EASTERN EUROPEAN SCREEN CULTURES

Edited by Bernd Herzogenrath

The Barrandov Studios

A Central European Hollywood

Amsterdam University Press

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Eastern European Screen Cultures

The series Eastern European Screen Cultures publishes critical studies on the screen cultures that have marked the socialist and post-socialist spaces in Europe. It aims to unveil current phenomena and untold histories from this region to account for their specificity and integrate them into a wider conception of European and world cinema.

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Eastern European Screen Cultures will also publish translations of important texts that have not been able to travel outside of national and/or regional borders.

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The last few years have been tough: a friend took his life, some people I love and care about got cancer, and the world as a whole has turned crazier than ever – we all need some hope.

I dedicate this book to Janna and Claudia, and to the memory of my brother Frank, and my dear friend Alex.

***

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Introduction: Once upon a (Central European) Time

Bernd Herzogenrath and Kevin Johnson

This book is meant as an introduction. It wants to present to readers not familiar with the subject one of the oldest and crucially important film studios of Central Europe, which also boasts to have been one of the biggest at the time it was founded – the Barrandov Studios in Prague, Czech Republic. Situated on top of the Barrandov Hills, Barrandov Studios functions as a truly Central European Hollywood, explicitly 'planned as a centre for international production' (Hames 2000, 64). The studios 'opened officially in the year marked by the advent of the "talkies" (1931)' (Iordanova 2003, 24). For their now more than ninety years of existence, the studios have been the location of choice for the production of more than 5,000 Czech and international films.

As with its analogous geographical eponyms, such as 'Hollywood' or 'Babelsberg', the label 'Barrandov' encapsules a wealth of connotations that far exceeds the confines of the physical studios themselves. Depending on the context the name can be used to describe a studio complex in the south of Prague, the neighborhood where the film factory is located, or a production company. At the same time, the word is more often than not employed as a general shorthand for the management apparatus that oversaw the state-run film production under communism or for the entire Czech (but not Slovak) film industry and its creative output more generally.[1] At a certain point, the concept of 'Barrandov' achieves mythological implications that are simultaneously linked to both the Czech national identity and with an internationally attractive technological production standard.

While most readers might be familiar with the Czech New Wave (*Nová vlna*), the institution behind these successes is likely less well-known.[2] Its

1 From the postwar era onwards, Slovakia had its own studios.

2 It has to be noted, though, that what is conventionally considered the onset of the *Nová vlna*, i.e., *Slnko v sieti* (*The Sun in a Net*, 1963, dir. Štefan Uher), is a Slovak film, shot in Slovakia. Indeed,

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story has so far not been told to an English-speaking readership. This collection aims at correcting this, presenting the studio's rich history, production culture, and some of its esteemed directors and their films.

A word about the phrase 'Central Europe'. While the diehard connotation of the Czech Republic as being part of Eastern Europe seems to be a default label still alive in the heads of many people (and politicians amongst them as well), it is simply a wrong (and 'ill-educated') notion. Being a remnant of both Enlightenment thinking and Hitler's *Kulturpolitik* (see Hames 2010, 2, referring to Larry Wolff) still does not make it right. As Martin Votruba has pointed out,

> from Switzerland to Slovakia and from Poland to Hungary, geography schoolbooks have been teaching children that their country is in Central Europe (going clockwise from the west: Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic in the middle). (Votruba 2005, 1)

An important studio, prolific, but little-known beyond its native country (at least in the English-speaking world) – that's the fate not only of Barrandov, but also other (not only European) studios in the shadow of Hollywood.

For a long time, the 'Dream Factory' had been the ne plus ultra when it came to film, but for quite some time now, the histories of national (and/or regional) cinemas have come to the fore and succeeded in 'breaking the hegemony' of that monolithic image. The 'big picture' is not just Hollywood – other studios have different histories, different structures, and different perspectives (see also, e.g., Filmové ateliéry *Koliba* (Koliba Studios), Bratislava, Slovakia, formerly known as Slovenská filmová tvorba *Koliba*, when Bratislava still belonged to Czechoslovakia, etc.).

At least since the immense rise of sales figures in Bollywood and Nollywood, non-Hollywood studios could no longer be ignored and excluded from 'the canon' (at times, Nollywood has surpassed Hollywood as the world's second largest movie industry by volume, right behind India's Bollywood). Film scholars have increasingly put 'other studios' on the map – not only 'historically' (older studios on the fringes of Hollywood, such as the studios on LA's 'Poverty Row', see, e.g., Weaver 1999), but also geographically (e.g., with regard to 'genre-specific' Asian cinema, see Fu 2008). However, there is still work to be done.

there has been a plethora of later Slovak filmmakers, working both in Prague and Bratislava (e.g., Juraj Jakubisko, Dušan Hanák, Elo Havetta, etc.).

Thus, the aim of the book is to shed a little light on one of those studios. It is not a book (solely) about Barrandov's studio system (for this, see, e.g., Szczepanik 2016), it wants to introduce the 'complex entity' that is 'the Barrandov Studios' (an assemblage of [film]historical background, particularities in studio culture, a wealth of dramaturges and directors, etc.). In order to do so, it employs a selection of varied methodologies and strategies – reflected also intentionally in different authorial styles: (film) history, film studies, cinema poetics, production studies, cultural studies, reception studies, etc. This approach also has consequences for the structure of the book: it consists of three parts covering: 1) (film) history, 2) production history, and 3) individual directors – which, of course, are not fields to be seen in their isolated state, but entertain 'subterranean' connections with each other.

Lastly, it should be noted that we have imposed a 'time frame' on the history of Barrandov. While there was a 'postsocialist' life after the Velvet Revolution (and the cancellation of state subsidies) in 1989, our introduction ends with that historical rupture: while a point could be made that Barrandov was (and is) still a very successful studio, Peter Hames observed in 2000 that 'there's a difference between a successful film industry and a successful national cinema. While the number of films produced at Barrandov averaged 20–30 features, the production of domestic films dropped to only two per year' (Hames 2000, 71).

Still – while during the last thirty years, Barrandov has predominantly been a production facility for international coproductions or Hollywood projects, and although the percentage of Czech films produced there is low, there actually have been a couple of important films that have come out of Barrandov: Martin Šulík's Slovak-Czech production *Zahrada* (*The Garden*, 1995), Petr Václav's *Marian* (1996), the work of surrealist filmmaker Jan Švankmajer, and, most notably, Jan Svěrák's *Kolja* (*Kolya*, 1996), which won both the Golden Globe and the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film (see also Hames 2000, 74).

***

Let us start with a short overview and timeline of Barrandov Studios. When in 1886, H. H. Wilcox bought an area of Rancho La Brea, which he (or, more precisely, his wife, Daeida) then christened 'Hollywood', this particular piece of land became one of the world's most important 'dream factories' to date. 'Hollywoodland', as it was known for some time, became famous for its scenery, situated in the canyons, its subtropical climate, and, not least, because of its light.

