well as the cultural revisions, amendments and extensions.¹⁸ This settlement of the ideology studies' "geological layers" then led to the series of publications in 90s that attempted to systemize the existing research, yet they usually somewhat extended the existing menu.¹⁹

3.1. Conception of ideology of unfree societies

None of the mentioned conceptions suits the explanation of the ideology substance that was supported by the communist regimes. It is as if the ideology studies theoreticians assumed that the political and legislative advocacy of so-called communist ideology in the post-war regimes of the Soviet type must be clear to everyone. Thus, in this direction, the ideological analysis did not get much further than common knowledge.

14 According to John Corner, however, the interest in ideology within cultural studies was exhausted and there is no potential for further studies. (Cf. Corner 2001: 532)

15 Cf. Marx - Engels 1959.

16 Cf. Althusser 1971.

17 Cf. Gramsci 1959.

18 We should mention at least *dominant or preferred meanings* of Stuart Hall (see the translation of Halls's text: *Rediscovery of Ideology* published in this MS number; further cf. Hall, 1980 in *Science Theory*, No. 2, 2005: 51) or an attempt of David Morley to open and subsequently review the model of coding and decoding. (cf. Morley 2003: 121)

19 Cf. Eagleton 1991; Larrain 1996 in: Chen - Morley 1996; Thompson 1984; Thompson 1990; van Dijk 2000 (first edition. 1998).

The “archetypal” Marxist ideology version is, for instance, unsuitable for the explanation of the society with a governing role of the communist party due to its economic nature. We can hardly explain the ideological functioning of the communist regimes by referring to the ownership of production means or class inequality, when the monopoly owner was the state and the existing classes were understood as classes with no antagonist relations. The regime that acknowledged the doctrine, according to which the proletarian revolution can remove all false consciousness, however, had its own ideology and defined the term of ideology (or faithfulness to guiding ideas) quite commonly. It is this paradox that is discussed by van Dijk, when he says that one item of Marx and Engel’s heritage, the communism, was discredited by the second part of their heritage, i.e. the term of ideology.

What did the communist “officials” own, if these were not the production means and what laid the grounds for their abilities to rule the post war society of Central and Eastern European by the ideology?²⁰ Along with Pierre Bourdieu, who was engaged in the same issue in his lecture delivered on 25 October 1989 in Eastern Berlin, we can offer a following answer: they owned the political capital (Bourdieu 1998: 23). Bourdieu replaced the function of the *cultural capital* with the *political capital*, as this was, in his interpretation, used as a tool to penetrate to so-called elite status culture and as a tool of achieving symbolic wealth and privileges. (Great Dictionary of Sociology 1996: 474) In these societies, the cultural capital represented one of the most significant, albeit changeable in content, relation distinctions which distinguish the classes. (Bourdieu 1989: 11) Similarly to our questions in the case of ideology conceptions formulated for the need of capital society description, Bourdieu asked if this model (model of the cultural capital as a foundation of the society differentiation) can also be applied to former East Germany. As well as we did, he answers that the economic capital is placed aside and that all the differences cannot be assigned to the ownership of the cultural capital nor the education capital. “It is therefore necessary to assume that the surveyed differences, especially those regarding catering and lifestyle, are based on another differentiation principle, i.e. on the uneven division of another capital type. By that we understand what could be called a political capital [...]” (Bourdieu 1998: 23) Bourdieu understands the political capital particularly as an approach lubricant to the attributes of the different life style – we however assume that this conception can become a cornerstone of the formula explaining the position, from which the communist elites could assert itself and keep its ideology.

3.2. Conception of formal and informal ideologies

The typology, which brought an order to the clutter of different ideology definitions (or typology, which, as stated above, is missing) is beginning to shape up in the moment, when we select the *political capital ownership* as a typological criterion.

The cultural ideology conceptions are expressive in case of free, democratic, bourgeois societies, in which the dominant society classes have a privileged access to the economic, cultural, social, symbolic capital, but in consideration of the political parties’ plurality institute have no guarantee of the political capital ownership. This applies to the *informal ideology* (and refined, which leads to artfulness of their definitions, too), as the superior status of those, who control the sources of circulation and legitimization of its ideology, is not formally recorded.

20 The power of the economic elite of the governing positions in socialistic companies is, for this purpose, left aside.

The ideology conception, which is missing in available definitions, concerns the regimes, in which the dominant classes influence does not fatally depend on the ownership of the economic or cultural capital, but whose elites are, on the contrary, formally secured with the political capital ownership. The ideologies, supporting thus insured political capital ownership, can be characterized as *formal ideologies* (for example in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, further abbreviated as *CSSR*), the Communist Party's governing role was formally recorded directly to the Constitution of the *CSSR* as its fourth article). The formal ideology aspects have not, despite their straightforwardness, been described in detail; still with the help of the informal ideology definition fragments, we can determine at least three characteristics: a) the approach to the dominant status does not have to be negotiated, it is formally, quite often legislatively, anchored; b) they are central and thus adopt their place in the very heart of the social life; c) disagreement, resistance or opposition is, in the view of their formal provision, punished not only by marginalization and subordination, but also by an intervention to the basic human rights, and in the extreme cases also the right to live.

John Corner states, with some relief, that the ideological studies of the last decade left at least the idea about the ideology, as a historically specific "bad thing". (Corner 2001: 527) A slightly contemptuous tone and the quotation marks used by Corner explain why ideology studies focused on the post-war formal ideologies insufficiently. Despite the fact that we would like to divide the formal ideology as a special form of ideology without any inclination to ignore the artfulness, slowness and durability of the informal ideologies, and the fact they are not anchored in any article or clause which could be cancelled by any "revolution" of any origin.

When analysing the ideological elements in the text of *SDJG*, we will understand the potentially present ideology simply as meanings that associate and explain the necessity or usefulness of the Czechoslovak Communist Party's leading role formalization (further abbreviated as *KSČ*) and they reproduce the associated values, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes.

3.3. Communication circuit as a model of relations between the production and meaning of a television text

The series of *SDJG* is analysed from the point of view of the control in the moment of production and from the view of the meanings arising in the framework of the text as a structure. We keep these two research perspectives and their consequences deliberately apart and do not determine any causal relations between them. We will try to explain their deliberate independence, more precisely the indetermination, through a model of so-called communication circuit of Stuart Hall. (Hall 2005: 42) This model describes the communication process with an emphasis to the television message production process as an articulation²¹ or interconnection of mutually associated, but distinctive moments set into particular discourses.

To assume this process is, however, possible and useful as a structure created and kept by development of *linked but distinctive* moments – production, circulation, distribution / consumption, reproduction.

(Hall 2005: 42)

21 The term of the "articulation" was introduced by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. (cf. Laclau – Mouffe 1985)

On each level, in each moment, a new meaning is created; however, what is happening in one moment does not determine the message meanings destinies in the subsequent moment.

The communication circuit model is usually quoted as a support for the audience activity precondition in the phase of the consumption or reception and an emphasis is given to the Hall's postscript about decoding within three different codes. (Hall 2005: 54) We are hence fully aware that Hall's communication circuit (or coding and decoding model) usually points to the relations between the production and consumption of the text and different discourse circumstances in both moments.

Hall is interested in different forms and moments of communication between the producer and the audience via the mediated text of the television programme itself. Essentially Hall is arguing that the process of communication consists of many different and related moments in which a 'passage of forms' takes place.

(Davis 2004: 61)

In this paper, the model is used model atypically: it serves us, with respect to the fact that there is no audience in our explanation, as a foundation for a discontinuous analysis of two generated meanings in the production phase.

Even the production phase is not a monolith, but a complex of different moments. Stuart Hall divides, amongst others, the production relations and meaning structures.²² Even between those, we anticipate the indetermination relation, which is fatally important for our decision to carry out the discrete analysis without the causal relations. On the production side, we simply see the *production relations* and relatively autonomous *meaning text structure*, when in both of the moments a meaning is created without any determination. It is believed that the text structure produces another meaning (or more precisely "larger quantity of meaning") or meaning above the frame of the intention present in the explicit intervention for the checking and control of the content. In the moment of production, we therefore distinguish production relations (in our case forms of ideological text control) and meaning structures (more complex meaning emerging in the whole text structure). As well as the whole production moments and receptions, the production relations and meaning structures in the moment of the production have, in our opinion, a relative autonomy. We therefore study these two areas (text control and meaning text structure) one after another, but without determining any causal relations:

- a) First of all, we focus on the actual forms of the ideological content control in the SDJG in the production phase or the text formation: it is a recapitulation (if the historical sources allow us to) of the explicit ideological attempts of the period formal ideology representatives (that is the authorities of the ÚV KSČ (*Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party*) – its ideological board and the mass media department – as well as the Czechoslovak Television management) to incorporate the preferred meanings to the screenplay in the process of its approval. The ideological elements that entered the screenplay out

22 This concerns so called meaning structures with the index 1 (meaning of the own text before the reader meets the text), which Hall distinguishes into the meaning structures 2 (meaning structures at the moment of reception). (Hall 2005: 46)

of the authorial intention due to the decision of the “higher posts” are therefore placed in front of the brackets and we emphasize them in a separate Chapter 5, where we also summarize, how the series of SDJG were discussed within the ideological mechanism between the Czechoslovak Television management and the authorities of the ÚV KSČ.

- b) The chapter 6 then analyses the television text of SDJG in its relative autonomy, and it is followed how the potential ideological elements are formed within the text itself based on the internal relations, processes, oppositions, and paradigmatic choices; i.e. how the text orientators contribute to the to the text meaning. We proceed from the fact that the text structure “revives in its own life” and the independent meanings are created in the text and it is not important with these meanings, how the “material” for their production entered the text.²³

4. Methodological intermezzo

There are three research methods that correspond to two analysis areas. The checking and control of the text is examined by a heuristic analysis of the period sources and by a method of an oral history; the text meanings are sought through a qualitative structuralist ideology analysis.

4.1. Heuristic analysis of the sources and oral history

The area of the research content checking and control (circumstances of the SDJG text formation between 1983 and 1985) is applied with a procedure that is called a “historiography of television” by Allen. (Allen in Godfrey 2006: 207) The analysis data were gathered from the primary and secondary sources. Benjamin considers the primary sources of the historiographical TV are the commented direction screenplays, editorial board records, the secondary sources are the programme reviews, and press releases. (Benjamin in Godfrey 2006: 27) Allen divides the sources to the written records, video records, interviews, memoirs and biographies, as well as newspaper articles. (Allen in Godfrey 2006: 222) The heuristic analyses of the sources are based particularly on the primary sources from APF ČT (possibly NA²⁴): we used the correspondence between the former management of the Czechoslovak TV and ÚV KSČ, board records and publications of *Ideological and Thematic Plan* for the examined years (which will be closely analysed later). We also worked with the approved versions of the printed screenplays of the SDJG series. The oral history method was used to produce and process the interviews with Magdalena Dietlová, the screenwriter’s widow, as well as selected witnesses (see note 49). The oral history, as described by Murray, “consists of the interviews conducted with people, who have direct or indirect knowledge or experience relating to particular topical area.” (Murray in Godfrey 2006: 47) Taking into account other Murray’s recommendations (picture type choice, time sufficiency, minimal editing), we conducted the interviews, rewrote them, filed and qualitatively used the selected parts as examples (“specimen”), i.e. as “parts or collections or data parts, that are used to support the arguments”. (Lindlof, Taylor 2002: 234)

23 “The consciousness of the broadcaster must be an area to be studied, for it exists – the terrain of intention – not as the origin of anything – but precisely as the intentional terrain produced by the field of ideology which is, of course, outside intention.” (Hall 1978, quotation according to Morley 2003: 120) When analysing the text structure, we can assume that the relations formed in the text are not under the control of the author’s aim.

