The Limits of Religious Plurality: The Pentecostal Movement in Post-Stalinist Czechoslovakia

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ABSTRACT
This article examines the religious conditions in Post-Stalinist Czechoslovakia on the example of the Pentecostal movement. It enlarges the classical research scope done on a church-state axis by focusing on a minority religious group, which is not only oppressed by the system driven by atheistic imperatives but also must compete with the rival religious organization. By using the concept of the religious field, the study argues that the state socialist system was caught between two different roles. The state tried to diminish the belief in God, but also it was supposed to operate as a guarantor of religious life. The state division of roles enabled believers to take an active part in negotiating their religious independence and even when they failed, it shows that they were not passive objects controlled by the state, but active actors with an agency of their own.

Introduction

According to the defendants, it would seem that they are not interested in earthly things, for their real life does not begin until the coming of the LORD. When there is great devastation, terrible destruction, when everything perishes, when everything will be totally destroyed, only then there will be brothers and sisters, the chosen ones, who will be saved and who will be taken away by the LORD. A terrible, fanatical faith that has nothing to do with loving your neighbour.¹

This truly vivid description of Pentecostalism could be read in 1964 by the ironworks employees based in Třinec, a city in today’s Moravian-Silesian region of the Czech Republic. Seven of their co-workers were convicted in a trial with the leaders of the Pentecostal movement, an illegal religious group to which the Czechoslovak state refused to grant the status of a church.

The presented scene ends the first act of the little-known struggle of the Pentecostal believers to practice their faith in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.² Communist
regimes across Europe were well known for limiting religious freedom and the questions of what the experiences of the believers were and how was the religious landscape influenced during the second half of the twentieth century are still being discussed. Most of the research focuses on well-established churches, while the exploration of illegal religious organizations is much more scarce. Nevertheless, I believe that examining religious minorities can enrich the research of new perspectives and can reveal a great deal about the whole communist system, as we can notice from a rising scholarly interest, especially concentrating on the Soviet Union.

The primary aim of this paper is to analyse on a concrete, micro-historical level the dynamics of the relationship between an illegal religious movement (Pentecostals in Cieszyn Silesia), an established religious organization (Unity of the Czech Brethren), and a state which is driven by the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. I will argue that, because the religious groups operated in a limited space defined by the state, they were not able to resolve their internal issues. As a result, they delegated the solutions of their inner conflicts to the state apparatus, which ultimately consolidated the role of the state administration in religious matters. The second goal is to adapt and subsequently apply the theory of the religious field to the specific settings of state socialism. By showing the somewhat contrary position of a state as an agent of atheization on the one hand, but as the guarantor of religious life on the other, I intend to contribute to the ongoing debate about communist atheization practices, which has come to the fore in recent years.

There is no consensus on a framework that would be able to encapsulate the dynamics between state, ideology, and religion in state socialism. Also, we lack a common language that would help to establish a meaningful interdisciplinary exchange between history, religious history, religious studies, and other related fields. Historian Sita Steckel in a

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3For example, Sabrina P. Ramet, Nihil obstat: religion, politics, and social change in East-Central Europe and Russia (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Paul Froese, The plot to kill God: Findings from the Soviet experiment in secularization (Berkley: Univer. California Press, 2008); Martin Schulze Wessel and Martin Zückert, Handbuch der Religions-und Kirchengeschichte der böhmischem Länder und Tschechiens im 20. Jahrhundert (München: Oldenbourg, 2009). Sonja Luehrmann, Religion in secular archives: Soviet atheism and historical knowledge. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2015). Catherine Wanner, Communities of the Converted (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011). Catherine Wanner, State secularism and lived religion in Soviet Russia and Ukraine. (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012). Nadezhda Beljakova, Thomas Bremer, Katharina Kunter, Es gibt keinen Gott! Kirchen und Kommunismus. Eine Konfliktgeschichte (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 2016). James Alexander Kapoló and Kinga Povedák, eds. The Secret Police and the Religious Underground in Communist and Post-communist Eastern Europe (London: Routledge, 2022).

5Paul Betts and Stephen A. Smith, eds., Science, religion and communism in cold war Europe. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). Victoria Smolkin, A Sacred Space Is Never Empty (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018). Jan Tesat, The History of Scientific Atheism (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019). Jenny Vorpahl and Dirk Schuster, eds., Communicating Religion and Atheism in Central and Eastern Europe (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH 2020). Tomáš Bubík, Atko Remmel and David Václavek, eds., Freethought and Atheism in Central and Eastern Europe: The Development of Secularity and Non-Religion. (New York: Routledge, 2020).

6This problem was, for example, pointed out by Sita Steckel, ‘Historicizing the Religious Field: Adapting Theories of the Religious Field for the Study of Medieval and Early Modern Church history and religious culture’, 99:3-4 (2019), pp. 331-370.
different empirical context has recently suggested that theories of the ‘religious field’ originally formulated by Pierre Bourdieu have the potential to work as a meta-language in interdisciplinary communication. The subsequent study is intended as a contribution to this discussion. However, it is not a theoretical elaboration or reworking of Bourdieu’s thesis, but an attempt to apply its framework to empirical material from Post-Stalinist Czechoslovakia. I believe that it has the potential to capture the dynamics of the religious situation without reducing its participants to passive objects of communist repression.

In addition to the framework of ‘religious field’, the article uses the term ‘atheism’ in its broader meaning as suggested by Victoria Smolkin: Atheism is not just a utopian idea, but also a tool for achieving certain results. Also, in order to distinguish a power inequality in the actions of the actors representing the state and Pentecostal leaders it uses the differentiation between strategy and tactic set by Michel de Certeau. From a chronological point of view, the text deals with the Post-Stalinist era of the communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia, which represents an especially dynamic phase in the state’s religious policies. Starting with the re-evaluation of the effectiveness of direct persecution of believers after the deaths of Stalin and Gottwald, coming through the anti-religious rhetoric connected to the announcement of the Czechoslovak cultural revolution in 1958, to the gradual liberalization in the mid-1960s. The research base of the study consists of published sources and archival materials from the Security Services Archive and in particular from the National Archive of the Czech Republic.