A similar epiphany might have occurred to the brothers Miloš and Václav Havel (uncle and father of the later president Václav Havel, respectively). Miloš Havel had been the managing director of the Lucerna cinema in Prague, and had also been involved with his father's production company, Lucernafilm. In 1921, he formed the production company 'A-B', a merger of his two companies, 'A' ('Americanfilm'), and 'B' ('Biografia'), for which he planned the Barrandov Studios, located in the part of Prague called Barrandov, approximately 10 km from Prague's city center, working hand in hand with the architect Max Urban.

Technically speaking, the name did not have any official connection to the sound stages until the late 1940s, when a film production company called 'Barrandov' came into being and took over operation of the film studios. Although there were at least three other Prague studios independently competing with the facilities in Barrandov (Host, Foja, and Favorit), the films from this period are generally considered as belonging to the 'Golden Age of Barrandov' regardless of which studios they were actually created in. Later, during the communist period, the Barrandov Studios was only one branch under the umbrella state film apparatus, Ústředního ředitelství Československého filmu (Central Office of Czechoslovak Film, ÚŘ ČSF). Many – both in academia and among the general public – tend to ignore the fine bureaucratic distinctions, however, and rely on 'Barrandov' to describe the whole of the national film institution and the movies it produced are commonly understood as coming 'from Barrandov'.[3]

The speed with which the facility was constructed was, in typical Havel style, staggering – the groundbreaking ceremony took place on

3 Some of the most conspicuous historical examples of entities that are decidedly *not-Barrandov*, but often implicitly implicated under the Barrandov label are: the Krátký film (Short Film) production division during the communist period; other Prague film studios that competed with Barrandov in the 1930s before, in some cases, being absorbed into the Prag-Film company during the Protectorate; and the studio in Gottwaldov (today: Zlín), which was primarily oriented toward animation, but became the site of increasing feature production in the later years of communist era, when it became somewhat of a refuge for filmmakers who did not align with the central party line and could not film in Barrandov. Note: the six volumes of the reference work *Český hraný film* (1995–2010) always indicate the specific studio where individual films were shot. Worth noting in this context is the German-language volume *Zwischen Barrandov and Babelsberg* (Roschlau 2008). The scope of this book spans several decades, from the silent period (i.e., predating the very existence of Barrandov) up until the 1980s, with special attention to various trajectories of connection between the Czech and German film industries. Although some of the essays address the actual film studios themselves, the labels 'Barrandov' and 'Babelsberg' are employed rather as semiotic signposts for 'Czech' and 'German' cinema, respectively. In this respect, the book contains considerably less scholarship on the Barrandov Studios per se as one might expect from its title.

23 November 1931 and the first day of shooting was already scheduled for 25 January 1933. On that day, the filming of *Vražda v Ostrovní ulici* (*Murder on Ostrovní Street*), directed by Svatopluk Innemann, kickstarted the brand-new studios. Max Urban, in cooperation with another architect, Vilém Rittersheim, was able to adopt the most current experiences from the construction of foreign film production studios and thus had successfully built what then was the most modern film studio in Europe. Over the course of the 1930s, a number of pictures, which today belong to the golden treasures of Czech cinematography, were created in these studios.

The memoirs of Václav Maria Havel, brother of Miloš Havel, may well be the most useful text providing insight into how the studios came into being and the full historical context of that period. Václav Maria was a real estate investor and developer whose entrepreneurial initiative brought into existence the luxurious Barrandov neighborhood on a hitherto remote and empty craggy hilltop south of Prague. It was, in fact, Václav, who we can thank for the very name 'Barrandov', which he chose to designate the residential neighborhood that arose from his urban project as a sort of tribute to the French geologist Joachim Barrande, who had carried out groundbreaking researched on the fossils in the area during the mid-nineteenth century. An entire chapter of the memoir is dedicated to the inception and realization of 'Barrandov' – in this case, the sprawling high-society urban project, of which his brother's A-B film studios were only a small part, at least initially.

Offering a more scientific approach to the period is Krystyna Wanatowiczová's 2013 monograph on Miloš Havel. Drawing on an impressive range of archival sources and other materials, Wanatowiczová reconstructs the life story of the father of Barrandov, including detailed accounts of the creation of the studios and the surrounding villa neighborhood, the forced takeover by Third Reich authorities, and Havel's role in film production under the Protectorate. In its telling, the volume not only offers a historical overview of the first decades of the studios under Havel's leadership, but also unique personal accounts of daily life in the studios and Czechoslovak film culture more generally. The prose is supplemented, among other things, by a wealth of photographs, reproductions of archival documents, and short biographies of those in Havel's intimate sphere (Wanatowiczová 2013).

The fateful year of 1939 and the Nazi occupation of the Czech lands resulted in the confiscation of Barrandov Studios by the German occupiers, turning it into an 'alternative centre for German production' (Hames 2000, 64; see also Heiss and Klimeš 2003; Dvoráková 2008). Guided by the systematic propaganda of Joseph Goebbels, German film production took advantage of the ideally equipped studios in order to make films that suited

Nazi tastes. In addition to the original stages and old halls already located at Barrandov Studios, the Germans constructed three more sound stages, called the New Halls. Over the course of the war, eighty-two films were produced there. During the Prague uprising in May 1945, Barrandov Studios was fought for as well. In the skirmish, several wooden buildings were damaged and caught fire, but that did not put a stop to the productions that were in progress. After the liberation, the studios were not returned to the original owners. As early as 1944, leftist Czech filmmakers and critics (among them Lubomír Linhart, Vladislav Vančura, and Otakar Vávra) requested that the whole film industry be nationalized. According to the late Antonín J. Liehm, the idea behind this was not so much directly political, but the wish to establish 'such conditions as cannot be provided by an organization which has commercial profit as its only goal' (Liehm 1966, quoted in Hames 2000, 69n1). President Beneš, heading the Czech government-in-exile in London, granted this request. After 1945, when Czechoslovakian State Film was nationalized on the basis of a governmental decree, the well-equipped Barrandov, which had remained almost untouched by the war, became the most important foundation for the renewal of a national cinematography.

During nationalization, films that were determined to be against national morale or the socialist state order faced rather difficult times. The dissident writer Josef Škvorecký, who also cowrote the screenplay for Evald Schorm's *Farářův konec* (*End of a Priest*, 1969), points out the existence of an 'Ur-Wave' – a group of filmmakers (which included Jan Kadár, Vojtěch Jasný, Karel Kachyňa, František Vláčil, and Jaromil Jireš, among others) that before the actual Czech New Wave tried to react against the stifling conditions of nationalization 'from within'. This included films such as Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos's *Tři přání* (*Three Wishes*, 1958), a satire that did not please the authorities, and, as a consequence, together with other films, such as Jasný's *Zářijové noci* (*September Nights*, 1957), Václav Krška's *Zde jsou lvi* (*Scars of the Past*, 1958), Vladimír *Svitáček*'s *Konec jasnovidce* (*The End of the Soothsayer*, 1958), and Ladislav Helge's *Škola otců* (*School for Fathers*, 1957), were banned and shelved until 1963 (see Hames 2005, 35).

