The notion of class in Czech political discourse

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Abstract: The article studies the discourse on class generated around the Czech parliamentary election of 2010.We look at the Czech discourse from the perspective of the wider discussion about the role that the notion of class plays in post-communist societies. While certain researchers have argued that class is absent as a category within post-communist political discourse, other researchers have reported the presence of derogatory discourse on the lower classes or even consistent symbolic boundaries between classes. Our analysis seeks to contribute to the discussion by offering recent evidence and capturing both the rejection and the employment of class-based classification within the discourse. We argue that the rejection of the notion of class goes hand in hand with the symbolic division of society into class-like groups. We also illustrate how these divisions are tied to the idea of a legitimate political subjectivity. We conclude by suggesting similarities with contemporary "Western" discourse on class.

Introduction

Discourse on class is increasingly coming under scholarly scrutiny. As a part of the cultural turn in sociology, we observe a renewal of interest in the cultural dimension of class [Devine and Savage 2005]. This return to culture is in part characterized by attention to the issues of awareness and perceptions about class. The ways in which class is talked about, the manner in which various social classifications and class schemes are developed in public and political discussion and the modes in which worth is differentially attributed to various social groups are understood to be an important object of cultural class analysis[Savage 2008; Skeggs 2004].

This article looks at discourse in the Czech Republic from the perspective of the wider discussion about the role that the notion of class plays in post-communist societies. Some researchers have highlighted the ways in which talk about class is silenced or outright rejected in the discourse of post-communist countries [Balockaite 2009; Eglitis 2011; Ost 2000; Weiner 2007].According to these authors, the notion of social class was in the minds of the leaders of transforming societies seen as being tied to the logic and ideology of state socialist regimes, not making sense (or even presenting a threat) in the newly attained conditions of freedom and democracy. Other researchers show that there exists derogatory discourse on the lower classes or even a consistent symbolic boundary being drawn between different social groups in post-communist societies[Gąsior-Niemiec, Glasze, and Pütz 2009; Kideckel 2002].

Our study looks at political discussion on class and inequality in the Czech Republic through a discourse analysis of texts published in the press during the 2010 parliamentary election. It aims to capture the ways in which the notion of class is both rejected and simultaneously employed within the discourse and thus to shed more light on the scholarly dilemma sketched above. Moreover, responding to the fact that most of the literature explicitly discussing political discourse on class has concentrated on the early years of post-communist transformation, it seeks to capture the more up-to-date character of political discourse on class in post-communist societies. Finally, this work seeks to make a thematic contribution by capturing the way in which social classification is tied to the idea of a legitimate political subject.

Our analysis is guided by concepts drawn from the works of Foucault and Bourdieu, who both emphasized the role that discourse and symbolic order play in the construction of social entities and saw discursive categories and social classification as important sites of political struggle [Foucault, 1981, p. 53; Bourdieu, 1989, p. 20-21]. We use Foucault's concept of discursive division and rejection to capture the ways in which the discourse on

class is rejected in Czech political discussion. In addition, we utilize Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic power and symbolic violence to shed light on how society is symbolically divided into distinct groups and how these groups are evaluated within the discourse. Finally, we use Foucault's notion of the constitution of the subject to show how these classifications are tied to the idea of a legitimate subject of politics.

The results of the analysis show that the rejection of the notion of class goes hand in hand with the simultaneous symbolic division of society into groups based on their economic position. Only a certain way of talking about class is being rejected, in particular critical discourse aiming to critique patterns of inequality and signaling the differential impacts of certain policies on different groups. Distinct groups are further attributed different characteristics and these characteristics are ascribed different worth. The article concludes with a suggestion to think about discourse on class not through the perspective of a simple contradiction between the presence and the absence of the notion of class, but to focus on the strategy and the dynamics of the rejection and the use of the notion in the discourse. It tentatively argues that the simultaneous absence and ubiquity of class in the analyzed sample is analogical to the contemporary "Western" discourse where "class is ubiquitous without being spoken" [Skeggs 2004:24]. We suggest that students of political discourse should, instead of emphasizing the specificity of post-communist societies, focus on the actual role the notion of class plays in various aspects of social debates and practices.

Class and the discourse of post-communist transformation

As a brief outline of the literature shows, the discourse of the post-communist transformation period was dominated by several themes. Firstly, the discourse of the new political leaders of Eastern Europe was based on the rejection of what was deemed a failure of the socialist utopia. Socialism was presented as a failed attempt to construct an artificial, unnatural society [Kumar 1992:309]. Secondly, the rejection of communism was

accompanied by an uncritical acceptance of capitalism, which was portrayed as a part of the normality to which the societies of Eastern Europe should return (Kennedy 2002:9; Kennedy and Harsanyi 1994:155; Kumar 1995:334). Thirdly, the political dimension of the discourse of transformation was tied to the notion of civil society, which represented a newly opened political realm deemed to equally empower all citizens of post-communist societies[Kennedy 2002:48; Kumar 1995:131].

However, the dominant doctrinal mixture of post-communist societies seemed to be in an uneasy relationship with certain social and economic claims of parts of the post-communist populations. While the proponents of economic reform and civil society constituted themselves as interpreters of the needs of rapidly changing societies [Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley 2000; Eyal 2003], certain groups were less easily incorporated within the dominant discourse. The discourse of civil society, which assumed the position of the main frame of meaning for constructing collective identities in post-communist societies, made it more difficult to formulate claims on the basis of certain categories. Class identities, along with those based on gender and sexuality, were the ones marginalized in this discourse [Kennedy 1994:26].

Several authors have emphasized the absence of the notion of class in post-communist discourse. David Ost notes, in his analysis of elites' discourse, that in the early years of the Polish transformation, despite the abrupt changes impacting certain sectors of society, talk about class was "paradoxically" absent [2009:497]. The paradox lies in the fact that the Solidarity movement, which played a prominent role in protests against the communist regime, is to a large extent based on the representation of workers' interests. However, political leaders express fears that mobilization of some sectors of society along class lines might endanger the project of the economic transformation of society. Issues of inequality or social hardship are instead presented through moralistic discourse and mobilized identities

take ethnic and religious form. This absence is also attributed to the association that the term class had with communist ideology, which is resolutely rejected [Bauman 1994; Mokrzycki 1994]. In another study, Ost[2000] claims that weak class consciousness, again following from denigration of the communist past, resulted in the weak position of worker's unions in social negotiations. Similarly, Kubicek (1999, 2002) notes that trade unions were often seen as enemies by politicians introducing pro-market reforms. Paradoxically, changes launched under the watchword of "civil society" are protected from the influence of civil society's strongest (at least in terms of membership) organizations (Kubicek 2002:603–604).