The following text first investigates the background of the Pentecostal movement up to the imprisonment of their representatives in 1964. Then it elaborates and applies the concept of the religious field. Finally, it presents the tactics of the Pentecostal movement to capture the dynamics of the religious situation in Post-Stalinist Czechoslovakia.

The story of pentecostalism in Czechoslovakia

Classical Pentecostalism is a Protestant Christian movement which distinguishes itself by its interest in the direct experience of God through baptism with the Holy Spirit and in spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues (glossolalia) or divine healing. It emerged in the early twentieth century among American Christians belonging to the Holiness movement, a faction in Methodist churches till the late 1880s.

The Pentecostal movement in the Czech lands started to grow at the beginning of the twentieth century as a part of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Cieszyn Silesia. Nevertheless, this coexistence was affected by spiritual conflicts, which remained even after the Evangelical church split up into the Czechoslovak and the Polish sections. Pentecostal-oriented Christians (mostly the ones expelled from the Evangelical Church) founded an association called Svaz rozhodných křesťanů letničních (The Association of Resolute Pentecostal Christians) in 1910. The group was officially dissolved in 1939 but it was again restored after the Second World War with around 1000 members, mostly of Polish origin.

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7ibid.
8Smolkin, op. cit., p. 19.
9Strategies are hegemonic practices setting the norms and rules, tactics on the other hand are developed for distorting the strategies of power. Michel de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life, (Berkeley: University of California, 1984).
10NA, f. 852, b. 211, inventory number (i. n.) 215-216.
After the communist takeover in 1948, the religious landscape radically changed. However, the introduction of heavy regulation did not automatically lead to the demise of religion, but following Fenggang Yang, it resulted in a tripartite religious market – a red market (officially permitted groups), a black market (officially banned groups) and a grey market (religion with ambiguous status). The possibility to exist as a ‘religious association’ was also prohibited and consequently, the believers had to establish an official church or join one already in existence. In other words, they were forced to operate on the red market controlled by the political authorities.

The Pentecostals all over Czechoslovakia did not strive to create a unified Pentecostal church, as they were geographically scattered with limited communication and different traditions. Two biggest groups of believers – The Association of Resolute Pentecostal Christians in Silesia and The Apostolic Faith (Apoštolská viera) in Slovakia tried to establish two independent organizations, but they were not successful and subsequently, they merged with other official churches. The Silesian group joined The Unity of Czech Brethren (Jednota Českobratrská), a traditional Czech protestant church. They made this decision precisely because Unity’s congregationalism seemed to ensure sufficient autonomy in their organizational and spiritual concerns. In short, they became a grey-market religion. Officially they were members of a sanctioned organization, but many of their practices were not strictly legal according to the state’s policies.

The coexistence of the Pentecostals and the Unity of the Czech Brethren was not without its difficulties, and in the late 1950s, the conflict escalated. In 1958, Jan Urban, a pastor overseeing the congregations in Cieszyn Silesia, publicly criticized the Pentecostal form of spirituality. His argumentation was based on the so-called Berlin Declaration of 1909, in which a number of leading German Protestant theologians condemned the Pentecostal direction of Christianity, thus making a sharp distinction between it and the older evangelical movement. Urban also warned the believers, that they should be cautious about their ecstatic practices and glossolalia, which are not necessarily gifts of the Holy Spirit, but of the Devil.

The Pentecostal representatives protested, but the leadership of the Unity supported Urban. Subsequently, Pentecostals were forced to renounce some of their grey-market practices – unannounced meetings, preaching without state consent, and dissemination of nonauthorized literature. Nevertheless, even after accepting the rules, the believers continued their practices as before, which finally attracted unwanted attention. It is not clear why the state originally became involved in the controversy, but in

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11F. Yang. 'The Red, Black, and Gray Markets of Religion in China', The Sociological Quarterly, 47:1 (2006), pp. 93-122.
12The communication between the Cieszyn Silesia group and the Slovakian group was existing but limited. One of the factors was nationality differences. Most of the members of the Silesian group communicated much more closely with their Polish counterparts. Nevertheless, that changed in the 1970s, when they unsuccessfully tried to join the newly established Pentecostal Apostol Church in Slovakia (Apoštolská cirkev).
13NA, f. 852, b. 211, inventory number (i. n.) 215-216.
14Zdeněk R. Nešpor and Zdeněk Vojtíšek, Encyklopedie menších křesťanských církví v České republice (Praha: Karolinum 2016), p. 100.
15Jan Urban (1920–2000) was a pastor of the Unity of the Czech Brethren (later called Church of the Brethren) and from 1975 he was its chairman.
16Historie letničního hnutí. III (Albrechtice: Křesťanský život 2006), pp. 79-90.
17Allan H. Anderson, An Introduction to Pentecostalism, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 97.
18Historie letničního hnutí. I (Albrechtice: Křesťanský život 2005), p. 70.
1960 the local church-state secretary judged the Pentecostal movement to be a threat, based on the information provided by the State Security (secret police) and Jan Urban.21

The main problem was the ‘preaching without the state consent’, as it was a common practice for the Pentecostals that anybody during the service could give a ‘testimony’. It was their tradition to publicly testify about a personal experience from their own spiritual life, with the aim of strengthening belief and showing the relevance of the Bible.22 During one specific religious gathering, over a hundred people gave a speech and some of them through glossolalia. However, the state officials did not differentiate between the testimony and the sermon and considered it a breach of the law.23 Urban allegedly attributed the actions to the influence of an American Pentecostal missionary called Growes24, who was staying in the Polish part of Cieszyn Silesia.