In the 1960s, a younger 'New Wave' generation came to the forefront of the creative effort and significantly affected European, and, consequently, international, cinematography. This included directors such as Miloš Forman, Věra Chytilová, Jiří Menzel, Pavel Juráček, Jan Němec, and Evald Schorm, who were all recent graduates of the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (Filmová a televizní fakulta Akademie múzických umění v Praze, FAMU), established in 1946. The Barrandov films *Obchod na korze* (*The Shop on Main Street*, 1965, dir. Ján Kadár and Elmar

Klos) and Menzel's *Ostré sledované vlaky* (*Closely Observed Trains*, 1966) received Oscars for Best Foreign Language Film, while Forman's *Lásky jedné plavovlásky* (*Loves of a Blonde*, 1965) and *Hoří, má panenko* (*The Firemen's Ball*, 1967) were nominated for that prestigious trophy. A number of additional European awards increased the visibility of Barrandov Studios and started to lure international crews to Prague – Hollywood productions shot in Barrandov and on location around Prague at the time include *The Bridge at Remagen* (1969), *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1972), and *Operation Daybreak* (1975). In the 1980s such international coproductions were actively sought as a means of providing financial support for the struggling communist economy, which resulted in foreign film crews coming to Prague to shoot such films as Miloš Forman's *Amadeus* (1984) and Barbra Streisand's *Yentl* (1983) (see Iordanova 2003, 26).[4]

However, in the wake of the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact countries in 1968, the number of internationally significant domestic productions declined. Several directors, such as Ivan Passer, Miloš Forman, and Jan Němec opted to emigrate to the United States and fashioned a significant reputation for themselves abroad. Films for children and youth and, in particular, fairy-tale films, played a key role in showcasing Barrandov creations. Many of these received prizes at international festivals. German-speaking countries were overwhelmed by Jindřich Polák's television series *Pan Tau* (1970–1978) and also broadcasted (and still do) Václav Vorlíček's *Tři oříšky pro Popelku* (*Three Wishes for Cinderella*, 1973) each year at Christmas time. The production of filmed fairy tales for theatrical distribution became a singular European rarity, at which Barrandov excelled.

After the revolution in 1989, significant changes took place in the studio. Government subsidies were no longer flowing into film production and the studios at Barrandov were gradually privatized, thus beginning their new era in a newly restored democracy. Following privatization, a number of companies changed places in the management and since 1996 Barrandov Studios has been owned by the joint stock company Moravia Steel (see Hames 2000, 71). So much for a little Barrandov timeline.

With regard to the scholarly literature in the Czech Republic relating to Barrandov, the situation presents itself as mixed – due to the fact that,

4 Western money had already been funneled into Barrandov much earlier on, because of the policy that Alois Poledňák (director of the Czech State Film Industry) launched in the 1960s. The international coproduction mentioned belong to a phase when late neo-Stalinist economies struggled to attract Western finance.

on the one hand, Barrandov's heyday is over, but, on the other hand, the interest in the national film studios is on the rise again.

While there are many compelling studies of specific periods in Barrandov's past, until now there has not been one book that attempted to trace the overall history of its development since the early 1930s until the present. Indeed, even within the Czech scholarly context, a definitive historical account of Barrandov has yet to be published. Yet, there is a growing body of research being published with the studios as the primary object of investigation or as a case study. On account of the various functions that 'Barrandov' has served in Czech(oslovak) and world cinema since its inception, a wealth of thematic approaches and modes of investigation have been applied to it. In recent decades some of the leading discussions about Barrandov have been related to topics such as political control and censorship; (planned) film economy; technology and innovation; and foreign-language or international (co)productions.[5]

Perhaps the most comprehensive general overview of the studio's century of existence can be found in a series of four coffee-table books compiled by Pavel Jiras (2010, 2012, 2013, 2017). These lovingly crafted volumes treat the reader to an abundance of behind-the-scenes photographs from film sets throughout Barrandov's entire history accompanied by basic facts and anecdotes about many of the features shot there. While each book is a compendium of information and images that would appeal to any enthusiast of Barrandov, Jiras does not strive for the same level of academic analysis as the essays collected in the current volume. An earlier analogue to Jiras's work is Jaroslav Brož and Myrtil Frída's two-volume *Historie československého filmu v obrazech 1930–1945* (History of Czechoslovak cinema in images, 1930–1945, 1966).[6] The authors are more analytical in their approach than Jiras, yet their primary focus is neither the production conditions in the studios nor the economic and policy decisions at work in the industry, but rather the thematic and aesthetic content of individual films and cinema

5 This last topic represents a wide range of themes connected to issues of language, national cinema, and the international/global film business, for example: multiple-language versions, foreign companies (e.g., those from Hollywood) shooting in Prague, German film production during the Protectorate, international coproductions, especially during the period of Normalization, etc.

6 A significant difference, though, is that these volumes are not narrowly focused on Barrandov at all, but rather aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the first fifty years or so of cinema in the Czech lands, from 1898 until 1945. Thus, the first volume, which only extends until 1930, does not deal with Barrandov at all. The second volume does include a brief discussion of the cultural and economic conditions that gave rise to the Barrandov Studios and its importance for film production in the 1930s.

personalities (actors, directors, writers, etc.). Nevertheless, these two volumes remain a valuable documentation of early Barrandov and what preceded it.

Until the 1990s, much of the scholarly literature related to Barrandov was similar in spirit and approach to the work of Brož and Frída: chronological accumulations of facts, data, and statistics. The most important writers to document the early decades of Barrandov are Jiří Havelka and Karel Smrž. Havelka's *Kronika našeho filmu 1898–1965* (Chronicle of our film, 1898–1965, 1967) strives to list as much data relating to any and all aspects of cinema in the historical period he is working with (e.g., films produced in Czechoslovakia by both domestic and foreign companies, films distributed in the country, dates and locations of premieres, information on film-related publications, numbers of films made annually by local studios, etc.). In his most important film-historical work, *Základní chronologická data vývoje českého a československého filmu* (Basic chronological data of the development of Czech and Czechoslovakian film, 1952), Smrž is more attentive to presenting the historical conditions – the industrial, economic, and political contexts – that gave rise to specific films. Later, in the 1980s and early 1990s, two scholars published important works in the same vein. Zdeněk Štábla's four-volume *Data a fakta z dějin čs. kinematografie 1896–1945* (Data and facts from the history of the Czech Republic: Cinematography, 1896–1945, 1990) presents an abundance of information in the form of a month-by-month chronology of important events related to the domestic film industry. Like Brož, Frída, and Smrž before him, Luboš Bartošek's chronological narrative *Náš film: Kapitoly z dějin (1896–1945)* (Our film: Chapters from history [1896–1945], 1985) is primary focused on individual films and personalities, while also occasionally taking into account the political and industrial conditions. For example, Bartošek dedicates an entire chapter to the construction of the Barrandov Studios (including the consideration 'Why Barrandov?') and the competition it faced from other Prague studios in the 1930s. Curiously, both of these works from the end of the communist era in Czechoslovakia deal exclusively with the period 1896–1945. They conclude (like Brož and Frída) at the end of World War II. This as was typical for the period, the political situation made it difficult and/or undesirable to examine contemporary or recent historical developments with any level of objective or critical lens.

