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Abstract: Early Narratives of the Shoah in Czech Literature

The project examines the earliest phase of Czech-language post war literature on the topic of the Shoah. This phase (1945-1949) was characterized by a high amount of publications seeking to come to terms with the recent history, among them several publications of Czech Jewish survivors. The dissertation examines which specific ways of writing and narrating about the events that came to be known much later as the Holocaust and Shoah were developed in the immediate aftermath, and which different narratives were competing with each other.

For this purpose, I consider both documentary and fictional texts, that were written in Czech language by survivors of the Shoah and published between 1945 and 1949. Among those are reports as Ota Kraus and Erich Schön's *Továrna na smrt* (1946, The Death Factory), Richard Feder's *Židovská tragédie. Dějství poslední* (1947, Jewish Tragedy. Last Act) or Anna Auředníčková's *Tři léta v Terezíně* (1945, Three years in Terezín) as well as novels such as Jiří Weil's *Život s hvězdou* (1949, Life with a Star) and Ota B. Kraus' *Země bez Boha* (1948, Land without God).

On the basis of those texts, the project analyses the negotiation and transformation of remembering the persecution of the Czech Jews in a changing social context: Which historic events were selected for a literary representation, which language is used to tell about them and how is the story transformed into a meaningful narrative? Additionally, analysis of reviews from newspapers and journals of the early postwar time reveals the early reception of those publications. The combination of these sources, supplemented by selected archival research, highlights the transformation of interpretations of the past and the development of narrative patterns. This will contribute to a better understanding of the development of Shoah memory in Czechoslovakia.