24 APF ČT = Archive of programme funds of the Czech Television, NA = National Archive (translator’s note).

4.2. Structuralist analysis of ideology

The series text (its visual and verbal form) was subjected to the structural ideology analysis and partially also to the narrative analysis. (Bertrand – Hughes 2005: 191). The structuralist analysis was carried out with an emphasis onto the relations that arise in the text with a repeated, detailed “reading”, and we used particularly the opposing and contrast relations for the interpretation creation (for example the presentation of the blue-collar and peasant work). Out of narrative elements, we took the portrayed characters and environment into consideration. The text (scenes and lines) and narrative elements (character and environment) were connected by relations according to the common codes, so that the resulting meanings illustrated how the text structure resonates the formal communist ideology (how the text contributes to confirmation of the communist party’s role of a governing social power). The meaning of connecting the qualitative and ideological analysis is emphasized by Larsen, when he states that “unravelling the latent meaning via qualitative content analysis assumes the ideology de-construction and criticism of its social roots with respect to the political action.” (Larsen in Jensen – Jankowski 1999: 123)

Technically, we proceeded from the selected procedures of the grounded theory construction in the structuralist ideology analysis, that is the open coding and classification. (Lindlof – Taylor 2002: 210) Recorded and code-marked data were taken out of the context and, according to the common feature sharing, connected to the higher system category. Audio-visual video records of the thirteen episodes of the SDJG series served as a basic data source for the structural ideology analysis. The sample was watched three times in total: premiere watching (without any comments, each episode without interruption), analytical watching (with interruptions to make comments) and monitoring (for an accurate record of the quotations). During the watching, we made notes in a form of a special record to each episode; we rewrote the story in our own words and provided the rewrite with the “asides”. The rewrite with its “asides” was then followed by a “commentary”.

Asides are brief, reflective bits of an analytic writing that succinctly clarify, explain, interpret, or raise questions about some specific happening or process described in a fieldnote.

(Emerson a kol. 1995: 101)²⁵

The coded and classified data (the codes were usually understood as a nominal terminology, connecting a certain fraction of data with a category, where the data come under in an excellent research scheme) were, in conclusion, interpreted with a mentioned emphasis to the structuralist monitoring of the difference relations. The opposition or contrasts were watched at states that the characteristics of defined categories eventually gain. For example, with the “work” category, the significant difference appeared on the scale of the work executor’s class membership, with the “political” category on the scale of the political affiliation. As for the communist political affiliation of the participants, there was a contrast placement in time dimension of the political affiliation and it brought a differentiation to the pre-war heroic period of the fighting Czechoslovak Communist Party and the post-war corrupted period of the governing Czechoslovak Communist Party. Another significant dimension of the communist political affiliation was

²⁵ Quoted according to Lindlof, Taylor 2002: 212.

moreover presented by the mentioned states of the historic regularity or on the contrary an individual failure.

Within the framework of the outlined and illustrated-with-an-example structuralist ideology analysis, we came to the generalized categories with the help of the grounded theory processes. The categories derived from the data are nothing else than text orientators, whose distinguishing was introduced at the beginning of the text.

5. Production circumstances: Field of ideology pressures during the SDJG series production

5.1. The second half of the 1980s as a historical moment of the communist twilight

The series of SDJG was produced at the already mentioned turn of the first and second half of the 1980s and a part of its production phase falls into the time after announcing the perestroika programme, i.e. the time of Mikhail Gorbachov's succession to the post of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March 1985. In the official, as well as the internal documents published at that time by the authorities of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, the "wind of change" did not win the way. Mikhail Gorbachov and his reform steps were loudly paid tributes, but internally, the leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party were rather confused from the liberalization of the Soviet Union, especially the policy of so called the "glasnost".

From February 25 to March 6 1986, 27th Convention of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was held, where a new programme version of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was approved and a new plan of reforms acceleration was set. Less than a month later, on March 24 to 28, the Czechoslovak Communist Party Convention took place, where the Main Directions of the Economic and Social Development of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic for the years of 1986 to 1990 were approved. The perplexity of the Czechoslovak Communist Party notables towards the Gorbachov trend of "new thinking" and towards the public information dissemination appeared in a turn to the economic topics, i.e. even in the relation to the deterioration of the state's economic situation in the second half of the 1980s. The editorial of the Rudé Právo newspaper (Red Right) on October 28 1985 emphasized that the Communist Party considers, in particular, an "intense economy development, higher efficiency and production quality" as its tasks. (Suk – Cuhra – Koudelka 1999: 15) The main documents of the 17th Convention described the cultural role in common clichés, Gustav Husák personally "announced that the developed socialistic society of Czechoslovakia faces a task of forwarding strategically the economic, social and societal development, based particularly on the use of the science-technical advancement." (Suk – Cuhra – Koudelka 1999: 17)

Even after the 17th Convention, the Praesidium of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party consisted of people who were brought to their position by the suppression of the reviving processes in 1968, which, according to Martin Hájek, was a source of normalization lethargy continuation and particularly of a paradox in the Czechoslovak communist discourse of the second half of the 1980s.

Until the succession of Mikhail Gorbachov, the programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was more or less a model example for the communist parties of other satellites and it was possible, as well as necessary to follow such model without any problems. With the arrival of restructuring, however, the Soviet model could not

be mechanically copied and at the same time, Moscow discontinued sending precise instructions, how to solve the internal situation in Czechoslovak Communist Party. (Hájek in Kabele et al. 2003: 62)

Ironically, when Mikhail Gorbachov started the reform steps in the Soviet Union [...], the Czechoslovak party management was forced to resist those Soviet = correct pressures for changes, as they undercut the stability of their own status. [...] The power group thus appeared in a schizophrenic position: on one hand they wanted to enforce the political and economic reforms (with emphasis to the second item), on the other hand its members were aware that this also means a serious danger and most probably the fall of their absolute power status.

(Hájek in Kabele et al. 2003: 63)

The above-mentioned schizophrenia and the deadlock resulted partially in the attempts for economic reforms, and partially in the ideological inertia of the official thinking framework and its representation (speech language or the media contents), which took place in a certain “calm before the storm”. This inertia was transferred via the hierarchy of the communist ruling also to the subordinate state organizations; the Czechoslovak Television was no exception. Jarmila Cysařová thus describes the situation in the Czechoslovak Television after the turn of 1985 as a “state of stillness”. (Cysařová 1996: 6)

The television management adjusted to the cosmetic modifications of the existing regime. They did not acknowledge the principles of “glasnost” and the economic reform verbally, but the television programme was still evaluated and planned in compliance with the usual rituals – exclusively in dependence on the congresses, assemblies, instructions of the Czechoslovak Communist Party authorities in the whole production spectrum.

(Cysařová 1996: 8)

5.2. Forms of “governance” in the Czechoslovak Television and deciding on the SDJG series content

If we speak of the ideological regulation of the SDJG content, we understand the external instructions that came from the mass media and communication department of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party²⁶ and similarly the internal preventative supervision of the Czechoslovak Television management. (The management at the same time functioned as a channel used for interpretation the comments of the Department of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party).²⁷

26 For more details on the structure of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, see Hájek in Kabele: 61 – 103. The Department of the Mass Media and Communication was incorporated as a division for Propaganda and Agitation Department in 1973; it was established again between 1970s and 1980s. Based on the research in the agenda relating to SJDS, it can be claimed that it was active again in 1985, as it is obvious from the gratulatory letter of Otto Čmolík, the Head of the Department to the Deputy of the Czechoslovak Television, Jiří Fér. (APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 979)

27 For example, at the editors meetings, where the members of the Mass Media Department were usually present as well (for example comrade Mělničuk, comrade Krempová or comrade Chorvati). At these meetings, they

At the time of preparation, shooting and broadcast, Jan Zelenka was the General Director of the Czechoslovak Television,²⁸ Vladimír Diviš the Deputy Director of Programming, Oldřich Janota the Editor-in-chief of the Drama Programmes Main Editorial Office and Jaroslav Homuta the script editor with the supervision above the series focus and the content.

5.2.1. External process of control and supervision

The fundamental instruments for the Czechoslovak Television program formation were so-called ideological and thematic plans (further as ITP), which were always produced for the upcoming year and contained an outlook for the following year. ITP was

[...] developed by the main editors according to the Policies of the central headmaster collegium, and coordinated by nationwide commissions specialized for particular program area for one calendar year with the outlook for the following year, it directed the main ideological goals of ČST for the given year.

(Television Explanatory Dictionary 1978: 220, c. Cysařová 1999: 21)

The ITP always contained the introductory word and then was divided into chapters according to the proposed programme guide and specific programmes from individual editors. The basic “compass” for the composition of the programme guide out of the programmes was directed by the anniversaries and important days of the year, the list of which was an appendix of the ITP. The series SDJG appeared for the first time in the ITP in the years 1984–1985, planned for the 40th anniversary of the liberation by the Soviet army. (According to the original time schedule, it was supposed to be broadcast already in 1985.)²⁹ The theme of the series was carried into the ITP in this way:

“Four generations, which we want to follow from the time of World War I to the times of the first republic, Fascist occupation, after-war period until today, live through the conflicts and fights of our people, our working class, and our modern history. Rich plots and dramatic, tragic and triumphal fights are shown within the extensive family of glassmaker Cirkl.”

(ITP 1984–1985: 40)³⁰

The ITP was approved by the ideological commission of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, however, in terms of everyday preparations,

functioned as the “voice of the communist party” during evaluations and intervened into this evaluation. For example, comrade Mělničuk in case of a programme broadcast at the same time with SDJG: “The Saturday programme of Drama Programmes Main Editorial Office was criticised by the Department for Mass Media Communication and the Department of Culture of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. We received a large number of critical letters and phone calls. (APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 210)

28 He was appointed by the Main Director on August 6 1969 after dismissal of Josef Šmídmajer (Team of authors – Bednařík 2003: 240)

29 It was talked about earlier on because Jaroslav Dietl wrote a screenplay in 1983. The series was ordered in the previous years, probably in 1982. In the name of the programme, the name “working class saga” is used in the ITP for the year 1984 – 1985. (APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 1219)

30 APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 1219

the suggestions and objections were more often brought up by the members of the department of mass media, which was during the preparation time of SDJG lead by Otto Čmolík.