The local church secretary assessed the ‘unacceptable forms’ of religion as remnants of the old sectarian ways, and he reacted immediately by closing their prayer room, revoking the state consent of the preachers involved, and preventing them from traveling to Poland. The state intervention escalated the conflict even more as some believers blamed Jan Urban for the situation. They complained to the leadership of the Unity of the Czech Brethren.25 However, the Unity fully supported Urban,26 who continued his public critique of the Pentecostal movement.27

A significant number in Pentecostal circles saw no other solution than to leave the church and try to establish a new one. The Unity of Czech Brethren was not against this in principle,28 but obtaining state consent in 1960s Czechoslovakia proved to be more difficult than the actors had anticipated.29 The Unity was faced with a conundrum. They could not control the Pentecostal believers, but nor could they exclude them.30 This stalemate saw the Pentecostals and the Unity both try to persuade the state to intervene on their behalf. It soon became clear that the authorities preferred the Unity and in particular Jan Urban. However, the Pentecostal representatives used a religious vision – the so-called prophecy of the destruction of Cieszyn Silesia – to resist the state’s demands.

Details about the prophecy differ, but the core message was clear. Josef Konderla, one of the leading Pentecostal figures, had a vision that they must leave Cieszyn Silesia.31 After he made it public, it spread among the believers and some of them shared a similar experience: ‘The lay preacher Adam Zagora and Konderla spoke a foreign language in an ecstatic trance. After awaking, they told the congregation (…), that Cieszyn would be destroyed, and that God had informed them in advance to move elsewhere.’32 According to the local authorities, the impact of those statements was severe – over two hundred people wanted to leave the area33 and some of them subsequently

21NA, f. MŠK, b. 60, sig. 47 IX. Informativní zpráva OCT o činnosti sboru Jednoty českobratrské v Dolním Žukově. (14. 1. 1960).
22Nešpor and Vojtíšek, op. cit., p. 98.
23NA, f. MŠK, k. 60., sig. 47 IX. Informativní zpráva OCT o činnosti sboru Jednoty českobratrské v Dolním Žukově. (14. 1. 1960).
24There was no sufficient information in the sources, even the question of whether he was American or English differs.
25NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Resoluce. (Undated)
26NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Vyjádření předsednictva Rady J. č. k událostem na Těšínsku. (24. 2. 1960).
27Historie letního hnutí III, op. cit., pp. 119-128.
28NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Tešínsko. (S. 10. 1961).
29Ibid.
30NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zpráva o situaci v těšínských kaz. stanicích. (12. 9. 1961).
31Historie letního hnutí III, op. cit., pp. 135-136.
32NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zpráva. (27. června 1962).
33NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zpráva o situaci v kazatelských stanicích Jednoty českobratrské v Horním Žukově a Něborách, okres Frýdek-Místek. (27. 6. 1962).
started to sell their immovable properties. Nevertheless, the state authorities refused any discussion of mass migration to Poland, and all the subsequent negotiations between the state, the Pentecostal movement, and the Unity of the Czech Brethren failed to resolve the issue. As a last resort, a number of Pentecostal believers left the Unity, and their representatives tried to establish a church in autumn 1964. However, the state authorities reacted quickly and they incarcerated most of the movement’s leaders. Subsequently, they charged them with ‘obstruction of the supervision of churches and religious societies’, a commonly used criminal act introduced in the 1950s as a legal base for religious persecution. Seven of the Pentecostals ended up in prison for nine to fifteen months.

To sum up, first, the objective of the state was to control and finally diminished the religious lives of its citizens. Any deviations from the norms given by the state should have been eradicated. Second, the objectives of the representatives of Unity of Czech Brethren were to prevent the spreading of the Pentecostal influence on their believers and regain control of their congregations in Cieszyn Silesia, which proved quite difficult as they were not able to expel a large number of believers without state approval. Third, the main goal of the Pentecostal representatives in the Post-Stalinist era was to legally operate in the red religious market either as an autonomous group of an existing church or as a state-approved independent religious organization. One of the reasons being that they were in principle against any conflicts with the state, always looking for a legal solution to their situation as obedience to authority be it divine or civil, is a very strong conviction culturally anchored in the Pentecostal belief. Creating an underground organization was never a seriously considered option, unlike, for example, Jehovah’s Witnesses.

The story of Pentecostalism in Czechoslovakia shows that even in the Post-Stalinist era the attitude towards Christians, who were unwilling to compromise in their religious practices, remained very hostile. Even though it is not a period clearly connected to openly violent show trials, that does not automatically mean less repression from the authorities. I would even argue that, in the case of the Pentecostals, state efforts to control and harass believers increased during the 1960s, particularly when compared to the situation in the 1950s. Clearly, this is a story full of victims and religious persecution. However, that is only one interpretative dimension, and I believe that Bourdieus framework will allow further investigation.

**Religious field and state-socialist atheism**

Pierre Bourdieu’s model of religious field can be perceived as a theory of differentiation – religion is described as ‘something distinct from other fields or spheres, defined historically by the fact that is not law, not politics, not economy, but rather distinct area with its distinct logics.’ That does not mean that the religious field cannot be influenced or

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34NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Svědectví o důvodech rozkolu v těšínských sborech Jednoty českobratrské. (September 1963), p. 6.
35NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zvýšená činnost radikálního křídla letničářů na Těšínsku. (25. 6. 1963).
36NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Informativní zpráva o ‘celostátní konferenci’ a dalších nezákonných akci radikálního křídla letniční sekty na Těšínsku. (25. 3. 1964).
37Historie letničního hnutí. III, op. cit., pp. 214-246.
38Catherine Wanner, *Communities of the Converted* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), p. 81.
influence other fields, but it means that it operates with a specific type of capital, in this case a religious one. Capital or resources can be defined as ‘means to create, sustain and alter social relations, units and identities within the framework of cultural ideas and practices.’

Religious capital is not evenly distributed among all actors and in this way, the religious field can be perceived as an ‘arena of struggle’, in which the actors are trying to maintain, stabilize or improve their positions, using various types of resources.

Bourdieu’s notion of a religious field is very specifically based on his empirical work. The field in his research is controlled by a single organization with a monopoly on the production and distribution of salvation. Nevertheless, since this is not a generalizable case, several authors suggested revisions of the model. The same applies to the case of Czechoslovakia. There was no single church with a monopoly on religious capital. There were sixteen legally recognized churches in the 1960s, but that does not mean that there was a free religious market. Quite the opposite. The specificity of the religious field lay in the crucial role of the state. We cannot say the state possessed ‘goods of salvation’, but to some degree, it controlled the distribution of religious capital by using a robust apparatus. In other words, the political representatives could influence which church was legal, how many economic resources it was acquiring, and which individuals were entrusted with the ‘religious labour’. State experts also produced numerous strategies, sets of ideas, and practices concerning religion, usually with the aim of diminishing it. For simplicity’s sake, this factor – encompassing the state efforts to understand, expose, control, or diminish the religious field – will be called ‘state-socialist atheism’.