In an ethnographic study of class and gender relations in the Czech Republic, Elanie Weiner [2007] arrives at similar findings. The silence on issues of inequality and class, she claims, is related to the domination of the free market meta-narrative through which social relations are interpreted, both by managers and by workers. The free market economy is deemed to benefit all citizens equally by bringing about "capitalism's promised bounty" [2007:5]This rejection of class differences at the level of public discourse however does not mean that issues of different social positions are not addressed by the respondents; however, they are interpreted through the free market meta-narrative. Managers interpret their positions as self-responsible "capitalist" selves in contrast to "others" (i.e. workers) who, in their eyes, lack the courage to accept responsibility for their lives and are therefore less adapted to life in the free market economy. Workers, on the other hand, understand their position as low (even degraded) and acknowledge the economic uncertainties resulting from economic transformation. However, inequalities are perceived as necessary (stemming from workers' socialist upbringing) and transient: women in working class positions believe, in agreement with the free-market meta-narrative, that the positions of their offspring would automatically improve with the success of economic reforms. In her study of Latvia, Eglitis [2011] contends

that even though social hierarchy is apparent in the patterns of consumption and marketing, as a result of the communist past, class is rejected as a category of political discussion.

In contrast to studies that stress the silence about class, different authors have demonstrated that in post-communist societies the issue of class is part of the social debate. In particular, the stress is on the ways in which "the lower classes," "the poor" or "workers" are represented in public debate. Kideckel [2002, 2009] documents how the symbolic position of workers in Romania changed from elevation under the communist regime to denigration in the era of post-communist transformation. Similarly, Stenning [2005:984] reports that workers' communities in Poland were portrayed as sites of fear, violence, dependency and passivity. In her analysis of examples from Lithuanian media and politics, Balockaite [2009] describes how the "lower classes" are depicted in politics and media as illiterate, ignorant or a potential source of danger for society. A study by Gasior-Niemiec, Glasze and Pütz [2009], which captures discourse on social differentiation in Poland, offers more recent evidence on the use of the category of class in public discourse. Studying debates about gated communities, the authors capture the emergence of two distinct identities or "housing classes" in the speaking positions of discussants. Reflecting the wider issues of Poland's transformation, discussants draw a symbolic boundary resting on binary oppositions such as wealth versus poverty or success versus failure.

Discourse on inequality and class has been also reflected by several authors writing about the case of the Czech Republic. While quantitative class and stratification analysis is relatively well established within Czech academia [for an overview see Katrňák and Fučík 2010:21], research on discourse seems to be less well established. In the early years of post-communist transformation, Alijevová [1994]notes the change in the role the working class has played in public discourse. Simultaneously with downgrading of the economic status of workers, the term working class loses the political and social significance it had in official

state ideology and is narrowed down to purely occupational meaning. In a much more recent study, Nedbálková [2012]focuses on the problematic of the working class. Reflecting on media discourse on the working class (mainly that of trade union organizations), she reports that it is portrayed as irrational and obsolete. Moreover, there is no sign of class consciousness that would transcend a mere reflection of one's position on the labor market. Nedbálková does not find any positive identification with the working class as a collective unit of political struggle or a distinct group with shared norms and values.

Considerable contributions have been made by several authors working on collective research focusing on the discursive reproduction of inequalities in the Czech Republic [Šanderová and Šmídová 2009; Šanderová 2006, 2007a]. They focus on the "informal micro-political struggles" in which social positions and their characteristics are negotiated in the discourse of various social groups[Šanderová 2007b:20]. For example, Šmídová and Šafr[2009] focus on the mutual understanding of landlords and tenants, noting how certain parts of low-income groups are portrayed as irresponsible and immoral and therefore, at the discursive level, excluded from access to social housing [see also Šafr 2007]. Vojtíšková [Vojtíšková 2008] focuses on individual perceptions of who is positioned "high" and who is "low" in the social hierarchy. Among other conclusions, Vojtíšková finds that income is considered the most important dimension of the perceived hierarchical structure in society. In addition, inequality is perceived as natural and necessary, rooted in the laws of social development, by all the informants. The period of communist rule is seen as an unnatural attempt to eliminate inequality, which failed.

From the perspective of this article, the most interesting contributions are the chapters by Marta Kolářová [2008a, 2008b], because she focuses directly on the use of the category of class. In her analysis of lay discourse [Kolářová 2008b], she reports that respondents found the category of class to be either irrelevant (especially those of lower social standing) or

genuinely dangerous. Similar to results elaborated in the literature on the discourse of class in other Eastern European countries, the notion of class is seen as connected to the disapproved ideology of the state socialist regime. Respondents, however, understand society as being hierarchical but prefer to talk about different positions in terms of less rigid differences between different strata. Respondents most often identify with the "normal" and "unproblematic" middle and the contemporary level of inequality is perceived as natural and even desirable. In a different chapter, Kolářová [2008a] focuses on the media discourse on class. Here she finds, in contradiction to the research reviewed earlier, that class is a category is rarely but nonetheless used in media discourse. More specifically, she identifies two "frames" in which the term is used. The first one, present in the far-left press, uses class in what she calls an "ideological" frame, where it is connected to a Marxist understanding of capitalism and class struggle. The second frame, present in the mainstream newspaper, she labels as "descriptive, analytical." Here, class stands for the description of groups with different demographic characteristics, however, without sketching the political relations among them. Understanding of the term class is not made explicit and there is no strict ideological framework in which the term is used.

This work seeks to contribute to the existing literature on the discourse of class in post-communist societies in three main ways. Firstly, as is apparent from this brief overview, there exists mixed evidence on the role that the notion of class plays in post-communist discourse. On the one hand, some authors, particularly those writing on the early years of the post-communist transformation, stress that the category of class and of class interests has been downplayed or outright rejected. On the other hand, other authors report the presence of a discrediting discourse about the lower classes and even the functioning of coherent symbolic boundaries between the constructed social classes. Rather than implying that one set of research is simply incorrect, this contradiction can reflect the actual ambiguity of post-

communist discourse on class itself. We therefore attempt to bring more evidence to the discussion by capturing both the rejection and the use of class-based classifications in political discourse.

The second contribution this work makes concerns its temporal focus. Most of the studies of political discourse on class in Eastern Europe focus on the early years of transformation. More recent works concentrate less on social classification in connection to politics and more on the social differentiation in areas such as consumption or housing. Our aim is therefore to focus on political discourse and capture its recent manifestation. In this way, we complement the literature that captures the political talk on class (or its absence) in the early years of post-communist transformation. By political discourse, we mean discourse not necessarily produced by politicians or within institutions of the state, but discourse which discusses and seeks to influence the political process, e.g. an important political event, and the aims and functions of which are primarily political [Van Dijk 1997].This work analyses newspaper commentary that discusses a recent political event – the Czech parliamentary elections of 2010 – and can therefore capture the more recent nature of the discourse on class in post-communist politics. Thirdly, we extend the theoretical focus of the discussion by showing how social classification is tied to the construction of a legitimate political subject of politics in post-communist societies.