Since the 2000s, when a new generation of researchers trained in postcommunist era academia began to gain broader access to formerly unobtainable archival sources, Czech film scholarship has seen tremendous expansion to the range of thematic subjects and analytical approaches to the local film history, including many studies that specifically deal with the Barrandov

Studios. The most conspicuous Czech scholarly monograph on Barrandov is Petr Szczepanik's *Továrna Barrandov. Svět filmařů a politická moc 1945–1970* (The Barrandov factory: The world of filmmakers and political power, 1945–1970, 2016), which focuses on a small, twenty-five-year portion of the studio's history. The volume examines Barrandov as a case-study for analyzing the operation and output of the nationalized and state-socialist studios during this first two and a half decades of its existence. Szczepanik argues that although the Barrandov Studios was subject to strict governmental control, the filmmakers working in it were also afforded a great degree of individual authority and had access to substantial material and symbolic benefits. He devotes particular attention to the day-to-day production practices of the studios, as creators of popular culture, focusing on collaborative production and popular genres, rather than the work of auteurs.

The communist period offers rich source material for analyses related to issues of state control, centralized industry, censorship, and individual (or small group collaborative) agency, such as in Szczepanik's *Továrna Barrandov*. Also addressing the same general period is *Naplánovaná kinematografie: Český filmový průmysl 1945 až 1960* (Planned cinematography: The Czech film industry, 1945 to 1960, 2012) edited by Pavel Skopal, which presents a collection of essays drawing on extensive archival research to explore various facets of the 'radically new model of film culture' during the first fifteen years after the end of World War II (1945–1960). (Many of the authors who contributed to this collection also provided texts to the current volume.) While half of the book is dedicated to studies of distribution and exhibition practices, the first five essays focus on film production. Of particular interest in the current context is Pavel Skopal's essay on coproductions among socialist states, which takes Barrandov as a case study, and Petr Szczepanik's examination of the top-down structural organization of the state film industry and how it affected production practices, including at Barrandov.[7] Versions of both essays were subsequently published in English in the volume *Cinema in Service of the State: Perspectives on Film Culture in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, 1945–1960* (2015), edited by Lars Karl and Skopal.

Although the political situation gradually began to loosen during the late 1950s and into the Prague Spring of 1968, centralized state control never fully disappeared. This period is the focus for Lukáš Skupa's examination of Barrandov Studios as a case study of censorship in Czechoslovakia during the 1960s in *Vadí – nevadí: Česká filmová cenzura v 60. letech* (Never mind – It doesn't matter: Czech film censorship in the 1960s, 2016). Adopting a

7 See also Szczepanik 2013a.

'New Film History' approach, this study considers the constantly shifting negotiational relationships between Barrandov, the central film administration, and the censorship authorities. Similarly to Szczepanik's monograph, Skupa's research reveals previously unknown details about the daily routine in the film studios, thereby offering a new perspective that contrasted with most studies until that time, which tended to focus on the aesthetic achievements of individual directors without regard for the conditions in which they arose. Picking up the historical baton from Skupa are two important studies on the period of so-called Normalization that came in the aftermath of the August 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces: Štěpán Hulík's *Kinematografie zapomnění: Počátky normalizace ve Filmovém studiu Barrandov (1968–1973)* (Cinematography of forgetting: The beginnings of Normalization at the Barrandov Film Studios [1968–1973], 2012) and Marie Barešová and Tereza Czesany Dvořáková's *Generace Normalizace: Ztracená naděje českého filmu?* (The Normalization generation: The lost hope of Czech film?, 2017). Hulík specifically examines the transformations at Barrandov Studios during the immediate postinvasion period. Drawing on the archives of the Barrandov Studios, which had only recently become accessible at the time, and interviews with people who had worked in the studios between 1968 and 1973, the study aims to reveal how the political changes behind the scenes influenced Barrandov's production practices and creative output in this crucial moment of transition in the national film history. Barešová and Dvořáková employ methodologies of oral history and cultural history to map the fates of the generation of FAMU students who began their studies during the liberal atmosphere of the 1960s, but began employment at Barrandov Studios during the repressive years of Normalization in the 1970s. In their presentation of semi-structured interviews with fourteen filmmakers, the authors observe two major trends: the careers of this generation shifted away from mainstream production to 'alternative' modes such as films for children, documentary, or animation; and due to the charged political environment at the central studios, many of these filmmakers migrated away from Barrandov to the smaller Gottwald Film Studio in present-day Zlín.

Of course, research into the influences of political, or even military, power on film production need not be restricted to the communist period of Czech(oslovak) history. The period of German occupation and Nazi control under the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia between 1939 and 1945 offers equally compelling material for such investigations. Notably, in the Czech academic context, this period is less extensively or rigorously examined as the communist period. The most substantial monograph relating to

Barrandov during the period of occupation by the Third Reich is Tereza Czesany Dvořáková and Ivan Klimeš's *Prag-Film AG 1941–1945 : Im Spannungsfeld zwischen Protektorats- und Reichs-Kinematografie* (Prag-Film AG 1941–1945: In the tension between Protectorate and Reich cinematography, 2008), which was published in German and does not yet have a Czech-language counterpart. Building on a wealth of archival research, this study describes the monumental changes imposed upon Barrandov during the Protectorate, when the German occupiers took forcible possession of the studios from Miloš Havel and integrated it into the centralized film industry of the Third Reich. Perhaps the most extensive study of Czech cinema in this period to be published in Czech, besides Wanatowiczová's monograph on Miloš Havel, remains Petr Bednařík's *Arizace české kinematografie* (Aryanization of Czech cinematography, 2003) about the Aryanization of the film industry during the Protectorate. In the volume, which examines how the forced processes of 'de-Jewification' played out in various branches of the industry, one chapter is dedicated to the film studios, with most attention spent on Barrandov. One of the most recent contributions to research about Barrandov during this period also focuses on Havel but was published in English: Pavel Skopal's 'Offers Difficult to Refuse: Miloš Havel and Clientele Transactional Networks in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia' (2021) in a volume about national cinemas under German occupation, which he also coedited with Roel Vande Winkel. In this essay, Skopal describes how Miloš Havel lost the 'battles over the Barrandov Studios' to the German authorities, yet managed to stay afloat during the war years due to his transnational networks and patronage from influential administrators.

Much of the most compelling new scholarship on Barrandov can be found in a series of film-focused books published by the Czech National Film Archive (Národní filmový archiv, NFA) over the past decade. As part of its ongoing mission to digitize the Czech film heritage, the archive has been releasing monographs on recently digitized films, which gather together a wonderful collection of factual data, documentation, interviews, and new scholarly essays related to various aspects of the films.[8] In 2017, as part of a ten-film digitization project supported by an EEA Grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway, the NFA published a bumper volume of new scholarship that examined the selected films from multiple perspectives (production history, technical innovation, distribution, reception, etc.): Lucie Česálková, ed., *Zpět k českému filmu: politika, estetika, žánry a technika/ Czech Cinema Revisited: Politics, Aesthetics, Genres, and Techniques* (2017; the

8 See, for example, Batistová 2012; Čechová 2013; Skupa 2014; Skopal 2016.

volume was published simultaneously in Czech and in English translation). Also of note here are the volumes in the 'Film Mosaic' (Filmová mozaika) series published by casablanca in Prague. Similarly to the books from the NFA, this series features 'collective monographs' dedicated to individual films (or collection of related films) that present archival documentation and interviews with filmmakers together with analytical studies that approach the film(s) from a diverse range of thematic and critical perspectives. For example, the first book in the series focused on the film *Marketa Lazarová* (Gajdošík 2009), where among studies about film aesthetics (sound design, cinematography, etc.), and analyses of the filmic depiction of the medieval period or gender roles, we also find chapters such as Tereza Czesany Dvořaková's presentation of the film's production history as reflected in the archival materials of Barrandov Studios ('Marketa Lazarová v zrcadle produkčních dokumentů Filmového studia Barrandov'). Likewise, the interviews with filmmakers offer inside views into the day-to-day operations at the studios and on the production sets (Gajdošík 2009).