Because I presume that the historical actors representing the state acted at least to some degree according to the atheistic tendencies set by Marxism-Leninism, to try to understand the field dynamics, I consider it important to briefly focus on three levels of state-socialist atheism: knowledge, policies, and praxis. The following paragraphs should certainly not be taken as an exhaustive description of the situation but should at least partially approximate the rationality with which the workers of the state have operated.

**Atheistic knowledge**

Within the framework of Marxism-Leninism, atheism rejected the idea that God or any other supernatural force wields any power over our world. But as historian Victoria Smolkin wrote in the context of the USSR, ‘Soviet atheism was also about power, a tool for undermining competing sources of political, ideological, and spiritual authority.’

Critique of religion played an important role in building socialism because believers, even without their own fault, were allegedly slowing down the process of reaching a modern, just society. In other words, ‘Marxist atheism’ can have a double meaning:

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39 Steckel *op. cit.*, p. 337. ‘Something distinct from other fields or spheres, defined historically by the fact that is not law, not politics, not economy, but rather distinct area with its distinct logics’

40 Anke K Scholz, et al. *Resource Cultures: Sociocultural Dynamics and the Use of Resources – Theories, Methods, Perspectives* (Tübingen, 2017), p. 14. Similarly as Steckel *op. cit.*, p. 338, I use the terms ‘capital’ and ‘resources’ interchangeably.

41 Steckel *op. cit.*, pp. 339–340

42 For example see Andrew M McKinnon, Marta Trzebiatowska and Christopher Craig Brittain, ‘Bourdieu, Capital, and Conflict in a Religious Field: The Case of the „Homosexuality” Conflict in the Anglican Communion’ *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 26:3 (2011), pp. 355-370, here p. 361

43 Pierre Bourdieu, ‘Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field’ *Comparative Social Research* 13 (1991), pp. 1–44, here p. 5.

44 Smolkin, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
first as an interpretation of religion and of the ways of overcoming it; and second, as a productive component of the communist worldview.45

The first decade of the rule of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia did not facilitate any clear set of atheistic ideas. The production of atheistic literature was scarce and mainly consisted of a critique of individual religious groups, but it was not attacking religion as a concept. The qualitative change occurred in 1958 in connection to the announcement of the Czechoslovak cultural revolution.46 Religion was labeled as ‘an incorrect, fantastic interpretation of the world based on unscientiﬁc abstraction’47 and the faith of believers was often considered a threat both to the wellbeing of individuals and to society in general. However, in the following years, the question remained as to the best way to circulate the knowledge among citizens because, according to the communist representatives, so far, they had not been so successful in doing so. The alleged mistakes were first assuming that religion will simply disappear by itself and second verbally insulting religious believers.48 In the early 1960s, the newly founded consensus conceived atheistic education as a tool for empowering people to believe in their abilities to shape their destiny.49

Atheistic knowledge production was mainly tailored to Catholic believers, as Czechoslovakia was predominantly Catholic. Nevertheless, the whole population was affected by it, including the illegal religious organizations. Most of them were considered sects, which had important implications. On the one hand, in the past, they could be seen positively, as a force opposing the ruling feudal or capitalist establishment.50 On the other hand, in a socialist society, there was no reason to oppose the system. Sects were seen in the same negative light as any other religious organization, maybe even more so. Members of those groups were viewed as the most fanatical and ﬁerce out of all the believers, which made them less likely to accept the atheistic worldview.51

The Pentecostal movement was also labeled as a sect. They were considered very vigorous in their religious practices and their characteristic feature was inducing ecstatic states, in which believers were to express regret over their lives and a fear of God’s punishment.52 They were also allegedly not organized, but they functioned as a spontaneous movement, which from time to time inﬂuenced religious lives. To sum up, contemporary knowledge considered them to be very religiously active, more inclined to an extreme manifestation of their belief, and not under the direct inﬂuence of western countries.53

45 Malý ateistický slovník (Praha: SNPL, 1962), p. 30.
46 Tesař, op. cit., p. 88.
47 František Frendlovs ký, ‘Ateistická a mravní výchova – součást výchovy k vedeckému světovému názoru’ Pedagogika, VIII:4 (1958), p. 403.
48 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zásady provádění vědecko ateistické propagandy v osvětových a školských zařízeních národních výborů. (Undated)
49 For example. František Kozel, O výchově k vedeckému ateismu (Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1960). and Milan Machovec, ‘O metodách ateistické výchovy’, Filosofický časopis, 7 (1959), pp. 678–694.
50 Markéta Machovcová and Milan Machovec, Utopie blouznivců a sektařů (Praha: Nakladatelství Československé akademie věd, 1963)
51 Milan Zubek, Ideové zdroje soudobého sektárství. (Praha: Československá společnost pro šíření politických a vědeckých znalostí, 1963)
52 Malý ateistický slovník, op. cit., p. 415.
53 Security Service Archive (ABS), f. 323. sign. 323-16-4. Zesam právně existujících církví a náboženských společností a charakteristika sekt. (9. 12. 1955). https://www.ebadatelna.cz/?id=f85838, pp. 17-20.
**Atheistic policies**

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia did not have a clear premeditated plan of how to deal with religious organizations and various atheistic policies were created ad hoc depending on the contemporary local situation.\(^5^4\) Loosely inspired by the SSSR\(^5^5\) the state in 1949 introduced so-called ‘church laws’, a regulatory framework that to some degree subordinated churches to the state influence. The property of churches was nationalized, the church press was prohibited or put under heavy censorship and all the preachers needed to be sanctioned by the state authorities. Not all the believers were willing to fully subdue to the legal requirements, which similarly to other Eastern Bloc countries, resulted in the creation of a tripartite religious market.