Conceptual framework and methods

Our understanding of class in this article falls into a category that Savage has labeled the "surface model" of class[Savage 2008:468]. This approach is different from the "depth model" of thinking about class and culture. The depth model starts with theory-driven assumptions about the existence of certain class positions (usually derived from the structure of production) and proceeds to empirically explore their utility and relate them to certain class cultures (e.g. identities). Depth accounts are often grounded (explicitly or implicitly) in

Marx's metaphor of base and superstructure. According to Marx, the relations of production constitute an economic base of society, which determines social relations [e.g. Marx 1963]. Groups of people hold positions in the class structure of the society based on the relation they have with the means of production. The overriding class division of the capitalist society is that between capitalists (owners of the means of production) and workers (who sell their labor in exchange for a wage) [Marx and Engels 1958]. The two most prominent contemporary classificatory schemes of sociological class analysis fall under the rubric of the depth model. In his class scheme, Wright [1985]differentiates twelve classes based on differential ownership of productive assets. Similarly, Goldthorpe and his collaborators define eleven classes in relation to positions within the job market and employment structure [see Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992]. Despite the differences in their approach [see the discussion in Katrňák 2005],both accounts start with a class scheme derived from theoretical discussion and then proceed to find whether it can be used to explain empirical differences between people (e.g. different life trajectories or different attitudes or identities).

Our understanding of class in this article falls into the rank of Savage's surface model. This model of thinking about class, partly associated with the cultural turn in sociology, is heavily influenced by the work of Pierre Bourdieu. According to Savage, "[t]his approach emphasizes the fluidity of class forms, and emphasizes how processes of classification are themselves integral to the making of class relations"[2008:478]. We do not employ a particular scheme with preconceived class positions that we expect to find within the data. On the contrary, we are interested in the names, categories and classifications that social actors (in this case, newspaper commentators) use to name groups of people and portray them as different from (and sometimes even hostile to) each other. We therefore focus on the presence of classifications and attempts to divide people into distinctive groups connected to their occupational, economic and cultural situation. Rather than focusing on theoretically derived

class positions and the identities (presumably) associated with them, we focus on classifications as they are employed in the text under analysis. Following Brubaker and Cooper [2000], we focus on attempts at identification rather than identities. In line with current trends in cultural class analysis, we direct attention towards "categorizations of class" as they themselves become stakes in symbolic struggles [Devine and Savage 2005; Savage 2008; Skeggs 2004, 2005].

We therefore do not proceed from a particular conception of class derived from an understanding of material and economic divisions. Instead, we seek to explore how economic and cultural differences are reflected (or not) in the text and therefore to see to what extent these divisions are employed in order to symbolically divide society into different groups. The attempt to classify - to produce classes through the use of symbolic power, is what we are interested in [Bourdieu 1987; Wacquant 2013]. We understand class as having the ontological status that Wacquant describes in his review essay on the state of the sociology of the middle classes: "The middle class, like any other social group, does not exist ready-made in reality. It must be constituted through material and *symbolic* struggles…; it is a historically variable and reversible effect of these struggles" [Wacquant 1991:57 emphasis added].

As indicated above, several commentators have reported that the notion of class is absent in post-communist discourse. We strive to make the silence surrounding the notion of class an object of our analysis. As Foucault noted, the study of discursive formations is connected to the principle of rarity, which is based on a seemingly ingenuous observation that "...everything is never said" [Foucault 2002:134]. In comparison to an imagined group of all possible statements allowed by the rules of grammar, vocabulary and logic, in any particular period there exists a relative rarity of statements actually made on any topic. Discourse analysis should therefore bring into focus the various mechanisms of control responsible for this relative paucity of statements.

One of the mechanisms through which the control of legitimate discourse operates is the principle of division and rejection [Foucault 1981:53–54]. It refers to the way in which certain discourses are denigrated and excluded, partly in order to maintain the integrity of the dominant discourse. Following Foucault, we may say that studies of discourse should make areas of silence or absence a focus of their analysis as much as the notions explicitly covered in texts[see also Gill 2000]. In addition, rather than simply reporting absence, it should be a goal of discourse analysis to describe and make explicit attempts to control the discourse by distinguishing acceptable statements from statements seen as dangerous that are rejected and silenced. For these theoretical reasons, the analysis in this article focuses on instances of the rejection of class as a category of legitimate political discussion.

Bourdieu develops a systematic argument about the importance of discursive practices in bringing to life collective social entities, most importantly classes. Attempts to name and thus produce groups as entities separate from others rest on the use of symbolic power. Bourdieu characterizes it as "the performative power of designation, of naming, [which] brings into existence in an instituted, constituted form ... what existed up until then only as ... a collection of varied persons, a purely additive series of merely juxtaposed individuals" [Bourdieu 1989:23]. Elsewhere in his work, Bourdieu writes about "[t]he act of social magic which consists in trying to bring into existence the thing named..." [Bourdieu 1991:223].

Even though there can exist an aggregate of individuals who share a certain disposition (e.g. their possession of social and cultural capital), these individuals do not form a distinct group or class whose existence they or other people would be aware of [Bourdieu 1987]. Emergence of collectivities separated from others by symbolic boundaries is possible only through relation of the social position to a common symbolic denominator. Classes and social groups in general are therefore produced through symbolic acts in which they are

named and differentiated from others. It is the attempts to use symbolic power in naming separate entities - classes - that we look for in our analysis.

It is not simply the naming of groups that matters in symbolic struggles. It is important to look into how constructed groups are positioned within the wider symbolic economy [Skeggs 2004:15–19]. The notion of symbolic power is linked with a larger vision of symbolic violence[Bourdieu 1990]. An actor committing an act of symbolic violence uses symbolic categories to portray unequal relations as inevitable, rooted in the natural order, and thus renders them legitimate [Bourdieu 1990:133]. Various "visions of division" of the social body are not neutral. Certain groups, their various cultural traits and social practices, are ascribed different worth in the symbolic hierarchy. There exist "culturally arbitrary" classificatory schemes of evaluation of these traits and practices [Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:5]. Certain qualities, which are variably distributed among groups in different socio-economic positions, are arbitrarily presented as more valuable, more worthy than others and these evaluative schemes are protected against various attempts to introduce "heterodoxic" schemes by potential contenders [Bourdieu 1984:475–476].

Part of the analysis presented in this article focuses on what is constituted as the "proper" political subject (i.e. an actor of politics, e.g. a voter) in Czech discourse and how this idea is applied to the classification schemes identified in the text. Here, we make use of Foucault's notion of the formation of subject in discourse [Foucault 2001b:326–327]. The question for analysis might be posited as what the subject must be, what conditions she must fulfill and what status she must have to become a legitimate subject of discourse and various practices [Foucault 2000:459] Again, the principle of division and rejection plays its role in the constitution of individuals as subjects. As Foucault puts it [Foucault 2001b:326]:

> The subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others. This process objectivises him. Examples are the mad and the sane, the sick and the healthy, the criminals and the "good boys."