The current volume seeks to present a historical overview of Barrandov's heyday, but not as a mere chronological account. While progressing through the studio's history, each chapter in the book approaches the object of Barrandov from a different analytical or thematic perspective.

In the following, we would like to introduce the three main parts of the book.

(Film) History

When in October 1918 the First Czechoslovakian Republic was founded, with the philosopher and politician Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk as its first president, Czechoslovakia became one of the most advanced countries in Europe. It was one of the most industrialized countries on the continent, and there had already been notable developments in the local film culture. In fact, '[r]egular film production began in Prague as early as 1910 and, by the beginning of the First World War, over a third of the cinemas in Austria-Hungary were based in Bohemia and Moravia' (Hames 2010, 10). In addition to Miloš Havel's already mentioned studios 'A' ('Americanfilm'), and 'B' ('Biografia'), there was also the Ateliér Kavalírka in Prague, which operated between 1926 and 1929 (see Fabiánová 2007). Throughout the 1920s, the international profile of Czech film production steadily increased with directors such as Gustav Machatý and Karel Lamač establishing solid reputations in Germany, France, and beyond.

The first essay in this section by Tereza Czesany Dvořáková situates and contextualizes the 'founding act' of Barrandov within the sociopolitical, cultural, and economic parameters of the times. A bit more than ten years into the 'First Republic', Miloš Havel established and developed one of the biggest film studios in Central Europe. Despite the national importance of the Czech film industry in the interwar period, local production companies suffered from a lack of professional infrastructure for shooting throughout the 1920s. The young film entrepreneur Havel, a member of a well-known Prague dynasty of developers, devised the ambitious project to construct an expansive and modern film studio complex in Prague's Barrandov area during a highly disadvantageous time: at the height of the world economic crisis. Nevertheless, thanks to his connections in the banking sector and government, Havel was able to realize his plan in 1933 and even managed to secure state subsidies to do so. The individual sound stages were designed to be large enough to accommodate not only the Czech industry, but also foreign film production.

The studio functioned according to this design until the Nazi occupation in 1939, when the German film industry included Barrandov on its list of Czech film companies to be taken over. They achieved this goal in 1940, when Miloš Havel was pressured to sign a contract of sale, turning the studio over to the Germans. In the course of the years 1940–1945, Barrandov Studios was integrated into the Nazi film apparatus, whereby it became a primary site for the production of German films, while Czech film production assumed a position of lesser importance. The studio also developed some of its own German-language film projects under the label 'Prag-Film'. No longer owner and manager of the studio, Miloš Havel turned his energy to producing Czech films and to diplomatic activities, negotiating between the Czech film community and German film policy officials. At the same time, contrary to his wishes and despite his best efforts against it, an illegal plan for the nationalization of Czech cinema was developed and approved by the Czech governments in exile in London and Moscow. The studio was taken over by the newly independent Czechoslovak state in summer 1945, and shortly thereafter Miloš Havel was accused of collaboration with the Nazis. It was not until the 1950s that Havel was partially compensated for his loss of property. By this time, he was no longer living in Czechoslovakia, having illegally emigrated to West Germany. As Dvořáková argues, the fate of Miloš Havel and his studio can be read as a metaphor of the shifts in the Czech film industry during the first half of the twentieth century: rising from humble origins as a self-made man, moving through a period of professionalization and internationalization

before submitting to the authoritarian power of the Nazis, and finally handing over the film industry to the state apparatus, which was already under communist control in 1945.

Before Kevin B. Johnson takes a closer look at Barrandov's further development, including the 'Nazi years', Radomír D. Kokeš's essay on 'The Concept of Regional Poetics of Cinema: Czech Films of the 1920s and Early 1930s' aims at moving towards writing an aesthetic history of Czech cinema from the perspective of the poetics of cinema. Kokeš introduces the methodological background of such research. In a critical debate with existing approaches, he formulates more general hypotheses about the typical features of Czech silent and early sound films, and then presents a more focused case study of the first film shot in theBarrandov Studios. Kokeš also discusses both one particular genre tradition and the thoughtful embedding of the extraordinary technical options of Barrandov into relatively longer-term stylistic continuities Kokeš sketches the possibilities of the concept of regional poetics, which refers to analytical and historical research regarding what is typical for a particular area: as such, it inquires a corpus of feature-length film works, each of which was predominantly made in a specified territory, predominantly in the official language of that territory, and for standard commercial distribution within that territory.

Kevin B. Johnson's essay presents an overview of the first fifteen years of Barrandov Studios, from its construction in 1933 until the communist coup in 1948. During this time, the Barrandov was primarily oriented to the production of popular films intended for a broad audience, whereby the industry relied heavily on the cultivation and promotion of a star system to generate business. Johnson highlights a few examples of the main genres (comedy, detective film, historical drama, melodrama, etc.) for closer analysis, with special attention to how these films imagined Czech identity, particularly in relation to its German-speaking neighbors and with regard to its place on the international, English-oriented stage. A secondary focus of the essay is the exploration of the studio's balancing act between the promotion of the national cinema and the cultivation of international industrial connections. For historical, political, economic, and geographical reasons, the most important foreign industries for the Czech studios were Germany and Austria. In addition to considering the studio's efforts to produce films to be marketed to these German-speaking audiences, the essay also examines various ways that these foreign industries invested in and capitalized on production in Prague, particularly during the period of occupation under the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. This examination focuses on four main phases or aspects of Barrandov's relationship with its Germanic

neighbors: the production of foreign-language films and multiple-language versions (MLVs); the output of the Prague subsidiary of the largest and most powerful German film company, Ufa; the integration of Barrandov production into the Third Reich film apparatus during the war years; and the postwar period (which saw a distancing between Czechoslovak and German production). In keeping with its primary focus, the essay traces the careers of the major stars and directors of the period as they developed through each of these phases. Although the events of 1938–1939 mark a significant social and political turning point, there is a high degree of continuity in film production at Barrandov in terms of film personnel, generic tropes, and overall cinematic style.