The ideological commission was involved in the documents negotiation, in which the series SDJG was featured, only once.³¹ The secretary of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Jan Fojtík introduced the *Information about the progress of realisation of the conclusions from the 15th session of Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and 16th Convention of the Czechoslovak Communist Party about the activities of the Czechoslovak Television and Czechoslovak Radio* on 6 December, 1984.³² The series SDJG was mentioned in the context of the following statements:

“The education of the socialistic human as a versatile personality, the institution of his socialistic awareness, and his beliefs are influenced by artistic and entertaining programmes of the Czechoslovak Television. [...] Especially it is necessary to show human fates in a wider conception of the industrial production in factories, in big building sites and other important work sites.”

In Chapter Four, under the title “40th anniversary of the Czechoslovak liberation in the television program”, the series “Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker” is also mentioned under the work name Saga of the working class, together with the cycle of the concerts *Forty independent years*, with the ten episodes documentary about the Czechoslovak Communist Party as the main force of the anti-fascistic fight *For the National Liberation, for the New Republic*, and the eight episodes series about the Slovak National Uprising, *The Revolt History*. It is interesting, that in the ITP from several various years, as well as in other documents from the years 1984 – 1988, the series is always introduced in nearly the same or just slightly shortened paragraph. The information for the Praesidium of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party thus says that it is a “thirteen-episode original drama series about the fates of several generations in working class family from the World War I to the 1960s.”

The SDJG was also mentioned in the document for the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party which was addressed to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and not to the ideological commission or directly to the Praesidium. It was presented by Otto Čmolík (the department of mass media) and Jan Zelenka (Czechoslovak Television’s general director) under the name *The objectives of the Czechoslovak television in observing the conclusions from the 17th Convention of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and 7th session of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party*.

“A series constitutes as a special chapter in the dramatic production. In the past period, there were several premieres – politically

31 Hájek also says: “In fact, during our studies in the archive, we did not experience any activities of the Commission of the Central Committee proposing any suggestions to the Praesidium or that the activities of the commission would be too outstanding.” (Hájek 2003: 71) However, in the National Archive there are only inventory notes from the Praesidium meetings available, the agenda of the commissions is not processed.

32 NA, f. 02/1, vol. 127, ar.u. 123, b. to information 2.

and socially most important were, for example, Povstalecká historie (Rebel History), Klement Gottwald, or Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker."³³

The rule about adopting the same characteristic which was once approved and did not appear provocative, is seen in another document with a note about the series SDJG, which was sent by the programme deputy Vladimír Diviš to Lubomír Chorvatič of the Department of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party on 17 August 1984.³⁴ It is again a variation on the former paragraph from ITP 1984–1985.

"In the second half of the year 1985, the thirteen-episode series produces by the Czechoslovak Television Prague, entitled Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker, will be introduced. The author: J. Dietl. The series is a saga of four generations of the working class family. It captures the times from the World War I to the present time and shows conflicts and fights of our nation, our working class for the better future."

It can be summarized that concerning the ideological control from the "outside", there were registered, regarding the references about SDJG, lively contacts between the Czechoslovak Television management and the Department of mass media and communication at the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. The ideological commission, the cultural department³⁵ or the secretary Fojtík were involved minimally in the process. The departments basically had executive and administrative (non-elected) role within the whole machinery in the structure of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, and were directed by the secretaries.

Generally, the difference between an elected officer and a worker of the machinery was the following: the elected officer was making the decisions and the machinery was executing the decisions, but in many practical respects the workers of the machinery were deciding independently or even the secretaries were directly dependent on the activities of "their" department. The directors of the departments had strong positions, especially if they were in the position for a longer period of time.

(Hájek 2003: 65)

There is a reason to believe that this was the case of the relationship between the ideological commission, directed by secretary Fojtík, and the Department of mass media and communication. The discovered correspondence of the Czechoslovak Television

33 APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 976.

34 "Dear comrade, I am sending you the information about the program plans for the 40th anniversary of the fight for national liberation of the Czechs and Slovaks with the Czechoslovak liberation by the Soviet army in the Czechoslovak television in the appendix. With the comrade salutation Dr. Vladimír Diviš." (APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 979)

35 The cultural department was mostly in charge of public education at schools, artistic associations and activities in literary, theatrical, film, music and artwork area. (Hájek 2003: 79)

regarding the SDJG was always addressed to the Department, never directly to Fojtik. The people from the Department, although they were only workers of the machinery, had quite wilful power over the Czechoslovak Television programme.³⁶

5.2.2. Internal processes of control and supervision

Internal supervision from the inside of the Czechoslovak Television connected with the series SDJG was concentrated into the institution of approving the screenplays, approval projections, evaluation of the programmes at the meetings of general editors, and quite unsystematic communicating of the suggestions to Jaroslav Dietl through the personal contact (when he was “hauled over the coals”), either on the phone or in writing.

The person signed on the front page of archived episodes is the general editor of the Drama Programmes Main Editorial Office, Oldřich Janota, who is the one who approved the screenplay. The process of developing variety of suggestions before the final authorization was quite complicated, without any strict rules, and the screenplay probably circulating within many pre-readers, often from the Department of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Magdalena Dietlová said following in the interview with the author:

“It was always corrected after someone new had read it and Jaroslav was totally mad about this. Why are they giving it to read to more people? Because the deputy said and this one said and that one said... He would always erupt with anger: “Heck, haven’t we finished, it is finished, approved, let’s not bother anymore.” But then someone else read it or made a note to it. Someone was always talking into it then.”³⁷

It can be assumed that various interferences and suggestions came also from the fear, from the rush or from the anxiety about how one would look if they did not object to anything. The screenplays were rather going from one person to another, because bearing the responsibility for the final verdict, that the work is finally ideologically clear, could be risky. Hardly anyone from the Czechoslovak Television’s management and the Central Committee’s department was so powerful without having someone else more powerful above or willing to point at mistakes and lack of class-consciousness. In this sense, Hájek, Kohútek and Vajdová characterise the Czechoslovak Communist Party as a clannish organisation, typical of inseparable mixture of governance and bureaucracy.

Václav Bělohradský called this mixture of functions and bureaucracy in the context of the banal evil, a charismatic bureaucracy [...] It seems that the Communist Party shared many features with this clan: criteria for the evaluation of the subordinate workers were particularly “political”, which means that their content could be changed ad hoc depending on the circumstances (what was right at one moment could be bad in another time etc.)

(Kabele, ed. 2005: 47)

36 Bohumla Zelenková, for instance, mentioned that some people pushed ahead their children with literary ambitions to become authors of the Czechoslovak Television programme. (Interview with Bohumila Zelenková, 26 July 2006, author’s archive)

37 Interview with Magdalena Dietlová, 12 July 2006, author’s archive.

The Czechoslovak Television organized working and approval screenings. Jaroslav Dietl did not used to be present at the approval screenings, the representatives of the directors were nevertheless present for the working screenings organized mainly for the management by the director Dudek. The contact of the creators with the chairmen of the Czechoslovak Television was not important concerning the exchange of instructions or expressing the disagreement with the content. In this matter, Magdalena Dietlová added:

“Jaroslav found it difficult to put up with the presence of Zelenka and the deputies. You know, they did not say much in front of him. But when they agreed on something as a result of their working meetings and announced it to him by the phone, he was terribly angry.”³⁸

Weekly meetings of the general editors, during which they regularly evaluated and commented on the program of the previous week, could be considered a form of an internal follow-up of the programme, and its official interpretation and creation of the overall opinion of the television headquarters. Central director, deputies, general editors and also more or less the same officers from the mass media department took part (in 1986 for instance comrade Krempová or Lubomír Chorvatič). At the time of SDJG broadcasting on TV, it was dealt with it three times at the meetings of editors-in-chief. On 14 February, the general editor Janota said that *“the final cut of the first episode had not been broadcasted, instead, it was the version approved in September 1985. The responsible workers we guilty and there will be disciplinary measures launched against them.”³⁹* On 7 March, Janota warned that *“the viewers noticed Jakub’s social status (he has no existential problems, he is building a house)”⁴⁰* However, Janota and director Zelenka did not go into detail about it, since the social status was relevant as it was the time of conjuncture and in the given episode, Jakub was a glassworks foreman. The implication of the series evaluation after its broadcasting confirmed that the television management found desirable meanings in it and included the series among other successful programmes. For instance, director Zelenka said: *“Jaroslav Dietl’s series Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker immensely impressed the viewers. The viewers understood that it was supposed to show a human and worker who was wise, honest, just, loved his work, and was devoted to his family.”* The deputy Diviš added that *“it is important to distinguish between the history book of the communist party and an artistic view of a certain period of time. It is impossible to make a didactic piece of work out of the art.”⁴¹*

One can thus feel a certain attempt to apologize or clear some parts of the series which digress from the black and white approach to the history and from formerly absolute dogmas in the commentaries pronounced in 1986. Provided the above mentioned confusion and uncertainty of the communist elite brought by the atmosphere of perestroika, the cautions appreciation of the series SDJG may be understood as its manifestation.⁴²

The means of influencing or regulating the content of the screenplays, personal, written or telephonic, probably quite varied from invitation to the management offices to informal

38 Interview with Magdalena Dietlová, 12 July 2006, author’s archive.

39 The protocol from the general editors meeting, 14 February 1986. (APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 1347)

40 The protocol from the general editors meeting, 7 March 1986. (APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No 1347)

41 The protocol from the general editors meeting, 16 May 1986. (APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 1347)

42 The Czechoslovak Television’s General Director, Jan Zelenka, was also a member of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. (Cysařová 1999: 8)

conversations above the half-finished screenplay. Apparently, Dietl's conversations with the dramaturges were the least conflicting and formal; the difference in the individual dramaturges' approach, however, depended only on themselves, on their past, since some of them came after 1968 from the machinery of the Central Committee of the communist party and their role was to be guards of the ideological purity rather than to be co-workers in the production of the artwork. Nevertheless, according to Magdalena Dietlová, this was not the case of Miloš Smetana or Bohumila Zelenková, who Jaroslav Dietl did not mind working with:

*“Jaroslav had always tried to somehow bluff the dramaturges. Not Smetana though, because he understood Jaroslav and suffered with him when there was something that had to be added. But even he was sometimes a messenger of bad news. They also sometimes led the debates at our kitchen table. I heard the discussions especially about the series *Nejmladší z rodu Hamrů* (The Youngest of the Hamr Family). They used to sit in the dining room; our house hadn't been finished by then yet.”*⁴³

The relationship with the dramaturge of the SDJG series, Jaroslav Homuta, was not so friendly, but at the same time Dietl did not rank him among dramaturges who Magdalena Dietlová characterizes as follows:

*“Watchers who kept saying that successes of anything connected with socialism should be added and that a particular character should be a member of the Party; they were there only for the process of authorization ... Some of them had to go through the proper schooling first so they could become dramaturges. He was saying about Homuta that he had already become a dramaturge who was able to comment on the dramatic structure, that Dietl had educated him as needed.”*⁴⁴