Some individuals are denied the status of the legitimate subject of certain practices because of their condition, for example, for being mad or dangerous. Another important point is that the rejection of certain individuals or a certain threat has an effect on constituting the "legitimate" subjectivity for individuals who are deemed to be (or strive to be seen as) normal. Subjectivities sanctioned by discourse are therefore "indirectly constituted" through the exclusion of others [Foucault 2001a:403–404]. Various authors have paid attention to the problem of the constitution of the political subject with a particular emphasis on liberal political theory and the rationalities of government in advanced liberal societies[Clifford 2001; Hindess 1996; Rose 1999:40–47]. In our analysis, we intend to show how the notion of the legitimate political subject is constituted and how certain social groups are denied the status of autonomous agents of politics in Czech political discourse.

Methods and data

Our analysis looks at how the notion of class is used or rejected and how various groups are constructed in the text. This aim corresponds with the principle of discourse analysis that advocates studying discourse "in its own right." In other words, it does not treat text as a way of learning about some external reality, but considers text itself to be an object of interest [Potter and Wetherell 2001:200; Silverman 2000:826]. Discourse analysis looks at how objects and subjects are constructed within texts [Wood and Kroger 2000:21]. In particular, inquiry into how people are differentiated, how these people are differentially evaluated and how the representation itself becomes an object of the discursive struggle is an

important feature of discourse analysis [Fairclough 2001:237; Taylor 2001:7; Wetherell 2001:25].

The focus of the study is on the use of the notion of class in public discussion about politics. Therefore, we chose to focus on the discourse around an important and regular political activity – election. Specifically, the texts analyzed were published within a few days around the election for the lower chamber of the Czech parliament in 2010. Rather than producing data for the purpose of analysis (e.g. through interviews), we decided to collect texts published independently of our research. Unobtrusive ways of data collection are advantageous as the analysis can capture the way in which the analyzed issue is conveyed independently of the researcher's interest and is preferred for the purposes of discourse analysis[Wood and Kroger 2000:57].

Bauer and Aarts[2000] argue that for qualitative research, representative sampling is not appropriate because the variety of meanings of interest and the proper "population" for the research cannot be decided prior to the analysis. Instead, a purposive construction of the sample controlled by the researcher is more suitable. The researcher should begin by selecting sources, proceed to analyze them in order to capture the variety of meanings and then extend the corpus of data. They suggest three criteria for corpus design. 1) Relevance – materials should be relevant to the research topic. 2) Homogeneity –the corpus should be consistent and focused on one type of material only. 3) Synchronicity – materials should be chosen from one time period [2000:31].

Our analysis started with three articles (19, 20 and 26 – the numbers refer to the order in the list of analyzed texts in Appendix 1) of the opinion/editorial genre discovered through a daily reading of Czech newspapers and magazines. All three concerned themselves with the 2010 election and commented upon the issue of class and its use in political struggles. We therefore decided to systematically focus on the genre of opinions and editorials as the next

step of data collection. We surveyed the four most widely read nation-wide daily broadsheet newspapers and the two most widely read magazines focusing on politics. The resulting sample included four daily newspapers and two weekly magazines (see Appendix 2 for descriptions). In the case of the newspapers, we focused on the period five days around the election (two days before the election, two electoral days and one day after the election). With respect to the magazines, we examined one issue prior to and one after the election. Reading every opinion article, we chose 45 texts related to the notion of class for further analysis.

The constructed sample fulfilled the criteria identified above. 1) Relevancy was ensured by a detailed reading of all articles and the selection of those relevant to the research topic. 2) Homogeneity was guaranteed by the selection of the same type of material (text) from a particular genre [Silverman 2000:828]. 3) Texts were synchronous since they were all issued in the same period of time, commenting upon a single political event.

After obtaining the selected texts in electronic form, we analyzed the articles using NVivo 8 software. As the first step of the analysis, we coded parts of the text with shared meaning into broad categories [for this recommendation, see Gill 2000; Parker 2004]. As a second step, we focused more narrowly on selected parts of the text and divided them into categories determined by the theoretical framework presented above. To orient the analysis according to the concepts provided by the chosen theoretical framework is a standard way of proceeding in discourse analysis [Howarth 2000:141; Taylor 2001:39; Wood and Kroger 2000:105]. Parts of the text were coded into four overlapping categories: 1) Rejection – where the notion of class was explicitly rejected. 2) Division – where individuals were divided into groups and these groups were named. 3) Evaluations – where certain groups were ascribed certain characteristics and evaluated 4) Political subject – where the standards for evaluation of political actors and their political behavior were mentioned.

Analysis

The election addressed in the selected texts took place on May 28 and 29. 2010. The main competitors were the two leading parties: the Czech Social Democratic Party on the left and the Civic Democratic Party on the right side of the political spectrum (in the text abbreviated as ČSSD and ODS, respectively). As the election was held at the time of deteriorating economic conditions in Europe (most notably just after the onset of the fiscal crisis in Greece), issues of fiscal restrictions were among those most discussed. Other topics included free health care, taxes and the redistribution of wealth. After the elections, two right-wing and one center party formed a coalition government with a program characterized by an emphasis on fiscal restrictions.

Rejection

As Foucault reminds us, in every moment, there is an effort to draw a line between what can be said and what must be rejected. Discourse is given shape by designation of the proper way of talking about some topics and the exclusion of what is seen as illegitimate, potentially dangerous speech. In the analyzed texts, the description of social relations in terms of class (e.g. as a conflict between the poor and the rich) is often explicitly rejected: We identified this feature in fourteen out of forty-five articles. The reasons for the renunciation (if they are given) differ slightly; however, the rejection is usually connected with the perception of a threat to society as a whole. In some cases, texts connect the notion of class with the danger of an oppressive regime and even directly with the memory of the communist dictatorship. In other instances, the evocation of class is likened to the spread of class hatred. In one instance, the talk about class differences is considered nonsensical in a post-communist country.