Production History

Production studies' most significant gesture, one might argue, is its insistence on not restricting film analysis to the content on screen. But, in addition, it is also not the directors and producers that this approach takes into focus, but rather the whole network of 'below the line' workers, such as camera operators, the editorial crew, grips, gaffers, etc. – all those laborers who turn the process of 'filmmaking' into an endeavor beyond 'auteurial analysis'. Going beyond the analysis of important decisions of media corporations and the forces of national economies, production culture, as John Thornton Caldwell has pointed out in his by now classic text *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television* (2008), focuses on the fact that studios

> do not simply produce mass or popular culture (a much-studied perspective for over seven decades), but rather film/TV production communities themselves are cultural expressions and entities involving all of the symbolic processes and collective practices that other cultures use: to gain and reinforce identity, to forge consensus and order, to perpetuate themselves and their interests, and to interpret the media *as* audience members. (Caldwell 2008, 2)

However, most studies of production culture not only exert a hegemonic framework by suggesting that Anglo-American modes of production (mostly Hollywood) present the default (and thus universal) example, they also tend to forget, as Petr Szczepanik has observed, 'earlier historical precedents and alternative modes of production' (Szczepanik 2013b, 113).

The fall of communism (and with it the decline of state control and censorship), which consequently also led to the accessibility of long-closed archives, made it possible that, as Lars Karl and Pavel Skopal have argued, 'historians from the region itself [now are able] to ask fresh questions and offer new judgements on their own past' (Karl and Skopal 2015, 1).

Four of those 'historians from the region itself' have contributed to this part of the book – Petr Szczepanik, Pavel Skopal and Michal Šašek, and Jindřiška Bláhová – and their innovative scholarly impulses differ significantly from the prevailing focus on the Czech New Wave and auteurist approach to its filmmakers. The following contributions all address a pivotal issue in dealing with Barrandov: while History (with a capital H) is usually said to move forward by big shifts, the following essays focus on continuity of production culture and production practice, despite and beyond those ruptures, such as the 1939 Nazi takeover, the 1948 communist coup, or the 1968 Soviet invasion.

Szczepanik's essay discusses the conditions for industrial authorship, and group-based creativity and style in the state-socialist production system of Czechoslovakia in the second half of the 1950s and the 1960s. It describes the manner in which collaborative creative activities were organized under a regime which designated the state as the sole official producer. It also looks at the way informal social networks allowed distinct group styles to take shape. Specific organizational solutions were introduced in the mid-1950s in an effort to strike a balance between top-down centralized control, on the one hand, and creative freedom as a necessary prerequisite for product differentiation, on the other. The chapter draws on recent theoretical discussions of group style and authorship as well as on Szczepanik's own previous work, on what he has called the 'state-socialist mode of film production', which comprises management hierarchies, and a division of labor and work practices (*Szczepanik 2013c*). He then moves to his example, Czechoslovak cinema after 1954, when so-called 'film units' were re-established at Barrandov Studios as part of the general decentralization of the rigid production system of the early 1950s (characterized by extreme social atomization and disempowerment of the production community). By focusing on the early stage of the transformation process (1955–1962), when the units – practically substituting for hands-on creative producers – were pushed to innovate and differentiate by building informal collaborative networks with young writers and directors, Szczepanik attempts to uncover the social workings of group styles. The group styles are thus described in their nascent form, before they materialized into the first revisionist film movement of post-WWII

Czech cinema – socially critical and satirical films movies of the late 1950s, followed by the so-called 'New Wave' of the 1960s.

In the next essay, Pavel Skopal and Michal Šašek take a closer look at a crucial, but often critically overlooked figure in the production process – the 'dramaturge'. Petr Szczepanik has discussed the specific concept of dramaturge in the Czechoslovak production system at length (see Szczepanik 2013a). He points out how during various reforms in politics and economics in the 'Eastern Bloc' during the 1950s consequently effected the establishing of 'dramaturgical units' within the production process – decentralized creative groups which were 'expected to bridge the gap between lower and upper management, and to insure the steady supply of professional-quality screenplays' (Szczepanik 2013c, 117). These 'dramaturges', which existed both in Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, were basically 'literary advisors' who 'attracted prominent writers and put them in touch with directors' (119). In their essay, Skopal and Šašek focus on the dramaturge Marcela Pittermannová, and on the routine of the dramaturgical job, with its dynamics and functions in the production system.

Pittermannová became a member of a creative group at Barrandov in 1961, and was a dramaturge in the successful area of production of films for children for almost three decades. Working at Barrandov from the 1960s to the end of state-socialist era, her case provides important insights both into a crucial time period and into a significant section of the studio's production system. As Pittermannová recalls, unpredictability became a part of life at Barrandov since the start of so-called Normalization era. Problems in the production system tended to emerge when instructions delivered by decision-makers in this bureaucratic system failed to adhere to strict rules or to outline clear criteria. Nevertheless, the Children's Film Dramaturgical Group was one of only two groups to boast high levels of continuity following the purges enacted during Normalization and represented a pocket of continuity and trustworthiness for the coproduction partners, as well as for the studio heads. This stability in part hinged on the exportability of fairy tales, whose stories of good and evil unfolding in non-national fantasy space were seen to resonate cross-culturally.

With Jindřiška Bláhová, we zoom in even deeper into the microhistory of production processes and micropolitics of quotidian decision-making. The production history of Czechoslovak films critical of state-socialism in late 1980s Czechoslovakia has so far been mostly linked to the big shifts in economic and political reforms (perestroika) and to a somewhat vague notion of liberalization. Bláhová's essay, in contrast, suggests to substitute those explanatory frameworks by a more nuanced historiography and

microhistory of individual films within the macrohistory of Barrandov in the 1980s. Taking as a point in case the 1988 Barrandov-produced film *Pražská 5* (*The Prague Five*), a feature-length compilation of five short films, Bláhová argues that the film might be better understood as a product of tensions between institutional and personal interests, and of industry-level changes at Barrandov. An analysis of historical documents in Barrandov's archives, the Czech National Film Archive, and Russian archives, alongside media coverage, and interviews conducted with former Barrandov personnel, reveals that a broader range of factors drove the openly critical and mocking elements of *Pražská 5*: 1) the reorganization at Barrandov, which had only little to do with perestroika, 2) the professional ambitions of key decision-makers, and 3) the emergence of home video as a delivery system paired with a renewed emphasis on young filmmakers. It was the notion of video as experiment that evoked a sense of a margin which facilitated the production of a film that would have otherwise either encountered difficulties and resistance within the state-controlled film industry, or, most likely, would not have been made at all.

While Bláhová's essay focuses on a single film, this is not a case study of just one particular production: the essay rather offers a fresh look at the production of more politically and stylistically daring Czechoslovak films in the 1980s, explores the integration of a new media technology within the state-controlled film industry, and offers an insight into the production culture at Barrandov towards the end of state-socialism in Czechoslovakia.

Individual Directors

Since this is not a book about a studio system per se, but about the complex entity called 'Barrandov Studios', a book which is also directed at the reader nonfamiliar with this studio and its productions, this part centers on five individual directors that have worked for Barrandov Studios. The choice of these directors aims to cover not only the auteurs of the famous Czech New Wave and their filmic aesthetics, but also lesser-known (but important) directors before and after, 'nationalizer veterans' (such as Weiss) and filmmakers working with film genres, who simply fall out of the scope (such as Vorlíček) alike.