However, negotiating the level of ideological conformance of the content did not depend only on the strength and power of the “watchers of purity”, but also on the author's personality. Jaroslav Dietl, for example, was not a passive receiver of the reservations and instructions, but participated in the disputations with the TV management and tried to advocate the plots and characters, explain their correctness, but still followed the authorized boundaries, and in the case of the SDJG series, pointed at the aspiration to show the realistic communist world. He managed to keep this strategy in the series throughout the negative character of Bořivoj Bošek, a bad glassworker, careerist, thief, Gestapo informer, notwithstanding that it is him, from the eighth episode taking place in 1945, who personalizes the more foregrounding role of the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

“Jaroslav had a very strong ability to persuade people... He was clever and when he felt very strongly about something, he was able to provide evasive answers. He was arguing about something totally

43 Interview with Magdalena Dietlová, 12 July 2006, author's archive.

44 Ibid.

*different for so long that the first was forgotten. As for the character of Bošek, he was explaining to them why they shall not raise any objections. He was ingenious in this. He was able to explain to them that there were good and bad members of the party and that Bošek belonged to the bad ones which should be shown in the contrast to the good ones.”*⁴⁵

Personal conversations during the preparations thus allowed some sort of discussion about various aspects of the content, however the results were uncertain. *“He was able to argue and fight and when he had lost, he rearranged it anyway because otherwise he would put it into the drawer.”*⁴⁶ The decisions about the correction of the content in a written form were yet incontrovertible. Any of the written instructions were not retained; nevertheless their existence is noted in the memo notes of Magdalena Dietlová: *“Tuesday, 22 May 1985. More and more corrections. Jarouš is reading aloud the deputy’s notes. It is really a pity that besides me there aren’t more listeners.”*⁴⁷

Concerning the direct and evincible interferences in the screenplay text of the SDJG series, there are only documents saying that the main character of Jakub the glassworker originally was not a member of the communist party and that the scene with Jakub joining the party (episode 8 taking place in 1945) was written by Dietl after being ordered to do so from outside.

*“Monday, 21 May 1984. A far more important event is that Jakub joined the Party. Jakub, father of a large family, a hero of Jarouš’s new big television saga, had originally never been a member of the Party and as a non-party man was introduced to the bosses in the first version. But he was not successful and so today, historically though in 1945, in a touchy scene, he announces to his two sons that he took the courage and joined it.”*⁴⁸

The scenes in which Jakub is building a new house and is moving into it were also endangered. Paradoxically, this motive, contradicting the principle of egalitarianism, was criticized for a long time. In 1986, the same people, who had reproached the building of the house at the general editors meetings in 1984 (see above), were advocating it as a logical step. *“Tuesday, 22 May 1984. It seems that the thing which bothered them the most was that Jakub built a house, though it was common and not unusual that glassworkers were building their houses.”*⁴⁹

5.2.3. The mystery of episode fourteen

Strong, yet unfortunately indemonstrable pressure on the content of the SDJG screenplay is implied by the discovered part of the screenplay for the episode fourteen, an episode

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 Diary of Magdalena Dietlová. Archive of Magdalena Dietlová.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

which has never been broadcasted.⁵⁰ The episode called *Wedding* was found in the Czech Television's archive, with the typed name of Jaroslav Dietl on the front page, with the name of the episode and with the additional title *Epilogue chapter of the television series* and the date October 1983.⁵¹ It is probably an unfinished screenplay containing only 69 pages (screenplays of the others episodes have about 120 pages) and there is no wedding involved in the plot outlined on the screenplay pages. What is, however, the most important thing is the fact that the episode is, in terms of time, taking place in the 1980s and that all the characters from the previous episodes are, except for the youngest son Vojta and his wife Liza, dead. The old Albrechtice glassworks had been demolished and instead, there is a new modern factory with Vojta as its director. The plot of episode fourteen, in comparison to the representation of the historical matters of the history, seems to be quite trivial. The main plot covers car robberies for which one of the Vojta's sons is sent to prison.

Nevertheless, the author of this episode cannot be claimed with certainty. Magdalena Dietlová does not know about its existence and is confident that Jaroslav Dietl did not write the fourteenth episode. The screenplay of this episode is not among the others bound in her personal archive. The other contemporaries do not recollect the creation of the screenplay.⁵² Both Bohumila Zelenková and Oldřich Janota imply the possibility that it could be an attempt of any of the dramaturges. Janota is also surprised by moving the plot into the 1980s in episode fourteen: *"There wasn't anything interesting, there was nothing what should be acted. If we had allowed him..., if they had allowed him to set the plot back in 1968..."*⁵³ The shallowness of the plot is in the sharp contrast with Dietl's writing, together with the violation of the dramatic arch leading to the closing of the plot, which is happening at the end of episode thirteen by the death of the main character. At the same time, however, the episode is dated in October 1983. The last episode which was clearly authorized by Jaroslav Dietl was finished in August 1983, so hardly anyone could know the exact content of the previous episodes two months after finishing the last one and follow the content, as it is quite unlikely that the television would ask someone else to write another episode while Dietl was alive.

The most remarkable is the change in the time set of the episode into the time of the premiere of the series. Compared with the last episode, there is almost a thirty year jump in time and a step Jaroslav Dietl was trying to persistently avoid.

*"Jaroslav was terribly afraid to get to the present after the experience with the Hamr's family. He awfully did not want to write about the celebration of the socialistic present and its outcomes, so he had decided to start as far in the past as possible and created a sort of historical folding picture-book."*⁵⁴

50 A poetic epilogue from Vladimír Janovic was broadcasted as the final note after the television series *Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker* (Týdeník Československá televize [Czechoslovak Television Weekly] 5.-11.5., 19/1986, p. 12).

51 APF ČT, f. SC, inv. n. 18/91.

52 The author asked Magdalena Dietlová, Jana Štěpánková, Jaroslav Dudek's widow, Jana Divišová, wife of series' architect, Ivana Rozehnalová, production assistant of Dagmar Bautzká, and Oldřich Janota, former editor-in-chief of the Drama Programmes main editorial office. Dramaturge Jaroslav Homuta died in 2005.

53 Interview with Oldřich Jnota, 28 July 2006, author's archive.

54 Interview with Magdalena Dietlová, 12 July 2006, author's archive.

The stronger was the need of the screenwriter to avoid the present time, the stronger were the appeals for its dramatic realisation that can be found in the then documents. For instance, in ITP 1984 – 1985: *“The main goal of the editorials was to show a contemporary hero as an active designer of the socialistic present and communist future.”*⁵⁵ Also the ITP from 1985 – 1986 says: *“The effort in all studies must be aimed at the ideological and artistic quality of the current matters as the base for the television dramatic production.”*⁵⁶ In the Information about the stage of realisation of the conclusions from the 15th session of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and 16th Convention of the Czechoslovak Communist Party about the activities of the Czechoslovak Television and Czechoslovak Radio (that was presented to the Central Committee’s praesidium by Jan Fojtík on 6 December 1985) is especially well seen the effort:

*“The societal order as the basic method of the dramaturgy of the artistic programs played a positive role. It stressed out the orientation on the positive hero of today, with his positive work, characters and human features.”*⁵⁷

The fourteenth episode of otherwise historical series moved to the present and is written in the time when the ideological aims explicitly accented the need of the orientation on the present time, thus indicates direct conflict between what Jaroslav Dietl wanted and did not want, and what was obligatory for the television management through the ITP and through the general timeline of the cultural policy of the communist party in the area of the dramatic television production. It is believed that “the mystery of episode fourteen” is a clear outcome of the television endeavour to “prolong” the plot of the exclusive and expensive series into the ideologically wanted at the present time. The ineptness of this solution and the interest in non-lowering the commercial value of the series probably eventually won over the requirements of the official theses and the episode was never shot. The poor script quite surely helped to this decision. Nevertheless, what cannot be answered are the question how it was created, why is the quality so different from other Dietl’s works and why it interrupts Dietl’s strictly kept rule of a story in thirteen episodes. However, either the creation of the motive was in fact entrusted to an inexperienced author, or – and we incline to this explanation – Jaroslav fDietl himself quietly (even without telling his wife) wrote the first draft and purposely spoiled it so much that he would lower its chances for realization to the minimum.

6. The story of a real human: text orientators in the series Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker

The following part will focus on the analysis of the markers realized in the visual and verbal content of the series Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker. We will be concerned with the qualitative analysis of the text orientators and their meaning-creating contributions to the text of SDJG. What is considered as text orientators in the historical television work are the narrative and marking elements with two parallel functions: they ensure the relationship to the represented real historical events and their choice also interconnects the text with the dominant ideology of the period in which the series was being created. (See Chapter 2 for more details.)

55 APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 352.

56 APF ČT, f. VE2, inventory No. 134.

57 NA ČR, f. 02/01, vol. 127, ar.j. 123, b. to the information 2.

6.1. Avoiding history: dual history and the strategy of precaution

Considering that it is a series, the episodes of which non-diagetically show the era with the specific years, supports the most important paradigm choices connected with the placement of each episode on the timeline, which can be graphically showed in diagram 1.⁵⁸

diagram 1: Datation of individual series episodes

1899	1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913
1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928
1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	

The first episode called *Vandrovník* (Wanderer), takes place in 1899 and ends by the 1990 New Year's Eve celebration, i. e. the celebration of the 20th century. The time setting of the first episode, i. e. opening of the whole narrative structure of the series, which needs to be dealt with separately (as well as its ending – see below),⁵⁹ orients the SDJG as a television novel about the 20th century. The outset of the New Year and the new century is connected with some other incomings in the first episode: a young glassworker Jakub is coming to Albrechtice and meets his future wife Terežka; it is on New Year's Eve when he finds out about their expected baby. The chronicler of Albrechtice has a speech in the pub about the hopes for *"equality, when there are no rich and no poor and when the Czech language will be even with others."*

The new century is thus represented through the expectations of new and better times in the private and public life, whereas these expectations function as comparison background for the historical peripeties shown in following episodes. In the arch between the beginning and the end of the narrative (in the final episode, Bošek as the concentrated personification of the sources for tragedies of the first half of the 20th century is definitely punished), the introductory expectations are confirmed and with the end of the narrative, the chance for better future is regained.