In the following excerpt, the author explicitly rejects the portrayal of politics as a conflict between the rich and the poor found in a different article. The words themselves are

attributed great power – the use of the notion of class is likened to "letting the genie out of the bottle." The rhetoric of class is dangerous because it can bring about an oppressive regime:

> Václav Bělohradský [the author of the article on which this author comments], just as many of his predecessors, lets the genie out of the bottle when he depicts politics as a clash of the rich and the weak. It begins as an intellectual game that has helped the dark forces to rise up many times before. These forces were parasitic on the poor. Mostly, they threw them into even worse poverty and, what is more, into oppression. Isn't it possible to talk about the equality of opportunity without boasting about class struggle? It is possible, but only if one's aim is solving problems, not profiting from problems. (20)

Most of the cases of explicit rejection address a statement by Jiří Paroubek, at that time the leader of the social democratic party. In the pre-election debates, Paroubek portrayed his party as a representative of "ordinary people." Moreover, he claimed that the only negative impact of progressive taxation (part of his party's program) would be that some people could afford "less caviar and smaller cars" [Viktora, 2010]. This statement was widely criticized in the analyzed commentaries. One author depicts it as the most important factor in deciding her vote:

> I understand that just as many young people worry about their future; many elderly people worry about the present. But those words about ordinary people and caviar, they are not a question of solidarity, a question of left or right point of view on the order of things [...]. This is different. This is a play on envy, which breeds hatred. Class hatred. And that is what I am scared of. (31)

Another text compares this rhetoric to the rhetoric of the communist regime:

> The former regime fancied the word "workers." One president even invented the term "petty people." It was in the times when the election results were known in advance. Today's election is real. Nevertheless, the pre-election language of politicians resembles the old one. The use of the old vocabulary is perhaps motivated by the politician's fear of their competitor's success. It is enough to replace the term "workers" or "petty people" with "ordinary people" and you have won. (35)

One commentator makes it explicit that in a post-communist country, it is nonsense to talk about class in relation to politics. The interpretation of elections in terms of class by the representatives of the Communist Party, he claims, offered a rare opportunity for laughter during the pre-election period:

> As when Pavel Kováčik [Member of Parliament for the Communist Party] stated that workers, pensioners and mothers [...] have lost. Workers, of course, lost already in 1948, when Mister Kovačik's party seized the government in an armed coup. As a result of the forty years of economic devastation, today's workers have half the wages of their comrades to the west of our borders. (45)

Division and evaluation

Even though talk about class is often rejected, as in the examples shown above, in the analyzed texts there are equally numerous attempts to introduce various "visions of division," whereby the population is divided by the imposition of a symbolic boundary. Various groups

in society are designated and ascribed different qualities. In some instances, these designations are explicitly linked to class position (e.g. occupational or related to the distribution of economic capital) – for example, people are described as managers or entrepreneurs (26), as opposed to welfare recipients (21). In other cases, the terms used are vaguer, but nonetheless have economic connotations such as "successful" (41) or people who "are unable to stand on their own feet" (26). In other instances, a boundary is erected between the young and the old.

As Bourdieu suggests, classificatory schemes are not neutral. They contain explicit or implicit evaluation of the named groups. Symbolic visions ascribe certain characteristics to the groups. In addition, they accentuate certain traits while diverting attention from others. In the analyzed texts, managers and entrepreneurs are connected with characteristics such as responsibility for economic productivity of the society, success and international mobility. The potential for success and mobility is also attributed to the young. In contrast, other groups are portrayed as dependent, ill-equipped for competition in the global economy or even threatening the wellbeing of the society. The old are depicted as living in the past and valuing certainty more than opportunity.

The following article (indicatively named "The manifesto against high taxes and the spread of class hatred") presents a telling example of the rejection of a certain discourse on class and the simultaneous symbolic division of society into classes. The authors warn against left-wing politicians who take advantage of the poorer circumstances of their voters and create an atmosphere of class hatred. On the other hand, the authors designate themselves to be speakers for entrepreneurs and managers:

> The left does not hide its aim to introduce higher taxes, namely to those who work intensively and bear responsibility for the performance of companies. ...

> Reflex [name of the magazine] looked at the tax increases through their eyes and attempted to formulate their stance on this matter.
>
> Left-wing politicians take advantage of the poorer circumstances of their voters and lead them by their campaign to the battle against the so-called rich. The catchphrase “the rich should pay for the crisis” creates an atmosphere of class hatred. (26)

Managers and entrepreneurs are evaluated as responsible for the wellbeing of the whole society and are regarded as a group worthy of protection against taxation. This group is also connected with agency and potential mobility:

> People who acquired their wealth through the building of functioning companies contributed to the whole society. They deserve recognition. People who, thanks to their effort, managed to stand up on their own feet already pay higher taxes and therefore contribute considerably to those who, for various reasons, are unable to stand on their own feet. [...] Middle and higher rank managers are the engine of economic success. [...]. People who bear responsibility for [economic] performance do not have to invest their talent and their work into a society that does not appreciate their skills and intends to punish them by progressive taxation... (26)

In another text, similar features are connected to the young. The young are active, oriented towards the future and internationally mobile. The author, who claims to speak for the younger generations (the article is titled, “We, the young generation”), explains why the young voted for right-wing parties.

> The main reason for the electoral protest of the young was the fear for their own future. In Jiří Paroubek [the chair of the main left-wing party], young people saw isolation, idleness, proletarianism and debts. This is in sharp contradiction to what the young want: freedom, to get to know the world, to freely fulfill their wishes and to live their American dreams. (24)

Often, the representation of other groups stands in sharp contrast to these portrayed qualities and visions of the entrepreneurs and the young. Other groups are characterized by a lack of agency, the absence of skills needed for success in the contemporary economy and as being dependent on others. The following excerpt is taken from an article that describes electoral struggles in one particular region of the Czech Republic:

> The Moravian-Silesian region is exotic. Thanks to its socio-economic composition suitable rather for the end of the nineteenth century than for the global battle of brains, it has one of the highest unemployment rates and the most people dependent on state pittance. In other words: more than half of welfare benefits go here. Concerning politics, it is not much better. [...] The situation is logically reflected in electoral preferences. According to a survey by Czech Television, spendthrift ČSSD is ahead of ODS. (22)

In a different text, the theme of dependency is also highlighted, but with added emphasis on the worsening of the situation of productive others:

> We need to remember that the collective plunder of public money does not lead to more common good. [...] And also that *fulfilling the demands of all those*

> *claimants of welfare benefits paralyzes the power and motivation of others who generate the wealth of society*. (21)

Similar traits are identified in the wishes and habits of older generations. In contrast to yearning for freedom, mobility and being concerned with the future, they are portrayed as worried about the present or yearning for the certainty of the past, without the courage to make innovative choices. Habits developed during the time of communism are mentioned:

> The cultivated lifestyle of life from day to day, with the most exciting perspective being to save up to buy an "embéčko" or vacation in Bulgaria[1] plays its role. [...] They do not long for the unused paths through which one needs to hack one's way or, on the contrary, luxurious highways with no speed limits. They would appreciate a fair speed of movement on a local road with the certainty of the occasional cheap refreshment. Above all, no risks. (28)

Political subject

The symbolic divisions of the population into various classes and their evaluation is in the analyzed texts often connected to the construction of a legitimate subject of politics and judgments about who fulfills the desired norm. As we have argued, the discourse forms a set of rules of what that subject must be, what status she must have and what constitutes acceptable behavior for the subject.