The question of religious minorities remained mostly unanswered. The consensus was that no religious organization can function outside the legal system, but even the highest Party members did not agree on a unanimous plan of action often oscillating between ideas of legalization, forced unification or destruction of individual groups. Till 1956 the primary focus of state apparatus was the majority churches and the policies regulating nonlegalized groups were changing rapidly without a clear agenda. For example, the Seventh-day Adventist Church was legally recognized, banned, and recognized again in less than six years. In the following years, during the Post-Stalinist period, the changes were not as dramatic, but the disputes between legalization/dissolution were not settled even then.

The concrete religious’ situation was always very much dependent on local state authorities. As mentioned before, the Pentecostal movement in Cieszyn Silesia was forced to join the Unity of the Czech Brethren in 1951, but at the same time, a small Pentecostal group near Karlovy Vary in western Bohemia unofficially still functioned independently. When a local state church secretary tried to figure out if he should somehow intervene, the state official from Prague replied that the question of sects is not yet settled, so he should act as he sees fit.\(^5^6\)

In comparison with the early 1950s, the state in the 1960s was less willing to deal with the believers in openly violent ways. However, the willingness to legalize new church organizations was till the very end of state socialism minimal. However, this fact is obvious with hindsight. For the contemporary Pentecostal movement, it did not seem an impossible task considering that three other small churches had been legalized in 1956 (Christian Brethren, New Apostolic Church, Seventh-day Adventist Church).

Even when the atheistic policies remained vague, we can observe two different inclinations toward more liberal treatment of religious minorities. First, connected with the destalinization processes and concluded with the announcement of the Cultural Revolution in 1958, which signified once again heavier regulation of religious lives. Second, in the 1960s, culminating during the Prague Spring in 1968 and finally reversed with the invasion of the Warsaw Pact army.

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\(^{5^4}\) Martin Pácha, ‘Possibilities of Research into the Catholic Church in the Czech Lands in the Early Stage of the Communist Dictatorship’, *Czech Journal of Contemporary History* 8:8 (2020), pp. 29-44.

\(^{5^5}\) The inspiration in the policies of SSSR was limited also later in the Post-Stalinist period. The actual decisions on which church become legal remained in the hands of Czechoslovak authorities. One of the more obvious reasons was that knowledge of the Soviet situation in this matter was scarce.

\(^{5^6}\) NA, f. 852, b. 211, inv. n. 215-216.
**Atheism in praxis**

State officials often found themselves in a paradoxical situation based on a split between their obligations to the Communist Party and the state as such. Religion was considered by the Party to be something to overcome or eradicate. But at the same time, a state official should behave in such a way as to arouse the loyalty of citizens. Researcher Nerija Putinaitė pointed out a similar situation in a Lithuanian case, where the declared objective of creating an atheistic society was in contrast to and finally overshadowed by an intention to create a society loyal to the Soviet state’s goals.\(^{57}\)

Both roles of the state featured in the Pentecostal case. First, state officials were preventing pluralization in the religious field. They never agreed with the legalization, putting forward the official argument that there is no need for a new church. The internal concern was that the independent movement would be harder to control and that it could be attractive to those believers with more ‘radical’ inclinations.\(^{58}\) Second, they were systematically putting themselves in a position of a religious guarantor or a mediator in the negotiations between the Pentecostal movement and the Unity of the Czech Brethren. And not only in local situations. It was the case for all the levels of the state apparatus. First, the local church secretary in Český Těšín tried to resolve the conflict, then the district official in Ostrava, and finally the workers of the Prague Ministry of Education and Culture.

To sum up, state-socialist atheism was one of the crucial variables in the dynamics of the religious field in Czechoslovakia. However, that does not mean that the state was fully in control of the situation. It was just one of the factors that the historical actors had to work with, and if we look at it from Bourdieu’s point of view, they still had a set of resources at their disposal to reposition themselves inside of the field.\(^{59}\)

**Resources, tactics, and strategies**

According to Bourdieu, two important relations constitute the dynamics of the religious field – exchange and competition.\(^{60}\) First, the exchange relation is established between specialists and laypeople. Specialists want to monopolize the power to shape the practices and the worldview of the layperson. Laypeople in return expect legitimation and explanation of social reality.\(^{61}\) Second, the relation of competition is the opposition among various specialists inside the field.\(^{62}\) To formulate the competition relation, Bourdieu differentiates among three positions in the field. The central position is the one with the most power – it can influence the structure of the field and maintain the status quo. Sometimes it is challenged by a second group of specialists who are trying to achieve decisive influence. The third position is marginal. It is at the very edge of the

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\(^{57}\)Nerija Putinaitė, ‘Political Religion and Pragmatics in Soviet Atheisation Practice: The Case of Post-Stalinist Soviet Lithuania’, *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 22:1 (2021), pp. 64-83.

\(^{58}\)NA, f. MSK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. *(Letniční hnutí. Undated).*

\(^{59}\)Steckel, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

\(^{60}\)Bourdieu, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

\(^{61}\)Lene van der *Aa Kühle*, ‘Globalization, Bourdieu and New Religions’, in Armin W. Geertz and Margit Warburg (eds) *New Religions and Globalization: Empirical, Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives* (Aarhus: CT Aarhus University Press, 2008), pp. 95-109, here p. 102.