The first episode, together with the outset of the new century, pulls the main character Jakub from the margin of society into its centre.⁶⁰ The wandering "hobo" (Jakub's trip through Italy is also mentioned) is pulled down from his unstructured field of his past and builds the basic bonds: bonds to the place (he is settling down in Albrechtice), bonds to his work (he has a stable job at the glassworks) and bonds to his family (he is announcing the wedding and the expected baby). The text fixes Jakub into the firm positions: from the wandering glassworker gaining his experiences, he is becoming a hero connected with the place, job and home. The history of the 20th century is opened by the prototypical phase of modernity created by the two main institutions, the factory in the public sphere and the family in the private sphere. However, the SDJG series does not concentrate

58 Dark cells stand for years into which each episode takes places.

59 Nick Lacy stresses out the importance of the narration "opening". "Openings are important because they are usually intended to grab and hold the attention of the receiver of the text ... The opening must act as a narrative hook" (Lacy 2000: 6)

60 Will Wright stresses out the extent of the hero's acceptance by the society in his work *Sixguns and Society*. "Perhaps the most important opposition is that separating the hero from, the opposition between those who are outside society and those who are inside society." (Wright 1975, quoted according to Storey 1998: 129)

on the tension between the public and the private, but family and job; on the contrary, they co-exist in the perfect symbiosis throughout the whole text.

In every piece of work a real historical event or a historical period can be identified. The screenplay orderly introduces the following events into the structure of the whole text: the outset of the 20th century; the assassination of the crown successor and enlisting to the front in World War I; end of the World War I and after-war modernization of the production; building of the member platform for the newly established Czechoslovak Communist Country; economic depression of the 1930s; the Nazi annexation of the Sudets and rise of German nationalism and war threats; the domestic resistance during the World War II; the end of the World War II and expatriation of Germans; nationalizing of the small enterprises; changes after 1948; lawsuits in the 1950s; or the foundation of JZD (cohesive agricultural associations). Altogether, those are twelve real historical moments. The last episode does not introduce any real historic event; its function is to close the narrative in terms of the characters acting within the basic conflict, and organization of the story so it ends up with the just revenge on the negative hero. It is interesting that in the plot which keeps culminating until the final reckoning with the “villain” of the story Bořivoj Bošek, Dietl was able to avoid the legitimate linear representation of the real history (the events are processed chronologically) and deals with the plot only within the fictional world of characters, or more precisely by revealing Bošek’s old guilt from the time of the occupation.

The main unravelling from 1957, in otherwise chronological linear story, goes back in time to the period of the World War II. This step is considered the climax of the “strategy of cautiousness” which Dietl uses for distinguishing the events of national history and events of the communist party’s history; it could be said that his choice of marking each episode by certain years establishes dual history. While the episodes from periods around the important events from the communist party’s history are regularly set aside (before or after) the specific years, the episodes around the general national history are directly overlapping with the important years. The episode from the beginning of the 20th century is not set in 1921 (the establishment of the Czechoslovak Communist Party) but in the meantime period in 1924, the episodes from the after-war power overtaking by the communist party are marked by avoiding years 1946 (the party won in the elections) and 1948 (the February putsch) and take place in the time of years 1947 and 1949.⁶¹ General national history, such as World War I or the time of occupation, are, on the contrary, represented directly by the years of the events: i.e. years 1914 and 1918 or 1938 and 1945. While Dietl prevaricates between the historical dates of the communist party’s history and tries to avoid them, he sets the episodes with the events of national history directly into the specific time epicentres. In this sense, it is typical that Bošek, an influential communist officer, is not punished for his dishonest actions in the role of the “bad” communist in the film present of the last episode, but for the backward revelation of his denouncing from the Protectorate years. The fall of the main “villain” of the story and its cause are not situated into the space within the communist party’s history (no matter how much Bošek is actively involved in it) but into the space of national history in general.

Dual history comes out of the text (especially in the perception of then viewers): firstly, history in which the plot proceeds carefully, cautiously and prevaricates among the years of the real events, and secondly, general national history, in which it is possible to move

61 The important communist party’s history years which the series avoids are marked on the timeline with a lighter shade in Diagram 1.

forward directly through the important years.⁶² The reflection of the communist political history penetrates into the text implicitly and carefully: their events are present as the echo in dialogues from the episodes spread “around” the important years but they are not directly shown. For example, the episode from 1924 in which Florian, the representative of the communist thinking, Jakub’s colleague and friend, says:

Florian: “But today something totally different matters. Somebody must tell the people that the capital won’t change. We live much easily today, that’s right, but it won’t last forever. If we have people with the right authority in the Party, then we will manage it.”

(Episode 4, 1924)

The establishment of the Czechoslovak Communist Party is not a directly represented event and this divergence manoeuvre is substituted by the dialogue from the time when the communist party had already existed for 3 years and its existence and care about the members are automatically assumed.

6.2. Representation of work

The working environment of the glassworks is one of the most frequent narrative elements, which is amplified by the plot connected with this environment.⁶³ The hero Jakub entering the society and his role in it is mainly derived from his activities in the glassworks: the scene of the factory is the main dimension of the public sphere. (On the contrary to, for example, Pepa’s son, for whom it is the pub in which he shows a jolly humour when he wears a tailcoat like a first-republic waiter, as in episode six taking place in 1938.⁶⁴)

The second important marker of the representation of the working environment is totally apolitical and from the working movement separated presentation of the work of glassworkers as of emotional and aesthetical phenomenon.⁶⁵ The work in the glassworks is not dramatized as the part of the process of exploitation or as a dirty and laborious activity; conversely, it is visually romanticized and verbally defined as the resource of happiness or even pleasure.

Kulíšek (to Jakub after his return from the WWI): “Master, the first dip with the blowpipe is the sweetest.”

(Episode 3, 1918)

62 The strategy of getting around the “problematic” years is confirmed by Magdalena Dietlová. The interview revealed that it was not Dietl’s effort to avoid the important events in the communist party’s history but it was more likely an attempt to make the author’s life easier and try to avoid the foreseen critique: “*You know that Jaroslav was trying to avoid everything he could because they would catch him on something anyway.*” (Interview with Magdalena Dietlová, 12 July 2006, author’s archive.)

63 The interior of the glassworks was shot on the premises in Tasice, the factory of then Sázavské sklárny, national enterprise.

64 The character of Pepa was compared to the doctor Štrosmajer, from the series *Nemocnice na kraji města* (Hospital at the edge of a town), for his specific sense of humor (cf. Spáčilová, Mirka. 1986. “*Řemeslo velkého vypravěče*” [The Craft of a Great Story-Teller]. *Svobodné slovo*, 5 May 1986.)

65 The presence of a repeated visual appearance should be probably ascribed to the director Jaroslav Dudek, not to the conception of Jaroslav Dietl. Jaroslav Dudek: “*For me, as a director, the text is attractive just for the chosen environment. It is poetical, fragile and more over it is beautifully and typically Czech. Glass as a material carries its symbolism, poetic character and beauty. I wish we could express just this moment in the series*” (Spáčilová, Mirka. 1984. “*Skleněná sága*” [Glass Saga]. *Svobodné slovo*, 30 December 1984)

Jakub (angrily to his son with the suspicion that he does not enjoy the work): "Do you like it? Do you do it with pleasure?"

(Episode 3, 1918)

The most expressive is the romanticisation of the work in long detailed camera shots accompanied by the music without further sounds (for example shop floor noise). The camera regularly ends in the big detail of the blowpipe end rotating the melted glass material and then follows how the creation of the thin, fragile cup is born. At this stage the shot already includes the "blower/worker, who is presented as the one who imprints a shape into originally formless matter (or the world). Other phases of the production process (for instance, cutting or painting the glass, which is being talked about in the series as well), in which the matter "is not changing from nothing to something", are not practically shot. No-one ever does the transformation of the matter into the glasswork product alone; the blower (often Jakub) always has audience, such as excited co-workers (episodes 3, 7, 9, and 12). In the first episode, Jakub's blowing is introduced through Terezka's admiring look at the "sexy" action; in episode four, there is a long shot of the production of the glass lustre for the "Persian shah", and Jakub's effort is closely watched by the proconsul and the director of the factory as if in the theatre.

6.2.1. Good worker and good man

The picture of work is complemented by the way in which the characters connect the real work dexterity and moral qualities. The most skilful and the most talented glass workers are shown as the most honest people with the best personalities in the series. The level of the work dexterity, skills, and diligence of the characters is almost in a direct proportion with the personality, and a scale of the typical characters or workers, ranking from the best glass workers/personalities through unstable centre to the worse glass workers/personalities, could be created according to this proportion. People involved (diagram 2) in the first category can then function as fully positive heroes or be their helpers, people involved in the centre can function as ambivalent characters and people involved in the last category can be totally negative heroes or villains.

diagram 2: The importance of the quality of work performance for the moral assessment of actors

Character	Work	Morality
Jakub	Best glassmaker, hard-working	Holder and bearer of simple truths
Florian	Good glassmaker, hard-working	Sacrificed his life in the resistance
Tonik	Skilful, naturally talented	Sacrificed his life in the resistance
Vojta	Skilful, wanted to be a glassmaker since his childhood	Defends justice, respects his father
syn Jakub	Hard-working but clumsy, not suited for work at the glass oven	Weak, impetuous, overcautious, conflict with father
Rostfa	Hard-working but does not improve	Truehearted friend, dull, stands in the back
Bořivoj Bošek	Careless, lazy, making essential mistakes	Malicious, traitor, opportunist, conceited

The direct proportion between the working skills and moral characteristics of the main negative character Bořivoj Bošek is the most obvious. The very entrance of the character to the scene in episode two is framed by the work accident caused by Bošek. His first appearance shows him as a poor glassmaker who is responsible for the accident when there was a danger that the furnace would flame out. (The accident was averted by his main challenger and the main positive character Jakub.) In episode five during the economic depression, Bošek, who is the leader of the work group, is reducing the workers salaries and keeps the money, and after 1938 is leaving the glasswork job without sentiment. His personality is defined as selfish, with alcoholic tendencies, thief, opportunist, revengeful prig, attitudinarian, phrasemonger and finally denunciator who caused the death of Jakub's most loved son Toník and of father's friend Florian.

6.2.2. Worker and farmer

However, it is not work itself that is the subject of romanticisation, but rather the work of proletarians, or more precisely glassworkers. Another setting, heavily influenced and penetrated by work, is farmer Krupka's farm (Krupka married Vilemína, Jakub's daughter). However, the shots of farmer's work are in sharp contrast to the portrayal of proletarian work. Krupka's farmhouse is an obscure building and its inhabitants, young Krupka with his mother, are presented, as series characters, through their interest in accumulating possessions, greed and tightfistedness. The moment when Krupka intends to marry Vilemína, his mother insists that she compensates her poor working-class background by at least a twenty-thousand dowry. Several episodes later, Krupka acts in a similar way when his daughter plans to marry a bricklayer.

Krupka (to the suitor): "My daughter will marry a farmer. Get forty thousand to your masonry, then we can talk."

(Episode 9, 1947)

Wealth and possessions are the element of most dialogues taking place at the private farmhouse (the farmer's only interest is to augment his wealth, paying no attention to the joys of work).

Mrs Krupková (reacting to Krupka's announcement that he is going to search for a midwife): "First take away the milk so that it doesn't turn sour."

(Episode 5, 1931)

Mrs Krupková (at the christening party about Jakub's large family): "She paid the dowry back for three years, no-one helped her, but all of them turn up for the christening".