Within the sample, the idea of a political subject is constructed in relation to a threat of populism. The legitimate political subject is seen as a rational individual immune to populist

[1]The term "embéčko" refers to a type of car widely available during communist times. Similarly, Bulgaria presented almost the only opportunity to spend a holiday in a seaside resort for citizens of the Soviet bloc due to restricted travel opportunities.

manipulation. Different groups are portrayed as being prone to the demagogue's influence to different degrees. The principle of division and rejection works to constitute the legitimate political subject through the discursive exclusion of groups portrayed as lacking political sophistication, being driven by habits and emotions instead of reason and whose political preferences may constitute a threat to democratic society. This lack of political sophistication is deemed to spring from two main sources. The first is the legacy of the communist regime. According to various texts, groups within the population emerge from the communist past damaged. The communist regime, it is argued, influenced their habits, ideology and most importantly, their ability to function as autonomous political subjects in a free society. The second concerns the social conditions of voters. The voters of the left are portrayed as being manipulated by populist politicians who take advantage of their lower socio-economic position.

The connection between populism and the norm of a legitimate political subject is perhaps most clearly expressed in the following excerpt:

> Europe deals with similar problems: we spend more than we earn, through welfare benefits, states reward convenience more than diligence and industriousness. The growing influence of populism was and still is a historical sign of the approaching decline of civilization. Under the influence of creeping populism, the European Union went into severe financial and political crisis. Even in spite of strikes and demonstrations, politicians start to realize the scope of this danger. Will Czechs show by their votes that it does not apply to them? (6)

The author portrays redistributive welfare arrangements as the manifestation of a damaging populism, which could eventually lead to civilizational decline. This populism is responsible for the fiscal and political crisis and needs to be resisted by politicians even against the protest of parts of the citizenry. Citizens are potential suspects for being prone to the populist spell and they should demonstrate that the danger of populism does not apply to them by voting against populist programs.

Another article connects aspects of populism, the economy and the norm of proper citizenship into a consistent pattern and shows their interconnection. It was written by the owner of the newspaper and published on the first electoral day. It starts by emphasizing the need to create a functioning democracy in the Czech Republic:

> I want to help to create conditions for the development of non-governmental organizations of the think-tank type, on whose basis there can be room for a public discussion about essential topics. I am interested in the shift of the whole society towards the traditional values of western democracy, to the development of and compliance with these norms. (4)

This vision assumes a particular construct of the political subject of democratic politics. Interestingly, this notion is pitched against the image of "ordinary people," which was elsewhere rejected as a manifestation of class hatred. Moreover, the proper subject of politics is identified as interested in the world in a way reminiscent of the value of mobility identified above. Again, a legitimate political subject is constituted in opposition to populism:

> The left hails ordinary people. I'd rather believe in extraordinary people. People who are fearless, proud, brave, independent, responsible, industrious.

> People who are creative and inventive, who are not afraid of new challenges. I believe that such people form the majority in the Czech Republic...
>
> [This newspaper] wants the Czech Republic to be a society of educated people, people who take interest in the world and not a country of people dependent on the state and populist promises.
>
> This newspaper will not remain indifferent when some political parties wish to turn citizens into a state-dependent, non-self-reliant and easily manipulated mass. (4)

In other passages, the manipulation of citizens is connected to the program of welfare benefits, while the ideal of an independent and free citizen is tied to restricted state intervention and low taxes:

> Parties on the left make an appeal to untenable certainties, an expensive and overgrown state, they take advantage of low and despicable instincts such as envy and they misuse people's fear.
>
> This newspaper builds on values that it considers central to the development of this country. *It wants a modern and cost-saving state that does not limit the freedom and activities of its citizens.* It wants simple, transparent rules and simple, low and just taxes. (4)

Another article follows the same general pattern. Democracy is something that "we're not good at" and what citizens yet need to learn. Moreover, left-wing parties threaten to undermine democracy by using populist tactics. In addition to this scheme, the text connects this thematic with the notion of a damaged part of the population, portrayed as an obstacle to civilizational growth:

> Before the forthcoming election, it seems to me that we can play ice hockey,[2] but we are not good at democracy. [...] The main left-wing party used the whole arsenal of negative emotions, such as envy and hatred, and by attacking so-called capitalism, it undermines the very basics of free competition. [...]
>
> The country where two occupational forces almost managed to destroy elites breeds new and new personalities who achieve the top results. The *burden of the past is remarkable and it carries with it backwardness and the moral deficit of a part of the population.* Nevertheless, in the longer perspective, Czechs have a chance for more civilizational growth. (21)

The perception that parts of the population have been damaged by the communist regime and are therefore unable to act as autonomous democratic citizens is emphasized in various texts. In the following excerpt, a different author ties this assumption of damage to the older generations. Again, this group is characterized by dependency and the absence of self-reliance:

> Older people got used to the regular modest, but assured dozes of existence paid for by absolute subordination. This subordination most likely infected their very souls and became their nature.
>
> Simply, the older generations do not yearn for freedom. They do not know what it is. They cannot handle it. On the contrary, they are frightened by it, because it requires independent behavior that they are not able to adopt. Older

[2]Shortly before the elections, the Czech team won a world hockey championship.

> generations have an imprint in their personality codes that people are directed and the one who directs regularly serves a bowl of food... (28)

This argumentation targets older generations, depicted as unable to operate in an environment of freedom. Moreover, as the authors suggest, they are more prone to be led than to make independent choices. Similar characteristics are in some instances attributed to voters on the left. They are portrayed as a group whose disadvantaged position and emotions can be misused by populist politicians, rather than individuals who can make autonomous choices. Their depiction as an object to be acted upon by politicians, rather than an autonomous subject of politics, forms a recurrent feature of the discourse:

> Left-wing politicians *take advantage of the poorer circumstances of their voters* and lead them by their campaign to the battle against the so-called rich. (26)
>
> The Czech left *appeals to low instincts* and fear. People's fear of changes, fear of the new. (4)

Alternative perspective

So far, we have described the patterns prevalent in the analyzed corpus. However, we found an important and obvious exception to the patterns described above. The texts published in the journal Právo reveal a discourse on class very different from the one described above. In this part of the corpus, the talk about class rejected in previous texts is often confirmed, and evaluation of the groups portrayed above is reversed.

The following excerpt presents an example of the confirmatory use of the term "ordinary people," which was vehemently rejected in the pattern identified above:

> Our wish – the wish of "ordinary people" – is ordinary: to have relative assurance in a decent job where one does not have to pass out into bed just after the shift. And [to have] an income that reaches the common standard. (15)

In another article, the main left-wing party is portrayed not as an agent inflicting class hatred or taking advantage of the poor circumstances of less successful voters, but as a representative of the interests of working people:

> ČSSD stands again – as many times before – at a programmatic and personnel crossroads. Its role in society, to protect the interests of the people who work for their living and do not reach an exorbitant income, cannot be denied or substituted.