\(^{62}\)Bourdieu, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
field, continuously in danger of losing the status of a religion and subsequently being excluded.63

If we apply the analytical model to the story of the Pentecostal movement in Cieszyn Silesia, we can distinguish two types of specialists – from The Unity of the Czech Brethren and from the Pentecostal believers. First, the leaders of the Unity had a central position in the field. They controlled the distribution of religious capital, meaning they influenced who was in which position in the field, of course within the boundaries set by the state. But in general, the church was well established, it had stable practices and a clear organizational structure, and it was recognized by the state as a legal institution. Second, the representatives of the Pentecostal believers were also recognized as such, but they did not achieve leadership positions in the Unity. In other words, they did not have the religious capital to radically change the whole church, but they had enough influence to alter the practices inside their congregations – for example by introducing adult water baptism.64

The struggle between the Pentecostal movement and the Unity of the Czech Brethren was originally strictly played out on a religious field, with both groups using religious resources. At its core, the dispute was about the forms of spirituality and also about the hierarchy within the organization. There were probably multiple reasons for the conflict, but the trigger was the speech by Jan Urban in 1958. He was not speaking specifically against the believers, and he even acknowledged the validity of some aspects of Pentecostal practices, namely the emphasis on repentance. Nevertheless, he concluded that even when the Unity is more than willing to accept and help their ‘Pentecostal brothers’, it will never follow Pentecostal teachings.65

Urban, in his speech, has taken up the central position in the field by preserving the status quo, and he has positioned the leadership of the Unity and himself as a defender of the ‘true’ belief.66 The Pentecostal representatives protested, but their influence as a group with a unique, but accepted form of belief was diminished. Their aim was either to achieve autonomy in their practices within the Unity or gain the status of an independent church in the state. The first having failed, they tried the second, and even when both participants decided to part ways, the state-socialist atheist strategy intervened.

To improve or stabilize one’s status, the actors are not limited to resources available in the particular field. They can use resources from other fields to better their position.67 This is doubly true in the case of Czechoslovakia because religious and political fields have to a large extent been interrelated. It was not a practice solely deployed on the level of communication with the state, but also when religious groups were communicating with each other. For example, Adam Zagora, a Pentecostal lay preacher, was also an elected local state official, and he leveraged this fact in his participation both in the debates with the Unity and with the state workers.68

The representatives of Unity first tried to ease the conflict by using their religious resources – they were trying to negotiate and use their position as leaders of the

63Bourdieu calls the three different positions of specialists Priest, Prophet and Magician.
64Historie letničního hnutí. III, op. cit., pp. 7–16
65Ibid. pp. 79–90.
66Ibid., p. 90.
67Steckel, op. cit., p. 340.
68NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zápis o jednání zástupců MŠK s představiteli těšínských kazatelských stanic Jednoty česko-bratrské konaném v Karviné. (25. 3. 1963).
church. However, when this failed, they used their status as a legally recognized organization and began to accuse the Pentecostal movement of illegal activities. Namely Jan Urban, in a conference of preachers of the Unity in Brno in 1960, portrayed the Pentecostal movement in the same way as the state was defining sects – as people with no interest in the outside world, who believe that ‘All the efforts of this world to build better tomorrows are just building the Tower of Babel, and the culture of this world is just a devil’s trap.’ And less than a year later, he lodged an official complaint at the Ministry of Culture and Education that the Pentecostal believers were meeting without any external control, and that the religious practices were conducted without the state’s consent.

These attempts to diminish the position of the Pentecostals does not mean that the Unity of Czech Brethren was in the given circumstance of state socialism trying to solve their religious disputes by using the state to subdue their opponents. Another explanation could relate to state officials, who were comparing the movement to a sect and were highly dubious of their practices. The leaders of the Unity, therefore, feared possible state oppression of the entire church if they did not try to make a radical distinction between their faith and that of the Pentecostal movement. Of course, we cannot know for sure, but I would argue that both explanations are not mutually exclusive.

Even after the Pentecostal movement was not able to persuade the state authorities to legalize it, it was still unwilling to fully submit to the leadership of the Unity. In other words, Pentecostal believers could not leave the church but were reluctant to remain part of it under the same conditions. That led their representative, Josef Konderla, to reveal his vision about the destruction of the Cieszyn area, and he was able to use his religious capital to mobilize other believers to oppose the Unity. This is not to say that his belief was inauthentic, but at least according to his son Jan, he waited around a year before revealing the prophecy, which could also mean that it was a carefully considered decision.

The outcomes of revealing the vision led some of the Pentecostal believers to challenge the central position of leadership by the Unity. As Bourdieu would put it, they try to ‘contest the very existence of the church by their very existence, and, more precisely, by their ambition to satisfy their own religious needs without the intermediation and intercession of the church.’ But it is important to note that the position of the Pentecostal representatives was not determined solely by the social context. Yes, the historical actors have specific positions in the field – some are in a position of power, others are marginal – but their attempt was consciously or unconsciously taken up to reconfigure the religious field.

The tactic of mobilizing believers was also combined with two other political resources. First, the Pentecostals claimed that the Unity was oppressing them in their constitutional right to freedom of belief. Second, they were claiming that they were persecuted for being Polish. They approached both the Czechoslovak and Polish authorities with a request to move to Poland. They argued that this would solve both the
national (they spoke Polish, many of them had relatives there) and the religious issues because they believed that the Pentecostal movement had more freedom to operate in the Polish United Evangelical Church. Nevertheless, the Polish embassy refused to assist them, despite the fact that they had supported Polish evangelicals in the same area after World War II.

As mentioned previously, the Czechoslovak government rejected their demands, but the Pentecostal tactic was not completely unsuccessful. They attracted members from higher levels of the political apparatus – employees from the Ministry of Culture and Education, who participated in the next round of the negotiations. The state, represented by these officials, basically took on the role of a ‘neutral’ supervisor trying to resolve the conflict according to the law and as peacefully as possible: ‘(The State) does not interfere in theological and doctrinal questions, but it gives full freedom. However, if the church came into conflict with the laws, the state must intervene (…). It is necessary to avoid extremes to prevent the misuse of religion.’ The problem was that the Pentecostal representatives had a very different idea about what those ‘extremes’ were.

‘Ideal’ worship in the eyes of the state representatives had almost no active participation by the laity. Congregations were supposed to meet in an official church or a prayer room and listen to the sermon of a state-approved preacher. However, that was unusual for the Pentecostal movement. Believers typically met in an informal setting, for example in someone’s home. Also, anybody could participate in the worship; as Pavel Unucka, a Pentecostal believer, put it at the negotiations: ‘It is part of the life of the Church that, as far as possible, everyone, not just the leaders, should be involved in the activities of the church. … Just as others have the right to go to the pub and get drunk at any time, believers have the right to go to the prayer room at any time.’ In other words, some practices that the state considered ‘not religious’ or ‘against church laws’, were crucial for the Pentecostal believers and they had been doing them naturally for decades.