(Episode 5, 1931)

Working at the farm is portrayed as a clearly utilitarian activity with the only aim to create wealth, while its accumulation does not bring happiness, but rather physical exhaustion only. For instance, in the series, the character of Vilemína ages in a different way than other female characters: with a growing age, she becomes burnt-out, washed out, hump-backed, and callously hard, while workers do not deteriorate physically with age. (In fact,

there is only one character whose health suffers due to working the glassworks: it is daughter Nanyinka's first wooer, a glass cutter, whose lungs have been attacked and who dies in the sixth episode.) Similarly, the images of landowner's work tend to portray more often dirt and hostile and rough environment of the farmyard. When working at the farm, the characters usually plod in mud or manure. The representation of proletarian work, on the other hand, is not associated with dirt. In the first episode, for instance, young and smart Jakub, having had an affair with a lady innkeeper, comes to his bride-to-be Terezka and feels dirty after the affair: *"I don't deserve you today."* Another, he visits her actually grimy of dust from the glassworks, but since his intentions are clear, his proletarian physical dirt does not have the slightest impact onto establishing a sexual contact.

Thus, the interpretation of the farmer's work does not emphasize joy and poetics. Working in a farm is depicted as drudgery leading to exhaustion, fostering insensitiveness and taking place in a hostile environment. A tense and captivated expression in the faces of workers when blowing glass, accompanied with music, sharply contrasts with gloomy, apathetic and seemingly lifeless faces of the farmer's family when ploughing, cutting grass, milking cows or cleaning the courtyard. While glasswork, enriching mass with shapes, is elevating, farm work, focussing only on accumulating wealth and possessions, lacks this dimension.

6.3. Images of capitalism

6.3.1. Paternal and parasitic capitalism

The conception of the social and economic capitalist system, within the framework of which ten episodes (until 1947) take place, is not stable and may be divided, at least, into two important phases, while the First World War is implemented in the narrative as a turning point.

In the first two episodes, the capital and its then nature is represented by the character of Krahulík, glasswork owner, with whom workers co-exist in harmony and respect him as a professional. At the same time, Krahulík does not keep his distance from workers: in the second episode, for example, he appoints Jakub a foreman; he takes part, willingly, in the so-called first drink, and supports Jakub's celebration financially. After his demise, the relationship of workers to Krahulík changes into nostalgia, expressed by Jakub's disgust over the actions of his son and the second successor Emil in the ninth episode, since he prohibits celebrating the birth of Jakub's grandson and at the same time, refuses to come to Jakub's farewell with the glass furnace.

Jakub: "This wouldn't have happened in the Old Man's time, for he was a true glass master. It's time to pack my blowpipes and go, I can't stand listening to someone who turned the oven into a cash cow."

(Episode 9, 1947)

The pre-war solidarity between the workers and the owner is also described in a scene in the second episode, when Krahulík attempts to pay out "his fellows" from the duty to join up the front, and comes to the military headquarters in Liberec. Having failed, he is forced to announce to the glassworkers that all of them will be conscripted, feeling dejected. The relations between the workers and capitalist are, in this phase, based on the respect

from the workers' side and care from Krahulík's side, and therefore, the series depicts this stage de facto as certain *paternal* capitalism.

After Krahulík's death, the widow takes over the glassworks and the series conception of capitalism begins to feed on proletarian work, and at the same time, the capitalism is being eaten away by its own inner deformations. In this stage, capitalism is described as a *parasitic* arrangement. In particular, the narrative emphasizes three features of inter-war capitalism: a) the loss of personal approach and bureaucratization, b) sharpening the class conflict, and c) lavish lifestyle of young generation of capitalists.

The character of accountant Horyna implies the loss of family intimacy in work relations. In the third episode, Jakub comes back from the front and his first journey, having stopped at home, leads directly to the glassworks, managed by the widow. Jakub is then confronted with many changes. Mrs Krahulíková, the owner, is addressed as "director", a new glass cutting room has been built and the business agenda has been taken over by a new accountant, a prototype of an impersonal clerk and bureaucrat.

Horyna: "The old times are far gone. We need to introduce strict checks and records of everything – goods, money, and people."

(Episode 3, 1918)

The relationships antagonize: although Mrs Krahulíková is not portrayed as a hard businesswoman, in the episode dealing with the economic recession, she enters into a conflict with the workers due to an attempt to save money by stopping the production. The ever more acute and tense relations before the negotiation with Mrs Krahulíková are expressed, for instance, by Jakub's son Toník, a radical and politically engaged communist.

Toník: "It's just not right to make a deal with the lady administrator. It's just liaising with the enemy."

(Episode 5, 1931)

The third emphasized defect of inter-war capitalism is the life style of the young Krahulík generation, son Emil and his wife Soňa. Glaringly, Emil lives on the capital accumulated by his parents without creating any other values. The character of Emil is constructed as a direct opposition to Protestant ethics, ascetism, and returning financial means to the production. While widow Krahulíková manages the glassworks, Emil chooses to live on the hog, leaving for Prague to have fun instead of working and marries mondaine, financially demanding and superficial Soňa. Mrs Krahulíková asks them to manage the branch in Ostrov and upon her visit in the fifth episode, she is amazed to find out that Emil has not been managing the desolate and dead factory, having spent the family fortune on refurbishing a luxurious villa, extravagant lifestyle and having run up debts of hundreds thousand. Although Emil grows wise and after his mother's death after the Second World War, he takes over the whole glassworks company, the scenes in the ninth episode still define him as the one who makes his living from the work of proletarians. Apart from the above mentioned Jakub's line that "*he had turned the glassworks into a cash cow*", this is also illustrated by a final scene of Bošek, an unpopular communist and chairman of the National Committee in this episode, who, at the end, challenges the workers to go on strike against Emil. Although at this moment in the episode, Bošek is already defined as a "stain" on the Communist Party sign,

a power freak and corrupt bribee, the confused workers eventually imply that they might follow the appeal for the strike.

Bošek (to the chief clerk who objects that he is not authorised to stop the supply of water to the glassworks): "I'll show what my competence is and what isn't. The time when industrialists could wipe the floor with us as they wanted is over. There's not enough water for the community but the business is going on and the cash is rolling."

Emil: "When the glassworks are doing well, the whole Albrechtice is doing well, too."

Bošek: "And you're doing best!"

Emil: "I pay my taxes properly and the rest is none of my business".

Bošek: "You're mistaken, we'll deal with you, too. [...] I am not alone here, the whole Albrechtice is following me and so are the glassworks."

Guys, who's gonna strike once we call up?"

(Episode 9, 1947)

As mentioned earlier, the capitalism of the inter-war and short after-war era is presented as a parasitic system which has lost the parental attributes of care and intimacy and is doomed to collapse under the influence of its own inner deformations, such as impersonal bureaucracy, class conflicts, or the enrichment at the expenses of others.

Inversely to capitalism, the series narrative also follows the development of the proletarian movement: while capitalism weakens while its discrepancies and breakdowns are revealed, the proletarian movement gains strength and unity. In the stage when capitalism is still safe and strong, the proletarian movement remains weak and opportunistic, which is a feature ascribed to the pre-1924 period when the movement is led by social democracy. With respect to the features of the representing characters in the series, this phase is predetermined for radicalization. The role of social democracy is conceived, as much as possible, as a doubtful and temporary phenomenon. For instance, in the first episode, Jakub responds to the appeal for joining social democracy that he already joined the party when travelling around Italy. However, when the main social democratic spirit of Albrechtice, chronicler Pertold, asks him to rejoin the party of the war in 1918, Jakub refuses claiming that he finds satisfactory *"what those respectable gentlemen of action did at the beginning of the war"*.

On the other hand, the proletarian movement gains strength from the fourth episode (three years after establishing the Czechoslovak Communist Party) and radicalizes, while capitalism finds itself under difficulties represented, in general, by economic recession. Starting from episode four, social democracy begins to vanish from the political scene of the series and it is the representatives of the Czechoslovak Communist Party who become the main authorities to the working class, namely Jakub's son Toník and his friend Florian.

What is also worth noticing is the fact that capitalism and its development are presented only in economic categories (the prosperity of paternal capitalism and difficulties of parasitic capitalism), while the socialist movement is depicted exclusively in political categories (surpassing social democracy and replacing it with the communist party). Among other things, capitalism is thus portrayed as a system without any ideas or social conceptions. In the series, capitalism lacks any transitions and with the exception of the temporary

and unevenly distributed ability to generate wealth, is not associated any more profound sense in the given narrative.

6.3.2. *Unlucky bourgeois*

It is not surprising that the plot does not allow the representatives of this system to enjoy even a simple and uncomplicated personal happiness. Family tragedies are distributed fairly equally between proletarians (the Cirkls) and bourgeoisie (the Krahulíks), since in case of both couples, one of them dies prematurely. In the Cirkl family, it is mother Terežka who dies when giving birth to the seventh child in the third episode, while in the Krahulík family, the father and factory owner dies during the war. At the same time, it might be said, however, that the higher authority (father) survives in the proletarian family, while in the capitalist family, it is the weaker mother who survives, which is subsequently connected with the need to cope with the difficulties brought by an economic recession and weakening capitalism.

Already in the second episode, one might notice that the proletarian family of Jakub Cirkl has six children, compared to the only son in the capitalist family. Children and their character as a source of happiness (in the last episode, Jakub dies happily and his last words are “*my children...*”) are distributed unevenly with a clear predominance of the proletarian family. All Cirkl’s children are portrayed as more or less people of good character with common indiscretions, while none of them follows the wrong way. On the other hand, Krahulík’s son Emil grew into an extravagant toff who addresses his lonely mother with large debts, ruins the family reputation among glassworkers and, in the after-the-turn tenth episode (taking place in 1949) flees the country hidden in a lorry. The inequality of personal happiness is depicted by a dialogue between Jakub and Krahulíková in the situation when Jakub drives the directress to Ostrov to check how Emil manages the local branch.

Mrs Krahulíková: “You must search the answer to the question where you made a mistake that your only child has grown up to such a failure. And I can’t find it”.

Jakub: “The poor bring their children up easily. When there are seven of them, you hardly need to make any effort.”

(Episode 5, 1931)

The absence of essential happiness in the feelings of bourgeoisie presented as yet stronger in the plot line in which Mrs Krahulíková falls in love with Jakub and starts a short romance. The financially secured directress and glassworks owner searches for the basic value of love in a poor worker. In comparison with Jakub, Mrs Krahulíková disposes of the power over the whole glassworks, the series, however, defines crucial emptiness in her life over which only Jakub has the power at the moment. In an illustrative line, the character of Mrs Krahulíková itself perceives the situation, in general, as good luck of the poor and bad luck of the rich.

Mrs Krahulíková (throwing herself into Jakub’s arms): “Why can every glassworker’s wife have her own man? And why can’t I have him?”

(Episode 5, 1931)

The rumour about Jakub’s romance with the glassworks owner spreads and the workers, who are just experiencing a conflict with Mrs Krahulíková concerning the reaction to the economic recession, mock at him and at the same time, are indignant.