The following excerpt most clearly expresses the reversal of the dominant scheme described above. The election is portrayed as a class struggle of the rich against the weak and the poor.

> Yes, the most alarming feature of the May elections was that they took place under the sign of a class struggle in reverse –a struggle of the rich against the poor and the weak, against state benefits for mothers, against workers [...]. The electoral campaign was approached as a class struggle in which the rich, organized in a Leninist way as a class, won over the poor, who were ashamed to defend their interests [...]. I use the word poor, but I simply mean workers.

The presence of an alternative perspective suggests that the categories used in the dominant pattern of political discourse and their subsequent evaluations are contested in another part of the discourse. Rather than silence, the analysis documents a struggle over the representation of classes. Rejection seems more a part of this struggle than a characteristic of the discourse as a whole.

Results and discussion

The rejection of the notion of class is present in the corpus; however, it takes a quite specific and limited form. What is rejected is critical discourse on class aiming at a critique of patterns of inequality and signaling differential impacts of certain policies on different groups in society. In the major part of the corpus, such speech is portrayed as belonging to the communist past and not making sense in the post-communist present. Moreover, this way of speaking about class is deemed dangerous for its capacity to bring about "class hatred" or even the return of the oppressive regime.

However, this rejection goes hand in hand with a symbolic division of society into groups based on their economic position. Groups such as "entrepreneurs" and "managers" are acclaimed as groups responsible for the wellbeing of society as a whole. Together with the youth, they are ascribed characteristics such as success, responsibility for economic productivity, knowledge of the world and international mobility. Other groups are mentioned in relation to passivity, dependency and portrayed as irrationally sticking to the old certainties. These attributes are portrayed as being in conflict with both a free democratic society and the goal of prosperity in the contemporary economic environment.

A similar division operates as a constitutive element in the construction of a legitimate political subject. The norm of the discursively sanctioned subject is constructed in opposition to the looming danger of populism and it works as a division between those seen as responsible in their political behavior and those who can be manipulated by populist

politicians. Groups named as “older generations” or those in “poorer circumstances” are portrayed as potentially dangerous objects in the hands of others, rather than the autonomous subjects of politics.

Notably, in a smaller portion of the corpus, an alternative or even contrary perspective on the matters of class is present. Categories such as “ordinary people” or “workers,” which were rejected in the dominant pattern are identified in this scheme. Moreover, the alternative scheme positively appraises values such as certainty of employment and an acceptable income. This finding suggests that the dominant scheme is challenged, and classifications and evaluations are at stake in the symbolic struggle.

In relation to Kolářová’s [2008b] contribution, we would like to raise a small but important objection. We do not see the “mainstream” newspaper’s discourse on class (at least in our sample) using the category of class as simply a descriptive, analytical category. We have found that the naming of different groups within society is connected with their differential evaluation. The alternative discourse on class, which uses affirmatively the categories of workers and ordinary people, was present only in the journal Právo. We have not found examples of such discourse in the other media. Among the journals, Právo is the only newspaper identified as left-leaning, while all the other ones (Mladá fronta, Hospodářské noviny, Lidové noviny) are identified as a right-leaning [see Hvížďala 2003:221; also Klusáková 2010]. This observation suggests that the different ways of social classification and evaluation are differentiated along the left-right political axis. We might suggest that the different “visions of divisions” are part of the wider political struggle.

In relation to the existing literature on the discourse on class in post-communist societies, our analysis suggests that the contention of “absence” [Ost, 2009] of talk about class does not capture the current reality of Czech political discourse. The rejection of certain talk about class is present and in line with the literature, it is strongly connected to the negative

perception of the legacy of communism. However, this rejection forms only one feature of the discourse and does not characterize the corpus as a whole. Rejection operates together with division of society into classes and evaluation of these classes. Moreover, the dominant scheme of classification and evaluation is challenged in an important part of the analyzed material.

It is necessary to remember the fact that most of the literature reporting the absence of the notion of class in post-communist discourse focuses on the early years of the transformation [Bauman 1994; Mokrzycki 1994; Ost 2000, 2009] capturing a situation in which the newly emerging political and ideological formations were still relatively unsettled and the gains of the wave of revolutions were still perceived as fragile and potentially reversible. Kumar [1995:124] stresses that leaders of post-communist societies often expressed their fear that the social claims emerging as a consequence of rapid economic change could derail the political achievements of the transformation. Indeed, Ost [2009:513–515] foresees the potential for rehabilitation of the term class in the post-communist environment, particularly connected with the maturing of a new generation that does not see the term as being negatively connected to the past. More recent works on class discourse [Eglitis 2011; Gąsior-Niemiec et al. 2009], even though not focusing on class in the discussion of politics, suggest that problematizations of the notion of class in the discourse may be changing. Our analysis focuses on a single moment in time and therefore, cannot make strong claims about historical developments of the discourse. We may however guess that the discourse itself is changing and discussion of the issues of class and inequality is now present more than in the early years of the transformation. In addition, thanks to our focus on the discourse about a recent political event, we can contend that in the Czech case the presence of the notion of class is not limited to areas such as lifestyle or housing. For instance, Eglitis [2011] claims that in the Latvian case class is denied in political discourse but apparent in the patterns of consumption and

hierarchy of lifestyles. Gasior-Niemiec and her collaborators [2009] document the emergence of class identities in Polish discourse on housing, with an emphasis on the issue of gated communities. Our analysis suggests that in the Czech case, discourse on class is part of the political struggle and an important aspect concerns judgments about the political behavior of citizens.

Interestingly, the combination of the rejection of the notion of class and the simultaneous use of class-like division identified in our analysis bears a striking resemblance to Skeggs' [2004] description of the political rhetoric about class in Western societies. As Skeggs argues (with particular emphasis on Britain and the United States), in "the West" there too exists a strong tendency to reject class as an appropriate category of political debate, together with a parallel proliferation of a classifying discourse and the differential attribution of worth to various social groups. In part, certain groups are depicted as "unmodern," backward, and as being an obstruction to national prosperity under the conditions of a global competitive economy [2004, p. 80]. This feature resembles the part of the discourse analyzed in this work that depicted parts of population as having old habits, being unable to cope with life and politics in an environment characterized by freedom and competition.

The evidence analyzed in this work is necessarily limited. It focuses on one society, one point in time and one type of document. Therefore, claims must be made with a great deal of caution. However, the affinities identified above suggest that political rhetoric about class in the Czech Republic is approaching the form this rhetoric takes in Western societies. Rather than starting from the premise of difference between post-communist discourse and its Western counterpart and taking the absence of class as a point of departure, future analysis should focus on the actual role that the notion of class plays in political and other social debates and practices.