The situation was not calmed even by Jan Urban, usually the loudest critic of the Pentecostal movement. He decided (or was forced by the Unity or the state) to ease the tension with a long, public apology and claimed that the Unity did not want to alter the religious practices of the Pentecostals; they only need to respect the laws of the state as the Bible demands. In the end, all of their representatives accepted Urban’s apology, but they were still not willing to cooperate with the Unity, perhaps because they did not fully trust his promises.

Another explanation for the unwillingness to find a compromise was that the Pentecostals were not primarily ‘playing’ against the Unity anymore, but they were again trying to gain complete religious independence. However, to establish a new church

76Pentecostalism in Poland see Oliwer Cieślar, The Pentecostal Movement in Poland and its Modern Social Context’ Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association, 36:1 (2016), pp. 30-41.
77NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Obnovení žádosti o povolení odjezdu do Polska. (18. 4. 1964)
78Józef Szymecek (ed.), Stát, církev a národ v československé části Těšínského Slezska. (Český Těšín: Kongres Poláků v České republice, Dokumentační centrum, 2004), p. 71-72.
79NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zápis o jednání zástupců MŠK s představiteli těšínských kazatelských stanic Jednoty česko-bratrské konaném v Karviné. (25. 3. 1963).
80NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zápis o jednání zástupců MŠK s představiteli těšínských kazatelských stanic Jednoty česko-bratrské konaném v Karviné. (25. 3. 1963).
81NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zápis o členském shromáždění kazatelské stanice Jednoty Českobratrské v Neborách. (10. 4. 1963).
organization, they had to convince the state officials. They chose to do so by adopting a very firm, non-negotiable position, which we could call the ‘no way back’ tactic or, as one of the Pentecostals put it, ‘behind our principles, we stand for life and death, I repeat for life and death.’

Not all Pentecostal believers followed a similar tactic. The original association *Svaz rozhodných křesťanů letničních* within the Union of the Czech Brethren consisted of four congregations – Hrádek u Českého Těšína, Karviná, Dolní Žukov and Nebory. Two of those (Hrádek and Karviná) did not express any major dissatisfaction with the Unity. Most of the dissatisfaction came from the congregations in Dolní Žukov and Nebory, which always spoke with one voice. However, with the ongoing conflict, it turned out that not all members of those two congregations fully agreed with all the actions, especially with the move to Poland. Moreover, according to the state authorities, the representatives of the Pentecostal movement were still claiming that it was just a matter of time before they would be able to persuade the state officials to leave the country. However, when Konderle’s prophecy was not fulfilled, it led to questioning of its veracity and doubts about the leadership in general.

The implied involvement of ‘non-specialists’ (common Pentecostal believers) in disputes shows that Bourdieu’s original model requires some revision. He defines the laity from a Catholic point of view and only portrayed it as passive participants in conflicts. However, as the sociologist of religion Terry Rey pointed out, under certain circumstances, even laypeople can express their views and play a role in reconfiguring the religious field. The classical hierarchical structures of the Roman Catholic Church, which Bourdieu worked with, do not always apply to different religious organizations, as is apparent from the case of the Czechoslovak Pentecostals.

The undermining of the position of Pentecostal representatives from Dolní Žukov and Nebory was publicly exposed during the negotiation between state officials, the Unity, and all four congregations on March 25, 1963. We can assume that some leaders of the Pentecostal movement overestimated their influence in the field, which led to the loss of their religious capital. At the same time, it enabled others to position themselves as the representatives of the dissatisfied. For example, Adolf Zabystrzan, a lay Pentecostal preacher from Nebory, expressed the concerns of some of believers about leaving their homes. He was subsequently labeled a Judas, who had betrayed the Pentecostal movement. Nevertheless, Zabystrzan, at least during the negotiations, avoided confrontation and claimed that he was just representing a circle of believers which did not want to leave. The ‘moderate’ position ultimately gained him the support of some believers, of the leadership of Unity and the state’s officials.

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82 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zápis o členském shromáždění kazatelské stanice Jednoty Českobratrské v Neborách. (10. 4. 1963).
83 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zápis o jednání zástupců MŠK s představiteli těšínských kazatelských stanic Jednoty českobratrské konaném v Karviné. (25. 3. 1963).
84 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Informativní zpráva pro II. odd. ÚV KSC. (11. 4. 1963).
85 Bourdieu, op. cit., p. 9.
86 Terry Rey, Bourdieu on Religion (London: Routledge 2014), pp. 120-127.
87 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zápis o členském shromáždění kazatelské stanice Jednoty Českobratrské v Neborách. (10. 4. 1963).
88 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zpráva o pobožnosti Jednoty českobratrské konané dne 21. června 1963 v Tyře. (29. 6. 1963).
After the failed negotiations, certain Pentecostal leaders chose to take a risky move, which was not successful in the end. They decided to leave the Unity of the Czech Brethren to establish their own church. Historian Jósef Szymecek claimed that the state authorities had promised to allow the new church to exist in exchange for its members abandoning plans to migrate. I am rather sceptical about this interpretation because there is no evidence for the claim, and some sources suggest otherwise. On the one hand, the preparations for the founding of the church were public and the representatives even sent a note to the Ministry of Culture and Education, thanking the state for not hindering their religious activities, which suggests they had some agreement with the state. On the other hand, the Ministry sent a letter in which they rejected the founding of the church with the conclusion: ‘This decision is final and any further personal or written requests do not have any purpose.’ In line with the message of the local church secretary, who claimed that he had been present when the letter was publicly read during worship, I would argue that it was not some strategy orchestrated by a state, but a tactic deployed by the Pentecostal leaders. They assumed that the state would not dare to take strong action against a substantial number of believers and would eventually accept the actual state of affairs. They were not completely wrong in their assumption.