Florian (to Jakub): “I am sorry but what you did wasn’t very thoughtful of you considering our situation.”

(Episode 5, 1931)

However, in the conflict between love and class struggle, Jakub prefers everyday yet numerous relationships with other workers to an exceptional yet isolating relationship with Mrs Krahulíková. From his own initiative, Jakub ends the affair, which also included one night spent together. He explains to Mrs Krahulíková that he cannot go on, that his place is at the glass oven, that other work is out of question, and that he belongs elsewhere than her. Mrs Krahulíková assures him that she does not mind, to which the character of Jakub Církil reacts: “...but I do.”

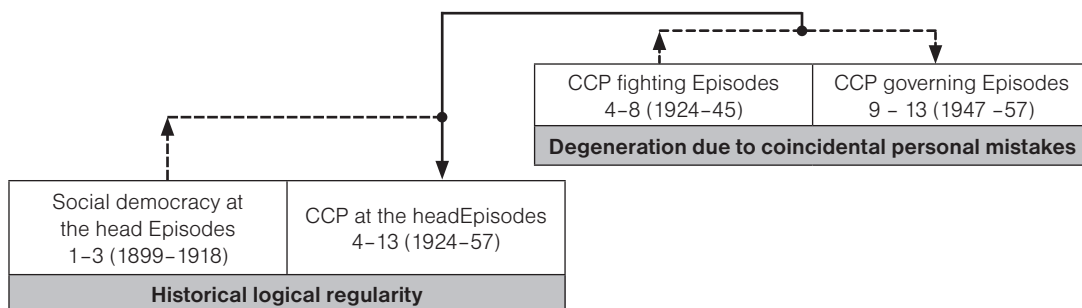
According to the series, the sources of happiness of a worker with a large family and life filled with work are obviously more abundant than the sources of the factory owner. Forlorn, she sees only one source of potential happiness in the future, Jakub’s life, on the other hand, is pervaded by happiness at present, which allows him to reject the romance and an offer to become a deputy director.

6.4. Regularity and coincidence in history

One of the most important consequences of working with ideologically selected text orientators in the film historiography of the series is the fact that its version of the history of the first half of the 20th century does not include a mere description, but on the level of depth structures of relationships, it suggests the *sequences of events arising from inner logic of history*, contrasted to the *sequences of events resulting from pure coincidences or individual failures*.

As for the course of Czech history in the first half of the 20th century, the series accentuates two basic sequences of events the chronology of which is interpreted as a logical causality or, on the other hand, as a coincidence caused by certain individuals. The first category includes the withdrawal of social democracy and the rise of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (episodes 1–4, 1899–1924). The latter then includes a degenerative transition process of the Czechoslovak Communist Party from the phase of fight (episodes 4–8, period 1924–1945) to the phase of governance (episodes 9–13, period 1947–1957). These two basic sequences of events are shown in the following diagram 3.

diagram 3: Regularity and coincidence in history



6.4.1. From social democracy to the Czechoslovak Communist Party

Replacing social democracy with the communist party taking the role of a progressive left-wing power belongs to the causally presented sequences of events. Handing over the leader's role of the proletarian movement to the communist party is depicted as a logical chain of causes and consequences, or as an inevitable course of history in the direction set in advance by certain "supreme" power and regularity.

In the series, the social democratic ethos is embodied in the character of chronicler Pertold, former teacher in Albrechtice. In the first episode, he welcomes the new century on behalf all the gathered, giving a celebratory speech; in the second episode, he agitates among the glass factory workers for the 12th Social Democratic Convention, and in the fourth episode (taking place in 1924), Pertold, as the only symbol of social democracy in the series narrative, dies.

The character of Pertold carries important features that are metonymically transferred to the whole party which he represents in the series. Above all, he is old and uses words, rather than actions. His counterparts in the line of replacing social democracy with the Czechoslovak Communist Party, Florian and Toník, represent, on the other hand, the ability to act (Florian is arrested and sent to prison for his political activities) and youth (Toník, Jakub's son). Pertold's age and affiliation with the old times is also emphasized by his archaic language and the chronicler's role. The fact that he has been assigned the chronicler's role connects him with memories and the past, the same as the phases he uses. In the third episode, he refers to Jakub's return from the front that "*he has return from a war harpy*" and when he asks him to renew his membership in the social democratic party, he says that "*the party is full of respectable and noble men of action*".

In the fourth episode taking place in 1924, three years after establishing the Czechoslovak Communist Party, with the existence of which this episode works, Pertold dies and his funeral is pictured explicitly. While being buried, Pertold's coffin is covered with a social democracy standard. Together with remains, it is the whole non-communist phase of the proletarian movement that is being buried: the scene is henceforth set so that the communist party may take over its role. On the way from the funeral, this visual symbolism is reflected in a dialogue between Jakub and Florian.

Jakub: "As if all my youth was gone with him, he was the first to bring us an honestly written proletarian word."

Florian: "Well, lately, he would fight through his words only. Communists, since the October Revolution, have been turning those words into actions. And he wouldn't understand this. But even much younger and more sensible people don't understand this ..."

Jakub: "Do you mean me? That experience was more than enough..."

Florian: "But today it's different. Someone must tell people that the capital won't change. Although we are better-off today, this won't last forever. When we have people with authority in the party, then we'll manage. I mean people like you."

Jakub: "You already know my answer, don't you?"

Florian: "I think I do but that doesn't mean that I will not ask you again and again."

(Episode 4, 1924)

The moments of Pertold's old age and his death of decrepitude are a key text orientator laying the groundwork for the representation of replacing social democracy with the communist left as logical, regular and inevitable. Within the narrative, Pertold is the only clear and named representative of social democracy. It may thus be said that he is its metonymy and Pertold's destiny equals the destiny of social democracy. Pertold (and social democracy as a whole) is associated with many attributes that connect him with the past; Pertold (and social democracy as a whole) dies, for his time has passed. If Pertold's character was built up, for instance, as a middle-aged person who dies in an accident or even wilfully, the meaning would be totally different. Exchanging social democracy by the communist party using the principle when the new (young and active) takes over instead of the old (outdated and passive) is a suggestion of necessary and hard-to-doubt logic.

6.4.2. *The Czechoslovak Communist Party fighting and governing*

After the narrative "clears up" the space for the historic role of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, two more phases are distinguished within its scope: the period when the Czechoslovak Communist Party is a fighting power (in favour of workers' rights and participating in the resistance during the war), and the period when it approaches and becomes very close to taking over the political power or the time when it already is in power. In this case, the representation of the transition between the first and second phase is again an important text orientator, or more precisely the nature of this shift and its reasons. Due to the time when the series was made, it may seem paradoxical that the shift is clearly presented as degeneration, or a shift from idealism and fighting spirit to holding offices and posts, power consolidation, and suppressions. However, what is more important than the nature of the relation between the two phases of the historic role of the communist party is depicting the cause of the degenerative shift. While the story ascribes necessary inner logic to the shift from social democracy to the communist party, the party's degeneration, when moving on from fighting to governing, is conceived as a coincidence which does not stem at all from the inner nature of things but rather individual personal qualities only.

In these episodes, the phases of the communist party development are also metonymically impersonated by specific characters. The phase of fighting is embodied in the destinies of Florian and Toník. Both of them do not, obviously, live to see the phase of governing, for they die during the war and, similarly to Pertold representing the end of the social democratic era, and it is the phase of communist militant idealism that departs with these two characters (though not so explicitly). The preparations for the assumption and execution of power are impersonated in two other characters who are not, on the other hand, defined as the Czechoslovak Communist Party members until the episodes taking place in 1945 and 1947, i.e. almost at the moment when it is clear that the pre-war party members Toník and Florian did not survive. It is the characters of Bořivoj Bošek and Jakub Jr. who symbolize the phase when the communist party was acquiring political power.

The shift from the phase of fight to governance is conceived as degeneration through a mere fact that the key figures of the first phase (Toník and Florian) are more or less positive, whereas the key figures of the second phase are, on the whole, negative (Bošek) or problematic (Jakub Jr.). See diagram 2.

In the episode when he is identified as a communist party representative (episode 9, year 1947), Bošek is generally known to have caused an accident leading to an imminent oven breakdown, to have been ripping the workers off, or to have been hired

as a company guard by the German glassworks management during the war. In 1945, however, he “did a U-turn” and boasted as a member of the revolutionary guard, lying about the reasons for being deported to a concentration camp (he claimed that he had helped to hide Jakub’s son Toník in the glassworks, while in fact he was only caught drunk a Gestapo commander), and as an after-war chairman of the National Committee, he took bribes for redistributing property. During Jakub’s farewell to the glass oven, taking place in Pepa’s restaurant, Vojta, for instance, argues with Rosťa because Rosťa informs about Bošek’s corruption. Vojta refuses to believe him and confesses the gossip to Pepa, who has the same opinion as Rosťa. (Bošek had forced Pepa to hand out a bribe so that he could get the restaurant under the national administration.)

Vojta: “Well, so you’ve heard that too?”

Pepa: “Nope. Paid.”

(Episode 9, 1947)

Jakub’s son, the second representative of the degeneration of the communist party’s idealism, in the phase of governing, is not a clearly negative figure, but at least ambiguous. At the beginning of the story, Jakub’s son is problematized in the third episode when it turns out that he does not have a close relation with the glassworker’s craft and he does not desire to follow his father’s legacy. In the seventh episode, the character of Jakub makes a serious mistake when he unintentionally causes that Florian and him are arrested by Gestapo. After the war, Jakub’s son, as a Nazi victim, starts a steep career of the chairman of the National, County and later Regional Committees. However, he gives in the traps connected with his political function, becoming a cowardly and cautious compromiser and rejecting courageous solutions. He lives in a luxurious villa in the regional capital, grows distant from his family, and refuses to help several of its members in an emergency, since he considers it risky given his function.⁶⁶

Vojta (to Jakub’s son about arrested Hajný): “That man didn’t do anything wrong, he was a member of the Party, just like you or me. The Party sent him here and he followed its resolution.”

Jakub’s son: “It’s all very nice but many things have changed.”

Vojta: “You haven’t changed, Jakub.”

(Episode 11, 1952)

Within the relationships built in the story, refusing to help the family is considered as a “cardinal sin”, which characterises Jakub, in this narrative stage, as a character with negative qualities. The family cult and its protection is ubiquitous in the series from the very first to the very last episode, with the father being its particular representative.

Jakub (to Horyna, daughter-in-law Milada’s father): “There are eleven of us, with Jakub, your Miládka and little Irenka fourteen. Will you take care of them?”

⁶⁶ In the eighth episode, he refuses to help Vojta when his fiancée Liza is threatened to be displaced, and in the eleventh episode, in particular, he refuses to help Hajný, newly appointed director of the glassworks in Albrechtice, who was – on the basis of unjustified allegation by Hošek – arrested for having helped the enemy and later imprisoned for five years, although Nanyňka, Vojta and Jakub senior intervene, one by one, on his behalf.