Conclusion

Our analysis reveals that the notion of class is simultaneously rejected and employed in Czech political discourse. In the dominant interpretative framework, rejection concerns the talk that combines class categories with a critique of inequality or the differential impact of certain policies on various groups. However, an equally strong tendency to symbolically divide society into distinct socio-economic groups was found. Similar classification and evaluation was present in judgments about the political behavior of the citizenry. The groups identified as the "older generations" or those in "poorer circumstances" were denied the status of a political subject and instead were portrayed as potentially dangerous objects of manipulation. However, the analysis also revealed the presence of an alternative perspective, in which categories rejected in the dominant framework were confirmed and tied to different values. These findings suggest that the notion of class is not absent in Czech political discourse and that the role it plays is not negligible. The categories used to depict social groups and evaluations of these groups are objects of symbolic struggle. The rejection of a certain discourse on class is only one part of this struggle.

A reading of these results, together with arguments about the discourse on class in Western societies, suggests that the combination of a partial rejection of the notion of class and its simultaneous use might not be a distinctive feature of Czech (or perhaps post-communist) political discourse. Rather than assuming the absence of class or focusing on the difference between post-communist societies and the rest of the world, future analysis should focus on the actual ways in which the notion of class is put into use in East European countries.

Future textually oriented research on the notion of class in Czech political discourse may concentrate on other types of documents, such as political parties' programs or policy proposals, to reveal whether similar patterns of rejection and classification are used also in

other discursive domains. Moreover, our analysis is limited to inquiry into the sphere of the production of discourse in the media. Prospective research may investigate whether the identified patterns are accepted or rejected by individuals about which these judgments are made or alternatively whether and how is social classification employed in everyday social and political practices.

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Appendix 1 – List of analyzed texts

Number of the text	Name of the article	Author	Periodical	Date of publication
1	Vítěz poraženým a naopak	Petr Honzejk	Hospodarske noviny	31.5.2010
2	Slušně rozdané karty	Luděk Niedermayer	Hospodarske noviny	31.5.2010
3	Sedm postřehů	Tomas Sedláček	Hospodarske noviny	31.5.2010
4	Zdeněk Bakala: K čemu se hlásím	Zdeněk Bakala	Hospodarske noviny	28.5.2010
5	Malé, ale naše	Petr Honzejk	Hospodarske noviny	28.5.2010
6	Plíživé nebezpečí populismu	Martin Ehl	Hospodarske noviny	28.5.2010
7	Politika jako umění možného	Jiri Leschtina	Hospodarske noviny	27.5.2010
8	Jsme odsouzeni k svobodě volit	Tomáš Sedláček	Hospodarske noviny	27.5.2010
9	ČSSD na křižovatce	Alexandr Mitrofanov	Právo	31.5.2010
10	Trestáni životem	Jiří Hanák	Právo	31.5.2010
11	Střídání politických generací I stylů	Lukáš Jelínek	Právo	31.5.2010
12	Krizová krátkodobá investice	Martin Hekrdla	Právo	31.5.2010
13	My a kmotři	Jiří Hanák	Právo	29.5.2010
14	Volby bez dluhu	Martin Hekrdla	Právo	29.5.2010
15	Naše přání, jejich realita	Martin Hekrdla	Právo	27.5.2010
16	Chtěli probudit národ z letargie	Martin Barták	Právo	27.5.2010
17	Kdo nechce být Pavlovovým psem	Alexandr Mitrofanov	Právo	26.5.2010
18	Retropolitika	Martin Hekrdla	Právo	26.5.2010
19	Pět poučení z	Václav	Právo	3.7.2010

	květnových voleb	Bělohradský		
20	O interpretaci voleb	Erik Tabery	Respekt	26.7.2010
21	Češi vyhrávají, když jsou tým	Pavel Šafr	Reflex	27.5.2010
22	Prožral jsem budoucnost	Petr Holec	Reflex	27.5.2010
23	Portét národa	Tomas Třeštík	Reflex	27.5.2010
24	My, mladá generace	Ondřej Šlechta	Reflex	3.6.2010
25	Volby: Překvapil vás jejichvýsledek?	various contributors	Reflex	3.6.2010
26	Manifest proti vysokým daním a šíření třídní nenávisti	redactional board	Reflex	1.4.2010
27	Paroubkův kaviár a velká auta	Martin Komárek	Mladá fronta dnes	26.5.2010
28	Levice Česká.Naševýjimka z Churchillova pravidla	Vladimír Kučera	Mladá fronta dnes	27.5.2010
29	Chcete ho?	Karel Steigerwald	Mladá fronta dnes	28.5.2010
30	Co nás rozčiluje na volební kampani? resp. Kdo jsou obyčejní lidé?	Jaroslav Cerman	Mladá fronta dnes	28.5.2010
31	Krkolomná cesta k volbám přes obyčejný kaviár	Martina Riebauerová	Mladá fronta dnes	29.5.2010
32	Vláda na jedno použití	Pavel Páral	Mladá fronta dnes	31.5.2010
33	Nekecejte mi do urny	Jana Bendová	Mladá fronta dnes	31.5.2010
34	Transformace v občany	Bohumil Doležal	Lidové noviny	26.5.2010
35	Obyčejný člověk	Ivan Kraus	Lidové noviny	26.5.2010
36	Nepodléhejme kultu preferencí	Miloš Čermák	Lidové noviny	27.5.2010

37	Nenávist vůčiParoubkovi: Proč takmálo?	Martin Weiss	Lidové noviny	27.5.2010
38	Zase obyčejní lidé	Martin Weiss	Lidové noviny	28.5.2010
39	Zase pochlebujeme králi	Pavel Bratinka	Lidové noviny	28.5.2010
40	Elity, odoláte?	Zbyněk Petráček	Lidové noviny	29.5.2010
41	Volby, kteránás měly zachránt	Jakub Horák	Lidové noviny	29.5.2010
42	Volby očima Marťana	Igor Lukeš	Lidové noviny	29.5.2010
43	Plíživé vítězství levice	Petr Kamberský	Lidové noviny	31.5.2010
44	Volby: Den poté	Bohumil Doležal	Lidové noviny	31.5.2010
45	Vyhrál volič	Ondřej Neff	Lidové noviny	31.5.2010

Appendix 2 – List of periodicals

Daily newspapers:

Title	Estimated readership as of 2010
MladáfrontaDnes	847 000
Právo	419 000
Lidovénoviny	213 000
Hospodářskénoviny	187 000

Weekly magazines:

Title	Estimated readership as of 2010
Respekt	90 000
Reflex	277 000

Data were obtained from the yearbook of the Union of Publishers. Data are publicly available at the following webpage:
http://www.rocenkaunievydavatelu.cz/2011/index.php