The state strategy against so-called sects focused primarily on isolating their leaders. Most of the members were considered ‘normal’ citizens who found themselves in a sectarian religious organization, but at least in theory they could overcome their ‘incorrect’ beliefs. The first step was to remove them from the ‘harmful influence of the sects’ leadership. The problem for the state in the case of the Pentecostal movement lay in the fact that they did not have a classical organizational hierarchical structure, which was something that the officials had trouble comprehending. The lack of their imagination in communicating with a religious movement that was not structured similarly to the Roman Catholic Church, was also evident in banal problems, such as uncertainty over who the letter with the state demands should be addressed to. The Pentecostal representatives were very much aware of this issue, and they acted accordingly. Whenever the state was criticizing or threatening individuals, they took collective responsibility as a movement.

The Pentecostals were, however, mistaken in thinking that the state would not get involved at all. Despite the ban, they very openly assembled at the first conference of a newly founded Pentecostal organization. There they voted for official representatives, as it was prescribed by the legal demands of the state. However, this final act gave the authorities the ‘leaders’, that they could imprison. The other believers tried to deploy the usual ‘collective responsibility’ tactic: ‘they carried out the resolutions of all

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89 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Kopie dopisu MŠK z 23. 6. 1963. (Undated).
90 Jósef Szymecek, ‘Za slovem jdi!’ in Historie letničního hnutí. III, op. cit., pp. 7-16.
91 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zaslání nového organizačního řádu. (26. 12. 1963).
92 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Rozhodnutí a žádost sboru Nebory. (13. 7. 1963).
93 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Dopis ze sboru Nebory – upozornění. (29. 7. 1963).
94 ABS, f. 323. sign.323-16-4. Seznam právně existujících církví a náboženských společností a charakteristika sekt. (9. 12. 1955). https://www.ebadatelna.cz/?id=f85838
95 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Souhrn nejblížích opatření k činnosti radikálního křídla letničního hnutí v kazatelských stanicích ČJB Nebory a Žukov. (18. 7. 1963).
96 NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Zpráva o pokračování nezákonné činnosti letniční sekty na Těšinsku. (14. 3. 1964)
and therefore we are equally responsible for all actions for which the accused are appointed"97 but this did not have any effect. Pentecostal representatives, led by Jan Folwarczný, the newly elected chairman, were sentenced to prison for nine to fifteen months.98

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Who actually planted the seed that grows in the dark, but does not thrive in the sun? It ripens into a hollow stalk of insane fanaticism. (…) It is a disease which does not spread spontaneously, but which someone spreads, sows and somewhere becomes its victim and instrument. And that is the most horrible thing.99

Where did the radical difference between these harsh lines written by a trial reporter in 1964 and a ‘moderate’ critique of Jan Urban in 1958 come from? What made the state drastically intervene in this particular instance? I would argue that there were three reasons. First, some of the Pentecostal representatives overestimated their position in the field concerning the standing of the believers and the state. Second, they lost their ‘legality’ by leaving the Unity of the Czech Brethren, which eventually brought them to a marginal position. They were at the edge of the religious field, where they needed to defend the fact that they were a religion at all. And third, to fulfill the organizational demands generally issued by the state, they abandoned the tactic of collective responsibility while establishing the church. In the end, it did not matter that they explained the collective nature of their actions; the state finally had its ‘cult leaders’, whom it could charge and send to prison. And this in connection with the dissolution of the new organization marked the end of the great attempt by the Pentecostal movement towards legally practicing their beliefs. At least for a time. To be continued in 1968 …100

**Conclusion**

The specificity of the religious field of Czechoslovakia was in the crucial role of the state, which to some degree organized the distribution of religious capital. Nevertheless, the state was caught between two very different roles. On the one hand, state-socialist atheism aimed to diminish religion, but on the other hand, the state was supposed to operate as a guarantor of religious life. We could presume that this particular role was taken up to control religious organizations, but over time it also became a stable factor in the religious field. I would argue that, because of the restricted religious field, the churches (for example the Unity of the Czech Brethren) did not have the resources to deal with inner conflicts, and they delegated the solution to the state apparatus. In other words, the restrictions framed by state policies also helped to stabilize the role of the state officials as active participants in religious struggles.

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97NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Prohlášení členů bývalého spolku rozhodných křesťanů krajské prokuratuře v Ostravě. (28. 3. 1964).
98Historie letního hnutí, III, op. cit., pp. 241-246.
99NA, f. MŠK, b. 60., sig. 47 IX. Třinecký hutník (závodní noviny Třineckých železáren).
100The Pentecostal movement in Cieszyn Silesia continued their attempts to change their position. Nevertheless, the state except in 1968 remained indifferent. After non-successful negotiations with the Baptist Church, Slovakian Pentecostals and many inner struggles they finally achieved the status of an independent church in 1989, a few months before the Velvet revolution.
The paper shows that the actors in the religious field were not mere passive objects controlled by the state. They had their own goals and tactics to achieve them, even if these were not successful, which shows that state-socialist Czechoslovakia was not an all-controlling regime. Different actors had various resources at their disposal, and they were employing them with lesser or greater success. In the case of the Pentecostal movement, its resilience came especially from their non-hierarchical structure. That does not mean that the movement was without its inner hierarchies, but the state officials found it puzzling and leaving them unsure of how to react to the numerous activities of the Pentecostals. There was a learning curve before the state was able to respond according to its own atheistic imperatives. The outcome was that certain minor religious groups were able to operate more or less ‘under the radar’ in the 1950s, but state officials, with a deeper understanding of the situation, were able to react more decisively in the early 1960s.

The model of the ‘religious field’ helped capture the dynamics of the religious situation in Post-Stalinist Czechoslovakia and in my opinion, it may be applied on a micro-historical level. The concept is very useful in distinguishing among different struggles and power positions, not only in the axis of church and state, but also among religious organizations themselves. The religious field is not all-encompassing and for the investigation of inner religious experiences it is not suitable, but that is not its promise anyway.\(^{101}\) The potential, which goes beyond this article and would need more research, is in the possibility of creating a framework and offering unbiased language for analysing the relationship between state, ideology, and religion more neutrally, but also without diminishing the agency and the suffering of believers under various communist regimes.

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\(^{101}\)Steckel op. cit., pp. 334.