Lucie Česálková opens this section with an essay on Jiří Weiss. Although not one of the best-known figures of Czechoslovak cinema, Weiss's career illustrates how Barrandov Studios was influenced by politics, generational linkages, artistic approaches, and international ambitions after the end

of the Second World War. Already considered at this time a member of the 'veteran' generation, Weiss brought to Barrandov continuity with the interwar avant-garde, connections to the West, inspiration from the British film industry, and an interest in international cooperation, while he also played an important role in shaping Czechoslovakia's version of socialist realism within the political context of the early 1950s. Yet, in spite of the ideological success of *a* (*New Fighters Shall Arise*, 1951), and his designation as a 'documentarian' and a 'realist', Weiss worked at the periphery of socialist realism, without engaging in simplistic agitprop. In her essay, Česálková proposes the term 'crossover auteur' to describe Weiss's position within the Czechoslovak film industry to highlight that his approach to filmmaking made it natural for him to move between genres, similar to the way he moved between documentary and fiction films, and between influences of various cultures and generations.

Definitively one of the most well-known (and internationally acclaimed) Czech directors is Miloš Forman. Forman began his career as a filmmaker at Barrandov Studios in Prague in the 1960s and filmed his international 'blockbuster' *Amadeus* with Barrandov in the early 1980s. The contrast between the big-budget historical spectacle of *Amadeus* and the gently ironic realism of his earlier films from the 1960s could not be more pronounced. In his essay, David Sorfa explores the changes that mark both Forman's own development as a filmmaker between the 1960s and the 1980s as well as considering the impact of Normalization on Barrandov Studios following the events of August 1968. During the 1960s, aside from its relationship with the young filmmakers of the New Wave, Barrandov supported an extraordinary range of films, from popular to historical epics. Under the directorship of Josef Veselý, Barrandov turned out to be an environment that produced films that were successful with the public, formally experimental, and politically challenging. The situation at Barrandov after 1968 quickly changed, and Forman decided not to return to Czechoslovakia. Forman's films during the 1970s in the United States brought him a level of international fame and popularity that is unrivaled in the history of Czech cinema but showed a radical departure from the films of the 1960s. This change culminates with *Amadeus* and Forman's return to Barrandov.

Another icon of the *Nová vlna* was Věra Chytilová, best known for her 1966 *Sedmikrásky* (*Daisies*). In his essay, Peter Hames considers Chytilová's authorship in proximity to questions of industrial authorship, examining not only her shifting relationship with Barrandov Studios from the 1960s through her departure from the studios in the 1970s, but also her controversial return with *Panelstory* (*Prefab Story*, 1979) and *Kalamita* (*Calamity*, 1981),

and her subsequent defense of the studios and the nationalized system in the early 1990s.

As one of the most formally experimental directors of the Czechoslovak New Wave, Chytilová was almost bound to experience difficulties with production companies both under communism and subsequently. Her graduation film *Strop* (*Ceiling*, 1961) was made from a script that had been disallowed, while her short 'documentary' *Pytel blech* (*A Bagful of Fleas*, 1962) had its release delayed for over a year. Surprisingly, she has commented favorably on the creative sympathy of the Šmída-Fikar production group at Barrandov when she was working on her first two features, *O něčem jiném* (*Something Different*, 1963) and *Sedmikrásky*. However, this was in the context of the developing creative freedoms that led to the Prague Spring of 1968. The reaction of political critics was rather different, leading to a petition that demanded the banning of *Sedmikrásky*.

The suppression of the critical liberties of the 1960s following the Soviet invasion led to the banning of large numbers of films from the 1960s (well over a hundred) together with many of their directors, some permanently. Notoriously, Chytilová challenged the system, sending a letter to President Husák in 1975 recording the many ways in which she had been prevented from working. The letter was published internationally, notably in English in *Index on Censorship* (1976), and she returned to features the same year with *Hra o jablko* (*The Apple Game*) made by Krátký film Praha (Short Film Prague). This film was not released in Czechoslovakia until 1978, with the authorities unsuccessfully attempting to obstruct its international release.

While both Forman and Chytilová were directors at the forefront of the Czech New Wave, their contemporary and fellow Barrandov 'colleague' Juraj Herz, a Jewish-Slovakian director predominantly based in Prague, curiously seems to have kept under the radar during this important period. Herz worked at Barrandov throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. He forged an unusually successful and long-standing career at the studio when compared with other talented filmmakers of his generation. Herz was at once audacious, pragmatic, and resourceful: he often pushed against the boundaries of what was permissible while also proving able to make the best of the projects that were offered (or at times imposed on) him.

Jonathan Owen's essay takes Herz's career one decade at a time. He developed from essentially an apprentice position at Barrandov (an assistant to Zbyněk Brynych and then Kadár and Klos) to directing his own films. However, Herz himself did not partake of the prestige of the Czech New Wave and endured censorship problems on his first two films, realizing his artistic sensibility only at the end of the decade with his occupation-era

comic horror film *Spalovač mrtvol* (*The Cremator*, 1969), benefitting from the freedom of the Prague Spring era.

The 1970s saw a return to censorship and ideological control at Barrandov, personified in a newly appointed central dramaturge, Ludvík Toman, but Herz's career, ironically, thrived at this point, in contrast to that of most New Wave directors. Though his specific plans of continuing in the vein of *Spalovač mrtvol* were scuppered early on, his output of the 1970s proved accomplished, popular, and often highly distinctive – indeed at times virtually unique amid the caution and dreariness of much Normalization era cinema. Herz's 1970s films include the baroque psychological melodrama *Morgiana* (1972) and two fairy-tale films, produced simultaneously, that are essentially works of horror in disguise, *Panna a netvor* (*Beauty and the Beast*, 1978) and *Deváté srdce* (*The Ninth Heart*, 1978). Herz sought to take advantage of the more relaxed climate of Barrandov in the 1980s by making a (literally) more full-blooded horror film, *Upír z Feratu* (*The Ferat Vampire*, 1982), and a yet more subversive spin on the fairy tale, *Straka v hrsti* (*Magpie in the Hand*, 1983), though in both these projects he hit against the limits of the studio's newly 'liberalized' status.

As Owen shows, Herz was indeed a boundary-pushing director who frequently saw aspects of his work censored both before and after production, and who endured routine directing bans at Barrandov. However, he also suggests that his relationship with the studio was marked by mutual advantage as well as antagonism. Herz's ability to make popular films made his work valuable to the studio, and this probably gave him a certain protection. The fact that the Barrandov leadership was itself concerned with fostering popular, genre-based material meant that their own aims to some extent matched those of Herz, who had been interested in making genre films from the start.

If, in terms of international connections, in the 1950s (and early 1960s), 'Barrandov and DEFA (formally the Deutsche Filmaktien Gesellschaft), gazed ambitiously towards the West' (Karl and Skopal 2015, 2–3), the direction changed in the 1970s – WDR (Westdeutscher Rundfunk), the West German broadcasting consortium, now gazed ambitiously to the East, to the fairy-tale movies that were being produced at Barrandov. One of the directors who was most productive in this field was Václav Vorlíček.