Horyna: "No. And I don't know why I should, either."

Jakub: "Because they are all the family".

(Episode 6, 1938)

Notably, what also belongs to the system of relations between the phase of fighting communist idealism and degenerating performance of power is the moment when Jakub joins the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Starting from the third episode, Jakub's character insists explicitly on his political independence, while in the eighth episode (taking place in 1945) he decides to join the party after all. This takes place in an intimate evening scene which has a form of confession of the father in front of his son Jakub in his office of the National Committee chairman, and it is one of the longest monologues in the whole series.

Jakub: "Suddenly, when I agreed to come back, you know, I had an idea that now after the war, after all that happened and changed, I just can't simply come there. It was Florián and our Toník who died for the glassworks and in fact, for all of us. So I was thinking, I was thinking a lot where they took the strength to leave the way they did, do you understand? So I came to ask you whether me, an old greybeard, now that I return to the glassworks, can ask them to take me to the party organisation. Well, can I or can't I?"

Son Jakub (quietly and with a long smile): "Definitely."

Jakub (leaving): "You'd better get a good sleep, what kind of comfort do you have here? Good night."

(Episode 8, 1945)

The story "sends" Jakub to the communist party in 1945, right before opening the degenerative power phase of its series existence. From the viewpoint of what follows, in the narrative, Jakub joining the party, this step does not have any constituent function. In short, Jakub only joins the Czechoslovak Communist Party and as a party card holder does not engage in politics any more. The final act of revealing definitely that Bošek was a war Gestapo informer does not represent Jakub as a communist but as Tonik's father and Florian's friend. Jakub's joining the communist party cannot thus be explained from the perspective of what happens in the plot after that, since it tends to be connected with what precedes it. The scene when Jakub shows interest in party membership, or the borderline scene between the phase of fighting and governing thus does not open the phase of governing but rather closes the idealist phase. Jakub, in his "accession" monologue reflects, on one hand, clearly personal (not political) motives due to which he desires to become a communist party member. If he is supposed to return to the glassworks after Tonik and Florian died for all glassworkers, he can no longer come as a non-communist. At the same time, however, his joining the party is not only a personal thank you and commemorating Tonik and Florian: it also has a philosophising vertone. Jakub ponders "*where they took the strength to leave the way they did*". The most probable meaning of this monologue is Jakub's assumption that Tonik and Florian took their power to die heroically from their attachment to the supreme communist idea or the belief of a victim for a better world coming from the same sources.⁶⁷

67 The text analysis disregards the proven fact that the scene with Jakub joining the party was written later following the direct instruction by the television company management, as mentioned earlier. The author maintains

Having summarised the use of text orientators contributing to the production of meaning in the sphere of regularity and coincidence in history, it may be said the story line with a positive tone for the communist party (it is young, active, and thus predestined to replace dying social democracy) is presented as a historical logical necessity, while the story line with a negative tone for the communist party (acquiring political power, the party degenerates into a functionary machinery and commits unfair repressions) is presented as a coincidence rising from individual weaknesses of specific actors. Coding the topic of the historical necessity and coincidence within the series narrative is, in our opinion, one of the strongest manifestations of ideological choice of text orientators, while in particular, it links strongly the representation of the past with the social and political climate in which the past is reconstructed. Taking into account the period of origin, the text readily and surprisingly admits that the stage of the communist party governance was highly questionable. However, such questionability is not explained (compared to what is shown about the communist party in an idyllic form) as a historical necessity but as a coincidence influenced by personal flaws of actors, i.e. by the fact that even villains (Bošek) or weaklings (son Jakub) participated in the governance.

6.5. Inside and on the surface or Essentialism as the central category

The last chapter analysing the text orientators deals with the motive roofing over all the previously described text relations and which might thus be perceived as the central category, as a basic result of using text orientators. What may be subsumed under this category also includes the afore-mentioned relations between the necessity and coincidence in history: the relation between the phase of social democratic influence and the one of communist party's influence, as well as the relation between the fighting and degenerating phase in the communist party's existence.

At a quick glance, the ideology in the text is manifested conspicuously and without any special artfulness based on the principle of metonymic treatment of characters: positive characters represent the Czechoslovak Communist Party, with the exemption of Bošek (he is the exception proving the rule, serving as a contrasting background due to whom other may come to the fore). Taking a deeper look, however, this apparent simplicity may be easily disproved: there are not enough characters included in the given pattern so that all of them may be labelled as an exception. First, even son Jakub is a "metonymic communist" of the degenerating phase, for he is, in this period (before rehabilitating himself eventually by resigning from all the functions and returning to Albrechtice), is a negative figure, and on the other hand, there is a significant character of Pepa, a clear non-communist, supporter of tradesman values and bourgeois lifestyle, yet being persistently a positive figure. Above them, there is the character of the main protagonist Jakub, who is also a permanent positive hero, although he has become a communist party member only after a long-lasting personal dilemma and furthermore, he never "practises" his party membership.

If these "hitches" of simple explanation ("every good-natured person is a communist") are complemented with other destinies of marginal characters (Vojta, Nanyňka, or Hajný) or second sequence characters (Horyna, Miládka, wife of Jakub's son, Krupka, or Vincek), the central category dividing the characters into positive and negative ones, is not the closeness to or distance from the communist idea, but rather to what extent

a structuralist approach according to which the text produces its meaning only through its inner relation, regardless of the external influences stand behind its constitution.

the characters follow their own “good” inner mind and to what extent they are only interested in the “bad” outside or surface. In other words, the inner and true in the series is *always* good, the interest in what people appear to be, what they look like, or what impressions they make is *always* bad. The series brings as the central category the distinction between two sources of action: the one originating from the essence of the human being and the one originating in the concern for the surface only. Therefore, the series is not a story of modernity, it is a symptom of its essentialist mentality.

Even both phases that the series distinguishes in the historical role of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (fight and governance) fall within a more general category of the opposition between the essence and the surface; therefore, it may not be perceived as an ultimate category but as a category which is only one of the variants of a wider central category of “the essence versus the surface”. The negative characteristics of “metonymic communists”, Bošek and Jakub’s son, are related to gathering and cultivating outer attributes which deposit on the characters. In case of Bošek, these are attributes of power and dominance over others: money, offices, influencing other people’s lives, clichéd language, and in certain scenes, even the clothing style. In the eighth episode taking place in 1945, Bošek, calling the National Committee for a more radical approach towards Germans, acts as a revolutionary guard member and his physiognomy is hyperbolic: he is dressed in a leather coat, with a cartridge strip stretching over his chest, has an RG strip on the sleeve and rides on a motorbike. In the ninth episode taking place in 1947, when he urges the workers to go on strike, he is dressed in the same way as the workers, wearing a checked shirt and a coat. In the tenth episode, he insists on keeping another attribute of power which does not belong to him, i.e. the villa after the factory owner Krahulík.

Furthermore, son Jakub is not presented as a hero with stable substance but as a character strengthening what affects from the outside. In the seventh episode, he joins the resistance, not because of his conviction, but to increase his own authority in front of his nagging wife Miládka. In the episodes from the after-war years, the steps taken in his political career and the functions of the chairman of the National, County and Regional Committee serve as outer superficial attributes replacing his weak “inside”. The importance of superficial expressions is condemned visually and relativized in the scenes in which son Jakub enters and leaves the office. In the tenth episode, son Jakub takes over the function of the chairman of the Regional Committee and enters the office building climbing massive steps surrounded on both side by lanes of subordinates who are applauding to him. In the twelfth episode (when he was not promoted as a candidate again due to Bošek’s initiative), he leave the office walking down the same steps, being lonely this time and having hardly anybody to shake hands with to say goodbye. In the episodes when he was holding those functions, he often looks at his watch (even during a family visit or opening Pepa’s restaurant) to demonstrate his own importance and work load, while in the twelfth episode, before leaving the office, he is sitting in an empty room with his arms lifted behind his head and not having anything to do. The secretary tells Vojta entering the office: “You can come in, comrade chairman is free.”

7. Conclusion

The headline of the fifth chapter called the series “Sons and Daughters of Jacob, the Glassworker” “a story of a real man”, while to be more precise, it should read “real people”. This allusion implies the central category explaining the position of any character in the text, i.e. the principle when the text ascribes the characters either a positive or

negative role according to the extent to which they are “genuine” people, i.e. the extent to which their action and behaviour stems from the inside.

A seemingly unimportant appearance of a marginal figure of the librarian of Albrechtice in the eleventh episode at a meeting chaired by Bořivoj Bošek is a crystalline moment reflecting this perspective. In the text, the character of the librarian does not have a name and in the conflict with Bošek, he is addressed as the library director.

Bošek: “Dear comrades, the National Committee has elaborated a plan of a general attack onto the last remains of bourgeois and townish way of life. It’s not only that step by step, we liquidate private entrepreneurship and old tradesman frowst, it’s also important that the overall look of our community be progressive. Well, what we need from you is to commit how many and who will make notice boards and posters and how many old facades will be covered with permanent decorations.”

Librarian: “Comrades, I am asking you, don’t you feel that the biggest step to make Albrechtice nice would be to make an effort and sweep up our streets? So that there isn’t so much dirt, so that all the lamps shine at night, all the services function, and so that plaster does not fall on the heads of our citizens?”

(Episode 11, 1952)

The complexly negative character of Bošek reacts to the librarian’s monologue with anger (“Comrade library director may not have understood well... Do I say anything else?”), so it is clear that the text assesses the librarian’s attitude highly positively. The above mentioned dialogue also uncovers Bošek’s tactics and at the same time, the tactics of all negative characters in the text: he wants to cover the facades with decorations and hang noticeboards and posters, in other words, he wishes to whitewash the surface, creating outer images or impressions. On the other hand, the librarian represents the attitude of positive and “genuine” characters: in his view, cleaning up is more important so that there is no dirt in the streets (and metaphorically in society). The librarian thus represents a desire to penetrate under the surface and purge or heal the substance.

When analysing the series *Sons and Daughters of Jacob*, the *Glassworker* and reconstructing selected moments of text production, or within the text itself, a number of ideological influences or meaning were identified. The production aspects and procedures were very highly pervaded by ideological interventions taking the form of external (coming from the circles outside the Czechoslovak Television, in particular, from the Department of mass media and communication of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party) or internal (coming from the Czechoslovak Television management) resolutions on changes in the script.

The text itself also included text orientators the selection of which is connected with then climate of the text creation: proletarian work is romanticised, in comparison with poor workers, wealthy bourgeoisie experiences significantly more disasters, and above all, the historical regularity and coincidence are explained in favour of the role of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in history (the transition from social democracy to the communist party in the pre-war era of fighting is presented as a historical necessity, while the degeneration in the governing phase is depicted as individually-based coincidence). The key

and central category of character classification into positive and negative ones, however, does not carry traits of ideological influence. The opposition between acting stemming from the “good” essence and what is only interested in contemptible surface may be perceived as an expression of essentialism, which classifies the series as one of the generally modernist narratives.

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