With titles such as *Kdo chce zabít Jessii?* (*Who Wants to Kill Jessie?*, 1966), *Dívka na koštěti* (*The Girl on the Broomstick*, 1971), *Tři oříšky pro Popelku* (*Three Wishes for Cinderella*, 1973), and *Jak utopit dr. Mráčka aneb Konec vodníků v Cechách* (*How to Drown Dr. Mracek, the Lawyer*, 1974), Vorlíček has been one of Barrandov's most prolific directors and scriptwriters, creating some

of the classics of Czech (and Czechoslovakian) film and TV (e.g., *Arabela*, 1979–1981, and *Arabela se vraci* (*Arabela Returns*, 1993). After studying directing at FAMU from 1951 to 1956, Vorlíček joined Barrandov, first as an assistant director, and later he became instrumental in the development of a decisively Czech(oslovakian) mode of comedies and – most importantly – fairy-tale films. Vorlíček, it could be argued, translated the avant-garde style and look of the satirical and surrealist fairy tales of the Czech New Wave (e.g., *Valerie a týden divů* [*Valerie and Her Week of Wonders*, 1970]) into pop-culture, both on film and TV.

Bernd Herzogenrath's essay traces some of Vorlíček's best-known films, also from a personal perspective, since his films also coincide with an epoch in which Czech fairy-tale films, because of growing connections and coproductions with both DEFA and, later, WDR, made them 'household items' in Western Germany in the 1970s and 1980s.

One recurrent theme in Vorlíček's films is the travel between a dream world/fairy-tale world and the real world. Gilles Deleuze had observed this very trait with regard to the work of Vincente Minnelli. Deleuze even claims this 'merging of two worlds' as a trademark of Minnelli's films, as the very Minnellian 'film|thought': his films follow 'the obsessive theme of characters literally absorbed by their own dream, and above all by the dream of others and the past of others' (Deleuze 1986, 118–119). Herzogenrath's essay highlights the different ways Vorlíček's films play on these 'two worlds'.

In a coda, Matthew Sweney looks back at the so-called 'vault films'. '*Trezorové filmy*' (in Czech) is the name given to the group of Czechoslovak studio films which were taken out of circulation, left in the can and not released, or left unfinished due to the political changes in Czechoslovakia subsequent to the invasion of Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968. The *trezorové* films are treasures. Recognition of their intrinsic worth at the time was such that the films were not destroyed, but instead spirited away and *archived*, put into hibernation to await the light of a new day. It took a generation – until the Velvet Revolution of 1989 – for them to be seen – and discussed – again, or in some cases for the first time. Those discussions were part of the necessary national healing process in the aftermath of totalitarianism. Films which had been earlier declared subversive acts by specific personalities against the state were reclaimed as shared national cultural capital.

The films discussed here are *Všichní dobří rodáci* (*All My Compatriots*, 1969, dir. Vojtěch Jasný; Best Director, Cannes, 1969), *Spalovač mrtvol* (*The Cremator*, 1969, dir. Juraj Herz), *Skřivánci na níti* (*Larks on a String*, 1969, dir. Jiří Menzel; cowritten by Menzel and Bohumil Hrabal; Golden Bear, Berlin,

1990), *Kladivo na čarodějnice* (*Witchhammer*, 1970, dir. Otakar Vávra), *Ucho* (*The Ear*, 1970, dir. Karel Kachyňa), and *Případ pro začínajícího kata* (*A Case for the New Hangman*, 1970, dir. Pavel Jurácek).

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After the Velvet Revolution, at the beginning of the 1990s, there was not yet any indication of a rapid decline in production due to the free market environment. The Barrandov logo appeared, for example, in projects from the director Irena Pavlasková, who continued with her bold themes in the film *Corpus Delicti* (1991), Jan Svěrák, who demonstrated his universal talent with *Obecná škola* (*The Elementary School*, 1991), and Jiři Menzel, who symbolically welcomed the new times with his update of *Žebrácká opera* (*The Beggar's Opera*, 1991).

Barrandov's first major international contract of the 1990s was *The Perfect Husband* from Argentinean director and screenwriter Beda Docampo Feijóo, who set his story (inspired by a work by Dostoyevsky) in Prague at the turn of the century. He was followed a few years later by Nikita Michalkov's *The Barber of Siberia* (1998), which opened the Cannes festival in 1999. The first blockbuster after the fall of the Iron Curtain was the 1996 American film *Mission: Impossible*, directed by Brian De Palma and starring Tom Cruise. This film attracted other big-budget productions to Barrandov and such films as *Les Miserables*, *Snow White: A Tale of Terror*, *My Giant*, *Ravenous*, and *Plunkett & Macleane* were produced there.

From the mid-1990s Barrandov began to enjoy the favor of foreign productions, particularly from America, and since 2000 many world-famous blockbusters such as *From Hell* with Johnny Depp, *A Knight's Tale* with Heath Ledger, *Hart's War* with Bruce Willis, *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* with Sean Connery, the Bond film *Casino Royale*, *Shanghai Knights*, *xXx*, *Blade 2*, *Bad Company*, *Alien vs. Predator*, *Hellboy*, *Van Helsing*, *Oliver Twist*, *G. I. Joe*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and more were created there.

In 2006 Barrandov expanded with the addition of the new MAX studio with unique demountable soundproof walls, making it possible to divide the total area of 4,000 m^2 into three separate studios (Studios 8, 9, and 10) or a combination of these.

Towards the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, a decline in foreign filmmaking occurred at Barrandov due to an absence of film incentives in the Czech Republic. Foreign film crews began to return to Barrandov after 2010, when incentives for filmmakers were finally introduced there. The establishment of incentives was a key step forward not only for

Barrandov Studios, but also for the entire Czech film industry. Since these incentives were put in place, Barrandov has gradually begun to attract major foreign productions, which required changes in terms of the way in which offers of services work and an investment in new technology for their production, something which Barrandov has taken on by investing in modern filmmaking facilities, new equipment for its buildings, and expanded inventories in the Costume and Props Department.

Since 2010, foreign filmmakers have once again been making use of Barrandov Studios, with the largest interest in filming in the Czech Republic coming from creators from the United States and Western Europe. Films such as *Red Tails*, *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol*, *A Royal Affair*, *Snowpiercer*, *The Man Who Laughs*, *The Last Knights*, *Child 44*, *Unlocked*, *Emperor*, *The Mountains and the Stones*, *Anthropoid*, *The Visitors 3: Bastille Day*, *Underworld: Blood Wars*, and more have been produced. Barrandov also continues to be linked with the production of major Czech film projects – *In the Shadow*, *Burning Bush*, *Colette*, *Three Brothers*, *Fair Play*, *Lost in Munich*, *Wilson City*, and *Devil's Mistress*. Among upcoming film premieres, *Masaryk*, *An Angel of the Lord 2*, *Ice Mother*, and *Knightfall* should be mentioned. Building upon its extraordinary history, Barrandov Studios continues to attract foreign and domestic filmmakers alike.

This volume is not only a valuable contribution to English-language scholarship on Barrandov and Czech cinema, but is also something that is unique even in the context of Czech academic literature (not merely a collection of rehashings or translations of previous works, but new scholarship). There have indeed been many others who have assessed the significance of Barrandov, not only for Czech cinema, but also for world cinema. While many writers capitalize on the mythical associations with the Barrandov label to present all manner of stories from Czech film history, an increasing number of scholars have been exploring deeper into Barrandov as a political, technological, industrial, and creative entity. The current volume marks an important milestone in this growing body of critical scholarly literature.

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